The air transport sector makes a major contribution to the UAE economy

It creates jobs...

Airlines, airport operators, airport on-site enterprises (restaurants and retail), aircraft manufacturers, and air navigation service providers employed 140,000 people in the United Arab Emirates in 2014. In addition, by buying goods and services from local suppliers the sector supported another 99,000 jobs. On top of this, the sector is estimated to have supported a further 56,000 jobs by paying wages to its employees, some or all of which are subsequently spent on consumer goods and services. Foreign tourists arriving by air to the United Arab Emirates, who spend their money in the local economy, are estimated to have supported an additional 400,000 jobs in 2014.

...and generates wealth

The air transport industry is estimated to have supported a $21.1 billion gross value added contribution to GDP in the United Arab Emirates in 2014. Spending by foreign tourists supported a further $26 billion gross value added contribution to the country’s GDP. This means that 11.7 percent of the country’s GDP is supported by the air transport sector and foreign tourists arriving by air.
The importance of air transport to the United Arab Emirates

Air transportation facilitates exports, foreign direct investment, and tourism

The ten most popular direct flight links:

1. India
2. Saudi Arabia
3. Qatar
4. Pakistan
5. Kuwait
6. United Kingdom
7. Bahrain
8. Oman
9. Iran
10. Germany

Air transport brings tourists and investment into the United Arab Emirates, and helps businesses trade their goods and services around the world. In 2014, foreign tourists spent US $15.2 billion in the United Arab Emirates, supporting restaurants, hotels, transport providers, and others who cater to tourists. In addition, the United Arab Emirates exported US $390 billion worth of goods and services in 2014. Over time, the country has accumulated US $100 billion in foreign direct investment.
The importance of air transport to the United Arab Emirates

The air transport sector connects people around the world

Number of direct flight destinations in the ten fastest growing countries

- India
- Bangladesh
- Vietnam
- Pakistan
- China
- Indonesia
- Philippines
- Kazakhstan
- Angola
- Nigeria

Number of direct flights to the top ten fastest growing cities

- Surat
- Ahmedabad
- Ho Chi Minh City
- Hà Noi
- Delhi
- Bengaluru
- Hyderabad (India)
- Kinshasa
- Dhaka
- Lagos

Arrivals by continent, number of passengers (000s)

- The Middle East and Europe are the largest sources of arrivals to the United Arab Emirates after Asia-Pacific. In 2014, 14.2 million passengers arrived to the United Arab Emirates from the Middle East (29.5 percent of the total) and 9.7 million passengers arrived from Europe (20.2 percent).

1 Fastest growing countries are Ranked by Oxford Economics’ forecasted real GDP growth 2015-2030, with a threshold of >US $100 million GDP. Fastest growing cities are ranked by Oxford Economics’ forecasted real GDP growth 2015-2030, with a minimum city size of 5 million.

The air transport sector’s ability to connect the United Arab Emirates to emerging countries and fast growing cities can help drive economic growth. There are 50 direct flight destinations among the ten fastest growing countries in the world as measured by GDP growth and 81 direct flight destinations among the 20 fastest growing countries. There are 332 direct weekly flights among the ten fastest growing cities in the world as measured by GDP growth and 1012 direct weekly flights among the 100 fastest growing cities.
Ease of travel, cost competitiveness, and infrastructure are vitally important

Survey evidence of infrastructure and ease of travel

Executives surveyed by the World Economic Forum suggest that the United Arab Emirates’ air transport infrastructure quality ranks 1st out of 10 countries included in the survey in the Middle East and 24th globally. The United Arab Emirates ranks 2nd out of 10 in the Middle East for visa openness and 7th for cost competitiveness.

Infrastructure quality score: 4/7
Visa openness score*: 5/10
Cost competitiveness score*: 9/10

Key infrastructure facts about Emirates air transport

Around 540,000 aircraft land or take off from the United Arab Emirates every year. The country has 2 airports that are in the top 100 in the world (ranked by passenger numbers). Dubai International airport carried the most passengers - 70.7 million - in 2014.

Number of passengers travelling annually through the five busiest airports in the country (000s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Passengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 DUBAI INTERNATIONAL</td>
<td>70,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ABU DHABI INTL</td>
<td>18,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 SHARJAH</td>
<td>7,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 AL MAKTOUM INTL EMIRATES</td>
<td>1,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 RAS AL KHAIMAH INTL</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of airports among the top 100 in the world: 14
Number of operating airlines: 113
540,000 landings and takeoffs

* Entry visa requirements for a tourism visit from worldwide source markets (10 = no visa required for visitors from all source markets, 0 = traditional visa required for visitors from every source market).
* Based on ticket taxes, airport charges, and VAT (10=low cost, 0=high cost).

Sources: IATA, Oxford Economics, International Monetary Fund, and national statistics.

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This report is one of several that examine the air transport sector’s importance around the world. Access them all from IATA’s website.

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