

#We_Are_All_Responsible

THE DUBAI NORMAL & THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

05	Vision and Strategic Objectives	49	Human Capital
07	Board Members	53	Dubai Chamber Headquarters Expansion
09	Chairman's Message	57	Dubai Chamber Initiatives
11	President and CEO's Message	59	Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Business Awards
13	Dubai Overview	63	Dubai Startup Hub
19	Dubai Chamber Overview	67	Dubai Business Women Council
25	Legal and Policy Advocacy	71	Dubai Association Centre
29	Economic Research and Business Support	75	Dubai International Arbitration Centre
33	Digital Transformation	79	Centre for Responsible Business
37	Global Network	83	University of Dubai
41	International Offices	86	Multi-media Gallery
45	Community		



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INTERACTIVE
REPORT



**Promoting Dubai
as an international
business hub and
supporting the
development of
business**

VISION

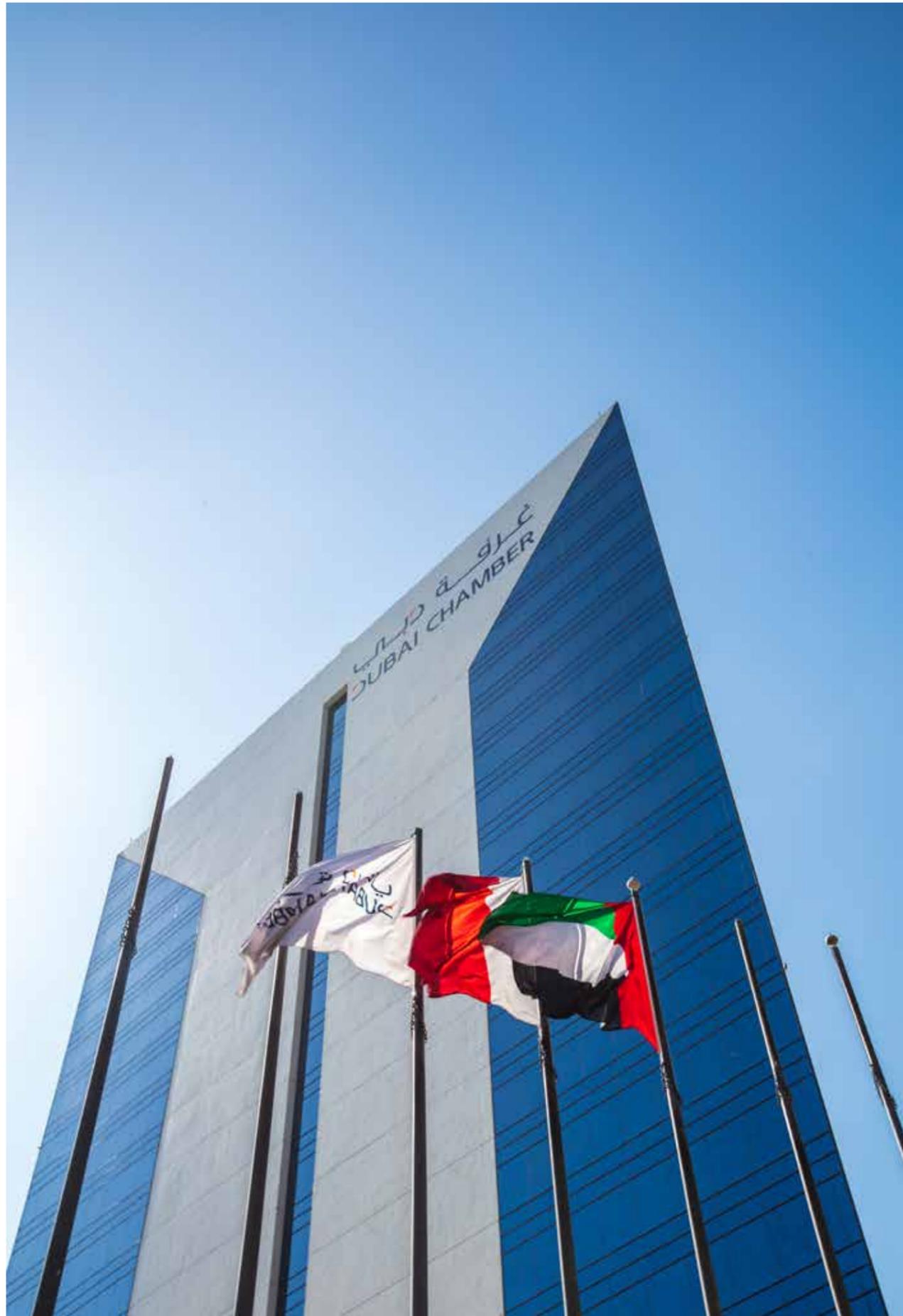
To be the best Chamber in the world in driving competitiveness and business growth by 2021

MISSION

Represent, support and protect the interests of the business community in Dubai

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Create a favourable business environment
- Support the development of business
- Promote Dubai as an international business hub
- Achieve institutional excellence and efficient management of resources



BOARD MEMBERS

Experienced professionals guide Dubai Chamber's strategy and operations

Majid Saif Al Ghurair
CHAIRMAN

Majid Hamad Rahmah Al Shamsi
1ST VICE CHAIRMAN

Hisham Abdullah Al Shirawi
2ND VICE CHAIRMAN

Abdul Jalil Yousuf Darwish
TREASURER

Helal Saeed Al Marri
VICE TREASURER

Raja Easa Saleh Al Gurg
MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Yahya Saeed Bin Ahmed Lootah
MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

H.E. Obaid Humaid Al Tayer
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Dr. Ahmed Saif Belhasa
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Ebrahim Ahmed Abdul Nabi Al Abbas
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Amna Khalfan Al Jallaf
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Buti Saeed Al Ghandi
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Rashid Humaid Ali Al Mazroei
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Shehab M. Gargash
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Sofia Abdulla Saleh
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Abdul Hamied Ahmed Seddiqi
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Abdulla Saeed Juma Al Naboodah
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Ali Abdullah Al Shafar
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Omar Abdullah Al Futtaim
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Essa Abdulla Al Ghurair
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Faiza Alsayed M.Y. Al Hashemi
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Faisal Juma Khalfan Belhoul
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Hani Rashid Bin Rashid Al Yateem
MEMBER OF THE BOARD



Broad restructuring of the UAE government, including the merging of ministries and converting half of government service centres to digital platforms, demonstrates our wise leadership's proactive approach to adapting future proofing the economy.



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

HE MAJID SAIF AL GHURAIR
CHAIRMAN
DUBAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

DUBAI CONTINUES ITS SPIRITED FIGHT AGAINST GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Dubai ensured business continuity and the safety of its citizens and residents amidst unprecedented disruption caused by Covid-19, thanks to its technological resilience, smart infrastructure and foresightedness of its wise leadership.

The government was quick to respond by announcing a post-Covid strategy, with Dubai's digital infrastructure and technological preparedness acting as a catalyst for getting key sectors such as retail, tourism, logistics, trade and hospitality back on track.

Advanced and integrated technologies in place ensured seamless supply chain and movement of goods as Dubai's non-oil foreign trade reached \$150 billion in the first half of 2020, while 44 million tonnes of goods were traded through the emirate.

Despite unprecedented challenges, Dubai strengthened its commitment to international cooperation and forged strategic economic partnerships. After a historic peace agreement was signed between the UAE and Israel, Dubai assumed the crucial role of driving business exchange between the two countries.

Several stimulus packages and other business-friendly measures were introduced under the directives of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to support the emirate's business sector, mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic and boost the emirate's attractiveness among foreign investors.

Broad restructuring of the UAE government, including the merging of ministries and converting half of government service centres to digital platforms, demonstrates our wise leadership's proactive approach to future proofing the economy.

We have a lot to look forward to in 2021. Expo 2020 Dubai, our ambitions in the space sector and the adoption of advanced technologies put the UAE in a strong position as it works to achieve new goals that will be outlined under the Designing the

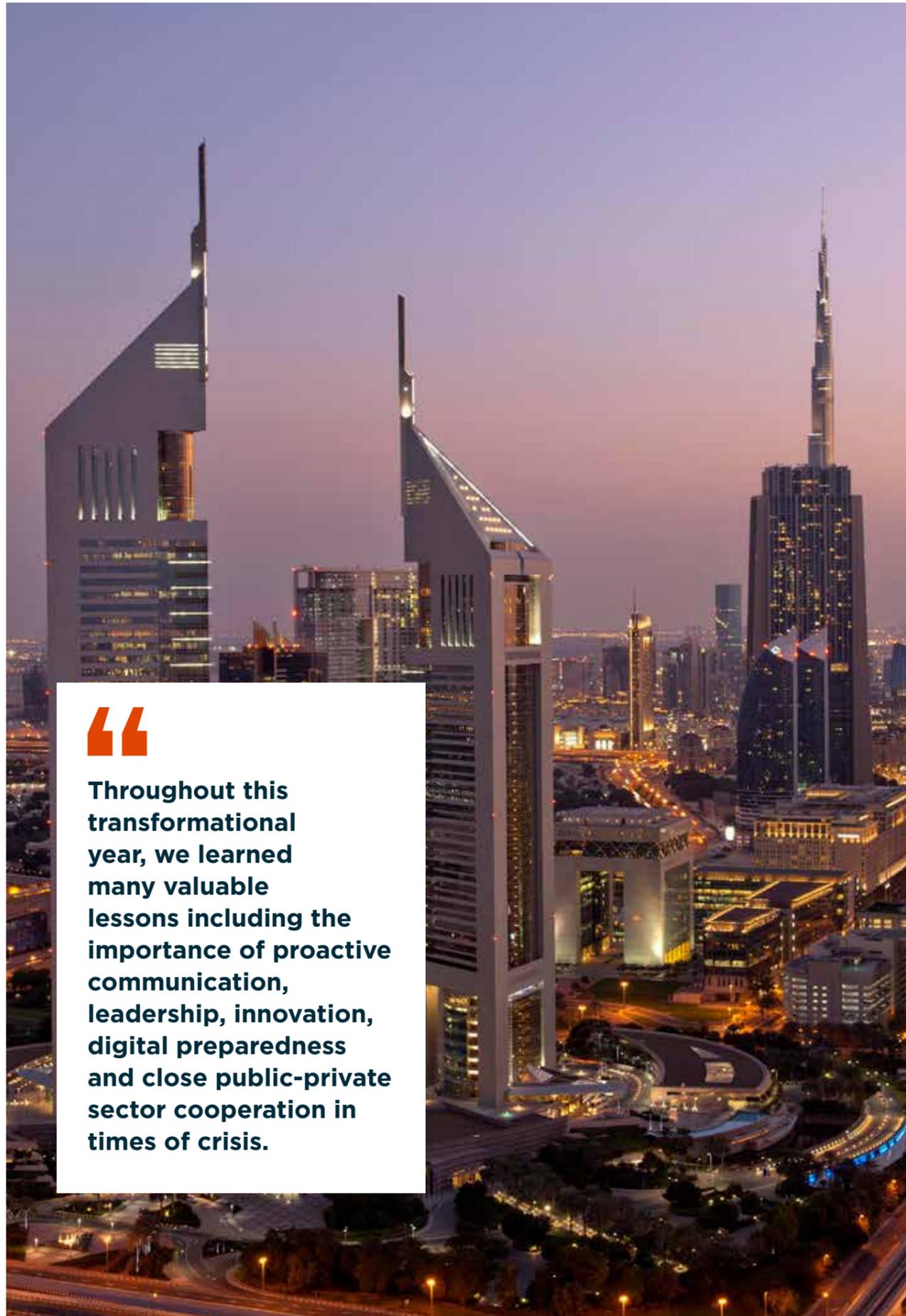
Next 50 project, which involves all segments of our society in shaping the future of this great nation.

Underlining Dubai's ability to adapt with the times and remain future-ready, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed once said: "The goals are clear, the road is paved and the clock ticks; there is no place for hesitation. There are many who talk, we accomplish."

For its part, Dubai Chamber, will spare no effort in supporting the UAE's strategic vision and guiding the private sector through Dubai's next phase of growth and development.

\$150^{BN}

**Non-oil foreign trade
first half of 2020**



Throughout this transformational year, we learned many valuable lessons including the importance of proactive communication, leadership, innovation, digital preparedness and close public-private sector cooperation in times of crisis.



PRESIDENT AND CEO'S MESSAGE

H.E. HAMAD BUAMIM
PRESIDENT & CEO OF DUBAI CHAMBER

ADAPTING TO A NEW REALITY

As businesses around the world navigated their way through obstacles created by Covid-19 in 2020, the role of chambers of commerce became more important than ever.

In the case of Dubai Chamber, the organisation played a leading role in ensuring business continuity by accelerating the digital transformation of core services, 98% of which are now available online, and shifting events and activities to virtual platforms.

The Chamber maintained an open line of communication with the private sector, advocated on behalf of businesses, and offered guidance on everything from stimulus packages, preventative measures and Covid-19 restrictions to remote working, e-commerce and guidelines for restarting economic activities.

The launch of Dubai Chamber's Business Connect portal was a crucial step in helping affected companies, and SMEs in particular, make informed business decisions and benefit from available support and resources.

Giving back to the community remained a top priority as the Chamber made significant

donations to support the Community Solidarity Fund against Covid-19, medical research and other charitable causes.

We continued to explore global gateways, established new channels for cross-border cooperation and leveraged our network of international offices to identify business opportunities in emerging markets across Africa, Latin America and the ASEAN region.

Dubai's growing appeal as a preferred entrepreneurial hub was reflected in the sharp increase in our startup membership and applications from international startups. In response to this demand, we expanded our offerings to the entrepreneurial community through the launch of new programmes, initiatives, resources, research and practical guides.

Throughout this transformational year, we learned many valuable lessons including the importance of proactive communication, leadership, innovation, digital

preparedness and close public-private sector cooperation in times of crisis.

It was His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, who once said: "The race for excellence has no finish line". These wise words still ring true as the UAE redefines its economic vision or the post-Covid era and the next 50 years.

Dubai Chamber remains fully committed to supporting businesses in Dubai as they adapt to a new reality and providing access to new growth opportunities at home and abroad.

98%

of core services available online

THE DUBAI NORMAL AND A FUTURE-READY ECONOMY

The determined and focused manner in which Dubai has navigated its way through coronavirus-related headwinds with resilience, reflects the vision and commitment of its leadership in to steering the emirate towards calmer waters.



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Dubai's seamless shift from traditional work environment to remote working was a milestone in ensuring business continuity and maintaining safety of government and private sector employees.



RESPOND AND ADAPT

Meticulous planning, timely execution of comprehensive preventive and business-friendly measures, advanced technology infrastructure and proactive policies were all crucial in helping Dubai mitigate the impact of the pandemic and become a leading example of a city that has reopened its economy responsibly and successfully.

One of the major factors that aided Dubai's response to the pandemic is its commitment to digitalisation. Whether it is IoT (Internet of Things) or the 4IR (Fourth Industrial Revolution), Dubai has been at the forefront of adopting the latest technologies, which have benefited all sectors of the economy – from retail to logistics to

trade. Dubai's leadership has been prioritising digital transformation and innovation long before Covid-19 disrupted the world.

As a first step, Dubai's seamless shift from a traditional work environment to remote working was a milestone in ensuring business continuity and maintaining the safety of government and private sector employees. In fact as per the Digital Quality of Life (DQL) study, which covers internet affordability, quality, security, online government services, and e-infrastructure, ranked the UAE first for best e-infrastructure globally.

Significant investments in the Dubai's logistics facilities over the years enabled it to keep supply chains steady. Unlike other major

cities around the world, the emirate didn't experience large-scale shortages of goods, which is a testament to its world-class ports, free zones and airports, as well as its diversified trade partnerships.

These strengths have helped the UAE consistently rank high on various indices, which is indicative of its recovery and strong foundation as a trade and business hub. The country was also named among the 10 safest places during the pandemic, based on 130 qualitative and quantitative parameters by the Deep Knowledge Group. The UAE also leads the Arab region in the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Index Ranking, which assesses 122 countries on how they are positioned for re-adjustment, and for the fourth consecutive

year, as well as the 2020 World Competitiveness Annual Report.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

The UAE's resilience and strength in the face of unprecedented challenges comes from the government's extraordinarily strong focus on supporting the private sector and providing a stable and strong base for companies to conduct and grow their business. In October 2020, the Government amended the country's bankruptcy law to provide protection to businesses and individuals and to help them overcome credit challenges during emergency situations such as pandemics, and environmental disasters.

In addition to several stimulus packages, major regulatory

changes were introduced to improve ease of doing business in the UAE and boost the country's appeal among foreign investors. On December 1, 2020, changes to the UAE Commercial Companies Law came into effect, allowing foreign investors 100 percent ownership of onshore businesses. This important development complements other initiatives implemented on a national level such as the 10-year "golden" residency visa for investors, and a 5-year residency visa for entrepreneurs.

Apart from this, the Dubai Government also launched the "virtual working programme", which allows employees and their families to live in the emirate for a year, while working for companies that are based overseas. All these laws

and regulations are expected to play a critical role in driving Dubai's sustainable economic growth.

Moving forward, the UAE Government has taken the step to streamline its ministries with the aim of becoming more efficient and agile in the post-Covid-19 era. Among the major changes were the establishment of a Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology, tasked with developing the national industrial sector, as well as the appointment of three ministers under the Ministry of Economy, who are responsible for entrepreneurship, SMEs and foreign trade.

The Government intends to close 50 percent of government services centres and convert them into

digital platforms within two years. It will also merge close to 50 percent of federal authorities with other authorities or ministries.

TRADING UP

Additionally, Dubai continues to play on its strength of being a hub for international trade and strengthening this pillar of the economy. The emirate's strategic location, sound financial and political system and pro-business regulations have made it the ideal trading partner.

Over the years, Dubai has built very strong ties with Asian, Latin-American and African countries, enabling companies from these regions to leverage its strategic geographic position and boost their global reach. Even during challenging times, Dubai continued to forge new partnerships that support its economic growth, with Israel being a prime example.

In September 2020, the UAE and Israel signed a peace agreement to normalise relations. This agreement opened the door to new possibilities and business opportunities. The launch of direct flights, establishment of a joint investment fund and the easing of visa restrictions are all major developments accelerating UAE-Israel economic cooperation.

Dubai is playing a crucial role as a strategic hub and catalyst for driving and expanding UAE-Israel trade. The emirate's world-class infrastructure and advanced logistics facilities can be utilised by Israeli exporters to expand their reach into markets across the GCC, Africa and Asia. In fact, Dubai's share of the UAE's imports in the year 2019 amounted to 84%, while the emirate accounts for 77% of the country's exports and re-exports,

trade it a gateway for companies in surrounding regions that want to explore the Israeli market.

EYE ON THE FUTURE

At the end of 2019, UAE announced 2020 to be the year where it will prepare for the next 50 years. Titled "2020: Towards the next 50", this initiative has taken a whole new meaning since Covid-19. The the launch of the "Designing the Next 50" project by HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, is a forward-looking strategy that launches a new phase of development for the UAE, while ensuring that the country is able to adapt and progress in the future.

In November 2020, the UAE Cabinet approved the establishment of a national cybersecurity council and the appointment of a special envoy for climate change - two very dynamic and relevant sectors. The Cabinet also adopted the UAE Environment Policy with a focus on 8 priorities, including limiting the impact of climate change, boosting air quality and accelerating efforts to protect natural resources, among others.

All this ties in well with the Expo 2020 Dubai, a mega event showcasing the latest innovations that address global challenges. The World Expo will definitely be a game-changer not only for Dubai, but also for the MENA region as it will attract millions of visitors and create significant opportunities in various sectors. By focusing on key issues that will define the future, the Expo will be an economic catalyst for growth and development.

Besides, the issue of sustainability, Dubai is also developing other

high priority sectors to further diversify its economy. Take the space industry for instance - it is one of the most promising sectors that is now attracting more attention following the launch of the UAE's Mars-bound Hope Probe. In March, the UAE Cabinet, led by HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched the National Space Strategy 2030. The launch of this strategy is not merely another milestone for the sector but a glimpse into the future of endless possibilities.

With its eye on the future and forward-looking leadership and policies, Dubai is well positioned to capitalise on untapped potential and continue to grow as a strategic trade and investment hub. With its strong focus on innovation, inclusive development, and forward-looking policies, the emirate is well positioned for growth in the post Covid-19 era, setting a benchmark for others to follow.

DUBAI'S SHARE OF UAE TRADE

84%

of UAE's Imports
in 2019

77%

of UAE's Exports and
Re-exports in 2019

“

With its eye on the future and forward-looking leadership and policies, Dubai is well positioned to capitalise on untapped potential and continue to grow as a strategic trade and investment hub.





RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Dubai Chamber maintained its position as a critical link between the public and private sector as it accelerated digital transformation, ensured business continuity and expanded support to companies.





659,000
e-transactions



98%
Dubai Chamber
Services online



As one of the world's largest membership-based chambers of commerce, Dubai Chamber supports and protects the interests of Dubai's business community. In the face of unprecedented challenges that emerged in 2020, the Chamber played a leading role in helping the private sector navigate its way around Covid-related obstacles, while it launched several initiatives to meet the evolving needs of businesses.

DRIVING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

In 2020, Dubai Chamber saw the return on its investment in digital transformation over the years. The Chamber was digitally prepared as it made 98% of its core services available online, which enabled it to

serve its members and customers remotely and efficiently.

During the early stages of the Covid-19 outbreak, the Chamber launched the #BeSafeWorkSmart campaign as it encouraged companies to implement preventive measures enforced by the government and offered valuable guidance on the transition to remote working. Advanced digital infrastructure and preventative measures in place enabled Dubai Chamber employees to work from home during the lockdown phase and later return to the office, serving as an example of reopening for the business community.

The Chamber processed more than 659,000 e-transactions during

the year, with more than 78% of the customers having to wait less than 5 minutes to be served. In March 2020, it launched an electronic attestation service and the authentication of signatures on documents. This seamless digital transformation was reflective of the Chamber's ability to quickly adapt to global changes due to its technological preparedness.

Joining forces with Google, Dubai Chamber unveiled plans to get 50,000 local businesses online by listing them on Google My Business and training them in digital marketing. This initiative has helped 100,000 businesses across the UAE get verified over the last two years. A separate partnership with Amazon was

established to help Dubai Chamber member companies expand their digital presence, capitalise on new business opportunities and learn about the benefits of selling online.

BOOSTING BUSINESS SUPPORT

Dubai Chamber welcomed over 16,000 new members in 2020, bringing its total membership to over 260,000. The value of Dubai Chamber members' exports reached AED 184.9 billion (\$50.2 billion), during the year. A total of 632,436 Certificates of Origin were issued by the Chamber in 2020, while the number of attestations exceeded 16,000. A total of 2,914 ATA Carnets – a system managed by Dubai Chamber in cooperation with Dubai Customs to facilitate temporary

import entry – were issued and received, with the value of good covered by these documents estimated at over AED 3.3 billion (\$898.4 million).

Among the initiatives launched by the Chamber was Business Connect, an information portal providing useful information and resources designed to help businesses deal with the impact of the pandemic. The Chamber released a comprehensive guide on various economic stimulus packages introduced by the government and created the "Ask the Expert" video series across its social media channels, which answers commonly asked business-related questions.

Webinars tackled a wide range of issues impacting businesses, such as banking and funding, legal implications of Covid-19 on business, new measures to ensure employee health and safety, and sustainability best practices, providing clarity and guidance during challenging times.

A prime example of Dubai Chamber's proactive approach to innovation is the Rapid Response Initiative – a new online marketplace for registration for Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), which saw a 340% surge in registration after its launch.

 www.dubaichamber.com/businessconnect



The #BeSafeWorkSmart campaign encouraged companies to implement preventive measures and offered them guidance on transitioning to remote working



Over
16,000
new members



\$50.2BN
value of member exports



632,436
Certificates of Origin



Despite unprecedented challenges posed by Covid-19, it was business as usual for Dubai Chamber international offices as they utilised virtual channels for meetings and events.



2,388

virtual meetings



43

virtual events



3,652

attendees

During this period, the Chamber created new channels of open and effective communication between public and private sector stakeholders. These platforms provided an opportunity for businesses to share their concerns and policy recommendations. Such efforts supported the Chamber's position of being the voice of the private sector and advocating on its behalf with the aim of ensuring a favourable business environment in Dubai.

Through its entrepreneurship arm Dubai Startup Hub (DSH), Dubai Chamber ensured that

SMEs and entrepreneurs received all of the guidance and support needed to navigate through new challenges and capitalise on new opportunities. A total of 2,166 entrepreneurs benefited from Dubai Startup Hub programs in 2020, 19% of which were Emiratis. By going fully digital, Dubai Startup Hub increased value of services to the startup community and hosted 48 webinars and virtual events during the year.

The Market Access Programme, a flagship initiative of DSH, evolved significantly in 2020 with a strong focus on tech start-ups.

Meanwhile, two new programmes were launched, namely the Emirati Development Programme and Scale-up Dubai to cater to changing needs of entrepreneurs. The 5th Dubai Smartpreneur Competition was also a highlight for 2020 with 315 innovative business ideas submitted that relate to the Expo 2020 Dubai sub-themes of Mobility, Opportunity and Sustainability.

EXPLORING NEW GATEWAYS

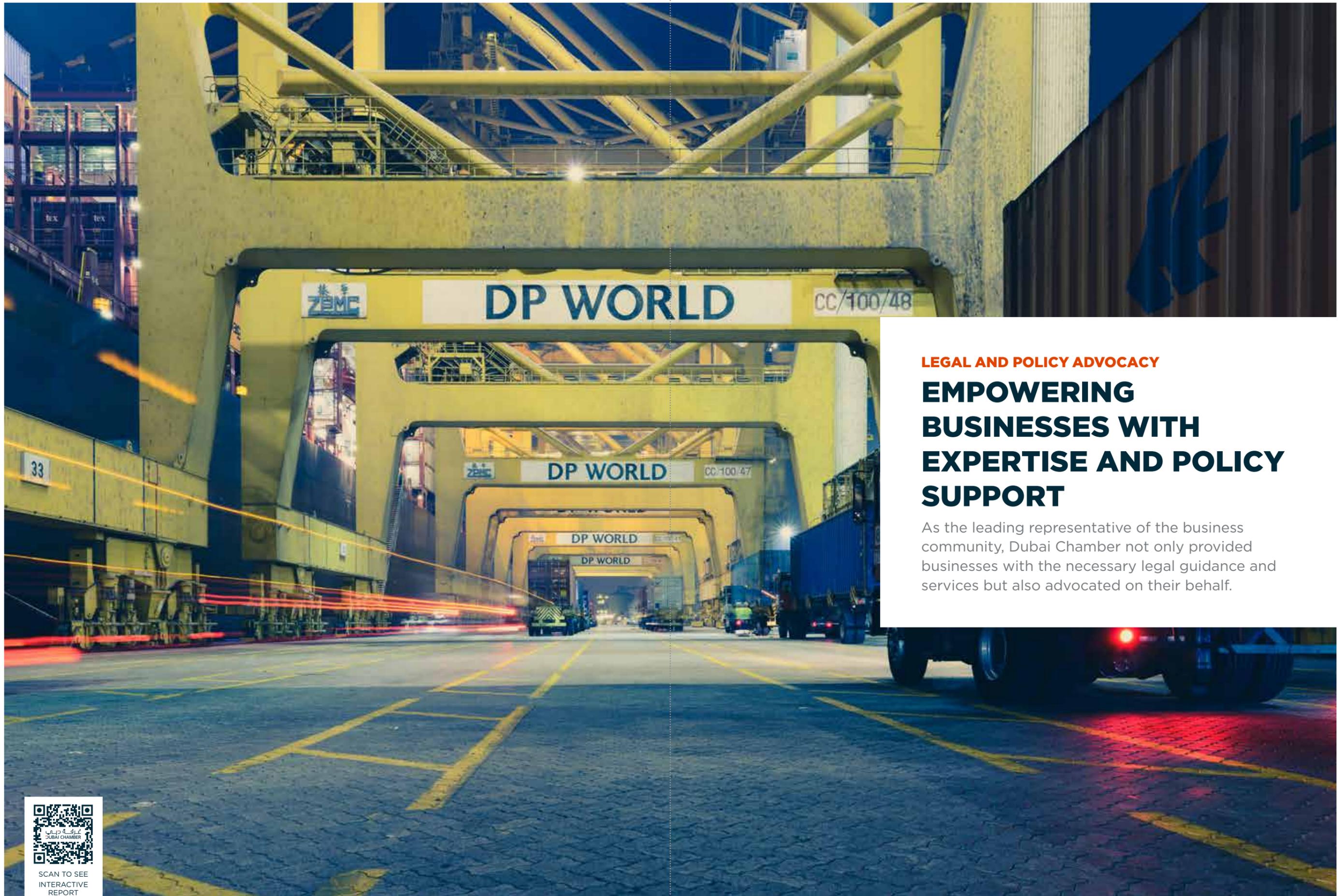
In line with its efforts to facilitate cross-border business collaboration, Dubai Chamber launched a series

of Global Business Forum (GBF) virtual roadshows examining new economic opportunities in emerging markets across Africa, Latin America and the ASEAN region. These roadshows aim to build global partnerships at a time when the dynamics of international trade and commerce are changing rapidly. The series advances Dubai Chamber efforts to identify existing investment opportunities, explore new avenues of economic cooperation and build bridges between business communities in the UAE and abroad.

Dubai Chamber's 11 representative

offices located across Africa, Eurasia and Latin America spared no effort in promoting Dubai as a global business hub and identifying new business opportunities in promising markets. A total of 2,388 virtual meetings were organised by Dubai Chamber's international offices, which were attended by close to 3,652 delegates. The representative offices also organised 43 virtual events and attended 400 external virtual events, providing participants with valuable information about Dubai's economy, business environment and competitive advantages.

In addition, the Chamber Connect Series was launched by Dubai Chamber as a platform for the world chambers community to collaborate and share knowledge on new strategies and solutions that address shared challenges. The series, drawing on the valuable expertise of chamber leaders and the key findings from the *Chambers New Norm: Adapting Business Needs Report*, lays the ground work for the 12th World Chambers Congress in Dubai in 2021, which explores how chambers are leveraging advanced technologies to achieve their goals.



LEGAL AND POLICY ADVOCACY

**EMPOWERING
BUSINESSES WITH
EXPERTISE AND POLICY
SUPPORT**

As the leading representative of the business community, Dubai Chamber not only provided businesses with the necessary legal guidance and services but also advocated on their behalf.



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Dubai Chamber's legal services department helps companies resolve their disputes swiftly, confidentially and cost effectively through its mediation service, while it also keeps them informed of important regulatory developments.

In 2020, the department received 334 mediation cases and settled 148 of the commercial disputes. The total value of resolved cases reached AED 13 million (\$3.5 million), while the total value of handled mediation cases amounted to AED 47.6 million (\$12.9 million).

The department conducted 215 mediation cases virtually during the year due to Covid-19 restrictions. It also organised 10 virtual events, which were attended by 2,299 participants from 45 countries. The events covered a wide range of issues and topics, including data privacy, Covid-19 and Force Majeure, commercial leases, business debts and VAT, among other matters.

ADVOCATING FOR BUSINESSES

As a bridge between government and business, Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry is playing a crucial role in facilitating public-private sector cooperation and advocating on behalf of companies in Dubai to ensure a favourable business environment. In addition to engaging in an open dialogue with members of business groups and business councils in Dubai, the Chamber provides businesses with a platform to voice their concerns,

address issues of common interests and share policy recommendations

During 2020, the Chamber also initiated a dialogue between the private and public sector that was crucial in resolving emerging challenges and maintaining the competitiveness of the economy. For instance, the Chamber coordinated a meeting with its members in the fruit and vegetable trade working group with the Ministry of Economy, to address important issues related to food security, continued flow of goods and commodities, and to maintain the strategic stockpile of basic foodstuffs.

It also held a meeting with the business groups and councils to reassure them of forthcoming stimulus initiatives and held a number of discussions with various government departments regarding the challenges experienced by the private sector.

REVIEWING LEGISLATION

Further to this, the Dubai Chamber Technical Legal Committee, headed by the chairman of Dubai Chamber Business Advocacy Committee, studied 62 draft laws during 42 meetings. This committee comprises of legal consultants and lawyers from a group of Chamber members, along with the Chamber's policy advocacy. The findings and recommendations of the Committee were sent to the Supreme Legislation Committee in Dubai for their consideration.

334

mediation cases

148

resolved commercial disputes

62

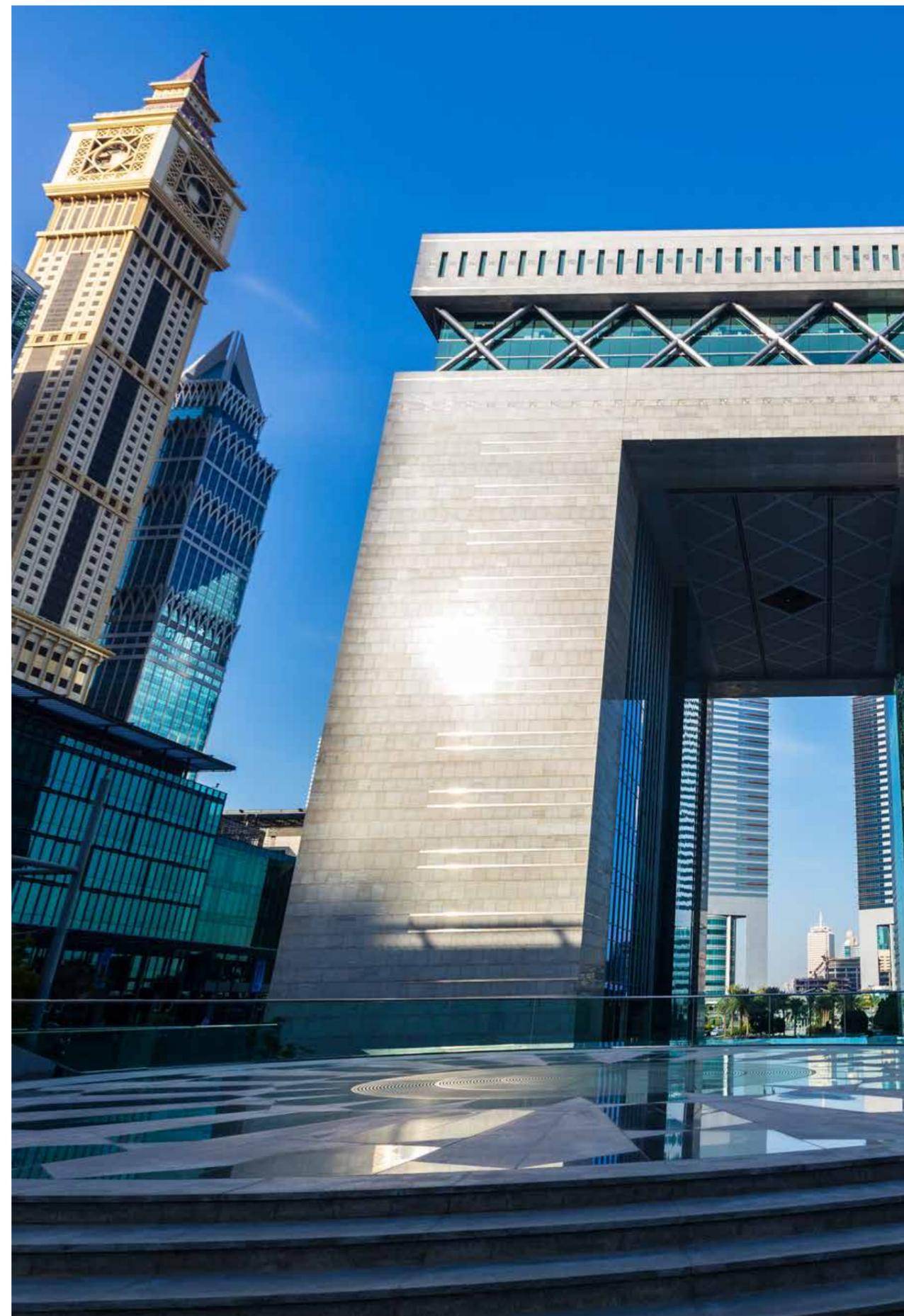
draft laws studied

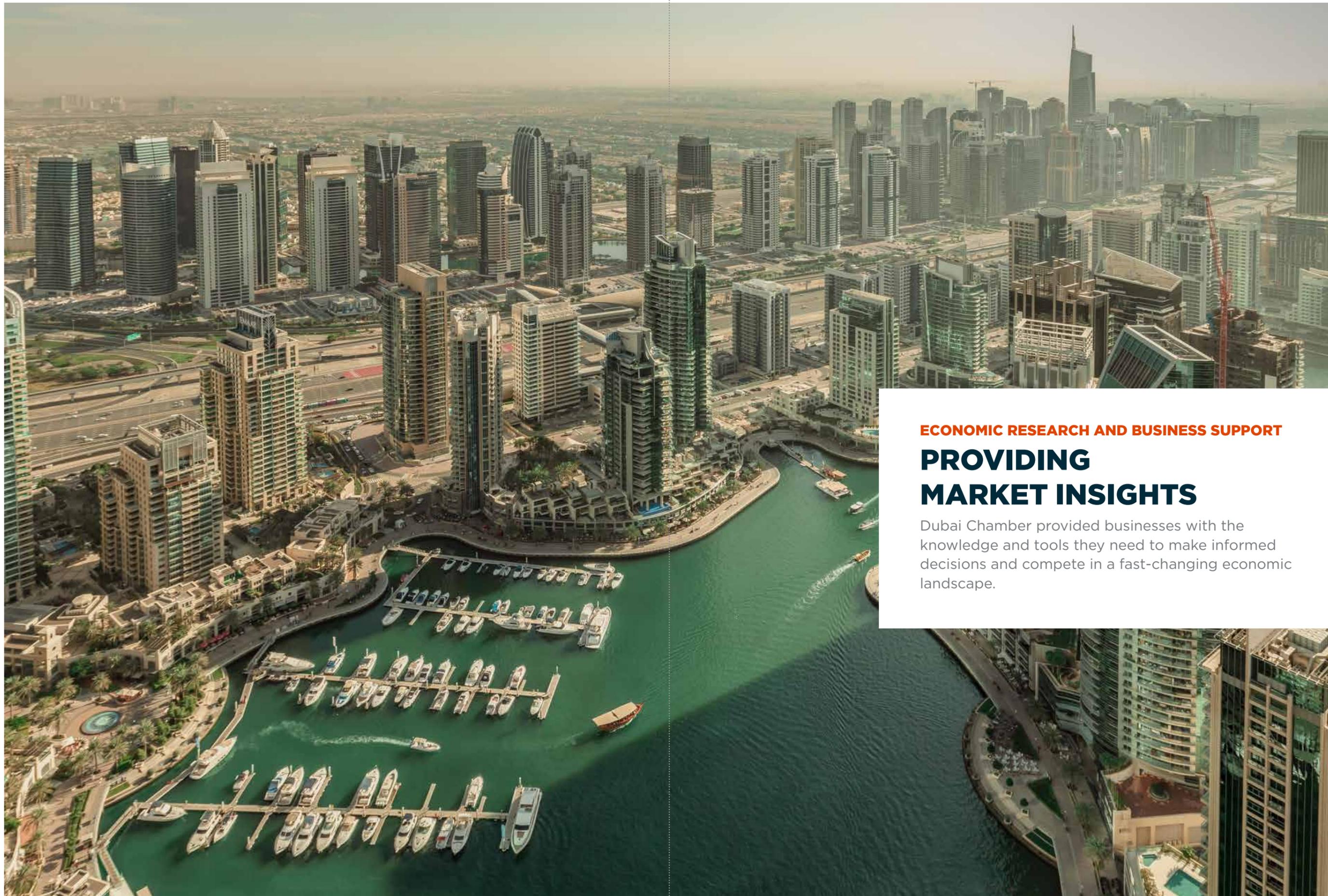
42

meetings held by Business Advocacy Committee

The Committee covered draft legislations on federal issues such as the federal law on Consumer Protection, maritime law, federal law concerning the amendment of Commercial Law, to name a few. It looked at 11 ministerial and authorities resolutions drafts on issues like regulating the procedures for registering and licensing aquatic farms, the Emirati standard for the Energy Efficiency Label for Domestic Refrigeration Devices, amongst others. It also studied 11 local legislation drafts.

Dubai Chamber signed a memorandum of understanding with the General Secretariat of the Supreme Legislation Committee in the Emirate of Dubai (SLC) that will see the two parties work jointly to develop the legislative process. This MoU aims to help Dubai establish a legal environment with the highest international standards that keeps pace with the emirate's rapid economic development.





ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

**PROVIDING
MARKET INSIGHTS**

Dubai Chamber provided businesses with the knowledge and tools they need to make informed decisions and compete in a fast-changing economic landscape.



To help businesses deal with the impact of the Covid-19, the Business Support Department introduced new initiatives and tools to meet changing market needs.



The Economic Research department played an important role in helping Dubai Chamber fulfil its mandate of keeping the business community informed and updated on the latest economic and business developments locally, regionally and globally.

It did so by carrying out extensive research on the economic and business impact of Covid-19, identifying potential business opportunities and publishing business outlook survey and intelligence reports, sector analyses and business guides.

MARKET INSIGHTS

The Department published six monthly economic trends reports and weekly economic highlights, 35 issues of the Weekly Economic Highlights, 12 issues of The Economic Bulletin and conducted two webinars on trade and economic trends in the Dubai market.

The Information Centre supported business continuity by providing 14,826 services and added 926 e-resources to its e-library and reduced the service waiting time from 1 working day to 10 minutes.

NEW INITIATIVES AND TOOLS

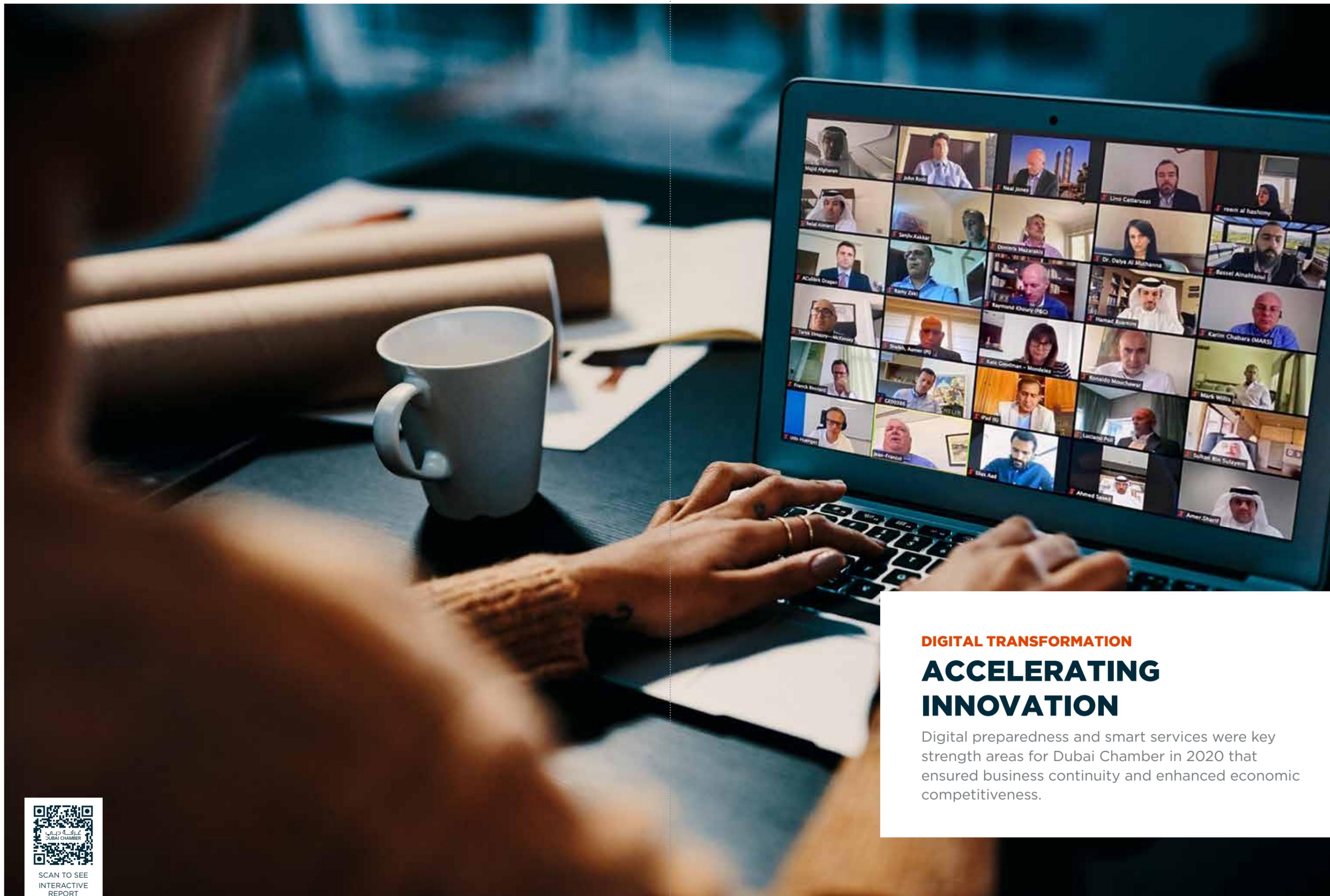
To help businesses deal with the impact of Covid-19, the Business Support Department introduced many initiatives and tools to meet changing market needs. In response to the ongoing demand for the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), under the Global Trusted e-Network, the Department launched the Rapid Response Initiative, a B2B health eMarketplace to help business owners, healthcare procurement professionals and other buyers to source high quality PPE products from the leading suppliers in the UAE. The platform saw a 340% surge in registration in 2020.

In addition, the Department shifted all training workshops to online platforms in collaboration with AstroLabs Academy and produced three essential sector-focused guides that included recommendations on how to confront the challenges and minimise the impact of the pandemic on businesses.

14,826
services

926
e-resources

12
economic
bulletins issued



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
ACCELERATING
INNOVATION

Digital preparedness and smart services were key strength areas for Dubai Chamber in 2020 that ensured business continuity and enhanced economic competitiveness.



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#BESAFEWORKSMART

campaign encouraged businesses to shift to remote working

In 2020, Dubai Chamber reaped the rewards of its investment and long-standing commitment to innovation and Dubai's smart city vision. The Chamber's wide range of smart services became a necessity for businesses during Covid-19, while its advanced digital infrastructure enabled it to carry out all of its operations remotely and efficiently.

SMART SERVICES

Over 659,000 e-transactions were processed by Dubai Chamber in 2020 as it offered 98% of its core services online and utilised digital platforms to host the vast majority of its meetings and events. In March, the Chamber reached a new milestone in its digital transformation mission as it launched the electronic attestation service and the authentication of signatures on documents, providing an innovative way for customers to complete transactions through its website in accordance with the highest international standards.

Virtual events organised throughout the year tackled issues of importance to the business community, covering everything from legal inquires and supply chain trends to employee safety, tourism and global expansion opportunities. The Chamber also launched the

Business Connect portal, which provides useful information, on available resources and the latest economic developments, helping companies deal with the impact of Covid-19 and make better business decisions.

A LEADING EXAMPLE

During the early stages of the outbreak, The Chamber's effective response to the pandemic underlined the importance of proactive communication with private sector stakeholders during times of crisis. With the support of industry leaders such as Dulsco, Pepsi, Metlife and GE, the Chamber was able to maximise the impact of its #BeSafeWorkSmart campaign encouraging businesses to follow preventative measures aimed at curbing the spread of Covid-19. The Chamber formed a special committee to oversee the transition to remote working as part of its efforts to ensure employee safety. Dubai Chamber staff were given the tools and resources needed to do their jobs without interruption.

As Dubai began to gradually reopen in July 2020, Dubai Chamber offices returned to work at 100% capacity, while following strict preventative health and safety measures put into place by the committee. The

659,000
e-transactions

98%
core services
available online

organisation adopted working-from-home policies for employees who needed to support their children learning online. By doing so, the Chamber set a leading example for the private sector on how to get back to business in the "new normal" and communicate effectively with internal and external stakeholders.

Keeping all of this in perspective, the Chamber plans to continue investing in advanced technologies and cutting-edge solutions that improve ease-of-doing business in Dubai, create value for its members and boost its competitiveness in a fast-changing business landscape.

DUBAI CHAMBER RALLIED THE SUPPORT OF BUSINESS LEADERS TO AMPLIFY AWARENESS OF #BESAFEWORKSMART CAMPAIGN

In the times of social distancing, there are still many things we can do together. We can all support government initiatives to keep us safe by working from home. If we as individuals have ever wondered how we can lead with purpose, this is it

AAMER SHEIKH
President,
PepsiCo MENA



During these challenging times, the best way we can stand together is by keeping apart

DIMITRIS MAZARAKIS
General Manager,
Metlife Gulf



Let's collectively work towards building responsible community and safeguarding our employees future and our businesses

DAVID STOCKTON
CEO, Dulsco



Do your part. Work from home. It's our responsibility to do the right thing and support our heroes working on the frontline

NABIL HABAYEB
PCEO, GE MENAT



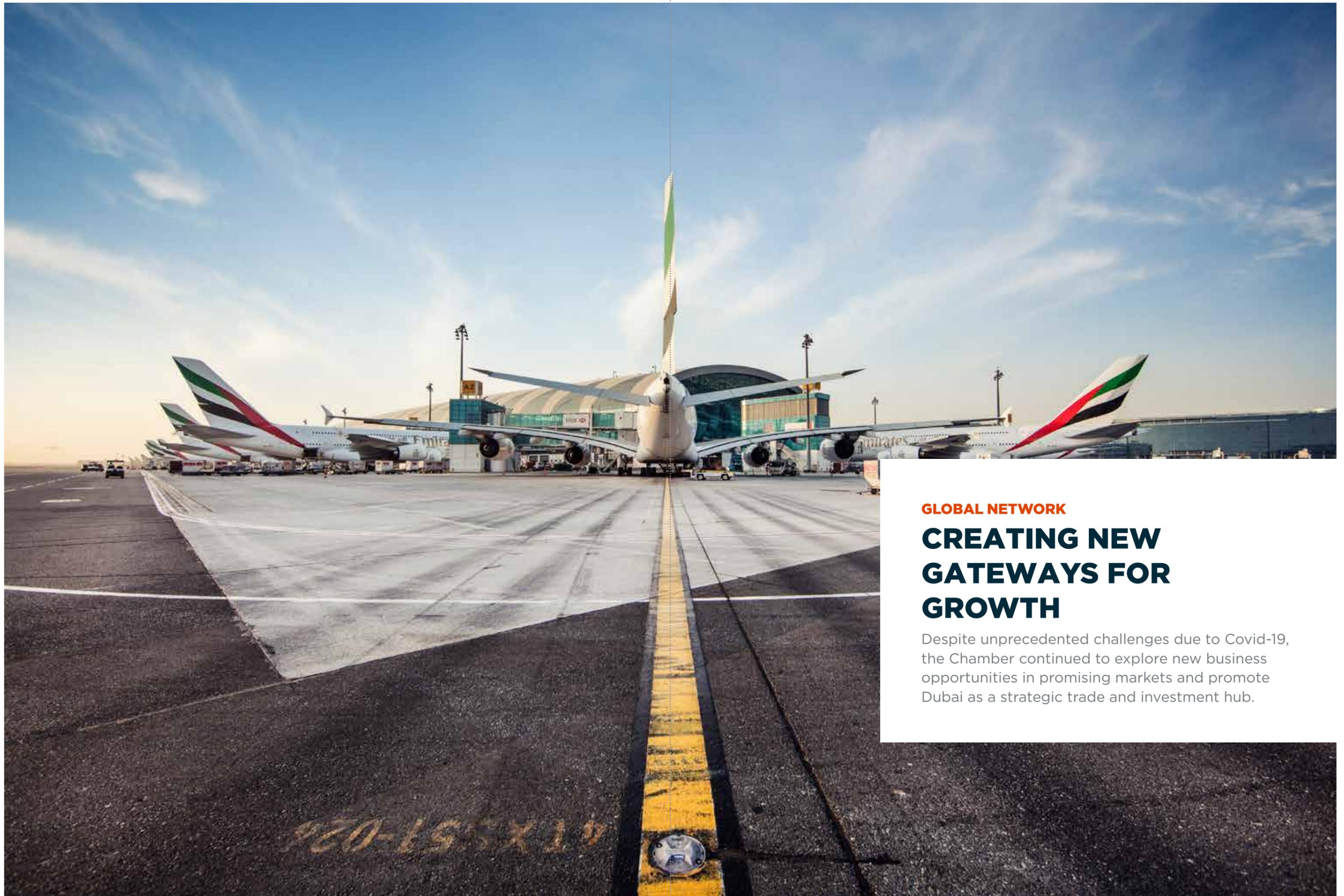
Be a
responsible
business.

#BeSafeWorkSmart
#StayHome

غرفة دبي
DUBAI CHAMBER



The Chamber's effective response to the pandemic underlined the importance of proactive communication and close cooperation with key stakeholders within the business community during times of crisis.



GLOBAL NETWORK

CREATING NEW GATEWAYS FOR GROWTH

Despite unprecedented challenges due to Covid-19, the Chamber continued to explore new business opportunities in promising markets and promote Dubai as a strategic trade and investment hub.



Despite unprecedented challenges due to Covid-19, the Dubai Chamber continued exploring business opportunities in promising markets



2,907

inbound delegations



5,694

delegates received



36

countries represented by visiting delegations



18

outbound missions



433

business matching meetings

Despite unprecedented challenges due to Covid-19, Dubai Chamber continued exploring business opportunities in promising markets around the world.

The Chamber received 2,907 delegations and met with 5,694 delegates from 36 countries in 2020. A total of 82 business networking events were organised, which were attended by 9,441 businesspeople. The Chamber organised 18 outbound missions, including study missions and virtual trade missions, while it arranged 433 business matching meetings.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

In response to heightened global interest in doing business in Dubai, the Chamber's representative offices organised a series of webinars and virtual meetings, which were joined by UAE businessmen and their global counterparts in Eurasia, Africa and Latin America. The events attracted strong participation, reflecting growing confidence in Dubai's position as a global business hub.

In December 2020, Dubai Chamber launched a series of 16 Global Business Forum (GBF) virtual roadshows examining

new economic opportunities in emerging markets across Africa, Latin America and the ASEAN region. The information collected during the roadshows will be used to shape the agendas of the upcoming GBF events in Dubai held in partnership with Expo 2020 Dubai.

In the early months of 2020, the Chamber hosted several high-level delegations including one from Luxembourg which was led by HRH Prince Guillaume of Luxembourg. Discussions were held on expanding cooperation in key sectors of mutual interest, such as industrial, ICT, healthcare

technologies, finance, Islamic banking and space.

The Chamber also organised the Dubai-São Paulo Business Forum, which was joined by a high-level delegation led by H.E João Doria, Governor of São Paulo State. A MoU was signed between Invest São Paulo and Dubai Chamber to facilitate cooperation and knowledge sharing between the two entities and business communities.

OPENING NEW DOORS

A landmark achievement of 2020 was the normalisation of diplomatic relations between the UAE and

Israel following the signing of the Abraham Accord. Dubai Chamber assumed the important role of building bridges between UAE and Israeli businesses and exploring existing synergies.

Dubai Chamber signed a strategic partnership agreement with the Tel Aviv Chamber of Commerce, represented by the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce, which paved the way for bilateral cooperation in a wide range of economic sectors. Since the partnership was announced, the Chamber hosted several high-level Israeli trade delegations at its headquarters with the

aim of boosting relations and familiarising Israeli business people with Dubai's economy, business environment and competitive advantages.

Another achievement was the launch of a joint study conducted by the two chambers, which identified trade synergies and sectors of mutual interest. The chambers are collaborating on a roadmap of virtual events and aligning their effort to support businesses with readily available resources and programmes.



INTERNATIONAL OFFICES

ELEVATING DUBAI'S STATUS AS A GLOBAL BUSINESS HUB

Dubai Chamber's representative offices build industry ties with key markets around the world and identify new business opportunities for member companies.



SCAN TO SEE INTERACTIVE REPORT



Dubai Chamber's 11 representative offices around the world are the engine driving the organisation's ambitious international expansion strategy. These international offices, strategically located across Africa, Eurasia and Latin America, are tasked with building ties with public and private sector stakeholders in emerging markets, identifying business opportunities for Dubai Chamber members and supporting foreign companies with their entry into the Dubai market.

In 2020, Dubai Chamber's representative offices hosted and participated in 2,388 meetings that were joined by 3,652 delegates. The offices organised 43 events attended by 4,886 participants and took part in 400 virtual external events, while they organised 13 outbound missions.

GROWING GLOBAL INTEREST

Following the Covid-19 outbreak and the reopening of Dubai's economy, the international offices witnessed a sharp uptick in the number of inquiries received from companies and investors related to

doing business in Dubai, with the recovery of the emirate's tourism and business events sectors garnering a lot of interest, in particular. A total of 1,120 inquiries were received in 2020, compared to 727 in the previous year.

The *Benefits of Doing Business in Dubai* series, organised by the Chamber's representative office in Africa, attracted 175 participants from several African countries, including Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique and Kenya, among others.

A webinar hosted by the Latin America offices, titled *Trust in Tourism 4.0: How Dubai Adapted to Welcome You Back*, highlighted Dubai as a leading example of a city that is getting tourism back on track following the successful and gradual reopening of its borders and economy. Other virtual events highlighted the vast competitive advantages Dubai offers Latin American exporters as a hub for coffee trade and success stories shared by UAE and Brazilian women entrepreneurs.

EXPLORING NEW AVENUES

Meanwhile, webinars organised by the Chamber's India office examined prospects for expanding UAE-India cooperation in the areas of food security, logistics, fintech, retail, technology and innovation. In addition, office collaborated with Dubai Startup Hub to organise the first-ever Dubai Tech Tour in partnership with Startup India and Mumbai Fintech Hub.

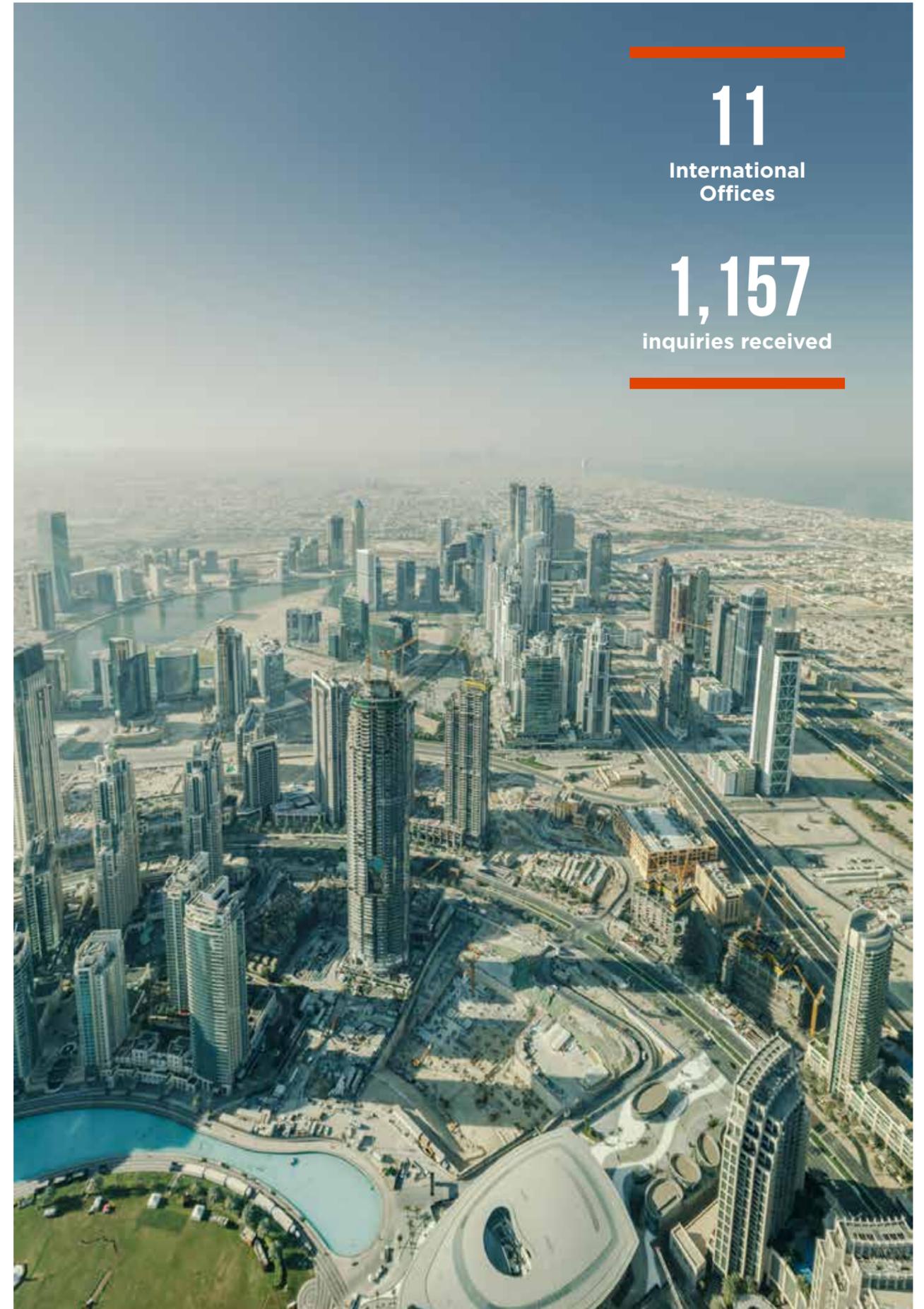
As part of the three-week virtual trade mission, high-potential Indian scale-ups were introduced to the Dubai market. The delegates participated in virtual events and meetings with public and private sector stakeholders from the UAE, while they also pitched their businesses to prospective investors and business partners.

11

International
Offices

1,157

inquiries received





COMMUNITY

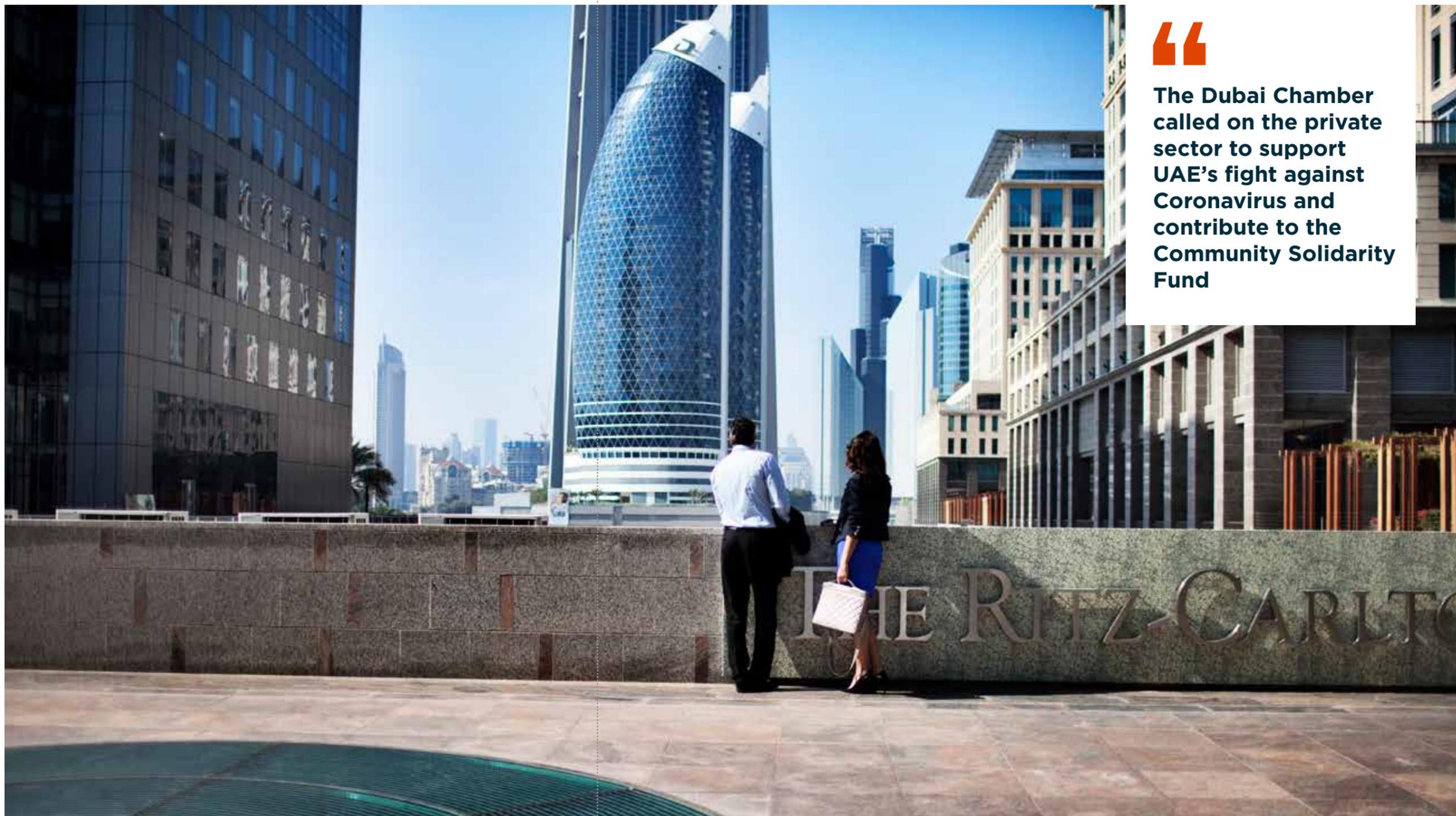
DRIVING SOCIAL IMPACT

Dubai Chamber was fully committed to giving back to the community during challenging times.

\$2.7M
pledge for
Community
Solidarity Fund
Against Covid-19

\$204,192
donation to
fund medical research

400
food packs distributed
to sailors as part of
volunteering initiative



The Dubai Chamber called on the private sector to support UAE's fight against Coronavirus and contribute to the Community Solidarity Fund



The Chamber maximised its social impact through various community and CSR-focused initiatives in 2020, which supported businesses, laborers, medical research and charitable causes.

COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY FUND

An initial pledge of AED 10 million (\$2.7 million) was made by Dubai Chamber to the Community Solidarity Fund Against COVID-19 which was launched by the Islamic Affairs and Charitable Activities Department.

The fund helped mitigate the economic, social, and health

challenges posed by the outbreak of COVID-19, while the donation provided humanitarian and logistical assistance to blue collar workers, who had finished their projects but have no financial means to go back home.

The Dubai Chamber called on the private sector to support UAE's fight against Covid-19 and contribute to the Community Solidarity Fund. It worked closely with all relevant government departments and mobilised the private sector to support the business community, and SMEs in particular.

ADVANCING MEDICAL RESEARCH

Dubai Chamber made a donation of AED 750,000 (\$204,192) to the Al Jalila Foundation as part of its commitment to foster innovation and support the advancement of medical research. The donation - allocated to medical research related to Covid-19, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, obesity and mental health - falls in line with its efforts to foster an innovation ecosystem in the UAE and further the advancement of medical science as a key sector driving the country's future economic and social progress.

The move underlines the importance which the UAE attaches to medical research and science - a field which has become a magnet for investment at a time when the global community responds to unprecedented challenges.

CHAMPIONING CSR

As part of its efforts to champion CSR and boost its social impact, the Chamber also organised a volunteering event, which saw its employees prepare and distribute 400 food packs to sailors working at Dubai Creek.

In addition, the Centre of Responsible Business, an initiative of Dubai Chamber, launched the Business Mentoring and Support (BMS) Programme, a CSR initiative designed to help SMEs in Dubai navigate new challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, by pairing them with large corporations that can offer support and mentorship where needed.



HUMAN CAPITAL

A NEW WORLD OF WORK

From remote working and flexible policies to preventative measures and online trainings, Dubai Chamber addressed the changing needs of its employees.



SCAN TO SEE
INTERACTIVE
REPORT



Effective communication, employee engagement, training and people-centric policies were top priorities in 2020.

The role of human resources in business is more important than ever as businesses navigate the new normal. For Dubai Chamber's Human Resources Department, effective communication, employee engagement, training and people-centric policies were top priorities in 2020.

TECHNOLOGY AND TRAINING

During the early stages of the pandemic, Dubai Chamber adopted and implemented flexible working policies for employees and provided them with the technology and support needed for them to do their jobs from remotely. Such efforts, along with effective internal communication about Covid-19 guidelines and new Chamber policies, ensured a seamless transition for employees throughout the lockdown, reopening of offices and various phases of the pandemic in Dubai.

The department facilitated 67 online trainings for Dubai Chamber's 188 employees in 2020, including certified courses and awareness sessions. These trainings were designed to broaden employees' skills, enhance productivity and develop their

potential. The Chamber boosted its Emiratisation rate to 57 percent, while 30 nationalities were represented by its employees.

RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE

Prior to the reopening of Dubai Chamber's offices and the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, the Human Resources team maintained regular communication with employees, informing them of the latest government-issued rules and guidelines, as well as preventative health and safety measures in place at its headquarters and branches.

In line with the Dubai government work-from-home system approved by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Executive Council, Dubai Chamber introduced a flexible working policy for its employees who needed to work from home in order to support their children with distance learning. Among the benefits achieved by the above-mentioned efforts were better productivity and efficiency, increased employee happiness and a more agile organisational structure.



67

online trainings



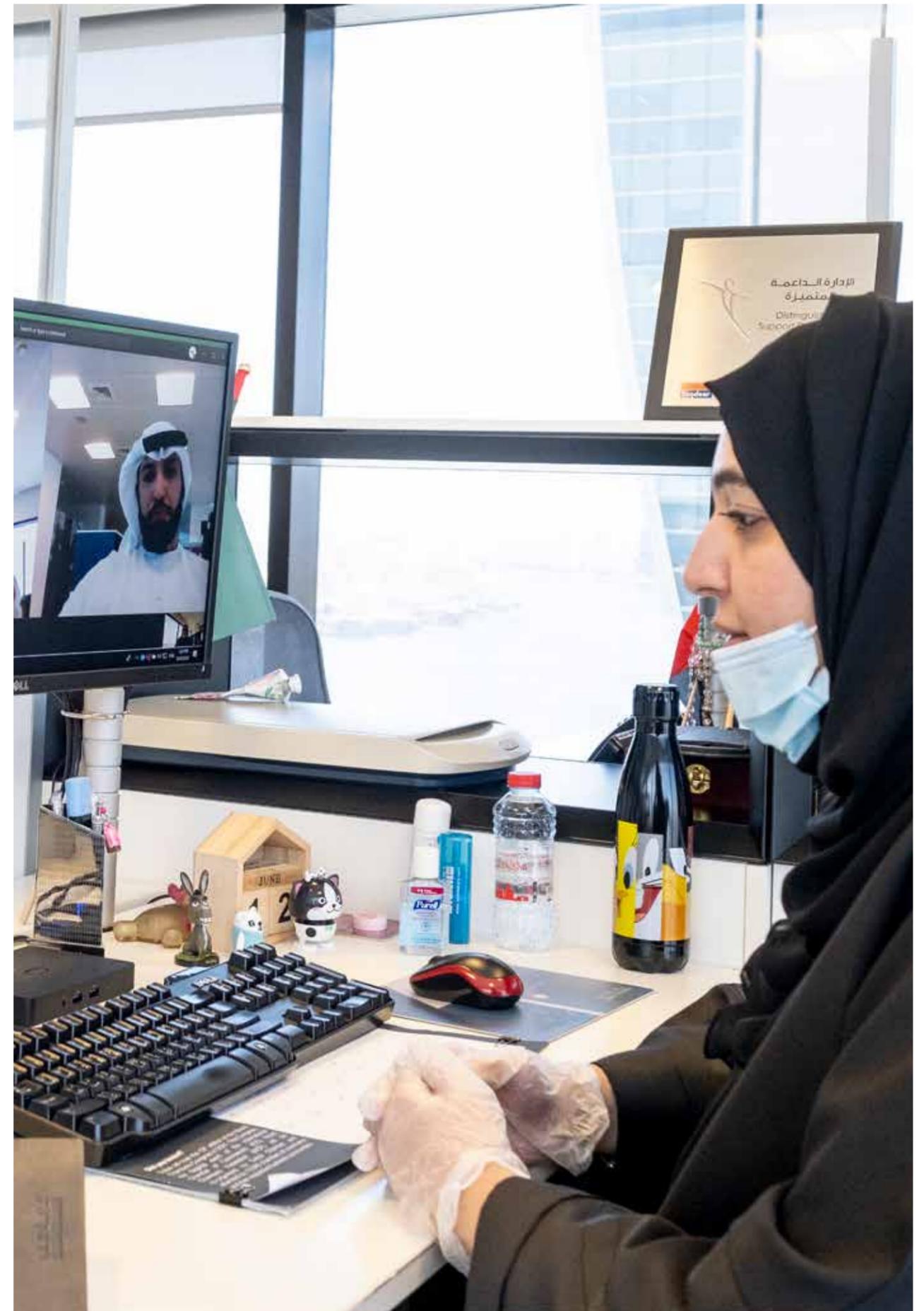
188

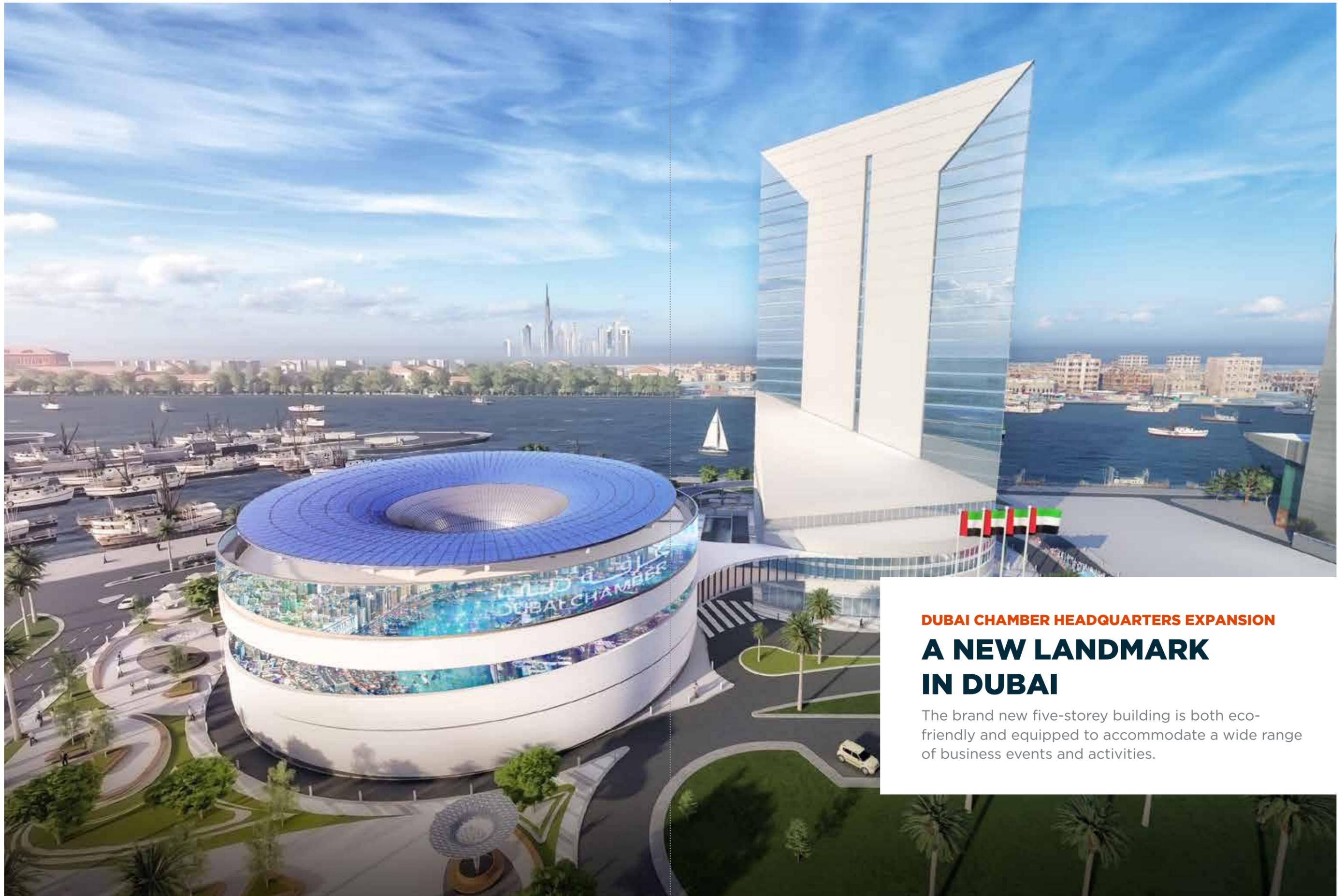
Dubai Chamber employees



57%

Emiratisation rate





DUBAI CHAMBER HEADQUARTERS EXPANSION

**A NEW LANDMARK
IN DUBAI**

The brand new five-storey building is both eco-friendly and equipped to accommodate a wide range of business events and activities.



19,000
square metres

Size of extension building

4,000
square metres

Office space

330

Smart parking spaces

Overlooking the bustling Dubai Creek, Dubai Chamber's headquarters remains one of the most iconic landmarks of the city's ever-expanding skyline. The building is truly unique as a modern space offering breathtaking views of old Dubai. The headquarters is a popular stop for trade delegations visiting the UAE, while there is no shortage of business functions hosted at the venue at any given time of the year.

Dubai Chamber expanded its headquarters in 2020 with the construction of a five-storey extension building offering state-of-the-art facilities. The building expands Dubai Chamber's offerings in line with the changing needs of Dubai's fast-growing business community. It also provides new parking spaces in the bustling Deira area.

FIVE-STAR FACILITIES

Spanning over 19,000 square metres, of which 4,000 square metres are dedicated to office

space, the extension building features a wide range of lifestyle amenities including a full-equipped gym for employees, cafes, restaurants and retail outlets. A rooftop lounge overlooking the Dubai Creek serves as an ideal venue for hosting high-level business and networking events. In addition, the building features a modern gym offering spectacular views of the Dubai Creek.

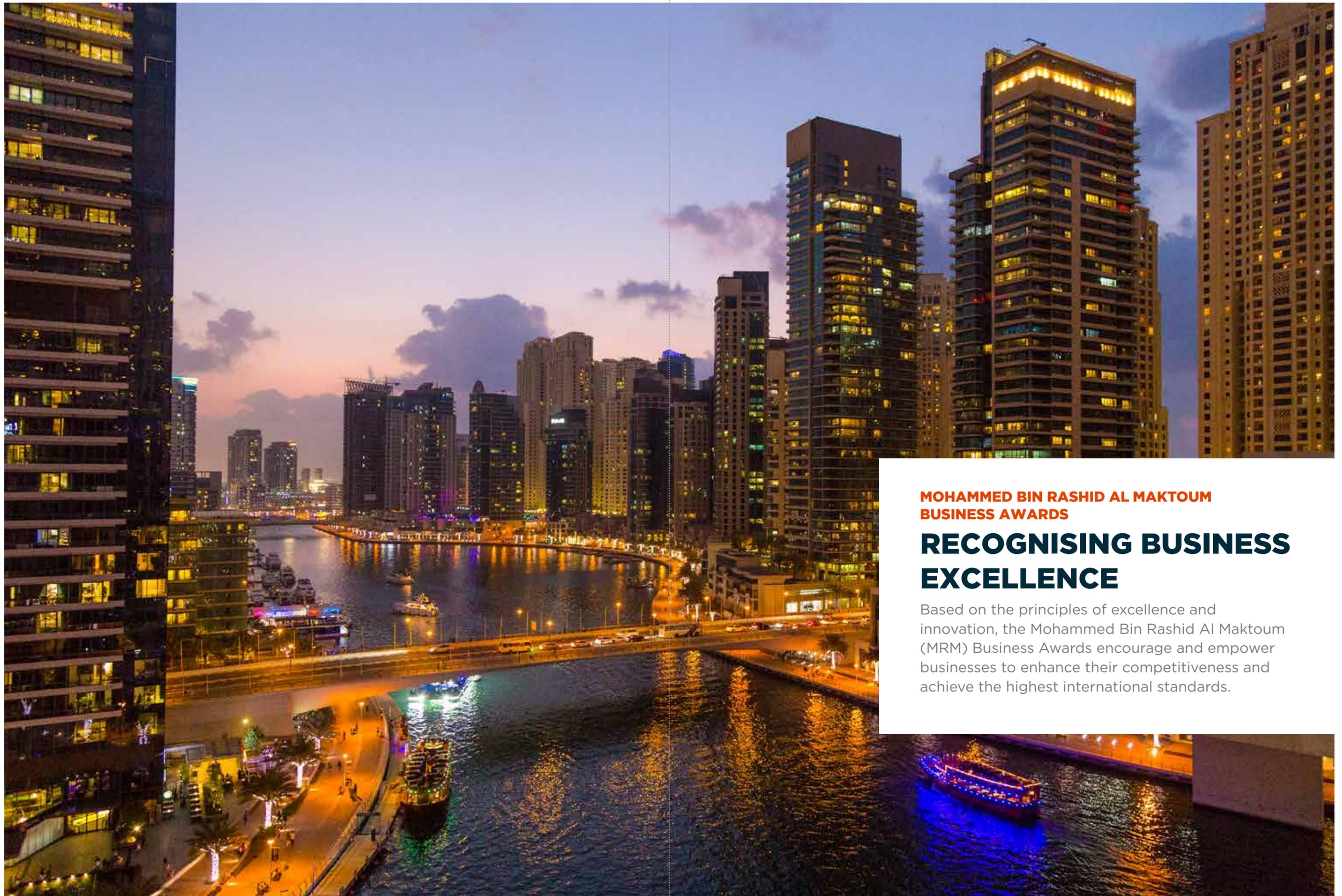
A SYMBOL OF SUSTAINABILITY

The extension building complements Dubai Chamber's green building achievements as it utilises the latest sustainable solutions and best practices incorporated into its design and facilities. More than 40 percent of the new building's energy requirements is supplied by clean sources such as solar power and wind turbines. Replacing a car park area is an intelligent parking system that accommodates 330 vehicles and allows for seamless entry and exit.

DUBAI CHAMBER INITIATIVES



SCAN TO SEE
INTERACTIVE
REPORT



**MOHAMMED BIN RASHID AL MAKTOUM
BUSINESS AWARDS**

**RECOGNISING BUSINESS
EXCELLENCE**

Based on the principles of excellence and innovation, the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum (MRM) Business Awards encourage and empower businesses to enhance their competitiveness and achieve the highest international standards.

The MRM Business Award, a member of Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, was initiated in 2005 to recognise and celebrate the success of organisations that contribute to the sustainable development of economies within the UAE and GCC. It aligns with Dubai Chamber's objective of fostering business excellence in the region.

The Award, based on a comprehensive selection process and extensive research, provides a robust learning platform designed to nurture organisations to lead in the international business arena.

It also promotes business excellence, contributes to sustainable growth and elevates the region's business reputation worldwide. For over a decade, the prestigious award programme has supported the development of business and encouraged the adoption of best international practices. The programme benefits participants by assessing the current health of their business and identifying areas of improvement, while giving them access to the knowledge and tools they need to enhance their performance and competitiveness.

INSTILLING EXCELLENCE

In 2015, a niche award category – the MRM Business Innovation Award was created by Dubai Chamber in collaboration with the UAE Ministry of Economy. The Award aims to encourage organisations to focus on developing and improving their

capabilities to drive innovation and promote sustainable growth. It also recognises innovation forerunners whose outstanding practices and achievements in innovation have contributed to the development of their economies and serve as an inspiration for all like-minded companies across the UAE and the GCC.

The award programme was expanded with the launch of the MRM Customer Excellence Award in 2019, which focuses on one of the most important components of any business – the customer. In today's digital era, it has become imperative for companies to understand their preferences and have a customer-oriented strategy. This Award aims to do just that – by recognising the outstanding efforts of companies that deliver exceptional customer experience at all levels and demonstrate proven customer-centric approach to success.

TAILORED TRAINING

In order to help participants prepare a strong application and improve their knowledge about the various aspects of innovation, business and customer excellence, Dubai Chamber organised 13 virtual events throughout 2020, including 3 virtual training workshops, 5 complimentary webinars and 3 virtual roundtable discussions, which were attended by 226 participants. The events aimed to help award applicants increase their chances of winning the prestigious MRM Business Award, MRM

Business Innovation Award, and MRM Customer Excellence Award.

A total of 147 companies from the UAE and the GCC region applied for the 11th cycle of the MRM Business Award, 3rd cycle of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Business Innovation Award and 1st cycle of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Customer Excellence Award and the winners will be announced in 2021 at a prestigious ceremony in Dubai. A total of 1,947 companies have applied for the Awards since the programme's inception in 2005.

226

participants joined virtual events

147

award applicants in last cycle

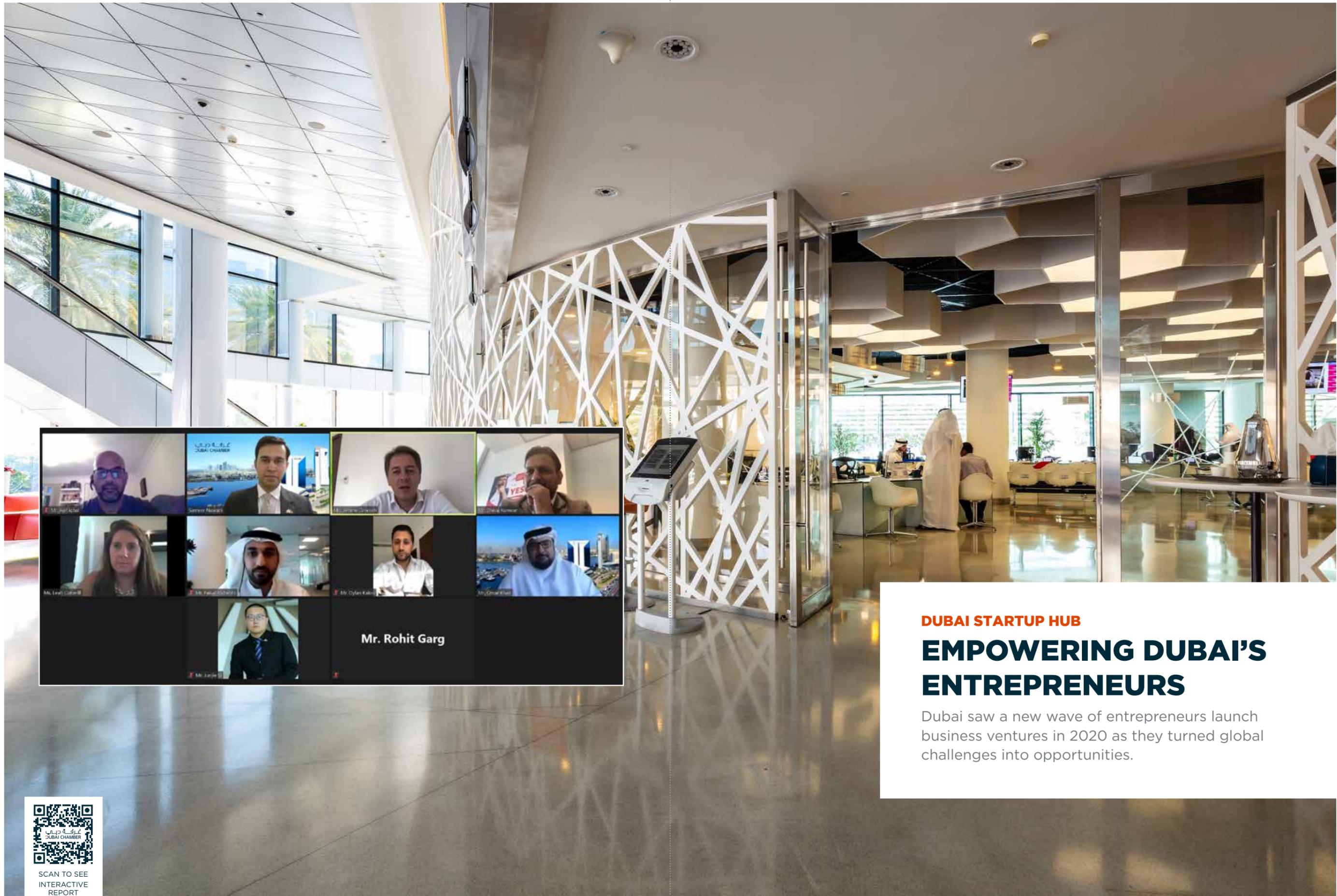
1,947

applicants since 2005



The Award, based on a comprehensive selection process and extensive research, provides a robust learning platform designed to nurture organisations to lead in the international business arena.





DUBAI STARTUP HUB

EMPOWERING DUBAI'S ENTREPRENEURS

Dubai saw a new wave of entrepreneurs launch business ventures in 2020 as they turned global challenges into opportunities.



SCAN TO SEE
INTERACTIVE
REPORT

2,166

entrepreneurs benefited from Dubai Startup Hub

48

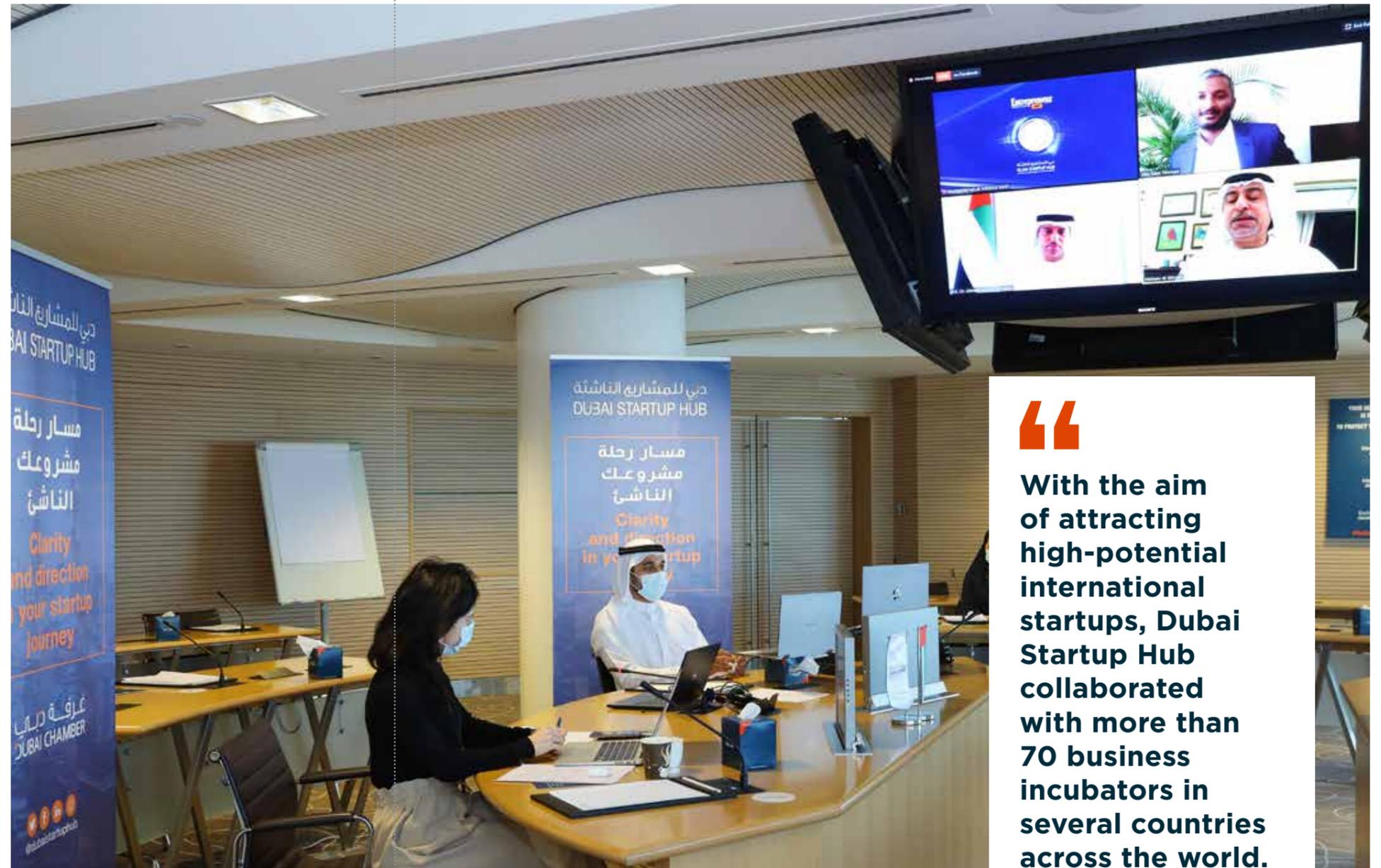
webinars hosted

315

submissions to Dubai Smartpreneur Competition

150

private sector jobs created by Emirati Development Programme



“

With the aim of attracting high-potential international startups, Dubai Startup Hub collaborated with more than 70 business incubators in several countries across the world.

Dubai Startup Hub (DSH), Dubai Chamber’s entrepreneurship initiative, expanded offerings in line with the evolving needs of Dubai’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, while it capitalised on growing interest in Dubai as a preferred hub for global startups.

In 2020, a total of 2,166 entrepreneurs benefited from DSH’s programmes and 48 webinars. Membership growth in 2020 was exponential compared to the previous year – a positive sign that businesses are looking to startups to kick start new projects and take digitalisation efforts to the next level.

MAGNET FOR GLOBAL STARTUPS

With the aim of attracting high-potential international startups, Dubai Startup Hub collaborated with more than 70 business incubators in several countries across the world, including India, USA, UK, Russia, Hungary, Germany and China, while 50% of applications for its core programmes came from international startups.

Dubai Startup Hub and Dubai Chamber’s India office, in partnership with Startup India and Mumbai FinTech Hub, organised the first-ever Dubai Tech Tour, a virtual trade mission joined by 15

Indian FinTech and HealthTech scale-ups. A total of 7 virtual events were organised as part of the mission, which were attended by over 600 participants, including 30 UAE entities.

A NEW GENERATION

Dubai Startup Hub launched the Emirati Development Programme and continued to support aspiring Emirati entrepreneurs through the Emirati Bootcamp and the National Company Programme 2020. The initiatives were successful with a total of 122 Emirati entrepreneurs applying for the Emirati Development Programme out of which 30 received specialised

training. The programme is expected to create 150 private sector jobs by 2021.

The Emirati Bootcamp, held in partnership with DTEC, saw 14 Emiratis entrepreneurs enrolled in training sessions covering topics of idea development, storytelling, and pitching and growing your startup in Dubai. In addition, the National Company Programme 2020 virtual competition was held in partnership with Injaz UAE, where 180 young Emirati entrepreneurs from 11 schools and two universities competed for prestigious awards, including the much sought-after Company of the Year title.

SUPPORT FOR SCALE-UPS

Through its Market Access and Scale Up Dubai programmes, Dubai Startup Hub guided scale-ups by providing them with the knowledge, tools and access needed to expand beyond borders. A total of 13 founders of technology companies graduated from the 1st cohort of the Scale-Up programme and received a digital “MARKET READY” stamp to boost their business growth in Dubai market.

With a focus on sustainability, the 5th Dubai Smartpreneur Competition focused on Mobility, Opportunity and Sustainability and

attracted 315 smart business ideas. Four Startup Panorama Reports and community newsletters covering various topics of relevance to entrepreneurs were released, while weekly virtual networking sessions were hosted.



DUBAI BUSINESS WOMEN COUNCIL

**UNLOCKING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR
WOMEN IN BUSINESS**

Gender equality and women empowerment in the public and private sector remained a priority in the UAE, with the Dubai Business Women Council (DBWC) playing a crucial role in supporting the interests of businesswomen.

Over the last few decades, the UAE has made great strides in empowering women in all segments of society. Policies put into place by the country's wise leadership and strategic initiatives like the UAE Gender Balance Council have catalysed progress on this front and created new opportunities for women at the highest levels of government and business.

The work of Dubai Business Women Council (DBWC) aligns with the UAE's vision to advance gender equality, enhance women's economic participation, especially in the field of entrepreneurship, and position the country as one of the top 25 countries in the UNDP Gender Inequality Index by 2021.

Established in 2002 under the umbrella of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, DBWC has dedicated its efforts to enhancing gender parity in society and encouraging women to play an active role in building the country and stimulating sustainable development. The DBWC organises tailored workshops and training sessions for its members empowering them to excel in their field of work.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

It continued to work on this mandate in 2020 and ventured into several successful partnerships. Early last year it hosted 11 workshops and then shifted its activities online by providing its members with exclusive access to interactive training programmes, online webinars, business resources and offers brought by its strategic and industry partners.

DBWC arranged more than 250 webinars for its members and the business community on topics such as influencer marketing, international trade, digital growth mindset, sustainability, future of banking, virtual learning and e-commerce business, among other topics.

It hosted the Women in Retail and Luxury Forum, which examined challenges women are facing in various industries and highlighted various best practices that leaders of the retail and luxury industry are adopting. Other online events, organised as part of DBWC Forums 2021, delved into timely issues and topics related to healthcare, technology and finance and investment industries.

The Council hosted Teresa Carlson, the Vice President Worldwide Public Sector, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and other prominent female business leaders, while it supported a number of events such as the 5th Edition of the Arab Women In Leadership and Business Summit, Power Women of Arabia Debate, Visa's She Next virtual summit, the 2020 What's Next Fest, GITEX Future Stars 2020, and Xponential talks on Xponential Women.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Expanding its regional network, DBWC signed new partnerships with Emirates Institute for Banking and Financial Studies (EIBFS), Creative Zone, Edelman Middle East, American University of Dubai - EMBA, The Ameliorate Group, Kompass Consultancy, Xponential, to launch a series of initiatives to further support SMEs and entrepreneurs.

In partnership with Creative Zone, DBWC launched the #SHELEADS Accelerator Programme to accelerate women-led start-ups in the UAE. More than 150 applicants from the region, Europe, the US and Canada signed up for this 12 week programme, with 12 modules being delivered by industry experts on the ins and outs of setting up and scaling up of a business.

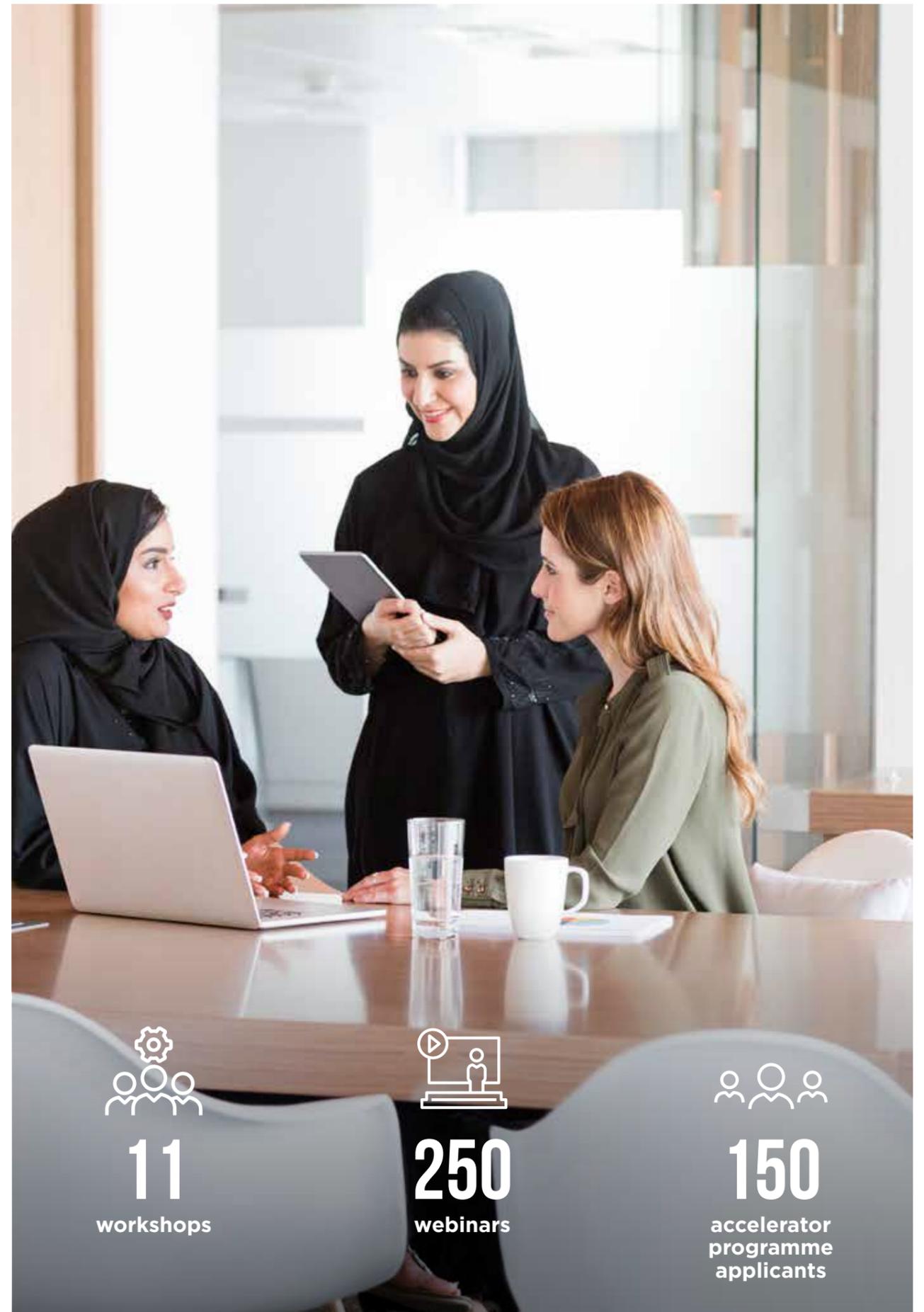


The work of Dubai Business Women Council (DBWC) aligns with the UAE's vision to advance gender equality and enhance women's economic participation

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

DBWC also launched a new smart app and introduced a Covid-19 tab on its website to ensure that the members are provided services as efficiently as before, along with all the up-to-date information on Covid-19. The Council has also introduced new features such as an online payment facility for local and international members, access to recorded webinars for members, member company profile, and a new social media segment called #YourBusinessMatters, along with special offers from members to members.

Dr. Raja Al Gurg, President of the Dubai Business Women Council and Board Member of Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was appointed as the Deputy Chairman of National Bank of Fujairah. She was also awarded the Legion of Honor, Chevalier (Knight) by President of France Emmanuel Macron, in appreciation of her outstanding efforts and the role she plays in strengthening the exceptional partnership between France and the UAE.



11
workshops



250
webinars



150
accelerator
programme
applicants



غرفة دبي
DUBAI CHAMBER

DUBAI ASSOCIATION CENTRE

**BUILDING THE
REGION'S ASSOCIATION
COMMUNITY**

Dubai remains an attractive destination for regional and international associations offering a conducive environment for them to conduct business in the UAE and beyond



SCAN TO SEE
INTERACTIVE
REPORT



DAC is actively exploring new ways to support its diverse membership base and create a conducive environment enabling associations to emerge from the Covid-era stronger than ever



Associations play a key role in the advancement of a particular profession or sector, providing support, resources and networking opportunities. The Dubai Association Centre (DAC) provides a formal environment for local, regional and global associations, allowing professionals within a common industry or profession who are registered in the emirate to form a member-based association.

DAC was established as a joint initiative between Dubai Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Dubai Business Events (part of the Department for Tourism and Commerce Marketing) and the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) to offer assistance for the establishment of non-profit, apolitical and nonreligious professional associations and trade bodies in the Emirate of Dubai. The Centre also provides a framework for international associations to open a regional representative office in Dubai in order to conduct business in the UAE and beyond.

GROWING STRONGER

The Centre received 22 new applications in 2020 and added 7 new licensed members during the year, bringing its total membership to 72. New DAC members are: the International Chamber of Commerce UAE Chapter (ICC-UAE), Arab Association of Surgical & Medical Aesthetics, Sharia Professionals Association, International Council of Museums - UAE, Leisure Marine Association MENA, Entrepreneurs Organization UAE and the Middle East Drymix Mortar Association.

The ability of the Dubai Association Centre to grow its membership amidst global economic challenges is a testament to Dubai's strengthening reputation as a preferred hub for international and professional associations.

EXPANDING OFFERINGS

After inaugurating new offices last year at One Central (Dubai World Trade Centre), DAC fully automated

its licensing services and upgraded its license format to include QR code technology in an effort to meet the changing needs of its members.

DAC organised 3 roundtable discussions, 2 Meet DAC" events and approved 12 membership applications. Through its series of virtual roundtables, DAC updated its members on the UAE's efforts to fight Covid-19, and the impact of the global pandemic on the association sector as it kept an open line communication with members of the association community in Dubai.

Going forward, DAC is actively exploring new ways to support its diverse membership base and create a conducive environment enabling associations to emerge from the Covid-era stronger than ever.

72

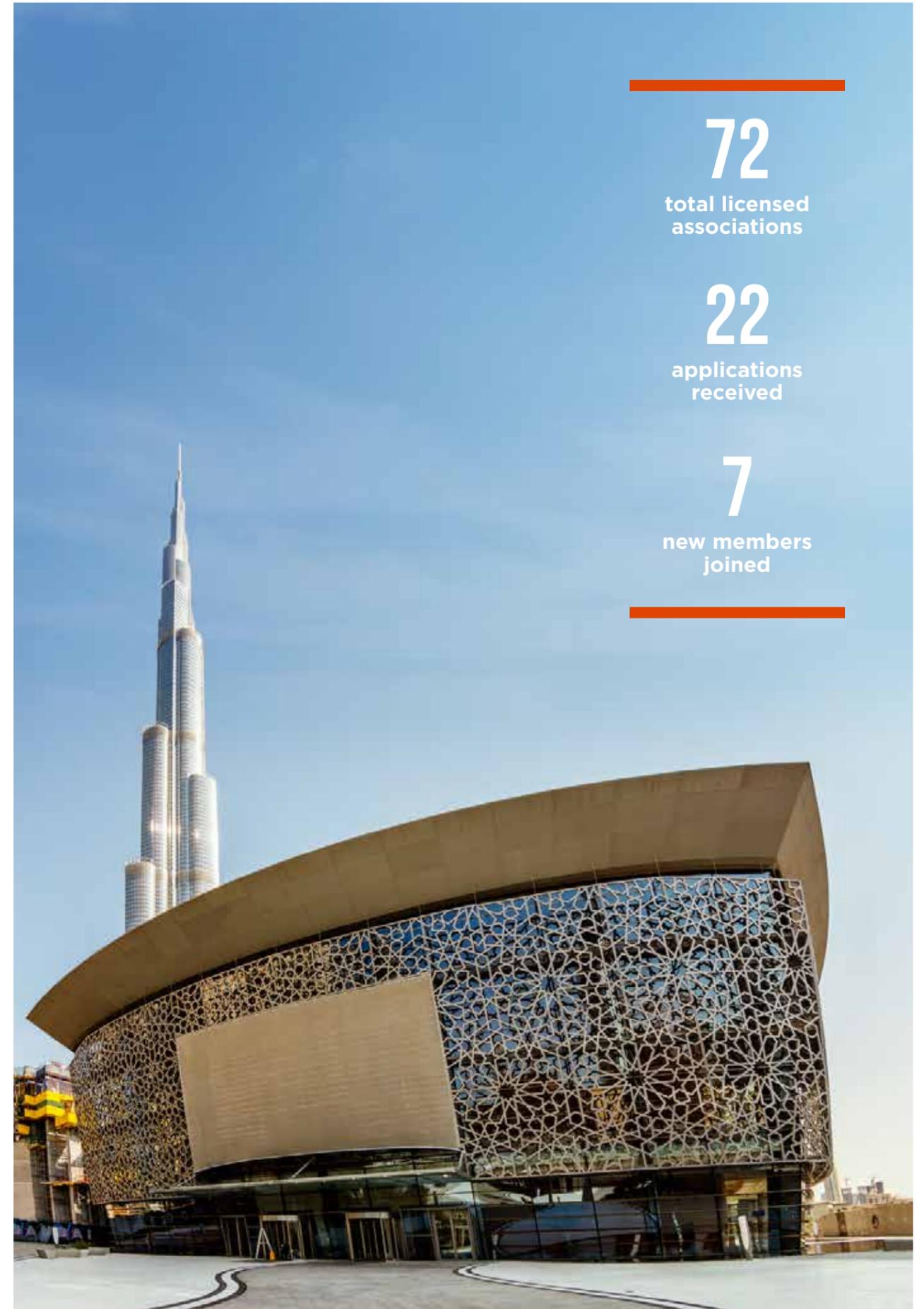
total licensed associations

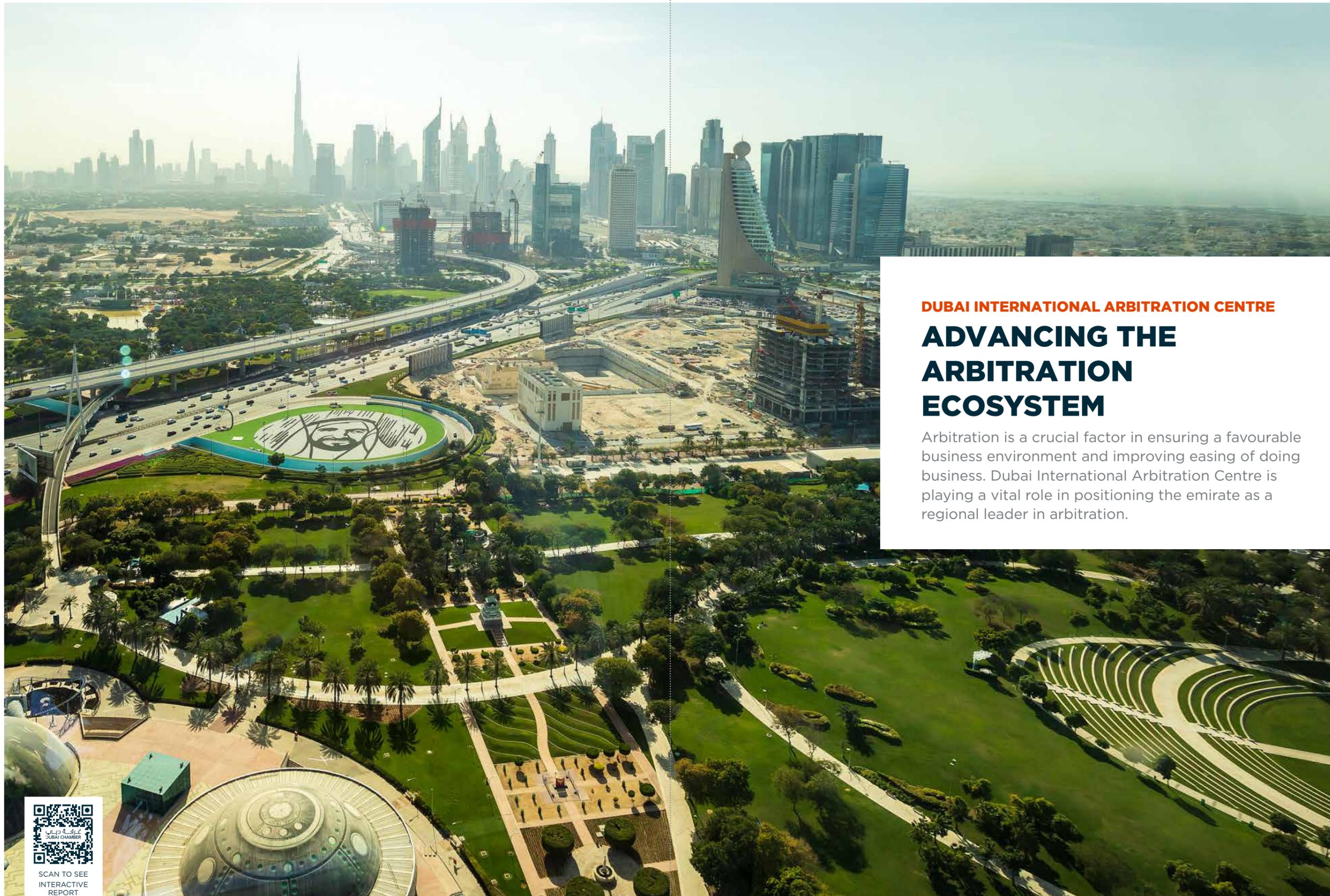
22

applications received

7

new members joined





DUBAI INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE

**ADVANCING THE
ARBITRATION
ECOSYSTEM**

Arbitration is a crucial factor in ensuring a favourable business environment and improving easing of doing business. Dubai International Arbitration Centre is playing a vital role in positioning the emirate as a regional leader in arbitration.



SCAN TO SEE
INTERACTIVE
REPORT



230
registered cases

3,376
total cases
handled to date

47
arbitrator
applications

33
DIAC 40 members

Arbitration as a mechanism to resolve disputes is increasingly growing in importance due to the globalised nature of commerce and countries' expanded efforts to improve ease of doing business.

Commercial arbitration has played a vital role in boosting Dubai's global appeal as an attractive place to do business. For over 25 years, Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC), an initiative of Dubai Chamber, has positioned the emirate as a regional leader in arbitration and raised standards in this area.

Established in 1994, DIAC is the largest arbitration centre in the Middle East providing efficient and impartial administration of commercial disputes. DIAC has developed a strong framework for arbitration in the Middle East, supported by rules and procedures that are based on best international practices, while it has built a community of experienced arbitrators from different nationalities and legal backgrounds.

GROWING DEMAND

DIAC responded swiftly to growing demand for its arbitration services

during Covid-19, by utilising digital solutions to deliver value-added arbitration services and operate smoothly and efficiently. In 2020, DIAC registered 230 cases, up from 207 in 2019, while the number of total cases handled by the Centre reached 3,376.

A total of 47 arbitrators applied to get listed with DIAC during the year. Meanwhile, 33 members were registered in the DIAC 40 Young Practitioners Group. Two new associate members joined DIAC and 15 others renewed their membership.

The Centre participated in 30 hearings and meetings in 202 and organised several virtual events designed to help members navigate new challenges. These including a webinars examining the impact of Covid-19 on the arbitration landscape, as well as practical solutions and the role of due process in ensuring the efficiency of dispute resolution.

MOVING FORWARD

DIAC's Board of Trustees pushed ahead with new plans and strategies in line with Dubai's ambitious vision and sustainable

development goals in order to boost investor confidence in the market. The board brings with it a wealth of business knowledge and legal expertise, which enhances its ability to meet the evolving demands of Dubai's maturing business community.

In addition, DIAC is working on expanding its e-services and digital systems in line with the Dubai Paperless Strategy 2021.



CENTRE FOR RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

CHAMPIONING CSR AND SUSTAINABILITY

In 2020, CSR became an integral part of companies' response to Covid-19 as they sought guidance from Dubai Chamber's Centre for Responsible Business on important matters.



Virtual events provided an ideal platform for sharing knowledge and best practices in supporting People of Determination in the workforce, adopting green building standards, and driving Emiratisation.



The Centre for Responsible Business hosted 25 webinars addressing timely and pressing issues related to CSR, sustainability and business continuity, which were attended by 1,816 attendees from 555 organisations. These virtual events provided an ideal platform for sharing knowledge and best practices in supporting People of Determination in the workforce, adopting green building standards, and driving Emiratisation, along with other timely issues.

In addition, two public webinars highlighted practical aspects of managing stakeholder relationships and talent during Covid-19. The events were joined by 222 participants from 153 organisations. The Dubai Dialogue 2020, Dubai Chamber's largest sustainability conference, was held virtually and attended by 113 participants from 56 organisations. The conference brought together public and private sector stakeholders to discuss strategies for surviving and thriving sustainably.

TACKLING NEW CHALLENGES

The Centre launched a number of new initiatives to address the business community's needs in response to COVID-19, such as the first-of-its-kind Business Mentoring and Support programme (BMS) designed to help SMEs navigate new challenges posed by the pandemic and beyond, by pairing

them with large corporations that can offer professional advice and resources tailored to their unique needs. At the same time, it provided large corporates the opportunity to enhance their CSR impact and contribute to the development of Dubai's economy.

A new Task Force on Prompt Payment Practices for Sub-contractors and Suppliers. Companies was established under the Dubai Chamber Sustainability Network. The task force, represented by businesses operating in a wide variety of economic sectors, explored the root causes of late payments, raised awareness about the matter and encouraged the adoption of best payments practices within the business community in Dubai.

BOOSTING SOCIAL IMPACT

The Dubai Chamber Sustainability Network grew its membership to 73 active member companies in 2020, up from 64 in the 2019. In addition, four new members joined ENGAGE Dubai programme as community and corporate members. As part of this programme, CRB organised the Give & Gain Week in which 834 volunteers from 24 companies participated and spent 14,854 volunteering hours supporting 50,501 beneficiaries.

In addition, 17 new CSR Label applicants applied in the first cycle of 2020 and 4 were awarded

the Dubai Chamber Advanced CSR Label. CRB also published a CSR survey report, 5 issues of CSR Al Youm magazine that featured contributions from CSR and sustainability experts, and a number of toolkits.

1,816
participants joined webinars

73
Dubai Chamber Sustainability Network members

834
volunteers participated in Give & Gain Week

14,854
volunteering hours



UNIVERSITY OF DUBAI

TOWARDS A KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY

University of Dubai, an initiative of Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, is fostering a culture of innovation and preparing students for a fast-changing workforce.

203
university
graduates

385
new students
enrolled

100%
solar powered
campus



Higher education, one of the main building blocks of knowledge-based economies, has become imperative to driving innovation and sustainable economic growth, which remain key objectives of Dubai's strategic vision for its future.

Established under the umbrella of Dubai Chamber in 1997, the University of Dubai (UD) plays a major role in developing the higher education landscape in the emirate. The university is committed to developing and educating future leaders who will make a difference in the business world.

FUTURE-READY EDUCATION

The Center for Futures Studies (CFS) at UD was launched with the aim of building the human capabilities in the field of future studies relating to health, energy, security, education, transportation and other sectors. The Center will offer programs designed to foster futuristic insights and capacities in the UAE and wider region.

UD and Krypto Labs launched an innovation hub open to students, alumni, professors, and the community. The innovation hub aims to grow the next generation

of all-rounded leaders who are equipped with the transferable skills for the 21st century.

INITIATIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The university dealt with the impact of Covid-19 very efficiently and effectively by moving all its courses online and running awareness campaigns. It carried out an extensive disinfection of the campus and had stringent precautionary measures for staff and students entering the campus. All exams and quizzes were conducted online necessary

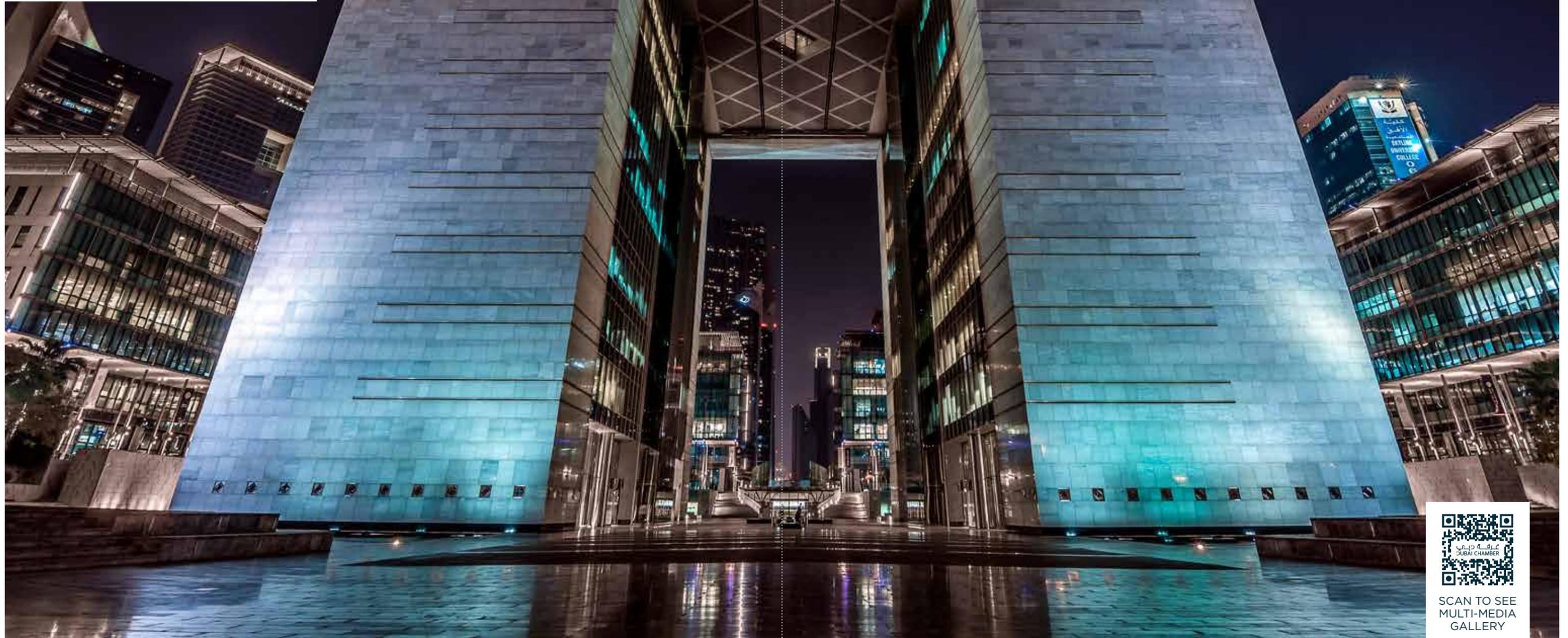
procedures were put in place to ensure educational integrity.

More than 130 webinars and other virtual events and activities were organised by the university in 2020. The President of University of Dubai, Dr. Eesa Bastaki, granted the "Medal of Excellence and Achievement" to the University's Information Technology Department members who were recognised as the frontline heroes who made distance learning and every other online task possible during difficult times.

A total of 203 students graduated from UD during the year, with 94 of those students earning an MBA degree, bringing the total number of UD graduates to 2,550. A total of 385 new students enrolled in 2020. Two new programmes - a Master of Science in Data Science and a Bachelor of Science in Power & Energy Engineering were launched in 2020, while the university created the "Adel Al Kamel Scholarship for Outstanding Students", in the name of Emirati businessman Adel Al Kamel.

UD's state-of-the-art campus now runs 100% on solar power. It is the first LEED certified net-zero energy building in the region, following the implementation of an AED 5.4 million (\$1.47 million) solar power project at its campus.

2020 MULTI-MEDIA GALLERY



SCAN TO SEE
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GALLERY



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