



# Inside the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031: Key goals and complementary projects



The UAE holds the top position in the MENA region and ranks 18th globally in the World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024. The TTDI report highlights that the UAE leads in travel and tourism data provision and air transport infrastructure, while ranking second globally in overall infrastructure and services. Additionally, the UAE ranks third in data comprehensiveness, air transport efficiency, and tourism policy and infrastructure. These achievements underscore the growing significance of the tourism industry, including the hospitality sector, in the UAE's national economy.

This report is part of a series exploring the UAE's expanding tourism sector, with a particular focus on the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031 and its supporting initiatives.

### **The Core of the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031**

Central to the success of the UAE's tourism and hospitality sectors is the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031, a key driver of economic growth. Launched by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, this Strategy is part of the 'Projects of the 50'. It outlines a comprehensive vision to establish the UAE as one of the world's top tourism destinations, aiming to attract 40 million hotel guests and secure AED100 billion in investments.

In pursuit of this ambitious vision, the UAE plans to increase the tourism sector's contribution to GDP to AED450 billion, with an annual revenue growth target of AED27 billion. The following pages detail the core elements of this transformative strategy within its roadmap.

# 1

## Reinforcing unified national tourism identity

The UAE Tourism Strategy 2031 emphasises a unified branding approach that positions the nation as a global tourist hub while celebrating the unique cultural identities of each emirate. This approach allows, for example, Dubai to attract visitors with its futuristic infrastructure, Abu Dhabi to draw tourists through its rich cultural landmarks, and Fujairah to welcome travellers with its nature-focused offerings.

By preserving each emirate's distinct tourism appeal, this strategy creates a cohesive narrative that resonates with diverse international markets.



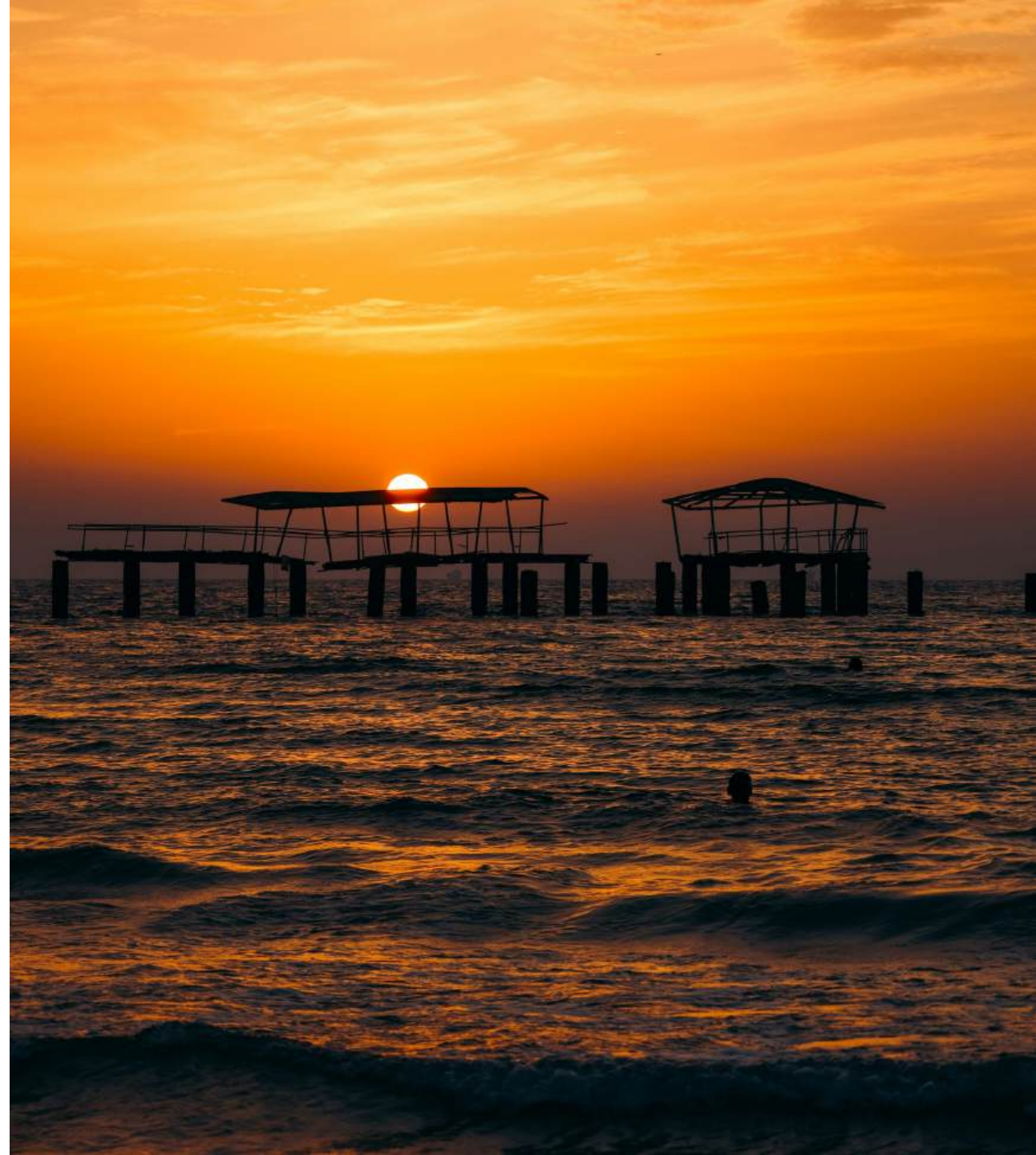


# 2

## Development of specialised tourism products

As part of the Strategy, the UAE is diversifying its tourism sector by increasing the number of leisure travellers and attracting business and investor tourists. By promoting business-focused tourism products such as world-class convention centres, luxury hotels, and infrastructure for international trade events, the UAE has successfully drawn high-net-worth individuals and business delegations.

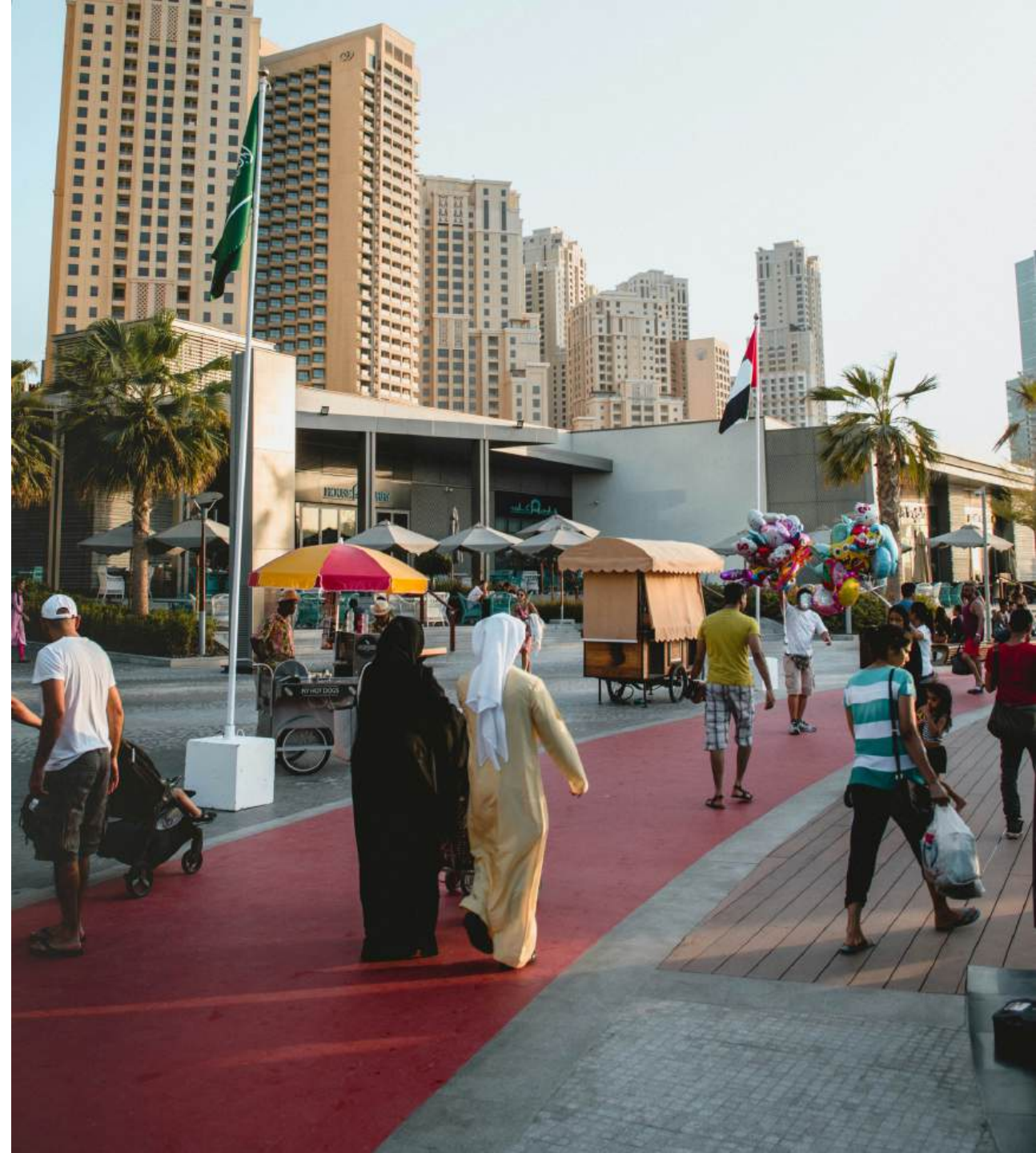
Additionally, by targeting niche segments such as adventure tourism, heritage tourism, and wellness travel, the UAE has boosted per capita spending and expanded the diversity of its tourist demographics.



# 3

## Tourism capacity building and national workforce development

With a focus on employment and skill development, this pillar aims to cultivate a skilled, competitive workforce in tourism. The Strategy also sets an ambitious target to increase national participation in the sector, with a goal for private sector companies to fill 10% of tourism-related positions with Emiratis by 2025. Furthermore, a series of collaborative, whole-of-government initiatives has been introduced to ensure that the workforce remains adaptable and future-ready. Notably, Dubai has recently unveiled supportive projects designed to create a sandbox environment that fosters the growth of small firms in strategic sectors.





# 4

## Increased investment in tourism infrastructure

To attract further investment into the UAE, the government continues to offer favourable conditions, including tax incentives, multidisciplinary free zones that grant expatriates and foreign entrepreneurs full ownership of companies, and more. Additionally, the UAE has been forging public-private partnerships to fund and manage strategic projects, further diversifying its economy and enhancing its global competitiveness.





# The complementary initiatives

The As part of the UAE's ambition to establish itself as a global tourism leader, both Abu Dhabi and Dubai have developed complementary strategies that align with the national objectives set out in the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031.

Abu Dhabi's Tourism Strategy 2030 aims to attract 39.3 million visitors by 2030, significantly expanding its tourism sector. The strategy focuses on enhancing cultural attractions, including museums and heritage sites, alongside the growth of hotels and major events. By 2030, it aims to create approximately 178,000 new jobs, increase international overnight visitors to 7.2 million, expand hotel capacity to 52,000 rooms, and further develop the holiday home segment to diversify accommodation options.

Dubai's 2040 Urban Master Plan complements the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031 by reimagining the city as a sustainable, smart, and globally competitive destination. Targeted at boosting Dubai's appeal to tourists and investors alike, the plan focuses on expanding green spaces, upgrading smart mobility solutions, and increasing luxury tourism offerings. It envisions a 134% expansion in areas dedicated to hotels and tourism activities and a 400% increase in beach length by 2040.



# Conclusion

This ambitious plan positions Dubai as one of the world's most liveable and sustainable cities, reinforcing its status as a leading destination for business and tourism on the global stage. Dubai's commitment to its tourism and hospitality sectors is also evident in recent reports: hotel occupancy reached 75.7% in the first three quarters of 2023, and in the first seven months of 2024, the city welcomed 10.62 million visitors.

These complementary initiatives, among others, ensure that the UAE remains a world-class destination that prioritises cultural identity while making a robust contribution to national economic growth.

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