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THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AVIATION IN DUBAI

A REPORT FOR EMIRATES AND DUBAI AIRPORTS

OCTOBER 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AED 137 bn

Gross value added supported in Dubai in 2023

Dubai aviation sector's total economic impact in Dubai in 2023

Dubai is a major global hub for air travel, with its **airports serving more than 88 million passengers** and the city welcoming **17 million international visitors** in 2023.[1] As a global transport and tourism hub, Dubai's aviation sector plays an integral role in the emirate's economy.

This report quantifies the economic contributions of Dubai's aviation sector—comprising the Emirates Group, Dubai Airports, and other aviation sector entities. This comprehensive study includes an assessment of direct economic activity generated by businesses in the aviation sector, indirect activity stimulated across the sector's supply chain, and induced activity supported through wage-funded consumption by employees. The study also assesses the catalytic impact of the estimated AED 66 billion of tourism spending in 2023 that the aviation sector facilitated in Dubai.

In 2023, Dubai's aviation sector is estimated to have supported **AED 137 billion in gross value added, equivalent to 27% of Dubai's GDP**. This comprised a core economic impact of AED 94 billion, and a catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism of AED 43 billion.

27%

Share of Dubai's GDP in 2023

The core impact of Dubai's aviation sector comprised a direct gross value added contribution of AED 70 billion, and a further AED 24 billion stimulated through the sector's supply chain spending and wage-funded consumption by employees. This highlights that the Dubai aviation sector has a GVA multiplier of 1.35—that is, **for every AED 100 gross value added generated by the sector itself, a further AED 35 is stimulated in the wider UAE economy**.

[1] Airport passenger data provided by Dubai Airports. International visitor data from Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (link).

In 2023, the sector also supported **631,000 jobs across Dubai, equivalent to one in five jobs in the emirate.**[2] This comprised 303,000 jobs supported through the sector's core economic impact, and a further 329,000 jobs through the catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism.

631,000

Jobs supported in Dubai in 2023

The core impact of Dubai's aviation sector comprised 103,000 jobs directly in the sector, and a further 200,000 jobs supported by the sector's supply chain spending and wage-funded consumption by employees. This means that the Dubai aviation sector has an employment multiplier of 2.9—that is, **for every 100 jobs held in the aviation sector, a further 190 jobs are supported across Dubai's economy**.

Finally, taking into account projected financial and passenger growth for the sector, this study forecasts that Dubai's aviation sector will contribute **AED 196 billion in gross value added** in 2030, or **32% of Dubai's forecast GDP**, with the sector's employment impact rising to **816,000 jobs in 2030**—equivalent to one in four jobs in Dubai. Within this forecast, the Dubai aviation sector's core economic impact is expected to grow to AED 132 billion in gross value added in 2030, while the catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism is expected to grow to AED 63 billion.[3]

[2] Note: totals may not sum due to rounding.
[3] Note: all monetary values are expressed in 2023 prices.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF DUBAI'S AVIATION SECTOR

TOTAL AVIATION SECTOR IMPACT IN 2023

Core impact plus catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism:

AED 137 bn
in gross value added, **27%** of Dubai's GDP

631,000 jobs
one in every **five** jobs in Dubai

2030 Forecast to grow by 2030 to...

AED 196 bn
32% of Dubai's forecast GDP

816,000 jobs
one in **four** jobs in Dubai

CORE IMPACT IN 2023

Direct | Indirect | Induced

Emirates' core impact in 2023

AED 75 bn
Total GVA supported

AED 56 bn | AED 14 bn | AED 5.0 bn

15% of Dubai's GDP

236,000
Total jobs supported

81,000 | 106,000 | 48,000

One in every **14** jobs in Dubai

Dubai Airports and other aviation entities' core impact in 2023

AED 19 bn
Total GVA supported

AED 14 bn | AED 3.5 bn | AED 1.4 bn

3.7% of Dubai's GDP

67,000
Total jobs supported

21,000 | 33,000 | 13,000

One in every **48** jobs in Dubai

CATALYTIC IMPACT OF AVIATION-FACILITATED TOURISM IN 2023

AED 66 bn
Est. international visitor spend

AED 43 bn
GVA generated by tourism spend, **8.5%** of Dubai's GDP

329,000 jobs
Jobs supported by tourism spend in Dubai

Of this, more than **half of GVA (AED 23 bn)** and **employment (177,000)** was generated by those flying to Dubai with Emirates

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding. All monetary values are expressed in 2023 prices.

Emirates
نيكولاس
Nicolas

1. INTRODUCTION

Aviation plays a central role in the economy of Dubai. Over the years, strategic investment has established Dubai as a global air transportation hub. This transformation is underpinned by the rise of Emirates as the world's largest international airline and Dubai International Airport as the most connected airport in the Asia-Pacific and Middle East region.[4] By connecting Dubai to the global economy, the sector facilitates international trade and investment, promotes international tourism, and enables greater access to education, knowledge, and skills from around the world—all of which contribute to Dubai's economic output and employment.

Oxford Economics was commissioned jointly by the Emirates Group and Dubai Airports, to estimate the economic impact of the aviation sector in Dubai. The objective of this study is to investigate the economic benefits that the aviation sector contributed to the Dubai economy in 2023, and the projected impacts in 2030. The study quantifies the core economic impact of the aviation sector through assessing the impact of its direct operations, its supply chain spending, and wage-funded consumption by its employees. In addition, the study estimates the benefits the sector generates through facilitating international tourism in Dubai—referred to as the catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism.

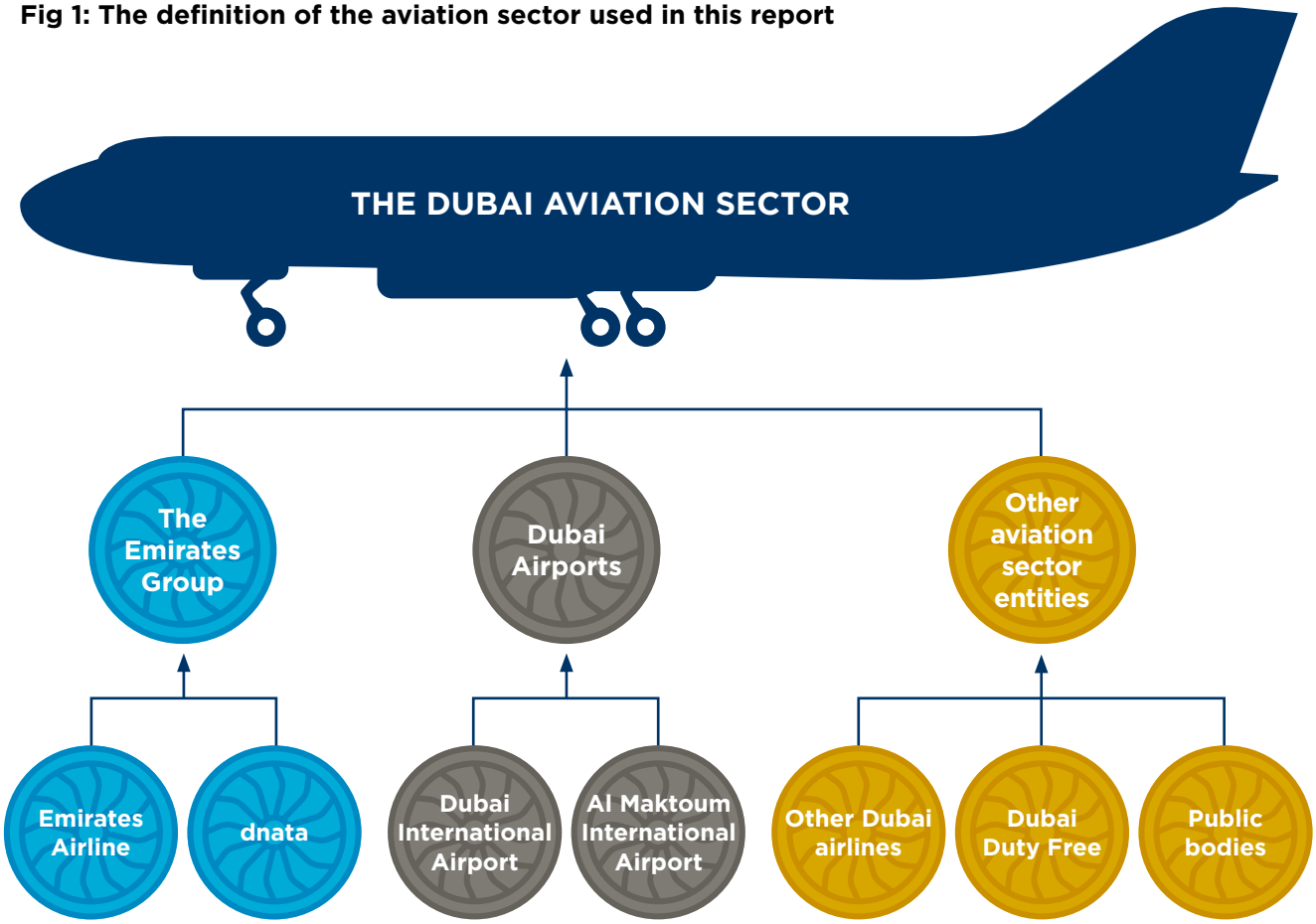
1.1 STUDY SCOPE

The aviation sector is a complex group of organisations undertaking a wide range of activities, spanning from operating airports and airlines, engineering and maintenance, duty-free and other airport concessions, to security on the ground and in the air (in the form of air traffic control). Consequently, any study of the sector must clearly define the breadth of the sector. Figure 1 illustrates the entities included in this study's definition of Dubai's aviation sector. These include:

- **The Emirates Group (hereafter referred to as Emirates):** a Dubai-based international aviation company comprising both Emirates Airline—the world's largest international airline, with a network covering 79 countries (as of March 2024), serving 52 million passengers in 2023; and dnata—an aviation services company which provides ground handling, cargo, catering, and travel services across 178 cities in 36 countries (as of March 2024);[5]
- **Dubai Airports:** the authority that owns and manages both Dubai International Airport—the world's busiest airport for international passengers—and Al Maktoum International Airport, which together handled 452,000 aircraft in 2023;[6] and
- **Other aviation sector entities:** in addition to Emirates and Dubai Airports, this study also quantifies the contributions of other aviation sector entities, including other airlines based in Dubai, Dubai Duty Free, Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects, and public bodies such as airport police, customs authorities, and the civil aviation authority. A full list of entities included in the study is provided in the Appendix.

[4] Emirates Media Center, 2024 (link). Airports Council International 2023 (link).
[5] Operations data provided by Emirates.
[6] Airport rankings based on Airports Council International, 2024 (link). Aircraft handled data provided by Dubai Airports.

Fig 1: The definition of the aviation sector used in this report



The remainder of this report will be structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 presents the total economic impact of the Dubai aviation sector;
- Chapter 3 presents the core economic impact results for the Dubai aviation sector;
- Chapter 4 presents the catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism spending in Dubai;
- Chapter 5 presents the results for entities within the aviation sector; and
- The Glossary provides definitions of terms and the Appendix details the methodologies used in this report.

2. THE TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE DUBAI AVIATION SECTOR

The total impact that the aviation sector supports in the Dubai economy consists of its core impact, and the catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism. The Dubai aviation sector's core impact reflects economic activity supported by Emirates, Dubai Airports, and other aviation entities.[7] Its core economic impact encompasses the sector's direct operations, economic activity stimulated through the sector's supply chain spending, and wage-funded consumption by employees. The aviation sector's core impact contributed **AED 94 billion in gross value added**, or **18% of Dubai's GDP** in 2023. This activity supported **303,000 jobs**, **or one in 11 jobs across the emirate**.

In addition, the Dubai aviation sector also stimulated economic activity across Dubai through facilitating tourism. The catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism spending contributed **AED 43 billion in gross value added**, or **8.5% of Dubai GDP** in 2023. This economic activity supported **329,000 jobs**, or **one in 10 jobs in Dubai**.

Combined, the total economic impact of Dubai's aviation sector is estimated to have supported **AED 137 billion in gross value added**, equivalent to **27% of Dubai's GDP**. This activity also supported **631,000 jobs** across Dubai, equivalent to **one-fifth of Dubai's total employment**. The sector is also estimated to have contributed AED 3.2 billion to government tax revenues in 2023.

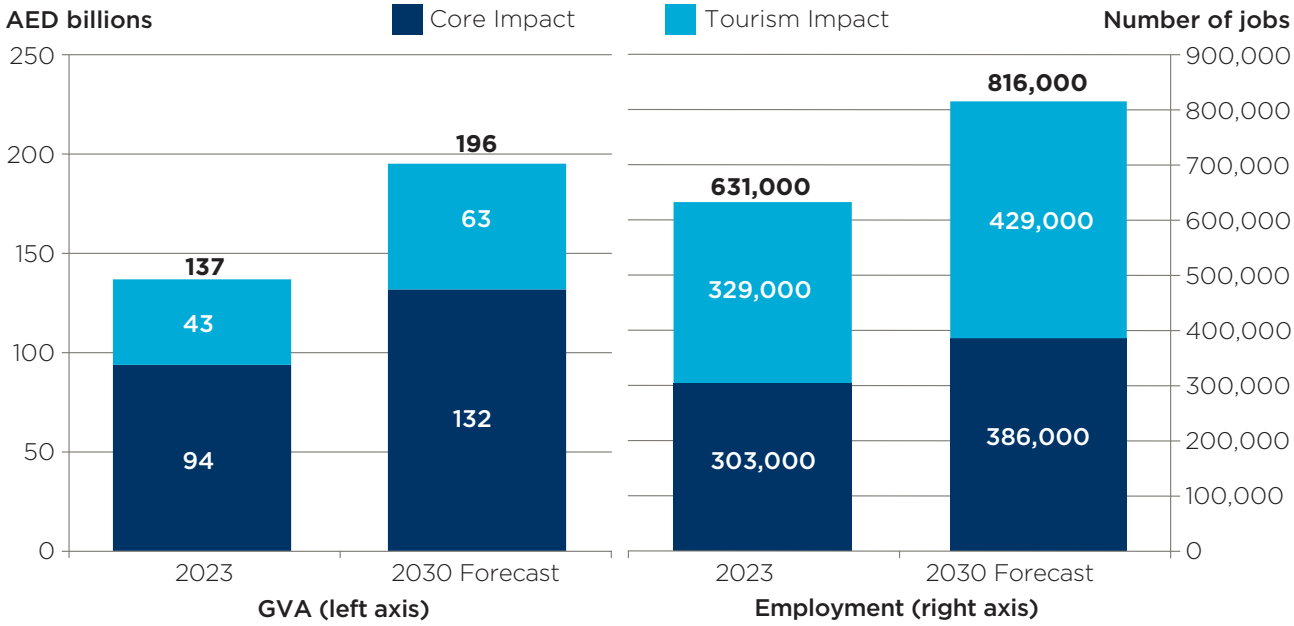
Fig. 2: Total economic impact of the Dubai aviation sector

2023				
	GVA (AED bn)	GVA (% Dubai GDP)	Employment (,000s)	Employment (% Dubai workforce)
Direct	70	14	103	3.2
Indirect	18	3.5	139	4.3
Induced	6.4	1.2	61	1.9
Core impact	**94**	**18**	**303**	**9.3**
Aviation facilitated tourism	43	8.5	329	10
Total impact	**137**	**27**	**631**	**19**
2030 forecast				
	GVA (AED bn)	GVA (% Dubai GDP)	Employment (,000s)	Employment (% Dubai workforce)
Direct	98	16	127	3.5
Indirect	26	4.2	183	5.1
Induced	8.9	1.5	76	2.1
Core impact	**132**	**22**	**386**	**11**
Aviation facilitated tourism	63	10	429	12
Total impact	**196**	**32**	**816**	**23**

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding. Gross value added forecasts are presented in 2023 prices.

[7] See appendix for a full list of entities included in the study.

Fig. 3: Total economic impact of the Dubai aviation sector in 2023 and 2030



Source: Oxford Economics

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding

Based on industry financial and passenger projections, the Dubai aviation sector's GDP contribution is forecast to grow to **AED 196 billion** in 2030, or **32% of Dubai's forecast GDP in 2030**. Furthermore, the Dubai aviation sector's employment impact is forecast to grow to **816,000 jobs** in 2030, or **one-quarter of all jobs in Dubai**. The sector is also forecast to raise AED 4.3 billion in government tax revenues in 2030.

The core impact of Dubai's aviation sector is expected to grow to AED 132 billion in gross value added in 2030 (**22% of GDP**), supporting **386,000 jobs**. Additionally, the catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism is expected to grow to **AED 63 billion** in 2030 (**10% of Dubai's GDP**), supporting **429,000 jobs**.[8]

COMPARISON TO THE 2013 STUDY

This study updates the results of a previous study conducted by Oxford Economics assessing the economic impact of the aviation sector in Dubai in 2013. That study found that the overall impact of the aviation sector contributed 27% of Dubai's GDP in 2013 and supported 417,000 jobs across the emirate. This study's results estimate that the aviation sector contributed 27% to Dubai's GDP in 2023 and supported 631,000 jobs. While the results suggest the sector's share of Dubai's GDP has been relatively stable, the sector's gross value added has increased in real terms, with the stable share reflecting faster growth in the wider economy over the past decade.

Note that, while this study's results indicate a growing but stable contribution of the sector to Dubai's economy, the study's methods have changed since 2013, reflecting improved data availability and ongoing methodological developments. As such, caution is advised when comparing underlying components of the sector with 2013. More details on the methodology and data sources are available in the annex.

[8] Gross value added forecasts expressed in 2023 prices.

3. THE CORE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE DUBAI AVIATION SECTOR

3.1 MEASURING THE CORE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF DUBAI'S AVIATION SECTOR

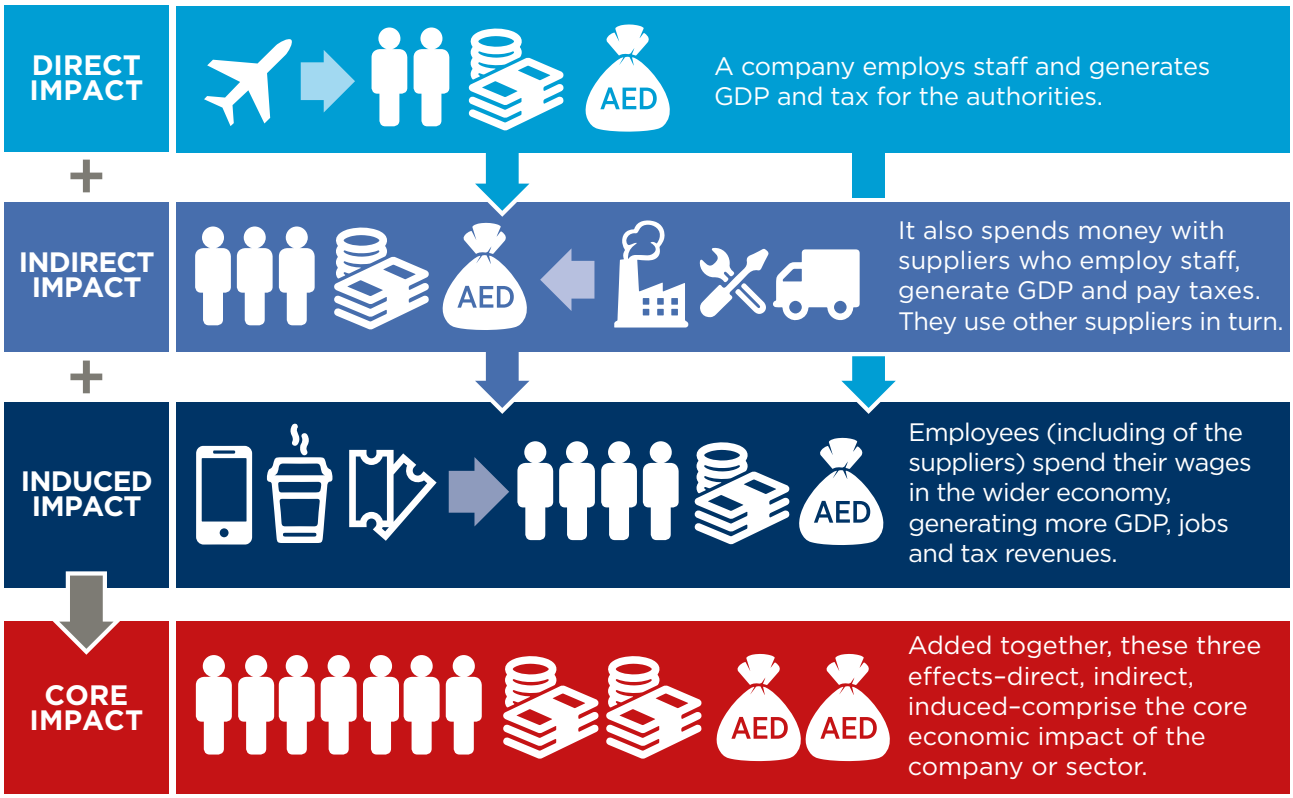
Oxford Economics used a standard economic impact framework to assess the aviation sector's economic impact in Dubai. This core impact of the Dubai aviation sector comprises **three channels**:

- **Direct impact:** economic activity generated by the sector's operations;
- **Indirect impact:** encompassing the impact the sector stimulates through its supply chain spending; and
- **Induced impact:** capturing the impact the sector and its suppliers generate through paying wages to staff, who in turn spend these in the consumer economy.

The sector's contribution to the economy is expressed in terms of gross domestic product (GDP). GDP is an integral part of national accounts statistics that measures the value of goods and services produced in an economy.

Businesses contribute to GDP by producing gross value added (GVA), which is created through the production of goods and services within the economy. A business's GVA can be calculated by summing its gross profits (or losses) and employee compensation. This is equivalent to the "value add" generated by the business, which is equal to the value of goods and services that it has produced

Fig. 4: Core economic impact framework



(output or revenue), less the cost of all inputs and raw materials that are directly attributable to production (intermediate inputs). When summed across all firms in the economy, and after small adjustments for taxes and subsidies, GVA is equal to GDP.

In order to create GVA, businesses employ staff. In this report, employment figures are presented on a headcount basis, allowing for comparability to national statistics.

This economic activity and employment generate tax payments for the government.

The taxes which are modelled in the indirect and induced channels are corporation tax, value added taxes, customs duties, aeronautical charges transferred directly to government, and social security payments for Emirati employees.

3.2 DUBAI AVIATION SECTOR'S CORE IMPACT

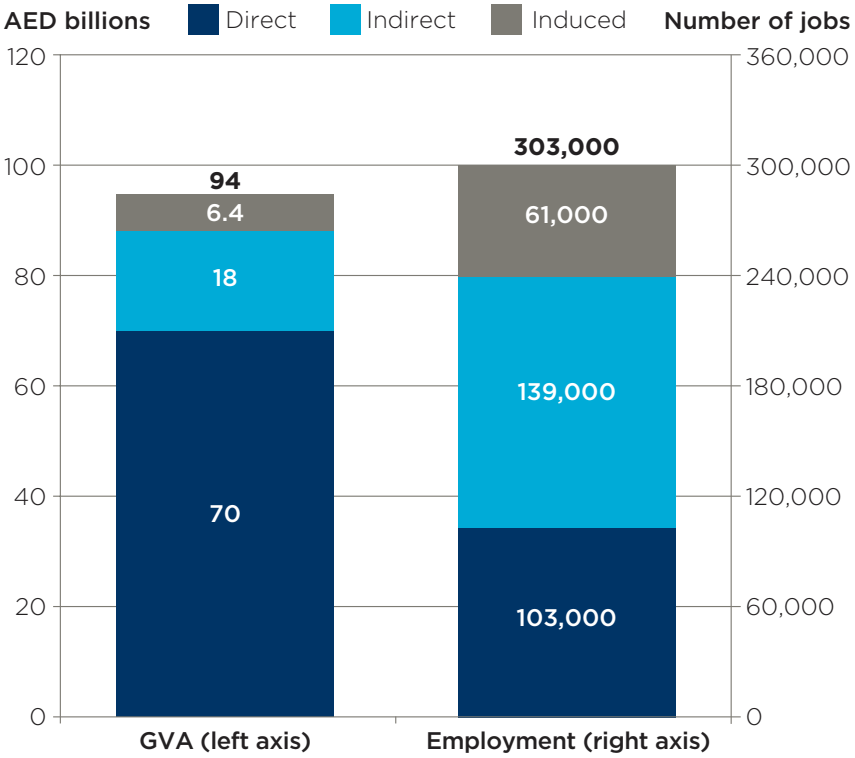
The Dubai aviation sector's core impact reflects economic activity supported by Emirates, Dubai Airports, and other aviation entities. The core economic impact encompasses these entities' direct operations, activity stimulated through their supply chain spending, and further activity supported through wage-funded consumption by employees.

The sum of the three channels of impact—direct, indirect, and induced—represents the core economic impact that the Dubai aviation sector supported across the Dubai economy in 2023. We estimate that the sector supported:

- **AED 94 billion in gross value added**, equivalent to 18% of Dubai's GDP in the same year;
- **303,000 jobs** across the Dubai economy, equivalent to one in every 11 jobs in the emirate.
- **AED 2.1 billion** in tax payments for the government.

Of the sector's core employment impact, 103,000 (34%) were employed by firms within the aviation sector. Some 139,000 jobs (46%) were supported by the sector's spending with suppliers, with the remaining 61,000 jobs (20%) being sustained by the spending of wages by workers in the aviation sector and its supply chain.

Fig. 5: The core impact of the aviation sector in Dubai in 2023



Source: Oxford Economics

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding

Based on industry projections, the Dubai aviation sector's core gross value added impact is forecast to grow to AED 132 billion in 2030[9], or 22% of Dubai's GDP. This economic activity is forecast to support 386,000 jobs in 2030. This growth reflects ongoing major investment by the sector to expand its capacity, including Emirates' announcement in November 2023 of a further expansion in its Boeing and Airbus fleet.[10]

Fig. 6: Core economic impact of the aviation sector

2023				
Gross value added, AED billions, 2023				
	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Core contribution
Emirates	56	14	5.0	75
Dubai Airports and other aviation sector entities	14	3.5	1.4	19
Total sector	**70**	**18**	**6.4**	**94**
Employment, thousands, 2023				
	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Core contribution
Emirates	81	106	48	236
Dubai Airports and other aviation sector entities	21	33	13	67
Total sector	**103**	**139**	**61**	**303**
2030 forecast				
Gross value added, AED billions, 2030				
	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Core contribution
Emirates	79	21	7.1	107
Dubai Airports and other aviation sector entities	19	5.0	1.8	26
Total sector	**98**	**26**	**8.9**	**132**
Employment, thousands, 2030				
	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Core contribution
Emirates	104	135	61	300
Dubai Airports and other aviation sector entities	23	48	15	87
Total sector	**127**	**183**	**76**	**386**

Notes: Totals may not sum due to rounding. Purchases between aviation entities are excluded to avoid double counting. All monetary values presented in 2023 prices.

[9] In 2023 prices.

[10] Emirates, 2023 (link). The Al Maktoum Airport expansion announced in April 2024 (link) is not included in the impact forecast. The DWC expansion would contribute an estimated AED 6.1 billion in gross value added to the economy in 2030, equivalent to 1.0% of Dubai's forecasted GDP; and generate 132,000 jobs, equivalent to 3.7% of Dubai's employment in that year. See appendix for details for the assumptions and methodology used in this estimate.

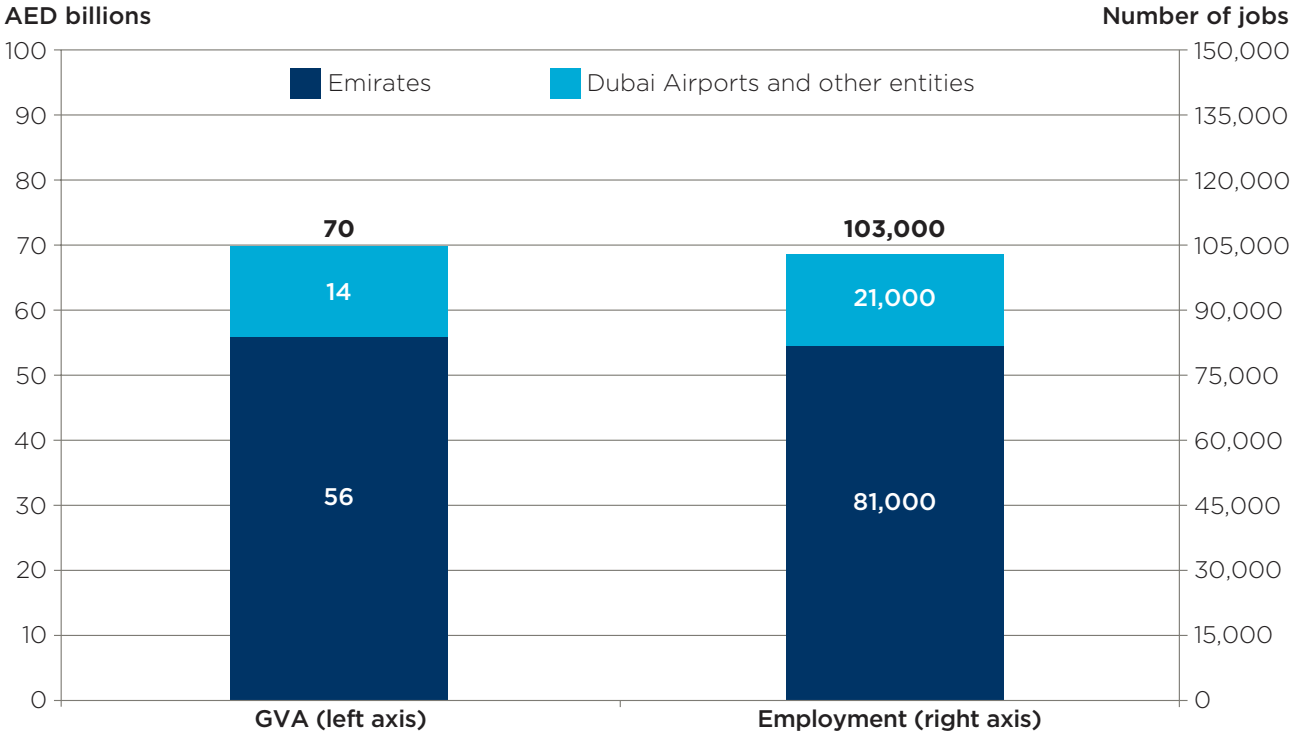
3.2.1 Direct impact

Through its operations, the aviation sector makes substantial direct contributions to Dubai's economy in terms of GDP, employment, and tax payments. In 2023, the aviation sector's direct operations are estimated to have:

- Generated **AED 70 billion in gross value added**, equivalent to 14% of Dubai's GDP; and
- Employed **103,000 staff** in Dubai, which was equivalent to one in every 32 jobs in the emirate.

The Dubai aviation sector's direct GDP impact is forecast to rise to AED 98 billion in 2030[11], equivalent to 16% of Dubai's forecast GDP in that year. As discussed previously, this growth reflects ongoing major investment by the sector to expand its capacity and operations. Furthermore, the sector's number of direct employees is forecast to grow to 127,000 by 2030, or one in 28 jobs in Dubai.

Fig. 7: The direct impact of the aviation sector in Dubai in 2023



Source: Oxford Economics, Emirates, Dubai Airports

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding

[11] In 2023 prices.

3.2.2 Indirect impact

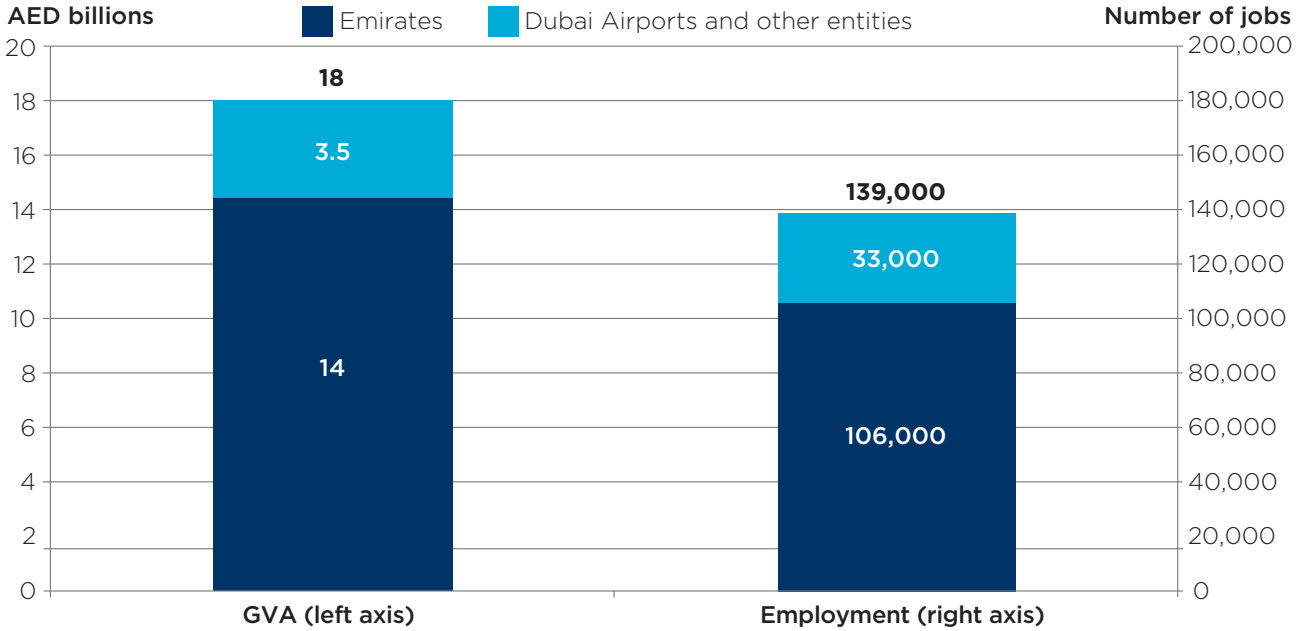
In 2023, Dubai's aviation sector **spent over AED 36 billion with Dubai-based suppliers** on goods and services to support its day-to-day operations and capital investments.[12] This included energy groups such as the Emirates National Oil Company (ENOC), utilities companies such as Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), and aviation services companies such as Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE).

This spending stimulated economic activity throughout Dubai's economy, as the sector's suppliers purchase from their own suppliers and so on. As this spending ripples through supply chains, the economic footprint reaches all parts of the Dubai economy. The main industries benefitting were Dubai's manufacturing and professional services sectors. Across the economy in 2023, the Dubai aviation sector's supply chain spending is estimated to have indirectly supported:

- **AED 18 billion in gross value added**, equivalent to 3.5% of Dubai's GDP; and
- **139,000 jobs**, equivalent to one in 23 jobs.

The Dubai aviation sector's indirect GDP contribution is forecast to rise to AED 26 billion in 2030[13], equivalent to 4.2% of Dubai's forecast GDP. This reflects the sector's increased demand for goods and services to support its expanding operations and capital investments. The employment supported through the aviation sector's supply chain spending is forecast to grow to 183,000 jobs by 2030, or one in 20 jobs in Dubai.

Fig. 8. Indirect impact supported by the aviation sector in Dubai in 2023



Source: Oxford Economics
Note: totals may not sum due to rounding
Note: Purchases between aviation entities are excluded to avoid double counting.

[12] Third-party suppliers. Excludes intra-industry transactions between aviation entities included in the study.
[13] In 2023 prices.

3.2.3 Induced impact

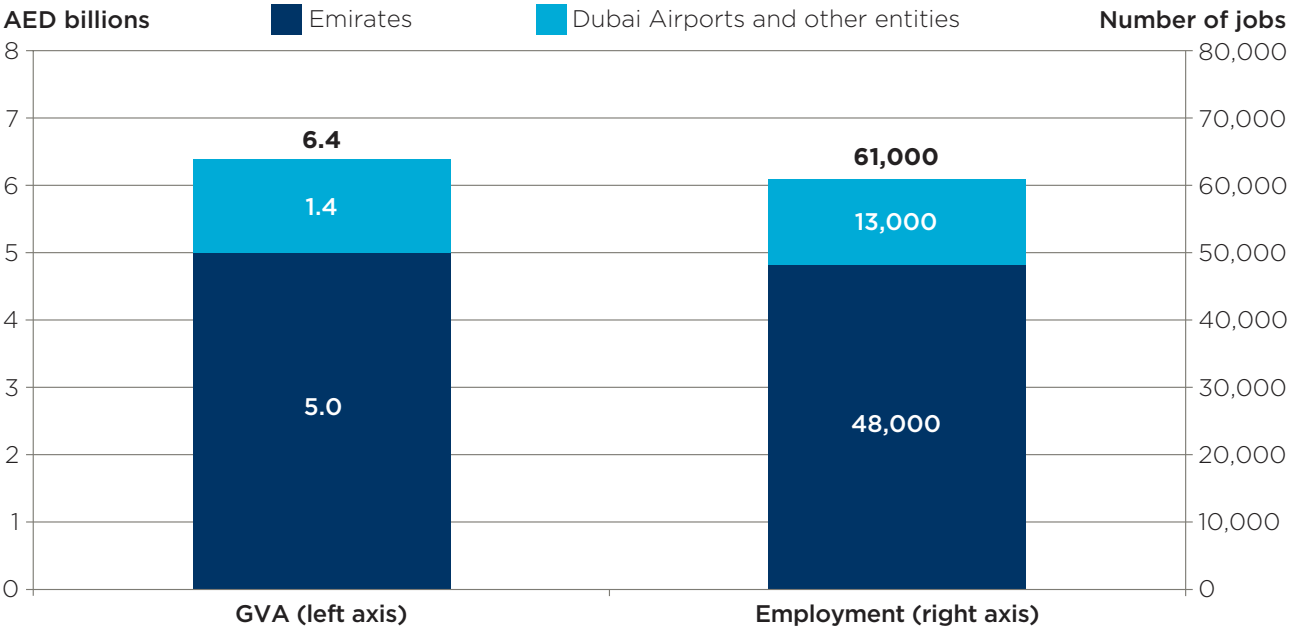
By paying wages to its employees—and supporting employment in its supply chains—the Dubai aviation sector stimulates further economic activity across the consumer economy through wage-funded consumption.

The aviation sector paid its 103,000 Dubai-based employees an estimated **AED 23 billion in wages and salaries** in 2023. These wages and salaries—along with payments to employees working in the sector's supply chains—are estimated to have stimulated:

- **AED 6.4 billion in gross value added**, equivalent to 1.2% of Dubai's GDP; and
- **61,000 jobs** across the Dubai economy, equivalent to one in every 53 jobs in Dubai.

The Dubai aviation sector's induced GDP contribution is forecast to rise to AED 8.9 billion in 2030[14], equivalent to 1.5% of Dubai's forecast GDP. This increase reflects increased employment within the sector and in its Dubai-based supply chains. The employment supported in Dubai by wage-funded consumption by employees working in the aviation sector and its supply chains is forecast to grow to 76,000 jobs by 2030, or one in every 47 jobs across the emirate.

Fig. 9: Induced impact supported by the aviation sector in Dubai in 2023



Source: Oxford Economics
Note: totals may not sum due to rounding
Note: Purchases between aviation entities are excluded to avoid double counting.

[14] In 2023 prices.

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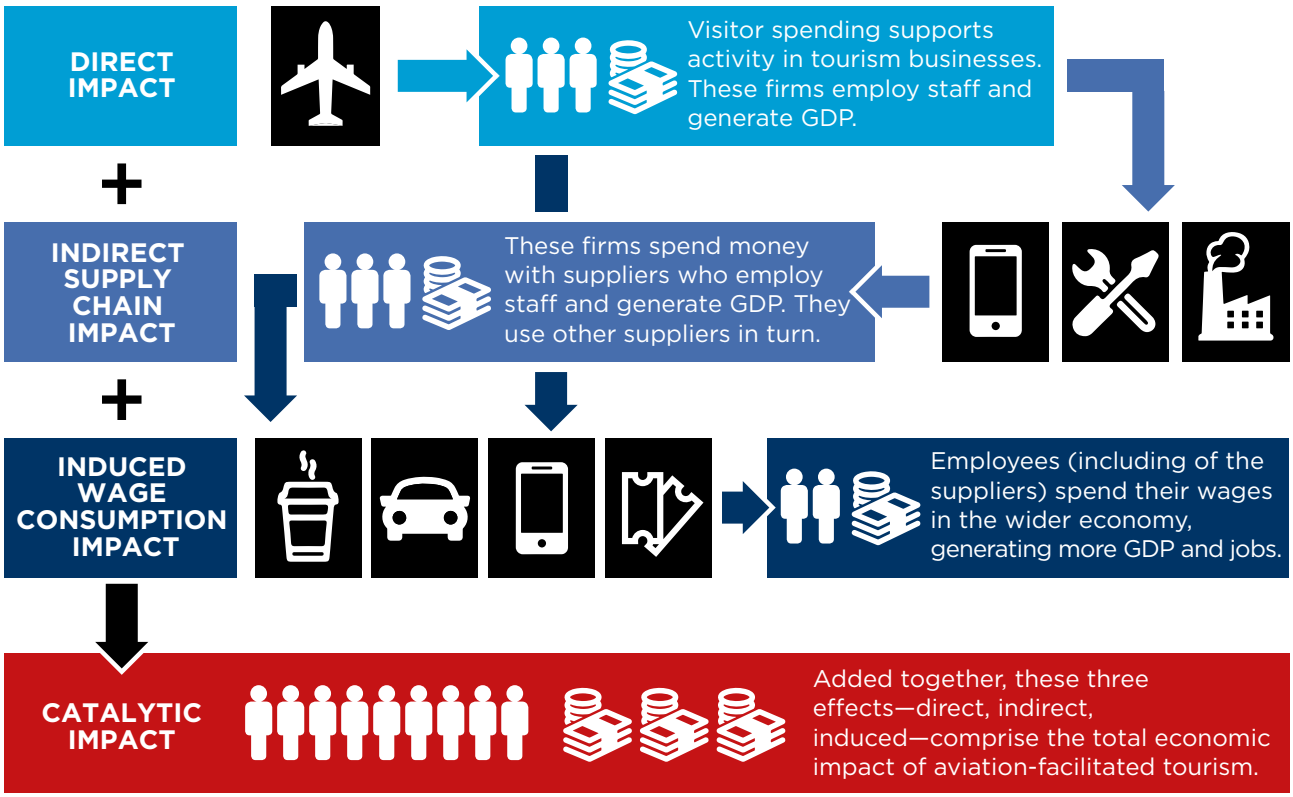
4. THE CATALYTIC IMPACT OF AVIATION-FACILITATED TOURISM IN DUBAI

The impact of the aviation sector extends far beyond its direct and wider core activities. In bringing visitors into the country from all over the world, it facilitates a growing tourism sector in the emirate. This chapter assesses the catalytic aviation-facilitated tourism impact that the sector facilitates through international tourists travelling to Dubai by air.

International visitor spending generates economic activity in Dubai's tourism industries and their supply chains. The associated profits, wages, and jobs generated by this activity represent the gross value added and employment contributions of aviation-facilitated tourism.

Aviation-facilitated tourism stimulates further economic activity as the tourism industries purchase goods and services from their Dubai-based suppliers. Meanwhile wage-funded consumption by the tourism industries' employees and those working in their supply chains stimulates economic activity in the consumer economy. These three channels describe the economic impact framework used to estimate the catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism in Dubai.

Fig. 10: Economic impact framework for aviation-facilitated tourism



4.1 DUBAI'S AVIATION-FACILITATED TOURISM IMPACT

Dubai welcomed over 17 million international visitors in 2023, making it the second most visited city in the world.[15] The number of international overnight visitors travelling to Dubai surpassed that of other major tourism destinations, including London, Paris, Rome, Tokyo, and New York.

In addition to supporting a strong aviation sector, international visitors generate economic activity and employment through their spending while in Dubai. In 2023, the average visitor stayed 3.8 nights at Dubai's hotels and spent AED 4,300 during their visit on hotels, restaurants, recreational activities, and retail.[16]

In 2023, **international visitors flying to Dubai spent an estimated AED 66 billion**. Dubai's largest source nations in terms of aviation-facilitated tourism spending were India (AED 7.6 billion), the UK (AED 7.0 billion), and Saudi Arabia (AED 5.7 billion).

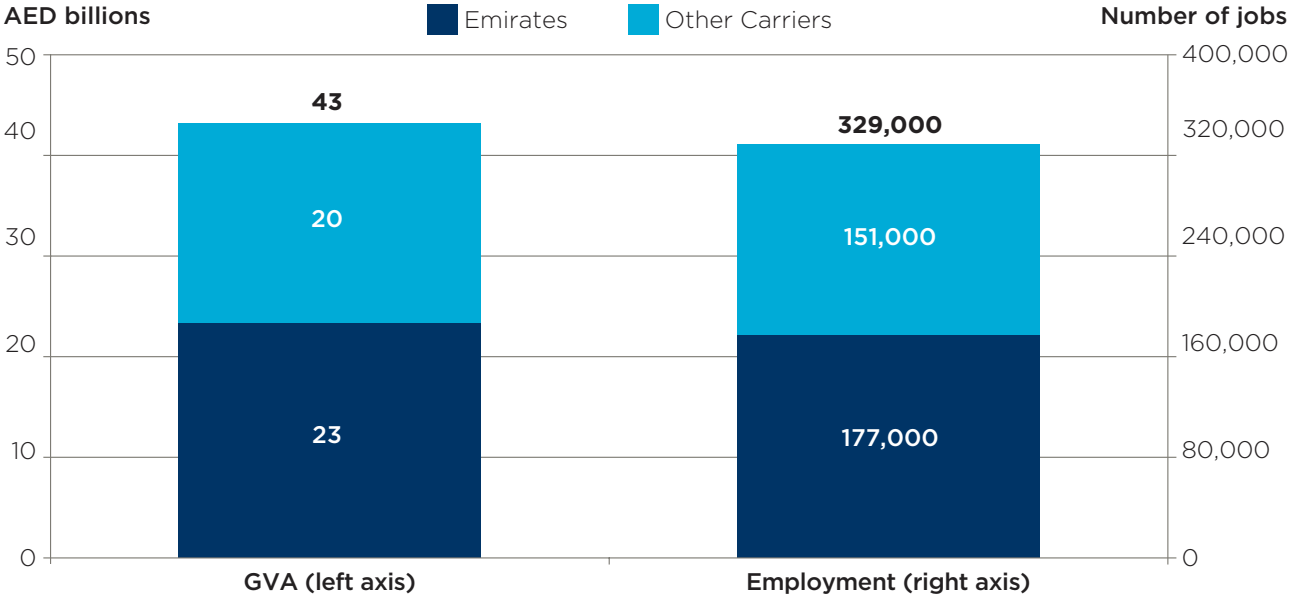
In total, aviation-facilitated tourism spending is estimated to have contributed:

- **AED 43 billion in gross value added**, or
- **8.5% of Dubai's GDP**; and
- **329,000 jobs** across Dubai.

Of the AED 43 billion in gross value added supported in the Dubai economy by aviation-facilitated tourism in 2023, around two-thirds (AED 29 billion) was generated through direct operations by key tourism industries such as hotels, restaurants, retail, and recreational activities. The remainder was stimulated through the tourism sector's supply chain spending (indirect) and wage-funded consumption by employees (induced).

The catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism in Dubai is forecast to grow significantly over the next six years. By 2030, the aviation-facilitated tourism spending is expected to support AED 63 billion in gross value added[17], equivalent to 10% of Dubai's forecast GDP. In the same year, aviation facilitated tourism is forecast to sustain 429,000 jobs, or one in eight jobs across the emirate.

Fig. 11: Catalytic impact of tourism spending in Dubai in 2023



Source: Oxford Economics

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding

[15] Dubai Tourism 2023 (link) and Tourism Economics 2023 (link).
[16] Number of visitors and average hotel nights from Dubai Tourism 2023 (link). Spending from Tourism Economics (link). Excludes spending on airfares. Spending on airfares with Dubai-based carriers is captured in the core economic impact.
[17] In 2023 prices.

Fig. 12: Catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism spending in Dubai in 2023 and 2030

2023				
	GVA (AED bn)	GVA (% Dubai GDP)	Employment (,000s)	Employment (% Dubai workforce)
Direct	29	5.7	214	6.6
Indirect and induced	14	2.8	115	3.5
Aviation facilitated tourism	**43**	**8.5**	**329**	**10**
2030 forecast				
	GVA (AED bn)	GVA (% Dubai GDP)	Employment (,000s)	Employment (% Dubai workforce)
Direct	43	7.0	279	7.8
Indirect and induced	21	3.4	150	4.2
Aviation facilitated tourism	**63**	**10**	**429**	**12**

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding. All monetary values presented in 2023 prices. Excludes tourism spending on air travel with Dubai-based carriers as these are captured within the core economic impacts.

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5. THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AVIATION SECTOR ENTITIES

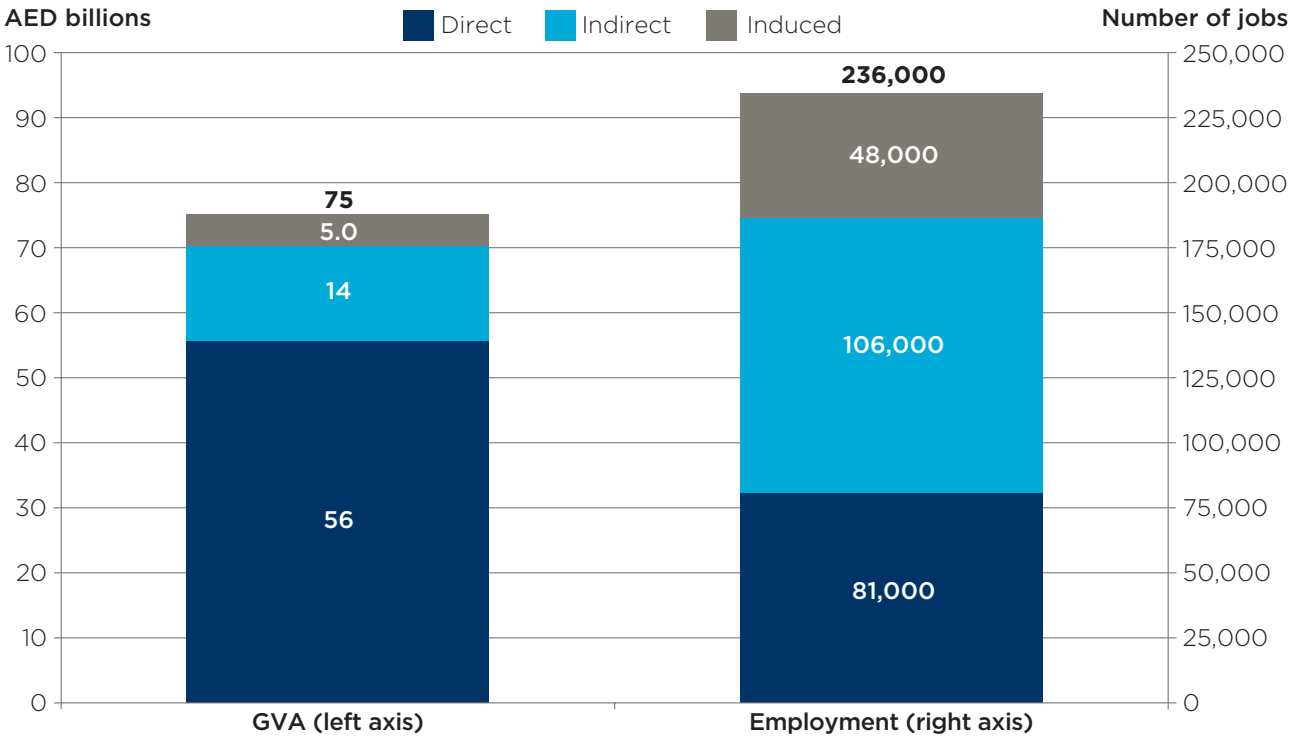
5.1 EMIRATES' ECONOMIC IMPACT

Through operating the world's largest international airline, and one of the world's largest aviation services companies, Emirates plays a central role in Dubai's aviation sector and the wider economy. Emirates Airline flew 52 million passengers and transported 1.9 million tonnes of cargo in 2023, while dnata handled 385,000 aircraft worldwide.[18] Through these operations, Emirates directly contributed AED 56 billion to Dubai's GDP and employed 81,000 staff in the emirate.

Emirates' supply chain spending also made an indirect contribution of AED 14 billion to Dubai's GDP and supported 106,000 jobs. In addition, wage-funded consumption spending by Emirates' employees—and by those working in its supply chains—stimulated an induced gross value added contribution of AED 5.0 billion to Dubai GDP and supported a further 48,000 jobs.

In total, Emirates' core economic impact in 2023 supported **AED 75 billion in gross value added**, equivalent to 15% of Dubai's GDP; and **236,000 jobs** across Dubai economy, or one in every 14 jobs in the emirate.

Fig. 13: Emirates' core economic impact in Dubai in 2023



Source: Oxford Economics, Emirates, Dubai Airports

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding

Note: Purchases between aviation entities are excluded to avoid double counting.

[18] Emirates passengers carried in 2023; Emirates cargo carried October 2022 to September 2023; dnata aircraft turns handled October 2022 to September 2023

Emirates also made substantial economic contributions through its catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism. In 2023, **Emirates Airline carried 54% of all international visitors** who travelled to Dubai by air. Spending by these international visitors contributed **AED 23 billion in gross value added** (4.6% of Dubai's GDP), supporting **177,000 jobs** across Dubai. This represented more than half of the total catalytic impact of aviation-facilitated tourism in the emirate, across all airlines. Combined with its core economic impact, Emirates' total economic contribution in 2023 was:

- **AED 98 billion in gross value added** in 2023, or 19% of Dubai's GDP; and
- **413,000 jobs**, equivalent to one in every eight jobs in the emirate.

Based on projected passenger growth rates, Emirates' overall economic contribution to Dubai's economy is forecast to grow to **AED 144 billion**, or **nearly a quarter of Dubai's forecast GDP in 2030**.[19] This reflects its core economic contribution rising to AED 107 billion and its catalytic impact rising to AED 37 billion in 2030. Furthermore, the number of jobs supported by Emirates in Dubai is forecast to rise to 554,000, or one in six jobs across Dubai. This includes the number of jobs supported through its core impact rising to 300,000 in 2030, while the number supported through its catalytic impact rising to 254,000.

Fig. 14: Emirates' economic impact in Dubai in 2023 and 2030

2023				
	Core	Catalytic	Total contribution	As % Dubai total
Gross value added, AED billions	75	23	98	19
Employment, thousands	236	177	413	13
2030 forecast				
	Core	Catalytic	Total contribution	As % Dubai total
Gross value added, AED billions	107	37	144	24
Employment, thousands	300	254	554	15

Note: All monetary values presented in 2023 prices.

[19] In 2023 prices.

5.2 DUBAI AIRPORTS AND OTHER AVIATION SECTOR ENTITIES' ECONOMIC IMPACT

مطارات دبي
DUBAIRPORTS

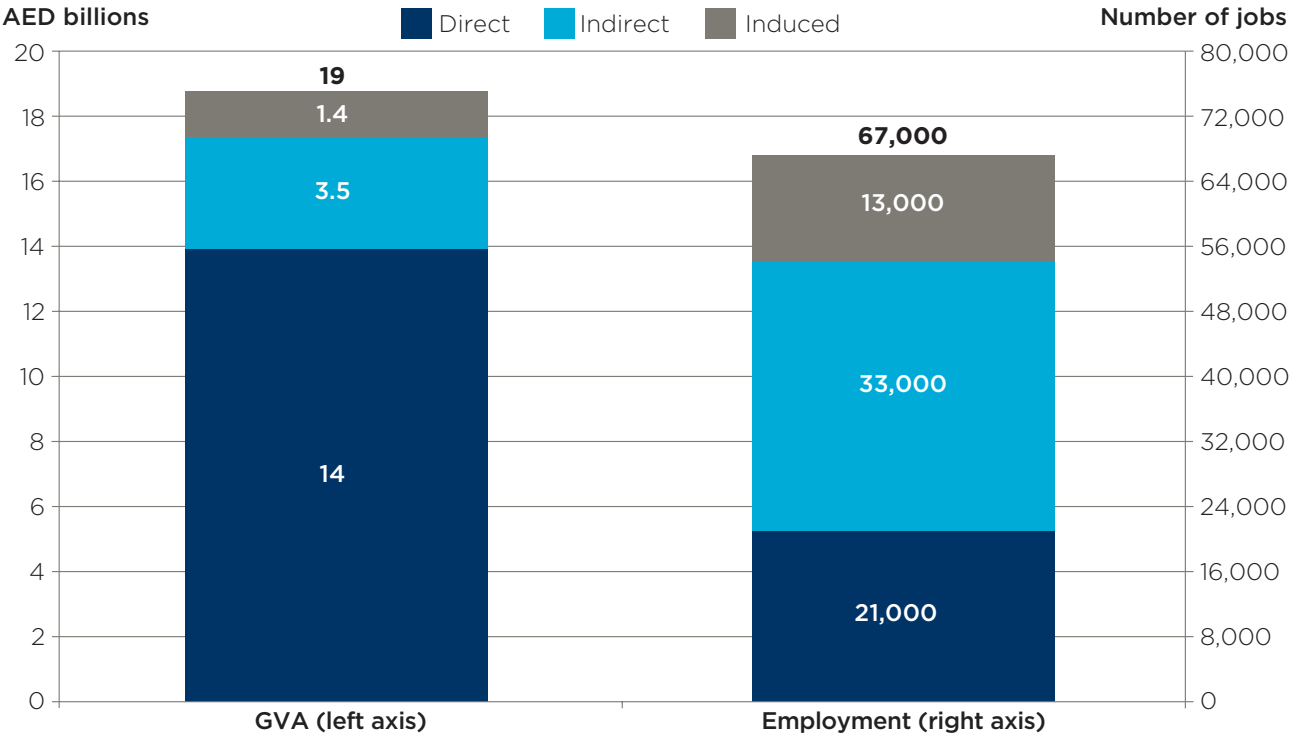
Dubai International Airport was the world's busiest airport for international passengers in 2023.[20] Combined with Al Maktoum International Airport, Dubai Airports served 88 million passengers, processed 452,000 aircraft, and handled 2.4 million tonnes of cargo in 2023.[21] Owing to its substantial capacity and connectivity, Dubai International Airport topped the ACI Airport Connectivity Index rankings for Asia Pacific and the Middle East region.[22]

Dubai Airports works closely with other aviation sector entities, including Dubai Police, GDRFA, Dubai Customs, DCAA, and DANS to enhance and protect the Dubai aviation ecosystem. Other major associated entities are Dubai Duty Free, the largest retail operator at the airport and Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects (DAEP), which is involved in infrastructure development.

Through these operations, Dubai Airports and other aviation sector entities supported a direct contribution of 14 billion to Dubai's GDP and employed 21,000 staff in the emirate.

Supply chain spending by Dubai Airports and other aviation sector entities also made an indirect contribution of AED 3.5 billion to Dubai's GDP and supported 33,000 jobs across the Dubai economy.

Fig. 15: Core economic impact of Dubai Airports and other aviation sector entities in Dubai in 2023



Source: Oxford Economics, Emirates, Dubai Airports

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding

Note: Purchases between aviation entities are excluded to avoid double counting.

[20] OAG 2024 (link).
[21] Dubai Airports data on operations in 2023.
[22] Airports Council International 2023 (link).

Wage-funded consumption spending by Dubai Airports' and other aviation sector entities' employees—and by those working in their supply chains—stimulated an induced gross value added contribution of AED 1.4 billion and sustained 13,000 jobs.

Together, Dubai Airports and other aviation sector entities supported a core economic impact in 2023 of **AED 19 billion in gross value added**, equivalent to 3.7% of Dubai's GDP; and **67,000 jobs**, or one in every 48 jobs in the emirate.

All of Dubai's aviation-facilitated tourism impact is considered part of Dubai Airports' catalytic impact, as all international visitors flying into Dubai do so through its airports.

Combining its core and catalytic impacts, the overall impact of Dubai Airports and other aviation entities in 2023 was:

- **AED 62 billion in gross value added**, or 12% of GDP; and
- **396,000 jobs** across the emirate.

Based on projected financial and passenger growth, the overall economic contribution of Dubai Airports and other aviation entities to Dubai's economy is forecast to grow to **AED 89 billion**, or **15% of Dubai's forecast GDP in 2030**.[23] This reflects their core impact rising to AED 26 billion, plus Dubai's total catalytic impact rising to AED 63 billion.

These entities' overall number of jobs supported is also forecast to grow to **516,000** in 2030, reflecting the core impact jobs supported rising to 87,000, while the overall number of jobs supported through the catalytic impact rising to 429,000.

Fig. 16: Dubai Airports and other aviation sector entities' economic impact in Dubai in 2023 and 2030

2023				
	Core	Catalytic	Total contribution	As % Dubai total
Gross value added, AED billions	19	43	62	12
Employment, thousands	67	329	396	12
2030 forecast				
	Core	Catalytic	Total contribution	As % Dubai total
Gross value added, AED billions	26	63	89	15
Employment, thousands	87	429	516	14

Note: All monetary values presented in 2023 prices.

[23] In 2023 prices.

GLOSSARY

Gross Value Added (GVA): The sum of compensation of employees and earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA). It is also equal to revenue minus the cost of bought in goods and services used up to produce that revenue. Summed across all firms in an economy, and after small adjustments for taxes and subsidies, GVA is equal to GDP.

Employment: The number of people employed, regardless of whether their employment is full time or part time. It is measured in headcount terms for comparability to national statistics.

Tax: The government revenues generated through the economic activity that the sector supports or facilitates within Dubai, that flows to either the Dubai or UAE governments. These include corporation tax, value added tax, customs duties, social security contributions for Emirati employees, and aeronautical charges transferred directly to government.

Direct impact: Economic activity directly generated by Dubai aviation sector entities at their operational sites.

Indirect impact: Economic activity that occurs due to entities in the Dubai aviation sector buying inputs of goods and services from third-party suppliers.

Induced impact: Economic activity supported in the consumer economy through wage-funded consumption by employees working in the sector and its supply chains.

Core impact: The total Dubai aviation sector's contribution to the Dubai economy through its three channels of impact (direct, indirect, and induced impacts).

EBITDA: Earnings (profits) before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation.

Compensation of employees: Compensation of employees represents the total remuneration payable to employees in cash or in kind, including private healthcare and social contributions payable by the employer.

Supply chain spending: Expenditure with third-party suppliers. In this study, we included both day-to-day operational expenditure plus outflows on capital expenditure. Capital expenditure refers to long-term major expenses on equipment, building, and capital goods such as aircraft and machinery. This included both standard capital expenditure outflows for capital goods directly purchased by entities in the sector, plus operating leases (Right of Use assets) for capital goods such as aircraft, where the aviation sector entity does not become the legal owner of the good but benefits from its use.

Tourists (or international visitors): Tourism is defined by the activities of persons identified as visitors. A visitor is someone who is making a visit to a main destination outside their usual environment for less than a year for any main purpose, including holidays, leisure and recreation, business, health, education, or other purposes.

Tourism spending: The spending visitors to Dubai make whilst in the country on goods and services. The definition of visitors includes those visiting for either business or leisure.

Catalytic tourism impact: The impact of tourism spending within Dubai attributable to people travelling to the emirate by air. In this report, only spending of visitors whose final travel destination is Dubai, or those who are transiting Dubai but staying in the emirate for more than 24 hours, are included. Transit passengers—those remaining in Dubai for less than 24 hours—are excluded.

APPENDIX

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF OTHER DUBAI AVIATION SECTOR ENTITIES

Other Dubai aviation sector entities included flydubai, Dubai Duty Free, Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects (DAEP), Dubai Police, Dubai Customs, Dubai Immigration, Dubai Air Navigation Services, Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA), and Dubai Aviation City Corporation.

No detailed financial data were available for the other Dubai aviation sector entities. As such, Oxford Economics utilised a range of data sources to estimate financial, procurement, and employment values for these entities, including airport pass counts provided by Dubai Airports, published financial accounts, and data from Oxford Economics' input-output model for the Dubai economy.

- **flydubai—**financial and employment data were sourced from published financial accounts. These were combined with industry average data from Oxford Economics' input-output model for Dubai's economy to estimate their procurement spend.
- **Dubai Duty Free—** employment data was sourced from published financial accounts. These were combined with industry average data from Oxford Economics' input-output model for Dubai's economy to estimate their revenue, profits, compensation of employees, and procurement spend.
- **Remaining entities—** employment estimates were based on airport pass counts provided by Dubai Airports. These were combined with industry average data from Oxford Economics' input-output model for Dubai's economy to estimate their revenue, profits, compensation of employees, and procurement spend. DAEP's impacts modelling included capital expenditure on construction projects in 2023 and 2030 forecasts, although this excluded spending related to the planned expansion to Al Maktoum Airport.[24]

Oxford Economics calculated the direct impacts using these estimated financials, before modelling the wider indirect and induced impacts using Oxford Economics' input-output model.

MEASURING THE CATALYTIC IMPACT OF AVIATION-FACILITATED TOURISM SPENDING

- Estimating the spending of aviation-facilitated tourism required the use of multiple detailed datasets, including IATA DDS passenger data; official statistics from Dubai Tourism on international visitors; Department of Economy and Tourism on tourism by inbound mode of transport; and a large number of datasets from Oxford Economics' sister company, Tourism Economics, on international visitor spend, spend type, and mode of transport.
- The approach used to estimate international visitor spending by country of origin and airline carrier involved:
  1. **Inbound visitors**—IATA DDS data were used to measure the number of international passengers flying into Dubai, broken down by country of origin and airline carrier. The data identify passengers remaining in Dubai for over 24 hours (overnight visitors), and those immediately boarding another flight out of Dubai (transit passengers). Data from Dubai Tourism and Tourism Economics were used to estimate the proportion of the overnight visitors that can be classified as tourists.
  2. **Average inbound visitor spending**—Tourism Economics' extensive database includes

[24] The Al Maktoum Airport expansion announced in April 2024 is not included in the impact forecast. The DWC expansion would contribute an estimated AED 6.1 billion in gross value added to the economy in 2030, equivalent to 1.0% of Dubai's forecasted GDP; and generate 132,000 jobs, equivalent to 3.7% of Dubai's employment in that year. This assumes there is AED 12.8 billion construction works in 2030, derived from the total capital expenditure of AED 128 billion investment reported in The National 2024 (link), which were evenly distributed over a decade. This estimate assumes all capital expenditure in 2030 is spent within the Dubai construction sector and does not include the value of land purchases. Note this is a single year impact of the construction project in 2030, not the ongoing impact of Al Maktoum Airport's increased capacity and operations.

statistics on international visitor spending by origin country and by spending category (e.g. accommodation, recreation, retail, etc). It was important to estimate spending by origin country to account for variations in spending patterns and visit durations. The estimates were produced at an airline carrier level. Department of Economy and Tourism data on international tourism by inbound mode of transport were also used to account for the proportion of tourism spending attributed to aviation passengers. Final estimates were then produced at an airline carrier level.

The above approach provided detailed estimates of inbound international visitors to Dubai by carrier and their associated expenditure by spend category. Oxford Economics' proprietary input-output model was then used to model the impact of this expenditure on the Dubai economy.

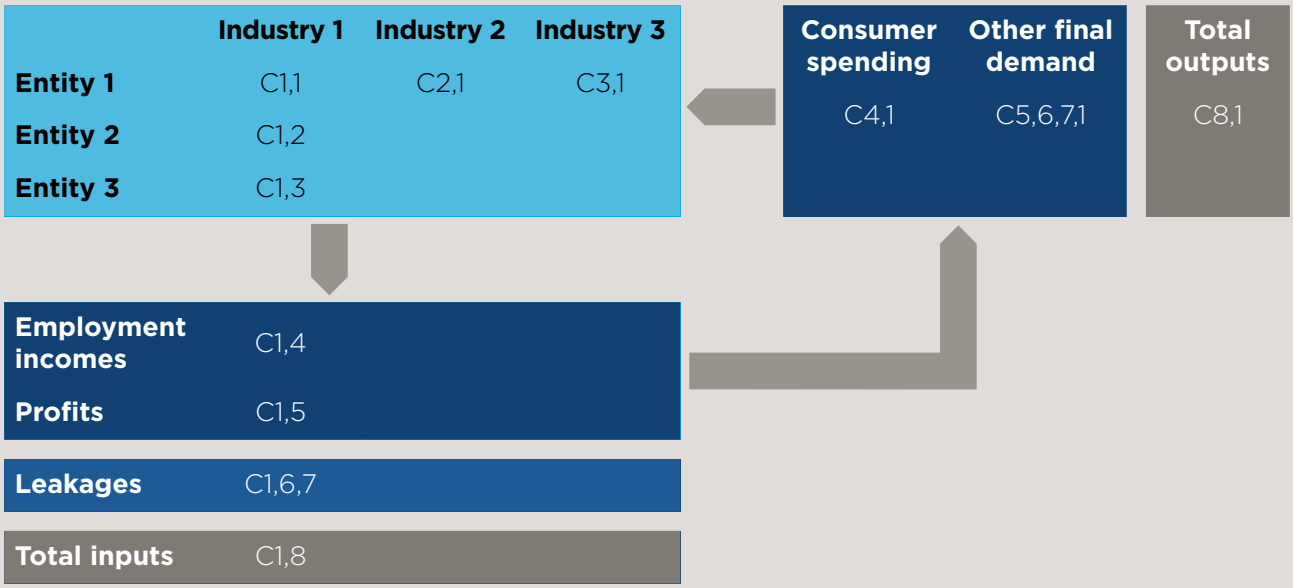
ECONOMIC IMPACT MODELLING

Direct impacts were calculated by Oxford Economics using HR and financial data provided by Emirates and Dubai Airports.

To estimate the wider impacts on Dubai, Oxford Economics used its proprietary subnational input-output model for the UAE economy. The model describes the Dubai and wider UAE economy in terms of interlinkages between industries in the economy, local household spending patterns, and the amount of demand that is met by local production or imported.

Oxford Economics utilised these models—along with supply chain spending data provided by Emirates and Dubai Airports—to estimate

Fig. 17: Illustrative input-output model



Emirates' and Dubai Airports' indirect and induced impacts in terms of gross value added and jobs supported in Dubai.

Oxford Economics also modelled the expected additional economic activity stimulated in Dubai through Emirates' and Dubai Airports' spending with international suppliers. This was achieved by using Oxford Economics' Global Sustainability Model (GSM)—an inter-country input-output model covering 185 countries, allowing for estimation of how spending in one economy can stimulate economic activity across global value chains. The GSM allows for "trade feedback loops" to be captured—for example, Dubai spending with overseas machinery manufacturers could stimulate economic activity in Dubai if those manufacturers subsequently purchase financial services from Dubai as intermediate inputs in their production process.

INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS FOR 2030

Dubai statistics

- Dubai GDP figures are based on official data from Dubai Statistics Centre. As 2022 is the latest available data for GDP statistics, growth rates for 2023 and 2030 were sourced from Oxford Economics' forecasts for the Dubai-Sharjah-Ajman metropolitan area.
- As no Dubai employment statistics are publicly available, 2023 and 2030 figures are based on Oxford Economics' estimates and forecasts.

Aviation entities

- Dubai Airports' financial forecasts for 2030 were provided by Dubai Airports.
- Emirates' financial forecasts for 2030 are based on growth rates informed by passenger projections provided by Emirates.
- Other aviation entities based on employment for the current year are based on airport pass counts provided by Dubai Airports. Growth forecasts are estimated as part of the study based on Dubai Airports' employee forecast.

Tourism impacts

- Oxford Economics used passenger forecasts from Emirates and Dubai Airports, along with Tourism Economics' forecasts of Dubai international visitors spending by origin country. These were used to forecast visitor and spending growth rates for inbound visitors into Dubai by airline carrier.

These projections are naturally sensitive to a variety of headwind and tailwind risks that could impact air passenger traffic growth—including geopolitical risks, supply chain issues, and competition across the region.

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