

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



Country Dialling Code (Tel/Fax): ++971

Map References: Middle East

Area: total: 82,880 sq km, land: 82,880 sq km, water: 0 sq km

Climate: desert; cooler in eastern mountains

Terrain: flat, barren coastal plain merging into rolling sand dunes of vast desert wasteland; mountains in east

Natural Resources: petroleum, natural gas

Population: 2,369,153, note: includes 1,576,472 non-nationals (July 2000 est.)

Nationality: noun: Emirian(s), adjective: Emirian

Ethnic Groups: Emir 19%, other Arab and Iranian 23%, South Asian 50%, other expatriates (includes Westerners and East Asians) 8% (1982), note: less than 20% are UAE citizens (1982)

Religions: Muslim 96% (Shi'a 16%), Christian, Hindu, and other 4%

Languages: Arabic (official), Persian, English, Hindi, Urdu

Economy: The UAE has an open economy with a high per capita income and a sizable annual trade surplus. Its wealth is based on oil and gas output (about 33% of GDP), and the fortunes of the economy fluctuate with the prices of those commodities. Since 1973, the UAE has undergone a profound transformation from an impoverished region of small desert principalities to a modern state with a high standard of living. At present levels of production, oil and gas reserves should last for over 100 years. Despite higher oil revenues in 1999, the government has not drawn back from the economic reforms implemented during the 1998 oil price depression. The government has increased spending on job creation and infrastructure expansion and is opening up its utilities to greater private-sector involvement.

Industries: petroleum, fishing, petrochemicals, construction materials, some boat building, handicrafts, pearling

Currency: 1 Emirian dirham (Dh) = 100 fils

Railways: 0 km

Highways: total: 1,088 km, paved: 1,088 km, unpaved: 0 km (1998 est.)

Ports and Harbors: 'Ajman, Al Fujayrah, Das Island, Khawr Fakkán, Mina' Jabal 'Ali, Mina' Khalid, Mina' Rashid, Mina' Saqr, Mina' Zayid, Umm al Qaywayn

Airports: 40 (1999 est.) Airports - with paved runways: total: 22, over 3,047 m: 8, 2,438 to 3,047 m: 3, 1,524 to 2,437 m: 4, 914 to 1,523 m: 3, under 914 m: 4 (1999 est.)

Airports - with unpaved runways: total: 18, over 3,047 m: 1, 2,438 to 3,047 m: 1, 1,524 to 2,437 m: 4, 914 to 1,523 m: 9, under 914 m: 3 (1999 est.)

Heliports: 2 (1999 est.)

Visa: required by all except the following nationals of: British, EU countries, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Duty Free: 2000 cigarettes or 400 cigars or 2kg of tobacco; 2 litres of spirits of more than 22 percent alcohol and 2 litres of wine; a reasonable amount of perfume for personal use.

Health: Malaria is not considered to be a risk in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi nor in the cities of Dubai. Tap water in major cities is safe to drink, but in small villages it should be filtered.

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