

Establishing a Global Hub

DUBAI, UAE

Boasting state of the art infrastructure and world-class business opportunities, Dubai is one of the most connected cities in the world. Once a small fishing village before the discovery of oil in 1966, the United Arab Emirates' largest city has established itself as a leading trade and logistics hub, leveraging its geocentric location on the Strait of Hormuz. Recently announced as the host of the 2020 World Expo, Dubai is one of the region's most diversified and vibrant economies, acting as a gateway between East and West.

Project overview

In recent years, Dubai has undertaken a number of ambitious projects to establish itself as a globally recognised trade and logistics hub, adopting an integrated approach to reaching its development goals outlined in the UAE 2021 Vision. Under the Dubai Strategic Plan 2015, trade and logistics are an important facet of the Emirate's growth as it continues to recover from the 2009 financial crisis. The Jebel Ali Port expansion project is a clear commitment to upgrading the city's port capacity, with the Jebel Ali Free Zone Authority continuing to attract leading multinationals. This complements the Dubai Logistics Corridor project launched in 2011, which plans to link sea, air and land trading, streamlining the import, export and re-export process through the Jebel Ali Port and Al Maktoum International airport. To complement both of these two key projects; the Dubai World Central project is committed to establishing Dubai as an 'aerotropolis', providing seamless trade and transport connectivity, driving the Dubai Airports Strategic Plan 2020 to make Dubai a global hub for air traffic. This significant investment is anticipated to enhance Dubai's reputation as a tourism hub, with two thirds of the world living within an eight hour flight of the city and the remaining third within a four hour flight.

demonstrating the increasingly impressive profile of the city's flagship port project, gains expected to increase with the completion of the Port's Terminal 3. The port's free-zones have also registered impressive growth, with 454 multinationals joining the Jebel Ali Free Zone in 2012, a 26 percent increase on the previous year and generating approximately US\$82 billion, a quarter of Dubai's non-hydrocarbon trade. Dubai's aviation industry also continues to thrive at the world's second busiest airport for international passengers behind London Heathrow in 2012, with Dubai's passenger capacity set to reach 70 million passengers by 2014. Lastly, currently under construction, the Dubai World Central economic zone is expected to cement Dubai's position as world class logistics and trade hub, taking advantage of the Jebel Ali Port, Logistics Corridor and Al Maktoum International Airport, creating unrivalled levels of connectivity, speed and efficiency across this multimodal logistics platform. As the location for the 2020 Dubai Expo, the Dubai World Central project clearly demonstrates the city's resurgence from the 2009 financial crisis as the first nation in the Middle East to host the prestigious event.

Enablers

There's no doubt that leadership has played a fundamental role in Dubai's success. Starting with the visionary decision taken by its first ruler, Sheik Rashid Al Maktoum in the seventies to develop Dubai's port capacity and infrastructure well beyond what the perceived demand was at the time, through to the series of bold decisions taken by Sheik Mohammed Al Maktoum to grow Emirates Airlines to become one of the largest airlines in the world; leadership has been key in transforming the Emirate into a diversified, economic hub. Additionally, Dubai has managed to create an attractive brand to promote itself as an open, tolerant and welcoming place for talent and investment, not only from the MENA region, but from all over the world. Finally, Dubai has developed an agile approach to taking ideas to implementation in considerably shorter periods than its regional counterparts. It is no coincidence that several economic clusters and economic zones in many sectors – albeit not all of them equally successful – have been developed in less than ten years.

Results and impact

The impact of Dubai's commitment to trade and logistics excellence has seen the city continue to drive its presence on the global stage. The impact of the Jebel Ali Port expansion project has seen the completed Terminal 2 allow for the simultaneous handling of 15,000 twenty foot equivalent units at one time. In 2012, the port won the prestigious Shipping Port of the Year award, clearly

