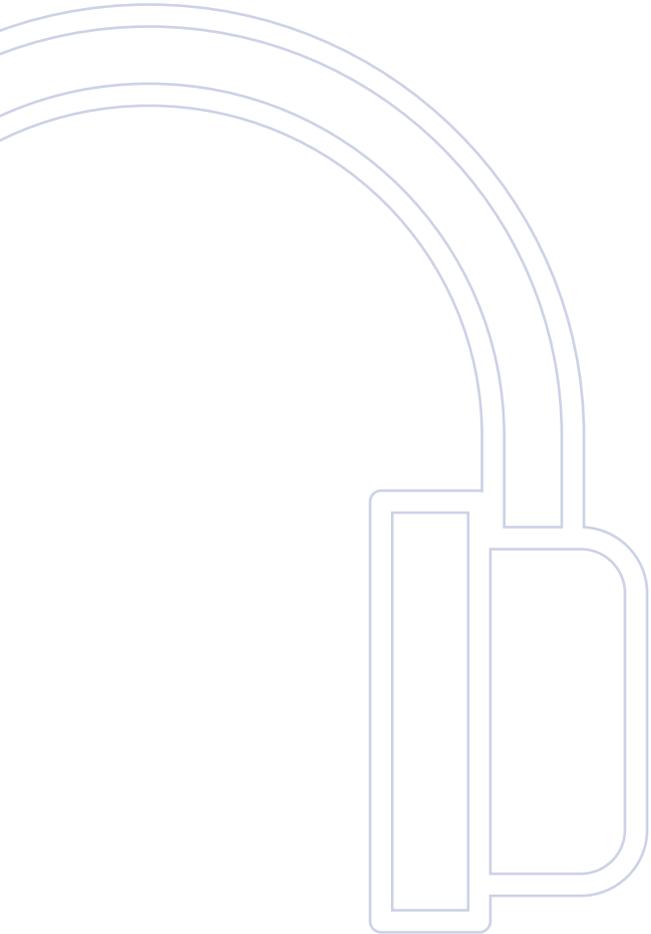


# Dubai Media City



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**Dubai Media City**

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## Context and Background

The media have a vital role to play in all aspects of economic and social development. The significance of media for development is wide-ranging from communicating development messages to facilitating citizen engagement and e-participation in defining and implementing their development. We should understand that media matters. From encouraging charitable donations and delivering public health messages to promoting democratic participation and state accountability, the media can play a crucial role in development.

In some countries, there is an adversarial role between media institutions and governments. When this happens, the trust between citizens and government weakens. Then there is the case when the influence of the media is unwelcomed. This happens when the media is used as a mechanism of surveillance and control or to disseminate hate speech and propaganda.

The media should be seen as an independent arm of a country that not only provides people with information and knowledge, but also plays the role of an honest broker that reports the news and information without trying to influence the user.

## Need

The question is, “how can a country create a cohesive and productive media environment without coercing it?”. The government should not interfere with the work of the media, but should embrace it as a vital part of development.

## Idea

Dubai Media City (DMC), was launched in January 2001, in the vision of His Highness (HH) Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, ruler of Dubai and the Prime Minister of the UAE, to transform Dubai into a knowledge-based society and economy.

### The Story of Dubai Media City

As part of the vision of His Highness (HH) Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, ruler of Dubai and the Prime Minister of the UAE, Dubai Media City was set up to create a world-class environment for global and regional media companies as well as independent media professionals.

DMC operates under the jurisdiction of Dubai Creative Clusters Authority (DCCA, that was formally known as the Dubai Technology & Media Free Zone Authority (DTMFZA) and is managed by TECOM Investments, a Dubai based company and a subsidiary of Dubai Holding. They are dedicated to creating knowledge and life-improving industries.

Within the DMC, local and international companies of all sectors and sizes, such as media and marketing services, printing and publishing, music, film, new media, leisure and entertainment, broadcasting and information agencies, are operating in a collective synergy.

DMC offers a supportive platform for media-oriented companies to display their products and services. Since its launch in 2000 more than 1,400 companies have set up operations in this free zone including global media giants like Bertelsmann, BBC, MBC, CNN, Reuters, CNBC, Forbes, Sony, and Showtime, among others.

DMC encompasses a media community of over 20,000 people working in over 2,000 regional and international media companies that are pushing the boundaries of creativity every day.

DMC has become a major hub for the media industry in the GCC and the Middle East, with more than 1,300 companies being registered under the Free Zone. This has created a launching spot where these companies can serve the entire region.

In 2005, The International Cricket Council, the worldwide governing body for the game, has moved its headquarters from London to the DMC, due to the excellent media infrastructure and the support the government provides to the city.

Through the DMC, UAE is aiming to attract global media companies with them becoming their respective company regional hub. Along with the launch of DMC comes a promise of

freedom of expression for journalists in the Emirate, but there are concerns about how realistic that will prove. The purposes of DMC are:

### 1. To become a magnet to attract media companies

Media companies see the DMC as a must-have address. It provides them with business opportunities that they would not have if they were not in DMC. It facilitates the collaboration process with other media companies

### 2. To support freedom of the Press

The opening of DMC has a greater significance for the UAE and potentially for the rest of the Gulf with HH Sheikh Mohammed being directly linked to the broadening of press freedoms in a conservative region.

DMC provides an opportunity for a variety of business clusters and companies to start their operations along with its other business, thus creating an energetic networking atmosphere and top-notch logistic facilities for DMC companies.

### 3. Unique Cluster Environment

DMC offers a unique collective environment where a work campus is dedicated to a specific industrial sector, thus creating a value chain and enables interaction and collaboration towards a common business goal.

### 4. World-Class Infrastructure

DMC offers a Metro Ethernet environment, high-speed data, digital voice services, latest technology, and community infrastructure at competitive rates to foster cluster growth.

### 5. Free Zone Status

- Freedom of 100% foreign ownership
- 0% personal income tax and corporate tax for at least 50 years, which can be later renewed
- Total exemption on customs duties on import and/or re-export of goods and services
- No currency restrictions
- No need for minimum capital investment

- No restriction on hiring foreign employees

### 6. Business-Friendly Environment

- The hassle-free and simplified incorporation process
- Streamlined legal framework and business-friendly company laws
- 24-hour visa service
- Single-window operations for all government services like postal services, licensing, registration, visa, traffic, etc.
- Faster immigration process and rapid access to knowledge workers

### 7. Business Segments in Dubai Media City

The Dubai government supports various forms of business ventures under its jurisdiction, and in DMC, there are various business sectors to choose from:

- Advertising & Communication
- Business Information
- Event Management
- Event Support Services
- Freelancing
- Media and Marketing Services
- Media Support Services
- Media Consultancy
- New Media
- Non-Profit Association

### 8. Types of Permissible Legal Entities in Dubai Media City

An individual or corporate can register their business in this Dubai Free Zone as one of the following legal entities:

- Free Zone Establishment (FZE or FZ-LLC)
- A business entity with one shareholder

- Free Zone Company (FZC/FZCO)
- A business entity with 2 to 5 shareholders
- Branch of a Foreign Company
- For an application of foreign nationality
- Branch of a Local Company
- For a UAE registered a corporate person to apply for company setup
- Freelancer
- For a person wishing to dispense a certain service, falling under freelance permit, under own name

### Impact

Dubai Media City (DMC) is the largest Information and Communications Technology (ICT) hub in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. DMC has enabled the UAE to attract the top media companies of the world to the UAE. This has led to an increase in employment for Emiratis in the media business. It has also led to the UAE becoming a major player in the media world.

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