

THE
CORPORATE
IMMIGRATION
REVIEW

TENTH EDITION

Editor
Chris Magrath

THE LAWREVIEWS

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PREFACE

The year 2020 will of course go down in history as one of the most unusual and difficult years the world has faced in modern times. As we prepare this 10th edition of *The Corporate Immigration Review* for print, most of the world's immigration systems have ceased functioning with any semblance of normality.

All over the world, government policies and national strategies have been upended by the threat of covid-19. Macroeconomic policies have been ditched in favour of imposing lockdowns designed to protect public health. Cross-border cooperation and multilateral structures have been replaced by national self-preservation. Fiscal prudence has been sidelined by state intervention on a scale unprecedented in peacetime. The priority of all governments is the fight to protect public health and to keep the number of acute new illnesses within the capacity of national health systems. Everything else is secondary.

In this context, immigration policy development has taken a back seat. Our globalised economies are in the deep freeze, unable to move or trade normally across borders. National immigration laws are responding to the crisis by imposing temporary, and often draconian, controls on the ability of people to move across borders, in a way unthinkable just a few months ago. Strategic, long-term liberal reforms in the interests of global business transactions have been placed on hold while national governments confront the immediate threat from a virus that has zero regard for state boundaries.

It is difficult to know how long this situation will prevail. Economies cannot be locked down for long periods without having a cataclysmic impact on their ability to emerge unscathed, to bounce back with the vigour they benefited from before. Societies face an alarming choice between the dreadful losses inflicted by a virus and those inflicted by broken economies and unemployment.

Hopefully, by the time this edition hits your desks, the storm will have passed and the business world will be in 'bounce-back' territory, people will be moving around the world again for pleasure, business and economic development, and the horrors of the first half of the year will have been replaced by optimism and relief. We hope so.

A year ago, in very different circumstances, Brexit and its constituent brutal political logjam dominated the news agenda for UK legal practitioners and international observers. Back then it was very difficult to see how the country could find a way forward and resolve the pre-eminent political issue of our time. The changes in political leadership in London followed by a decisive general election result have resolved the problem definitively. At least, of course, until the current covid-19 crisis placed the whole project on hold.

Legally the United Kingdom left the EU on 31 January 2020. There is no going back – it is no longer possible to revoke Article 50. The country has entered a transition period until the 'true Brexit' date of 31 December 2020, when the country will leave the EU single market

and separate definitively from the four freedoms contained therein. The year 2020 was set to be one of hard-fought, dynamic negotiations between London and Brussels. The negotiations are expected to place meat on the bones of the skeleton contained within the revised Political Declaration agreed between the parties in December 2019. Given the new rules around social distancing, as well as the fact that some of the principals have themselves tested positive for the virus, it is difficult to see how the timetable can be met. There is a vast range of complex topics to be agreed upon. Before covid-19, there was already doubt about whether the timetable was realistic. Now the time frame appears impossible.

It is now, however, a matter of law – the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020 prevents the United Kingdom from seeking an extension to the timetable. The Johnson government must either deliver on its much stated promise to ‘get Brexit done’ or change the law. It will be interesting to see whether the Prime Minister’s legendary optimism will find a way through this new challenge.

The UK government is in the process of designing a new immigration framework for the country’s future as an independent nation state. At the end of the transition period, the United Kingdom will leave the single market and the cross-border freedom of movement of people will no longer apply. The country will set its own rules regarding the conditions of entry, stay, work and long-term residence of citizens from outside the British Common Travel Area. The purpose of the new framework will be to ensure that the country remains open for business, attracting the skills and attributes needed by key sectors of the economy while at the same time reducing overall migration numbers and boosting the skills and opportunities of local workers.

Meeting all these objectives is a major policy challenge for ministers and their officials. Designing and implementing the legal and administrative architecture required to launch these changes by the end of the year, particularly in the context of the pandemic, is also a gargantuan task for the UK Home Office. By the time the 11th edition of *The Corporate Immigration Review* goes to press a year from now, perhaps the United Kingdom’s new system will act as a template for a modern, innovative, focused immigration programme for dynamic economies around the world. We will have to wait and see.

In the United States and Canada, as elsewhere, long-term immigration reform has taken a backseat while North America grapples with the coronavirus crisis. As the November election approaches, the United States is entering the most intense period of its political cycle. It remains to be seen how presidential campaigns can be run with anything approaching normality in the age of social distancing.

President Trump had hoped to rely on a buoyant economy as the basis of the case he would put to the American people for re-election. That prosperous foundation is now in tatters as unemployment rises and the economy freezes in the shadow of covid-19. The President will undoubtedly deploy new arguments in his attempt to appeal to the US electorate. Among these, if he is true to form, will be an assault on outsiders. He is likely to heap opprobrium on external multilateral organisations, such as the World Health Organization and the United Nations. He is unlikely to offer a liberal approach to business immigration reform as part of his prospectus for the future.

Much will depend on the outcome of that election as the world emerges from the current crisis. Business immigration practitioners from all over the world, including many from the countries whose laws and systems are set out in this book, will be looking towards that emergence with hope. The desire is for a bounce-back based on the fundamental resilience of our global economy and international structures. We hope that businesses will be able mobilise their workforces into a new post-coronavirus dynamism.

As ever, we are grateful for all the outstanding contributions to this text. As we celebrate the 10th edition, we hope the 11th will be produced in the context of a greatly revitalised world.

Ben Sheldrick

Magrath Sheldrick LLP

London

May 2020

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

*Charles S Laubach and Zahra Zaidi*¹

I INTRODUCTION TO THE IMMIGRATION FRAMEWORK

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has progressively transformed itself into a Middle Eastern business hub since its inception in 1971. The ongoing growth and development of the country are facilitated by the relatively straightforward business controls in place and by the UAE's long-term vision of becoming the financial capital of the region.

The UAE has achieved this with high levels of immigration of both skilled and unskilled immigrants. Employers in the UAE are able to sponsor residence visas for their employees. The residence visa allows the employee to reside in the UAE and to enter and leave the UAE freely for as long as the visa remains valid. Such visas are valid for a two- or three-year term, which is renewable an indefinite number of times. A holder of a residence visa is generally able to apply for residence visas for his or her dependent family members. A person does not obtain the right to become a UAE citizen solely by reason of long-term residence in the UAE.

The vast majority of foreign nationals who reside in the UAE hold residence visas sponsored by their employers or their heads of household. A smaller number of foreign nationals reside in the UAE on the basis of residence visas that are granted by reason of holding shares or other ownership interests in local businesses (a visa known locally as an 'investor' or a 'partner' visa), and yet others are able to reside in the UAE on the basis of real estate ownership; these types of residence visa are not discussed in detail in this chapter, because they are of little relevance to corporate employers.

For an individual who will visit the UAE for a specific job assignment of short duration, a separate category of visa is available known as a mission visa. This may be obtained for a term of up to 180 days.

For shorter trips to the UAE, not suitable for permanent employees, visit visas and transit visas are available. A visit visa is usually issued for a 30-day period, with a possibility of up to two renewals depending on the conditions of the visa. Citizens of many countries (listed in Section II) are routinely granted visit visas upon arrival at UAE ports of entry; nationals of other countries require sponsors for their visit visas. A transit visa may be obtained for a period of two weeks and is not renewable. A sponsor is required for a transit visa. Both visit visas and transit visas are single-entry visas and they cease to be valid once the holder departs the UAE.

¹ Charles S Laubach is a partner and Zahra Zaidi is an associate at Afridi & Angell.

i Legislation and policy

The rules governing immigration requirements are contained primarily in Federal Law No. 6 of 1973 Concerning Immigration and Residence, as amended (the Immigration Law). Further immigration regulations are contained in various ministerial resolutions and orders, the most important of which is Ministerial Resolution No. 360 of 1997, as amended (the Regulations). The requirements of the Immigration Law and the Regulations are administered by the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA) within the UAE Ministry of Interior.

The Federal Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MOHRE) administers laws pertaining to the employment of locals and foreign nationals in the UAE.

The UAE has established a number of free zones to facilitate the conduct of business by foreign nationals and investments in such businesses. Approximately 30 free zones have been established in the UAE at the time of writing. The general approach to employment and immigration is the same within the free zones as in the rest of the UAE. However, as a matter of form, the relevant free zone authority serves as the employer of record for each of the employees hired by an employer that is licensed in the relevant free zone. The employee then serves the specific employer that hired him or her on the basis of secondment from the free-zone authority. Personnel employed in the free zones hold residence visas issued by the GDRFA, but they are not required to hold labour permits issued by the MOHRE.

ii The immigration authorities

The GDRFA is the government body responsible for issuing visas and permits to foreign nationals wishing to enter the UAE. There is a GDRFA presence in each of the seven emirates. The GDRFA controls nearly all aspects of immigration in the country, including receipt, processing and granting or denial of applications for visas, for amendments or extensions to visas, and for cancellation of visas, as well as policing, enforcement, prosecution and adjudication of immigration offences. The MOHRE, formerly known as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, supervises the implementation of the Labour Law in the UAE. Free zones have their own application centres for visas, many of which can be processed online.

iii Exemptions and favoured industries

There are no exemptions for favoured industries in the UAE private sector, although recent developments have introduced special categories of longer-term visas for individuals who hold certain forms of investment or work in certain industries. Further, employers in the free zones generally deal with fewer regulatory restrictions on the hiring of personnel than is the case in the rest of the UAE.

Under the UAE Labour Law, there is a strong preference in favour of hiring UAE nationals. As a formal matter, an employer can hire a non-national of the UAE only following a finding by the MOHRE that there is no UAE national that could fill the proposed role. However, in practice, applications for residence visas are rarely denied on this basis.

There is a formal requirement that an employer with more than 50 employees must ensure that at least 2 per cent of its employees are UAE nationals. Higher thresholds exist in certain industries, such as banking and insurance. As a matter of official policy, employment of UAE nationals is strongly encouraged. Special rules apply to UAE national employees over and above those that apply to non-national employees; among other matters, pension contributions are required in respect of UAE national employees and there are various protections from termination of service.

II INTERNATIONAL TREATY OBLIGATIONS

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a regional association whose members are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Nationals of these countries may travel within the other Member States of the GCC on the basis of their official ID cards, without having to obtain a visa or even produce a passport. They are also permitted to live and work within the other Member States of the GCC without obtaining a residence visa.

Political differences emerged during 2017 that led three of the GCC Member States to impose sanctions on Qatar. The long-term status of Qatar as a member of the GCC remains uncertain.

Visitors from certain countries can enter the UAE for tourism or business purposes with a visit visa granted upon arrival based on a bilaterally agreed visa waiver programme. This visa is valid for up to 90 days. Eligible persons are passport holders from the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Vatican City.

III THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The UAE continues to attract large numbers of expatriate employees and recognises that the growth of business in the UAE relies on creating an encouraging environment for the growth of business for investors, entrepreneurs and professionals.

The most important change in the past year has been the implementation of the new 'Golden Visa' permanent residency scheme, whereby expatriates who are investors, entrepreneurs, researchers or outstanding students, or who have specialised talents, are granted 10-year visas that offer multiple benefits and allow holders to come in and out of the UAE at will, without having to abide by the requirement to be out of the country for less than six months at a time. The UAE has granted several hundred of these Golden Visas since announcing the scheme in early 2019.

IV EMPLOYER SPONSORSHIP

i Residence visa

An employer that wishes to hire a foreign national in the UAE must fulfil a number of obligations. The most important obligations are to obtain immigration approval from the GDRFA and then to obtain labour approval from the MOHRE. The following is a general outline of the process for recruiting an employee from overseas. Similar but somewhat abbreviated procedures would apply to recruitment of an employee who is already present in the UAE.

Typically, an employer would file an application with the GDRFA for an entry permit for the prospective employee. It would be necessary to attach an offer letter signed by both parties outlining the general terms and conditions of employment; identification documents for the employee (usually a passport copy); and copies of the prospective employee's educational

qualifications if the employee will be hired in a managerial, professional or executive capacity. The application must also be supported by a certificate of good conduct issued by the law enforcement authorities in the employee's home country or in the country where the employee resided during the five years immediately preceding the filing of the application.

Based on these documents, the GDRFA reviews the application and either grants or denies the entry permit. As part of the application, internal verifications are conducted to determine whether the prospective employee presents any security or law enforcement risks.

If granted, the employee then enters the UAE under the entry permit. Following the employee's arrival, the employer begins the process of obtaining a residence visa and labour permit for the employee.

In this connection, the foregoing documents are submitted once again to the authorities. However, each of the documents noted above must now be fully authenticated, which means a chain of authentications culminating with the UAE Embassy in the country of origin of the document, followed by authentication by the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, finally, by translation into Arabic by a UAE Ministry of Justice-licensed translator. (An abbreviated authentication process is followed in respect of free-zone applications). The employee is required to undergo a local health check, in which persons are specifically screened for tuberculosis, HIV, leprosy and hepatitis B and C; applications of persons who test positive will be denied. In addition, the employee must sign an employment contract substantially conforming with the terms stated in the offer letter. This employment contract is filed with the MOHRE. Following these procedures, the employee will be issued a residence visa and a labour permit, upon receipt of which the employee will be able to formally commence employment duties in the UAE.

The procedure for employees who will be hired by a free-zone employer are very similar, although the authentication process is somewhat shortened (as noted above). In addition, the employment contract will be filed with the relevant free-zone authority, not with the MOHRE.

ii Labour market regulation

A unique feature of the labour market in the UAE is the significant presence of non-UAE national employees. The process for admitting non-UAE nationals to the UAE for the purpose of employment is administered by the GDRFA, while the process of granting employment permits is administered by the MOHRE. The right to reside in the UAE is closely tied with employment in the UAE and generally one cannot reside in the UAE if one is not employed.

For nationals of the UAE, there are substantial incentives to find employment in the private sector and there are generous pension benefits provided to UAE national employees as well as protections from termination. Nevertheless, the economy is so large that the local private sector labour market is still dominated by foreign employees.

iii Rights and duties of sponsored employees

The UAE Labour Law is Federal Law No. 8 of 1980, as amended. It governs the rights of employees in the private sector. The Labour Law deals with matters related to working hours, vacations and public holidays, sick leave, the employment of juveniles, maternity

leave, employee records, safety standards, termination of employment and end-of-service payments. The Labour Law applies to all employees working in the UAE, whether UAE nationals or expatriates, except for following categories of employees:

- a* officials, employees and workers in federal and local government departments, or appointed for federal or local government projects;
- b* members of the armed forces, police and security officers;
- c* domestic servants working in private residences; and
- d* workers employed in agriculture, apart from employees of agricultural companies engaged in processing products, or operating or repairing machinery required for agriculture.

In addition, employees in Dubai International Financial Centre and Abu Dhabi Global Market, two financial free zones in the UAE, are subject to the labour laws specific to those free zones, and not to the UAE Labour Law.

Probation period

It is often the case that a new employee is hired under a probation period. Under the UAE Labour Law, the probation period may be up to six months. No employee may be required to serve two probation periods with the same employer.

Minimum wages

There is no minimum salary stipulated in the Labour Law. The GDRFA requires an employee to receive a minimum salary of 10,000 UAE dirhams per month if the employee wishes to sponsor residence visas for dependent family members.

Working hours

Article 65 of the UAE Labour Law provides that the regular working hours for the private sector are eight hours per day and 48 hours per week. An employee who works in excess of either threshold will be entitled to overtime compensation. Overtime compensation is 25 per cent more than the employee's salary during the normal working hours, which increases to 50 per cent for overtime between 9pm and 4am.

For some employees, working hours may be extended to nine hours per day. This primarily benefits employers in the hospitality (hotels, restaurants and cafes) and retail sectors.

Regular working hours are reduced by two hours daily during the holy month of Ramadan.

Reduction in working hours

Construction and industrial workers are not permitted to work outdoors during the peak hours of the day during the summer. Any firm found to have staff working during the designated break time would be fined 5,000 dirhams per worker up to a maximum of 50,000 dirhams.

Working in remote areas

Every employer who employs staff in remote areas that are not served by public means of transportation must provide the employees with the following services:

- a* suitable transportation;
- b* suitable accommodation;

- c* suitable drinking water;
- d* suitable food;
- e* first aid services; and
- f* means of entertainment and sports activities.

All the above services, apart from food, are provided on the employer's account.

Labour accommodation

In June 2009, the UAE Cabinet issued a General Standards Manual for Group Labor Accommodation and Related Services. The Manual sets minimum standards for facilities that must be provided to labourers while adhering to the established environmental and health and safety laws. It also recommends providing recreational amenities. Municipal authorities regularly inspect labour accommodation.

Ministerial Resolution No. 591 of 2016 requires employers with 50 or more employees who each earn less than 2,000 dirhams per month to provide accommodation for its employees.

Insurance

Employers in the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai are required to provide medical insurance to all employees.

Official leave and vacations

Friday is the official weekend for all employees, except for daily wage workers. If circumstances require an employee to work overtime on that day, the employee will be entitled to regular working hours' pay, plus an increase of not less than 50 per cent of that amount.

Pursuant to UAE Cabinet Resolution 27 of 2019, employees in both the private and public sectors are entitled to paid leave on the following public holidays:

- a* Hijri New Year – one day;
- b* Gregorian New Year – one day;
- c* Eid Al Fitr – from 29 Ramadan to 3 Shawwal;
- d* Eid Al Adha – three days;
- e* Prophet Mohammed's birthday – one day;
- f* Martyr's Day – one day; and
- g* National Day – two days.

In addition, employees are entitled to annual leave of:

- a* two days per month, if they have completed six months of service but not one year; or
- b* 30 days, if they have completed one year of service.

An employee's annual leave is not extended by any weekends or official holidays that fall during the course of the annual leave.

Employees are entitled to sick leave of not more than 90 days per year subject to conditions stipulated in the law. They will receive full pay for the first 15 days, half pay for the next 30 days and no pay for the final 45 days. Employees are not entitled to any paid sick leave during the probation period.

An employee may be granted special leave not in excess of 30 days, without pay, for the performance of Hajj. This is granted only once during the employee's years of employment.

Wage Protection System

The Wage Protection System (WPS) is intended to ensure that all employees are paid salary in a timely manner. WPS requires that employers pay all their employees their monthly salaries in UAE dirhams via the local banking system. Payments are monitored by the MOHRE to ensure compliance and it conducts inspections and takes other remedial measures in the event of discrepancies.

Termination

The UAE Labour Law places some limitations on the circumstances in which an employer may terminate the services of an employee. An employee may serve under a contract of specified term or unspecified term. An employee serving under a specified-term contract may have services terminated only for one of the specific reasons of employee misconduct that are listed in Article 120 of the Labour Law. In contrast, an employer may terminate services of an employee who is serving under an unspecified-term contract by providing at least one month notice of termination on the basis of a 'legitimate reason' for termination. A legitimate reason is a far less demanding standard than the grounds listed in Article 120. If the termination is done improperly or for an arbitrary reason, then the employer could be required to pay up to three months' salary as damages for wrongful dismissal. The UAE Labour Law does not provide for damages in excess of this figure.

End-of-service benefits

At end of service, an employee becomes entitled to a severance payment known as an 'end-of-service gratuity'. This payment is equivalent to 21 days of salary for each of the employee's first five years of employment, plus 30 days of salary for each year thereafter. The end-of-service gratuity is based on the employee's total salary excluding any allowances or in-kind payments, which is roughly equivalent to basic salary. The end-of-service gratuity obligation can be replaced, in some circumstances, by an employer-funded pension or savings scheme.

Grievances

Employees with grievances may file the grievance directly with the labour disputes section of the MOHRE. Collective bargaining is not permitted in the UAE and there are no labour unions. The MOHRE serves as the principal body charged with protecting employees' rights.

Renewal and transfer

Most employer-sponsored UAE residence visas are valid for a two-year term, after which they must be renewed for the employee to stay in the country. Employers are subject to numerical limitations depending on the employer's business activities. Some of the free zones give employers visa quotas that depend on the size of the employer's business premises.

Visa transfers within the UAE are generally possible for employees who hold bachelor's degrees or higher educational qualifications. The specific requirements on transfers vary somewhat from time to time and from place to place.

Free-zone employees

There are numerous free zones in the UAE and most of them have their own separate employment regulations that apply in addition to the provisions of the UAE Labour Law. The exceptions are the Dubai International Financial Centre and the Abu Dhabi Global Markets, which have their own stand-alone labour regulations that apply in lieu of the Labour Law.

As noted above, employees in free zones do not generally hold labour permits issued by the MOHRE. Instead, they are granted residence visas by the GDRFA under the sponsorship of the free-zone authority where they are employed.

V INVESTORS, SKILLED MIGRANTS AND ENTREPRENEURS

The UAE has introduced new long-term visas of up to 10 years, granted for investors, entrepreneurs and specialists working in fields of medicine, science and research, as well as a new scheme for expatriate retirees in the UAE. We outline the requirements of the long-term visas below.

i Outstanding students

Outstanding students will also be eligible for a long-term visa as part of the changes, to encourage them to settle in the UAE following the completion of their education. Those with an average of at least 95 per cent in school and a grade point average of at least 3.75 on graduation from universities in the UAE and abroad will qualify for a five-year visa for themselves and their families.

ii Investors

Investors will be eligible for a five- or 10-year residence visa depending on the size of their investment in the UAE. The investor's spouse, children, one executive director and one adviser will also be able to obtain long-term visas.

A five-year residence visa may be applied for by investors in real estate in the UAE if the following conditions are met:

- a* the investor must have invested in one or more properties in the UAE with a total value of at least 5 million dirhams;
- b* the amount invested must not be derived from the proceeds of a loan. Consequently, it will not be possible for there to be a mortgage over the property if the visa is to be applied for;
- c* the property must be owned by the investor for at least three years from the date of issuance of the residence visa;
- d* the investor must not be financially liable for any claims or civil judgments that reduce his or her financial solvency below a certain amount; and
- e* the investor must have a comprehensive health insurance policy covering himself or herself and his or her family members.

A 10-year residence visa may be applied for by investors if the following conditions are met:

- a* a deposit of at least 10 million dirhams in an investment fund inside the country;
- b* establishing a company in the UAE with a capital of at least 10 million dirhams;
- c* partnering in an existing or a new company with a share value of at least 10 million dirhams; or

- d* having a total investment of at least 10 million dirhams in all areas mentioned, on condition that the investment in sectors other than real estate is not less than 60 per cent of the total investment.

The 10-year visa also requires the following additional conditions to be met:

- a* the amount invested must not be derived from the proceeds of a loan. Consequently, it will not be possible for there to be a mortgage over the property if the visa is to be applied for;
- b* the property must be owned by the investor for at least three years from the date of issuance of the residence visa;
- c* the investor must not be financially liable for any claims or civil judgments that reduce his or her financial solvency below a certain amount; and
- d* the investor must have a comprehensive health-insurance policy covering himself or herself and his or her family members.

The 10-year visa can be extended to include business partners, on the condition that each partner contributes 10 million dirhams.

iii Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs with a former business worth a minimum of 500,000 dirhams, or those boasting the approval of an accredited business incubator in the UAE, will be given a five-year visa. They will be able to upgrade to an investor visa subject to certain conditions.

The visa will be offered to the entrepreneur's spouse, children, business partners and three executive directors.

iv Specialists

Doctors, scientists, inventors, specialists in culture and art and researchers working in science and knowledge may be eligible for a 10-year visa. The researchers, scientists and doctors will be able to include their spouses and children under their visa.

The categories of persons that may apply for this visa include:

- a* scientists accredited by Emirates Scientists Council or holders of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Medal for Scientific Excellence;
- b* creative individuals in culture and art accredited by the Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development;
- c* inventors who obtain a patent of value, which adds to the UAE's economy. Patents must be approved by Ministry of Economy and exceptional talents must be documented by patents or a scientific research published in a world-class journal;
- d* executives who are owners of a leading and internationally recognised company or holders of a high academic achievement and position; and
- e* doctors and specialists who meet at least two of the following criteria:
- have a PhD degree from one of the top 500 universities in the world (as recognised by the UAE authorities);
 - have an award or certificates of appreciation in the field of the applicant's work;
 - have contributed to major scientific research in the respective field of work;
 - have published articles or scientific books in distinguished publications in the respective field of work;
 - are a member in an organisation related to the field;

- have a PhD degree, in addition to 10-year professional experience in his or her field; or
- specialise in areas of priority to the UAE.

v Retirees

Expatriates aged 55 or above can also remain in the UAE following retirement once they secure a five-year retirement visa that meets certain criteria, including the ownership of property worth at least 2 million dirhams. Other conditions include the ownership of at least 1 million dirhams in savings or an active income of over 20,000 dirhams per month.

VI OUTLOOK AND CONCLUSIONS

Growth in the economy over the next five years as a result of economic diversification will continue to establish the UAE as a vital economic and commercial centre in the Middle East. The UAE has a long history of political and economic stability and has a well-earned reputation for ease of doing business. These factors are likely to continue to contribute to the growth of the UAE in the future. This is likely to lead to a continuing high demand for a foreign workforce. At the same time, with the UAE population growing, there will be increased demand to create rewarding careers for nationals of this country.

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