

Company: General Directorate of Identity & Foreigners Affairs-Dubai- United Arab Emirates
Company Description: The General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs - Dubai is the agency of the Dubai Government that regulates the residency of foreign nationals and the entry and exit of international travelers to and from the Emirate of Dubai. GDRFA has more than 5000 employees spread across 8 main sectors all of them aiming to deliver specific objectives for the organization.

Nomination Category: Company / Organization Categories

Nomination Sub Category: Organization of the Year - Non-Profit or Government Organizations - Large

Nomination Title: Identity & Foreigners Affairs-Dubai

1. Which will you submit for your nomination in this category, a video of up to five (5) minutes in length about the achievements of the nominated organization since 1 January 2023, OR written answers to the questions for this category? (Choose one):

Written answers to the questions

2. If you are submitting a video of up to five (5) minutes in length, provide the URL of the nominated video here, OR attach it to your entry via the "Add Attachments, Videos, or Links to This Entry" link above, through which you may also upload a copy of your video.
3. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this first question: Briefly describe the nominated organization: its history and past performance (up to 200 words):

Total 199 words used.

In October 1971 and by order of H.H Sheikh Rashid Al Maktoum the ruler of Dubai (1958 – 1990), two departments were established, namely (the Central Immigration Department and the Ports and Borders Department) and the terms of reference for residency and foreign affairs were reorganized according to Federal law No. (1) for the year 1971, as it specialized in accessing all matters related to nationality, passports, immigration and residency, and in 2017, according to Federal Law No. (3) for the year 2017, the same specialization were reorganized by transferring them to the General Directorate of residency and foreigners affairs.

The GDRFA--Dubai consists of 4,917 employees. The organizational structure of the department is made up of 6 main sectors: (1)Identity and Citizenship–Dubai, (2) Entry Permits and Residency, (3) Follow-up on Violators and Foreigners, (4) Air Ports Sector, (5) Sea and Land Ports Sector, and (6) Labor Relations Organization. Additionally, there are 3 supporting sectors: (1) Leadership and Future, (2) Human Resources and Financial, and(3) Digital Services.

The GDRFA-Dubai provides seven main services:(1) Entry and Exit, (2) Entry Permits, (3) Residency Permits, (4) Follow-up on Violators, (5) Nationality and Passports, (6) Establishment Cards, and (7) Labor Affairs Organization.

4. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this second question: Outline the organization's achievements since the beginning of 2023 that you wish to bring to the judges' attention (up to 250 words):

Total 250 words used.

The GDRFA actively employs future foresight by identifying upcoming challenges and investing in global opportunities to provide proactive services and future scenarios for services. It has integrated innovation into its work and services by utilizing modern and emerging technologies, in addition to applying behavioral science to understand customer behaviors and perceptions toward the provided services.

Furthermore, it has strengthened a set of strategic partnerships with leading local and international organizations such as ICAO, the GINI Institute, IATA, Gartner, and others — along with academic institutions including the University of Houston, Zayed University, Higher Colleges of Technology, University of Dubai, University of Sharjah, and the American University in the Emirates — with the aim of enhancing research and scientific studies to support continuous improvement in operations.

GDRFA implements its operations in accordance with global best practices and standards, and it holds more than 21 certified ISO standards across all administrative fields. It also has an organizational unit dedicated to agility and institutional flexibility, ensuring agile and responsive execution of all tasks.

These capabilities have enabled the Directorate to deliver pioneering, world-leading projects and services, such as:

1. **Seamless Travel:** A system that employs artificial intelligence and biometric data to complete all passenger procedures across all airport checkpoints — including passenger registration, immigration checks, and boarding verification — without human interruption.
2. **Work bundle:** A unified digital platform that provides all services required to launch business activities in Dubai by integrating the procedures of five government entities, streamlining the process for investors and entrepreneurs.

5. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this third question: Explain why the achievements you have highlighted are unique or significant. If possible compare the achievements to the performance of other players in your industry and/or to the organization's past performance (up to 250 words):

Total 238 words used.

The GDRFA-Dubai has positioned itself as a global leader in **innovative government services** by adopting a proactive, future-oriented strategy.

Through **future foresight**, the Directorate identifies long-term challenges and global opportunities to anticipate customer needs and deliver forward-looking services and operational scenarios.

A major pillar of its strategy is **innovation**, which is embedded in daily operations through the use of **emerging technologies** such as artificial intelligence, biometric systems, and digital platforms. Furthermore, the Directorate utilizes **behavioral science** to analyze the perceptions and behaviors of customers, enabling the continuous refinement of service delivery based on real user experience.

To support research and improvement efforts, the Directorate has established **strategic partnerships** with international organizations (e.g., ICAO, IATA, Gartner) and academic institutions (e.g., University of Houston, Zayed University, University of Sharjah). These collaborations strengthen its capacity for **evidence-based decision-making** and **scientific research**.

The Directorate operates under **international best practices**, maintaining over **21 ISO-certified standards** across various administrative functions. Its dedicated **Agility and Flexibility Unit** ensures rapid, adaptive responses to dynamic operational environments.

These capabilities have enabled the launch of several **pioneering global projects**, including:

1. **Seamless Travel:** Fully automated airport procedures using AI and biometrics.
2. **Work bundle:** A unified digital platform integrating the services of five entities to simplify business setup.
3. **24/7 Airport Services Center:** The world's only center offering **instant passport renewal** in just eight minutes.

This integrated model sets a new benchmark for **digital governance and public service excellence**.

6. You have the option to answer this final question: Reference any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words):

Total 224 words used.

GDRFA-Dubai has significantly strengthened the **global leadership and competitive position** of the Emirate through its pioneering services, future-focused strategies, and innovation-led initiatives. These efforts have directly contributed to **outstanding global rankings** in several key indices, including:

1. **1st globally** in the Passport Strength Index (Passport Index)
2. **1st globally** in Foreign Direct Investment Inflows (FDI Markets)
3. **1st globally** in Flexibility of Residency Laws (IMD)
4. **1st globally** for the World's Busiest International Airport (Gallup)
5. **3rd globally** in Tolerance Toward Foreigners (Legatum Prosperity Index)
6. **7th globally** in Public Perception of Safety and Security (Gallup)

In parallel, the Directorate has advanced Dubai's position in **sustainability and responsible governance** across three pillars:

- o **Environmental:** Achieved full digital transformation by eliminating over **288 million physical documents**, leading to a reduction of more than **288 million kg of CO₂ emissions**—a major milestone in environmental responsibility.

- o **Economic:** Reduced operational costs by **3% in 2024**, saving **AED 386 million** while attracting over **AED 386 million** in investments from Golden Visa real estate holders.

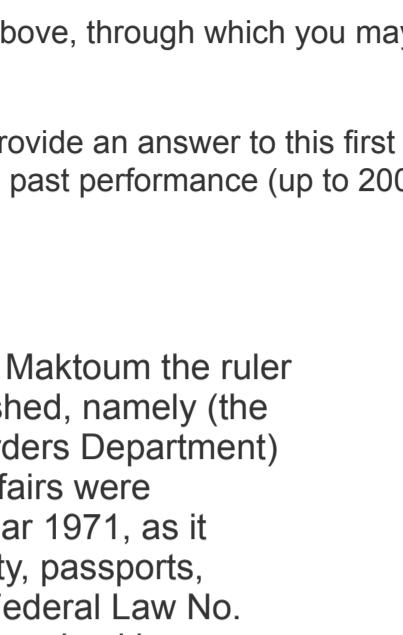
- o **Social:** Introduced **18 administrative decisions** to improve community happiness, resulting in a **95% public satisfaction rate**.

The GDRFA is now considered a **global model in public administration**. Its practices have been adopted internationally—for example, IATA revised its POCs based on GDRFA POC. The GDRFA continues to host global delegations seeking to adopt its **best-in-class systems**, reinforcing Dubai's role as a **leader in government innovation and service excellence**.

Attachments/Videos/Links:

[Identity & Foreigners Affairs-Dubai](#)

[REDACTED FOR PUBLICATION]



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