



Get Started

# Set Up Your Mainland Company

## Select Your License

**Industrial License** - This applies to a range of manufacturing activities such as production, packaging, sorting, or collection, including food, textiles, paper, petroleum products, and machinery.

After obtaining the industrial license, you must obtain further approvals from the relevant government departments before commencing operations.

**E-Trader License** - If you are someone who works from home and sells products or services through social media or other online platforms, this license is designed for you.

**Professional License** - This license is intended for individuals who provide professional services that rely on their intellectual or creative skills.

## Choose Your Legal Structure

Pick a legal form that fits your business:

**General Partnership** - Partners share responsibility for the company's debts.

**Limited Partnership** - Some partners have full responsibility, while others are only responsible for what they put in.

**Limited Liability Company (LLC)** - Limits how much each partner is responsible for. Can be owned by a UAE national or foreigner with up to 50 partners.

**Private Joint Stock Company** - Up to 200 shareholders with shares that can't be traded publicly.

**Public Joint Stock Company** - Lets the public buy shares.

**Civil Company** - For partnerships in professions like tailoring or consulting.

**Sole Proprietorship** - Owned by one person who is responsible for everything.

## Check Foreign Ownership eligibility

Please verify whether your company's proposed activities permit full foreign ownership. While most business activities do allow for full foreign ownership, there are specific strategic sectors where such ownership is restricted. If your business intends to engage in these restricted activities, partnering with an Emirati associate will be necessary.

## Foreign Ownership Restrictions

Determine which business activities do not permit full foreign ownership.

Although most business activities in Dubai can be conducted by companies with full foreign ownership, certain categories are exempt from this provision. Please review the list below to identify these restricted activities before initiating the business setup process and make the necessary plans.

If you intend to engage in any of these restricted activities, you will be required to partner with a local Emirati partner.

## **The following activities are not permitted for full foreign ownership**

Manufacturing of military garments  
Tailoring of military uniforms and clothing  
Production of medium military weapons  
Manufacture of metal badges and military insignia  
Production of military tools and supplies  
Dismantling and destruction of military equipment and weapons  
Trading of military dress  
Trading of military weapons  
Trading of military equipment  
Trading of military ammunition, explosives, and pyrotechnic products  
Trading of military scrap  
Trading of military tools and supplies  
Trading of spare parts for military vehicles and equipment  
Disposal of unexploded ordnance and mines (naval and land)  
Manufacturing of light military weapons  
Manufacturing of heavy military weapons  
Manufacturing of military ammunition  
Manufacturing of explosives and pyrotechnic products  
Construction of military ships  
Manufacturing of military aircraft  
Production of toughened and laminated flat glass  
Manufacture of propellant powders  
Production of radar equipment  
Manufacturing of military plants equipment  
Production of ballistic and guided missiles  
Manufacturing of military fighting vehicles  
Manufacturing of tanks  
Manufacturing of armored amphibious military vehicles  
Production of military remote-control systems  
Manufacturing of sensors and military communication systems  
Manufacturing of plating machinery and vehicles  
Repair and maintenance of military equipment  
Repair and maintenance of military aircraft  
Repair and maintenance of military ships  
Reality-based training for military purposes  
Representation of defense and security companies  
Military consultancy  
Development of defense and surveillance systems  
Development of missile and weapons technology  
Development of safety and protection systems for military aircraft  
Research and development of military technology

Development of control and command systems Financial  
Services and Banking Activities

**The following financial and banking activities are subject to restrictions on full foreign ownership**

Commercial Banks  
Islamic Banks  
Credit and Finance Banks  
Investment Banks  
Savings Banks  
Wholesale Banks  
Digital Wallet Services for Electronic Payments  
Hawala Brokerage Services  
Real Estate Financing  
Industrial Financing  
Agricultural Financing  
E-Finance Services  
Consumer Loans and Credit  
Financing Operations  
Insurance for Accidents and Civil Liabilities  
Life Insurance  
Credit and Savings Insurance  
Fire Insurance  
Theft Insurance  
Workers' Compensation Insurance  
Motor, Marine, Aviation, and Transport Insurance  
Health Insurance  
Mechanical Failure Insurance  
Other Types of Insurance  
Reinsurance  
Life Reinsurance  
Money Exchange Services  
Money Orders and Travelers' Cheques Exchange  
Remittance of Local and Foreign Currencies  
E-Banking Services  
Insurance Actuaries  
Insurance Brokers  
Insurance Agents  
Banknote Printing  
Coin Minting

## **The following telecommunications activities are restricted from full foreign ownership**

Radio Broadcasting Stations

Wired Telecommunications Services

Operation and Maintenance of Switching and Transmission Facilities

Cable Distribution and Operation of Data and Television Signals

Television and Radio Broadcasting via Encrypted and Open Channels

Wireless Telecommunications Services

Satellite Communications Services

Satellite Ground Stations

### **Additional Categories**

Commercial Agencies

Hajj and Umrah Organization

Holy Quran Recitation Institutes

Fish Harvesting

Natural Pearl Harvesting

Marine Wildlife Capture

### **Check if you need additional approvals**

Some businesses might need extra approvals from the government.

Make sure you know what you need before starting. Certain activities within sectors such as food and beverages, healthcare, aviation, education, communication, transportation, and insurance require additional approval procedures.

These include obtaining specific No-Objection Certificates and other relevant documentation.

**For some activities, external approvals are necessary. Please consult the list below for information on the relevant ministries or agencies that must be approached**

Activities in the Telecommunication sector [TDRA](#)

Agriculture, veterinary, environmental consultant UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment ([moccoae.gov.ae](#))

Air Cargo, Travel agent with ticketing activity [DCAA](#) - Dubai Civil Aviation Authority

Auditing Auditors Department | Ministry of Economy - UAE ([moec.gov.ae](#))

Branch of a foreign company / Representative office Home | Ministry of Economy - UAE ([moec.gov.ae](#))

Construction companies, clinics, engineering firms Dubai Municipality - Home ([dm.gov.ae](#))

Customs broking, freight forwarding, sea cargo Dubai Maritime Authority | Index ([dmca.ae](#))

Financial Consultation, Share broking, Investment advisory Securities and Commodities Authority ([sca.gov.ae](#))

Cryptocurrency / Virtual Assets Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority ([VARA](#))

Fintech services [DFSA](#) | THE INDEPENDENT REGULATOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial institutions, banks, money exchanges CBUAE | Home ([centralbank.ae](#))

Healthcare, Biotechnology and Pharmaceuticals [DHA](#) Home

Insurance Company, Insurance Agents CBUAE | Home ([centralbank.ae](#))

Land Transport Page Not Found | Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure in UAE ([moei.gov.ae](#))

Lawyers Licence The Rulers Office

Manpower Supply / Recruitment Ministry of Human Resources & Emiratisation ([mohre.gov.ae](#))

National industrial licence Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology ([moiat.gov.ae](#))

Publishing, printing, newspaper, advertising, video film, photography National Media Council

Registration of boats, yachts, ships Dubai Maritime Authority | Index ([dmca.ae](#)) | Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure in UAE ([moei.gov.ae](#))

Restaurants and Food Establishments Dubai Municipality - Home ([dm.gov.ae](#))

Social Service Providers Home ([cda.gov.ae](#))

Tourism – permits Discover Department of Economy and Tourism in Dubai ([dubaidet.gov.ae](#))

## Prepare Your Documents

Gather all the forms and documents you need, like your passport, visa, and company's articles of association. If you are new to Dubai, it is essential to secure a tourist or visit visa, as business setup is not permitted without a valid entry visa.

### **For initial business approval, the following documents are required:**

For Foreign Nationals: Copy of the licensee's passport.

For Emirati or Resident Applicants: Copy of Emirates ID.

For Non-GCC Nationals: Copy of the residence permit or visa.

For All New Businesses: Company's articles of association (not required for a sole proprietorship).

### **Additional Requirements for Public Shareholding and Private Joint-Stock Companies:**

Feasibility study of the project.

### **For Branches of Companies Based in Other Emirates:**

Board resolution from the parent company authorizing the branch establishment in Dubai.

Letter of authorization from the managing director.

Copy of the parent company's commercial registration certificate.

Copy of the parent company's memorandum of association (MoA).

### **For Branches of Foreign or Free Zone Companies:**

Copy of the parent company's license.

The parent company's documents must be attested and legalized by the UAE Embassy and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the country of origin. Additionally, they should be counter-attested by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the UAE and translated into Arabic by a legal translator, with attestation by the Ministry of Justice in the UAE.

## Start Your Company Registration

There are three main steps:

**Initial Approval** - The Dubai Department of Economy & Tourism checks your application and documents to give you the okay to find a place for your business.

**Trade Name Registration** - Register your trade name, business activity, and company structure according to Dubai's rules.

**Receive Your Business License** - Submit your approval receipt, Memorandum of Association, and any other needed approvals.

You will get your business license after this.

If you require additional support, please contact us.