

MEDIA RELEASE
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Dubai becomes home to the World's Largest Visa Application Centre, revolutionising visa services for a new era

Future-ready, culturally rooted, and powered by AI — Dubai's new centre will serve 37 governments

- **Conceptualised as a next-generation global model for visa centres, setting new benchmarks in service, security, and customer experience**
- **Built to support the UAE's growing outbound travel demand, with the capacity to handle 10,000 applications a day**
- **37 client governments. Over 200 submission counters. One powerful, unified destination for smart visa services.**

VFS Global, the global leader in trusted technology services, empowering secure global mobility for governments and citizens, has announced the launch of its flagship Visa Application Centre in Dubai's Wafi City, marking the opening of the largest visa application facility in the world. The centre was inaugurated by **His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri**, Director General, Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism; **His Excellency Mohammed Ahmed Al Marri**, Director General, General Directorate of Identity and Foreigners Affairs - Dubai; and **Mr. Zubin Karkaria**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, VFS Global Group.

His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism said, *"This milestone is more than an infrastructure achievement — it reflects the strategic direction Dubai is taking to enhance global mobility, unlock access to opportunity, and accelerate growth across our visitor and business economy. As we advance the goals of the Dubai Economic Agenda D33, strengthening seamless access to and from Dubai remains a priority. Visa facilitation is a key enabler of talent attraction, tourism development, and international partnerships — all essential levers of our strategy to position Dubai as the world's most connected and future-ready city."*

His Excellency Mohammed Ahmed Al Marri, Director General, General Directorate of Identity and Foreigners Affairs – Dubai said, *"Today, we witnessed the inauguration of a new milestone in the journey of excellence pursued by the UAE in general and Dubai in particular, with the opening of the world's largest Visa Application Centre, located in the heart of Dubai, a city that continuously redefines innovation. This achievement embodies a true reflection of the directives of our wise leadership towards strengthening the nation's position as a global hub for smart services and establishing a unique model for delivering government services with high efficiency and quality. We believe that continuous development is not an option, but rather a commitment to a more prosperous future."*

Zubin Karkaria, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, VFS Global Group, said, *"Operating in the UAE since 2004, our journey has been defined by our unwavering commitment and a deep-rooted connection*

with this dynamic nation and its visionary leadership. In these two decades we have witnessed the spectacular growth and development of the UAE to become a preeminent global hub of business, thought leadership, technology development and innovation.

In line with the rapid development of Dubai, today we are pleased to launch the world's largest Visa Application Centre, serving over 200 nationalities in this Year of Community. Working closely with Emirati Entrepreneurs and Emirati Artists, the centre captures and reflects the multicultural fabric of the country that we are proud to call our Global Headquarters."

Designed to meet the surge in outbound travel and rising expectations for security, accessibility, and convenience, the state-of-the-art Dubai centre sets a new global benchmark — built not just for today, but for the travel demands of tomorrow. At nearly 150,000 square feet, the centre is equipped to handle up to 10,000 visa applications daily – a capacity that stands as the highest for any single location – and is supported by a skilled and diverse team of over 400 trained professionals from more than 25 nationalities.

Key features of the centre include:

- Tech-enabled self-service kiosks, secure lockers, photo booths, and photocopy stations for last-minute needs
- Touchscreen info kiosks, QR code-based check-ins with automated feedback at each visa desk
- More than 400 on-site staff equipped with tablets to assist applicants, supported by trained volunteers for form and kiosk help
- Intuitive, airport-style navigation with clear signage, spacious waiting areas, and a buggy service for easy movement
- Dedicated prayer rooms, kids' play areas, and various convenience zones ensuring a truly customer-centric experience
- ESG-compliant design with energy-efficient systems and fast-track lanes for seniors, families, and persons with disabilities

With rising outbound travel from the UAE, personalised services like the Premium Lounge have become the preferred choice for applicants seeking enhanced comfort and convenience. Of the 200+ submission counters at the centre, 79 are exclusively available as Premium Lounges. The centre is one of the few globally, and just two in the UAE, to offer the Platinum Lounge service, which includes a personalised experience with chauffeur service, end-to-end application support, and a calm, modern setting.

At the Core: AI and Innovation

From real-time document validation to next-generation biometrics, the on-site AI Innovation Hub powers smarter, faster, and more secure processing. Complementing this is a Digitization Centre that converts paper documents into secure digital records and a Global Resilience Center (GRC) that ensures 24/7 operational uptime, data protection, and continuity for all partner governments.

VFS Global has leveraged technology at every stage of the applicant journey to revolutionise the submission experience. Visitors use QR code-based e-tokens for check-in, guided by an advanced queue management system. This smart system, paired with electronic displays and mobile updates, minimises wait times and optimises applicant flow — even at peak capacity. By marrying innovation with human

expertise, the centre reimagines visa application as a seamless, transparent, and efficient process.

The launch of the world's largest Visa Application Centre in Dubai underscores VFS Global's commitment to the UAE Government's 'We the UAE 2031' vision. Aligned with the Year of Community 2025, the centre not only sets a global benchmark in service excellence but also integrates Emirati cultural installations that celebrate the spirit of Dubai's communities.

This flagship facility represents a new model — one that blends breakthrough technology with local values to ensure a future of secure, connected, and community-oriented travel.

VFS Global has been associated with the UAE since 2002 as the official visa service provider for Emirates Airlines passengers and has been headquartered in Dubai since 2013.

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About VFS Global

As the global leader in trusted technology services, empowering secure mobility for governments and citizens, VFS Global embraces technological innovation including Generative AI to support governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. The company manages non-judgmental and administrative tasks related to applications for visa, passport, and consular services for its client governments, increasing productivity and enabling them to focus entirely on the critical task of assessment.

With a responsible approach to technology development, adoption and integration, the company prioritizes ethical practices and sustainability while serving as the trusted partner to 69 client governments. Operating over 3,616 Application Centres in 158 countries, VFS Global has efficiently processed more than 461 million applications since 2001.

Headquartered in Zurich and Dubai and majority owned through investment funds managed by Blackstone Inc, along with minority stakeholders including Swiss-based Kuoni and Hugentobler Foundation.

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