

# United Arab Emirates

## Geography

Location: Middle East, bordering the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf, between Oman and Saudi Arabia

Area:

total area: 75,581 sq km

land area: 75,581 sq km

Land boundaries: total 867 km, Oman 410 km, Saudi Arabia 457 km

Coastline: 1,318 km

Maritime claims:

contiguous zone: 24 nm

continental shelf: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

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

Land use:

arable land: 0%

permanent crops: 0%

meadows and pastures: 2%

forest and woodland: 0%

other: 98%

Irrigated land: 50 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: lack of natural freshwater resources being overcome by desalination plants; desertification; beach pollution from oil spills

natural hazards: frequent sand and dust storms

Note: strategic location along southern approaches to Strait of Hormuz, a vital transit point for world crude oil

# People

Population: 2,924,594 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 35% (female 499,559; male 521,415)

15-64 years: 64% (female 643,819; male 1,229,730)

65 years and over: 1% (female 10,296; male 19,775) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 4.55% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 27.02 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 3.03 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: 21.53 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 21 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 72.51 years  
male: 70.42 years  
female: 74.71 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 4.53 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Emirian(s)

adjective: Emirian

Ethnic divisions: Emirian 19%, other Arab 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

Literacy:

total population: 71%

male: 72%

female: 69%

# Government

Names:

conventional long form: United Arab Emirates

local long form: Al Imarata al Arabiyah al Muttahidah

former: Trucial States

Type: federation with specified powers delegated to the UAE central government and other powers reserved to member emirates

Capital: Abu Dhabi

Independence: 2 December 1971 (from UK)

National holiday: National Day, 2 December (1971)

Constitution: 2 December 1971 (provisional)

Legal system: secular codes are being introduced by the UAE Government and in several member emirates; Islamic law remains influential

Suffrage: none

Flag: three equal horizontal bands of green (top), white, and black with a thicker vertical red band on the hoist side

## Economy

Overview: The UAE has an open economy with one of the world's highest incomes per capita and with a sizable annual trade surplus. Its wealth is based on oil and gas output.

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

Agriculture: accounts for 2% of GDP and 5% of labor force; cash crop - dates; food products - vegetables, watermelons, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish; only 25% self-sufficient in food

Illicit drugs: growing role as heroin transshipment and money-laundering center

## Transportation

Railroads: 0 km

Highways:  
total: 2,000 km

Pipelines: crude oil 830 km; natural gas, including natural gas liquids, 870 km

Ports: Ajman, Al Fujayrah, Das Island, Khawr Fakkan, Mina' Jabal' Ali, Mina' Khalid, Mina' Rashid, Mina' Saqr, Mina' Zayid, Umm al Qiwain

Airports:  
total: 41

## Defence Forces

Branches: Army, Navy, Air Force, paramilitary (includes Federal Police Force)