

Part II

About UAE:

Geographical location:

The UAE lies on the Eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula in the south western corner of the Arabian Gulf. It is bounded to the north-west by the Arabian Gulf, to the East and south-east by the Sultanate of Oman and to the west and south-west by Saudi Arabia, and part of its Eastern boundaries lie on the Gulf of Oman. The total area of the UAE is around 77,700 square kilometres, excluding the small dependent islands.

Government:

The UAE is a Federal Sovereign State which consists of seven Emirates namely: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al Qaiwain, Fujairah and Ras Al Khaimah. This Federation was established on 2nd December 1971 with six Emirates. The Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah joined the Federation on the 10th of February 1972. Abu Dhabi is the capital of the UAE. The highest federal authority in the UAE is the Supreme Council of the UAE comprising of the Rulers of the seven Emirates. Both the President and Vice President are elected by the Supreme Council from its members. The Federal Government also includes a Council of Ministers (Cabinet), a Federal National Council (FNC) and an independent judiciary presided over by the Federal Supreme Court. The FNC, which consists of representatives of each Emirate, is the Legislative Council with executive authority to discuss and draft all Federal laws and then refer them to the Supreme Council for enactment. In addition to the Federal Government structure, each Emirate has its own local Government arrangement which differs in size and scope.

Population and language:

In addition to its native population, the UAE is inhabited by a fairly large expatriate community including Arab nationals as well as Asians, Iranians, Europeans, etc. The official language of the UAE is Arabic according to the constitution of the country, while English is widely spoken especially in business and trade fields. Expatriates also use their mother tongues but not at official level.

Climate:

The UAE lies in the arid tropical zone. Its climate is characterized by a high temperature and humidity in summer and a moderate winter accompanied by irregular rainfall, the annual average of which rarely exceeds between 5-10 inches.

Currency and banking:

The unit of currency in the UAE is the UAE dirham (Dh.) or the Arab Emirates Dirham (AED) as it is termed in international markets. Many local and international banks are represented in the UAE. International financial transfers are relatively simple and there are no exchange controls. Opening a bank account is also relatively easy. There are also various money exchange centers operating in the UAE.

Communications:

Postal service: The Emirates Postal Corporation (Emirates Post) operates postal services in the UAE. However, in the UAE, a mail is not delivered directly to the addressee, but is delivered to post office boxes instead. It is therefore essential, for any business setting up in the UAE, to obtain a post office box at the earliest opportunity.

Couriers: All the major courier services operate fast and efficient services in the UAE and are used by many businesses for the delivery of letters and packages within the UAE and overseas.

Telecommunication: The Emirates Telecommunications Corporation (Etisalat) operates telecommunications in the UAE. All local telephone calls and faxes within the UAE are free except for those made from public phone booths. Etisalat offers all the services that a modern business may need including mobile phones, paging services and internet.