



DWC EXPANSION US\$ 34.85BN

WRITTEN BY EELCO DIJKSTRA

global supply chain

Dubai World Central—DWC, also known as Al Maktoum International Airport, will undergo a transformative expansion with the addition of the massive new passenger terminal. This ambitious project is a testimony to Dubai's commitment to becoming the world's largest aviation hub.

Dubai has recently unveiled plans to build a new passenger terminal at Al Maktoum International Airport (DWC) in anticipation of a spike in visitors, after halting the project for more than ten years.

Once completed, all operations at DXB will be transferred in the coming years. Emirates has been pushing for expansion of DWC to support its future growth plan.

HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has approved the designs for the new terminal, expected to cost AED 128bn (US\$ 34.85bn), according to the Dubai Government's statement.

The new terminal is also expected to have a significant impact on Dubai’s economy. It will significantly increase the airport’s capacity. Once the capacity at DXB is transferred to DWC, it will enable it to handle up to 260mn passengers annually.

This expansion is not just about accommodating more travelers, it is about stimulating Dubai’s economic growth. The airport is poised to become a central pillar in Dubai’s economy, driving job creation, fostering tourism, and attracting international businesses who recognise Dubai as an important regional and global business hub.

World's busiest airports - 2023	Passenger #
1. Hart sfield–Jackson Atlanta International Airport	104 million
2. Dubai DXB	87 million
3. Dallas–Fort Worth International Airport	81 million
4. London's Heathrow Airport	79million
5. Tokyo Haneda International Airport	78million

New Passenger Terminal and Infrastructure

The ambitious expansion project includes a US\$2.7bn substructure contract for Concourse 1 and the West Terminal building, which encompasses various facilities such as tunnels, baggage handling systems, road networks, and support facilities.

The construction of the new passenger terminal at DWC Ultimatum Airport and the resulting development of the airport and surrounding Dubai South logistics park, is set to further cement Dubai’s position as a global leader in logistics, regional distribution and economic development.



Dubai to build world's largest airport by 2050

Dubai's Al Maktoum International Airport aims to become the world's largest airport by 2050, with a capacity of up to 260 million passengers annually.

According to Dubai South, the urban master developer, DWC is slated to become the largest airport in the world once it is constructed and goes fully operational.

DWC will be home to the world's largest airport once completed, and with a multi-modal transport infrastructure linking air, land, and sea. Along with the advantages of a business-friendly free zone, it will also provide a diverse range of residential options," Dubai South said via Twitter, referring to the Dubai South urban development that has already started.

DWC Airport Expansion

The Al Maktoum International Airport is already a functioning international airport, the home base of Fly Dubai, used by many cargo-freight charters including Emirates, and hosting the bi-annual Dubai Airshow. The government of Dubai already since 2007 had much bigger plans for the DWC facility as part of its long-term vision for Dubai.

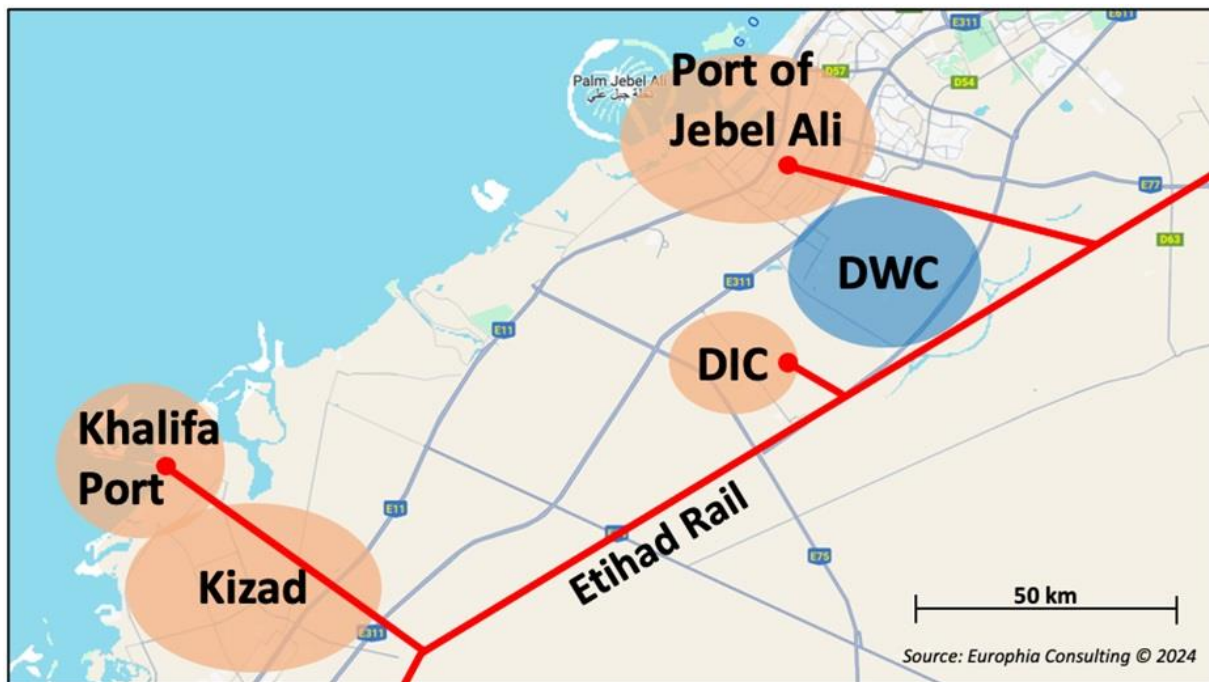
Unfortunately, the global financial crisis which started in 2008 slowed the development of the airport down. Then in 2021, Covid-19 came along and again postponed any expansion plans. However, the government knew that at some point DXB airport, with its two runways, would run short of capacity to cater for the ambitious growth developments of Dubai and Emirates Airlines.

HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid recently reviewed the Master Plan for the Airport of the Future. During the event, HH was briefed on the key design features and strategic implementation plan for the airport.

“In keeping with the vision of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid for the Aviation industry in Dubai, we announce the commencement of the design and construction process for the new airport at Jebel Ali. It is expected that the first phase of the project will be ready within a period of 10 years, with a capacity to accommodate 150 million passengers annually,” affirmed HH Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President, Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman, Dubai Airports and Chairman and Chief Executive, Emirates Airline & Group

“The new airport, which will ultimately be over five times the size of Dubai International, will prepare the ground for the next 40 years of anticipated growth in Dubai’s aviation sector. It will respond to the Hub Airline ambitious plans in terms of fleet acquisition and passenger growth. The airport will provide cutting-edge technologies, passenger facilities with unmatched level of service, and state-of-the-art aviation support facilities,” HH Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed added.

Al Maktoum International is planned in a manner to represent a leap into the future. It will comprise of five parallel runways with a quadruple independent operation, west and east processing terminals, four satellite concourses with over 400 aircraft contact stands, uninterrupted automated people mover system for passengers, and an integrated landside transport hub for roads, Metro, and city air transport.

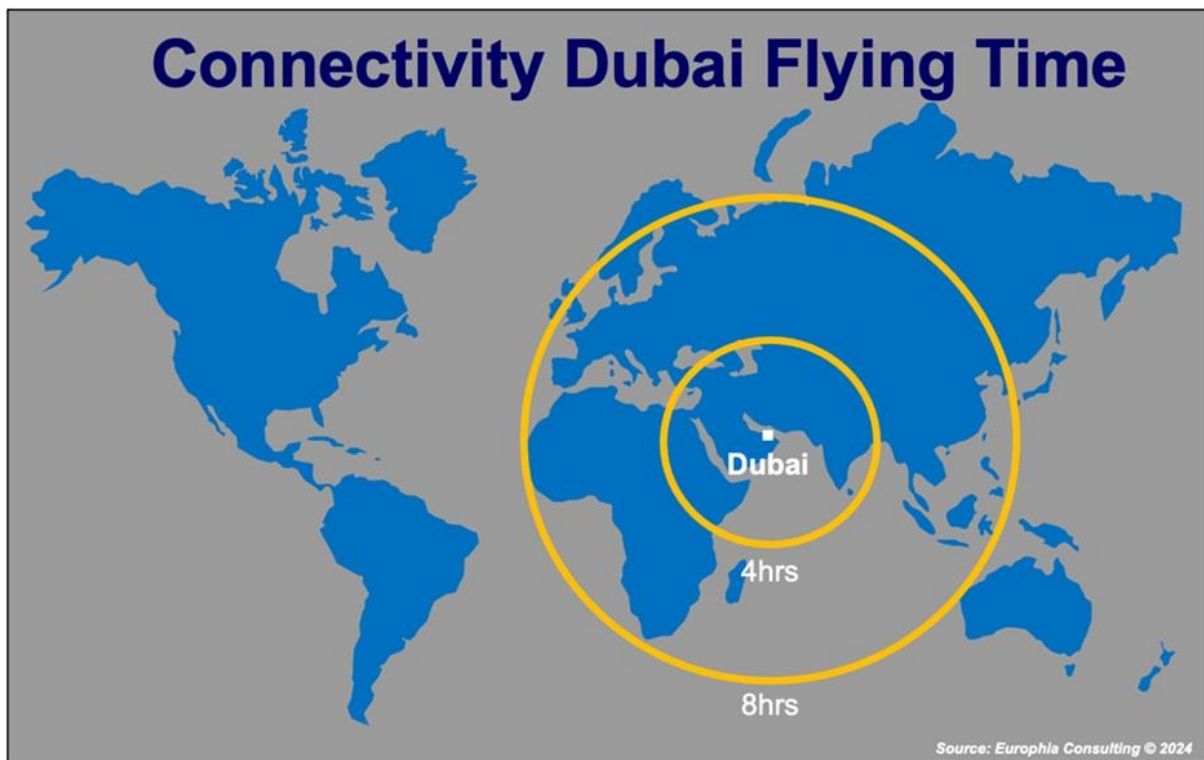


What do industry leaders say?

“The announcement of phase two of Dubai World Central – Al Maktoum International Airport’s (DWC) expansion, representing a substantial investment of AED128 billion, marks the start of a huge investment of resources by our many stakeholders in designing and building a state-of-the-art airport that will provide a quick, convenient, and high-quality 21st-century experience for our customers. This further solidifies Dubai’s position as a leading aviation hub on the world stage.”

Paul Griffiths, CEO, Dubai Airports, stated that Dubai’s growth has always gone together with the growth of its aviation infrastructure, and today, one sees another bold step in that journey.

“The development of this new airport will be an integral part of Dubai’s economy and major contributor to the Dubai Economic Agenda (D33). It will generate estimated workforce and residential requirement for over a million people living and working in Dubai South (the aerotropolis), which has been under development and operation since 2007.”



Khalifa Al Zaffin, Executive Chairman, Dubai Aviation City Corporation, highlighted the economic benefits of the project.

Logistics Connectivity Dubai – Abu Dhabi

DWC airport is located on the other side of Dubai. However, it has several huge advantages. Whilst DXB is penned in on all sides, DWC has plenty of space reserved for its expansion. It is also within proximity to Jebel Ali. It allows for the seamless movement of cargo between the seaport, Jebel Ali Port and the airport, Al Maktoum International Airport. It also allows for greater connectivity with the Port of Khalifa and KIZAD in Abu Dhabi, itself expanding rapidly and approximately 75km by road.

With the addition of Etihad Rail and the Etihad rail terminal at Dubai Industrial City it will be able to seamlessly connect freight from across the UAE from and to the airport.

Under phase 2, Etihad Rail is anticipated to launch the prequalification process for the UAE's high-speed rail line connecting Abu Dhabi and Dubai by the end of Q2-2024. The high-speed rail project is expected to reduce journey times between the UAE's two largest cities. The new Etihad Rail terminal at Dubai Industrial City is near both Al Maktoum International Airport and Jebel Ali Port.

Connecting the World

With so many infrastructure developments going into the three respective hubs as well as into Etihad Rail, the UAE further positions itself through DWC as global gateway connecting the world.

Once the DWC airport expansion is completed it will place Dubai even more at the centre as a global transit passenger and logistics distribution hub. Two-thirds of the world's population is within eight hours flying time.

Dubai South, formerly known as DWC, has already benefited over the past 10 years from the expected strategy to turn the airport city into the biggest airport in the world. Now with the expansion plans underway it will capitalise further and attract even more logistics and distribution companies to set up around the airport in support of their regional distribution activities.

Many of the large global 3PL companies already have multiple state-of-the-art facilities around the airport. Many global and regional retailers in recent years have also set up large warehouse facilities at DWC.

The airport logistics zone is also well positioned as regional e-commerce hub. Another important development at DWC has been the development of cold chain activities. Several healthcare facilities are located within the free zone as well as Emirates's Pharma Hub.



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