

**Baker
McKenzie.**

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Extensive capabilities

Pioneering knowledge and experience

As one of the world's most open and swiftly growing economies, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) continues to be a strategic business, trade and financial hub. The country has diversified beyond oil and gas exports, cultivating its services and infrastructure sectors. More emphasis has also been placed on developing travel and tourism, financial services, professional services, technology, transport and logistics, trade and construction.

Baker McKenzie has been in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region for over 40 years and our UAE offices form an integral part of Baker & McKenzie's renowned MENA practice. As with all of our offices, we have deep local roots, offering an integrated global reach to seamlessly assist clients looking to solve complex problems across borders and practice areas.

We have supported our clients on their most sensitive and challenging transactions, helping them to both optimize opportunities and mitigate risk. Our multidisciplinary team of more than 30 lawyers on the ground provides a full-service offering, advising on both onshore, UAE and offshore/free zone matters (including in the DIFC and ADGM), as well as matters of English law.

Our clients include some of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds, global and regional financial institutions, private equity funds, leading conglomerates, family offices and many of the world's largest companies.

Awards & recognition



Meeting your needs

We offer focused legal services in strategic business areas in the UAE, delivered by a team with extensive experience across the local commercial landscape. Our lawyers are fluent in both Arabic and English and can provide integrated and insightful advice tailored for local companies and multinational corporations in the region.

Banking & Finance. We advise on all aspects of domestic and cross-border banking across a broad range of industries. Our experience includes secured and unsecured asset finance; corporate, commercial and trade finance; structured finance; financial services regulatory and legislative compliance; investment funds; Islamic finance; insurance and takaful; fraud and insolvency.

Capital Markets. We advise issuers, advisors, underwriters and corporate trustees in connection with a broad range of capital markets transactions. Our experience ranges from initial public and secondary offerings, financing corporates, debt securities as well as Islamic capital markets transactions, including sukuk.

Construction. We counsel on all aspects of construction law, from project inception to completion, and assist in procurement, contractual documentation and dispute resolution. We are experienced in drafting and amending all standard forms of contract used in the region, including FIDIC, as well as non-standard, project-specific contracts.

Commercial & Trade. We advise on commercial and civil matters under UAE law as well as on the enforceability of agreements in the country. We support companies in the overall management of their trade and distribution networks in the region and are experienced in drafting and negotiating a wide variety of commercial documentation, including agency, distributorship and franchising agreements.

Corporate/M&A. We advise on a full range of M&A and general corporate and commercial matters. This experience includes public and private M&A, joint ventures, divestitures, financings, reorganizations, spinoffs, strategic alliances and other business combinations.

Employment. We advise on all aspects of UAE labor law and provide legal support in the structuring, management and organization of your workforce.

Hotels, Resorts & Tourism. We assist owners, managers and lenders on high-profile acquisitions and dispositions as well as on financing, joint venture, and ground lease transactions. We also represent clients in negotiations of hotel management, licensing, branding and franchising agreements.

International Arbitration and Offshore Litigation. We represent clients during English and Arabic proceedings in the UAE and abroad, including arbitrations that involve the Dubai International Arbitration Centre, the Abu Dhabi Conciliation and Commercial Arbitration Centre, the International Chamber of Commerce, and the London Court of International Arbitration, as well as disputes before the DIFC and ADGM courts. We can also draft multi-language expert reports and participate in ad hoc arbitration proceedings and other forms of alternative dispute resolution such as mediation, conciliation and dispute board proceedings. We also assist clients with, and provide strategic advice in respect of, claims and disputes management.

Investigations, Compliance and Ethics. Nuanced understanding of current governing trade regulations and enforcement practices. Vast experience in developing trade compliance programs including tailored processes and procedures covering US and EU sanctions, export controls, and customs. Extensive track record of advising and establishing programs for companies in highly regulated sectors.

Private Equity and Funds. With our strong money-center deal experience, we assist sponsors and investors throughout the investment process including fund formation, acquisitions, add-ons and refinancings, portfolio company management and restructuring, and exits. We advise clients in a wide variety of private and public investment funds, including private equity, infrastructure, real estate, energy, mezzanine, hedge, merchant banking, carbon credit trading and distressed assets funds.

Real Estate. We provide legal support across project lifecycles, from initial land acquisition to corporate structuring and joint ventures, project financing, construction, development, subdivision, titling and leasing. We work with landlords and tenants on leasing issues arising from industrial estates, warehousing and other commercial uses. We have also advised master developers, sub-developers, investment funds and Islamic banks on large-scale, mixed-use integrated tourism, commercial hotel, retail and residential developments.

Regulatory. Our thorough understanding of UAE law and legislative developments result in pragmatic advice on all regulatory and legislative matters. We are regularly called on to assist with the drafting and review of major legislation at Federal and Emirate level, and to help clients comply with and stay abreast of ongoing regulatory developments, across all industry sectors.

Tax. We can help organizations with the legal and commercial implications of the Value Added Tax (VAT) regime in the UAE and wider Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), in accordance with the GCC VAT Framework Agreement, as well as the new Corporate Tax Law in the UAE. We stay abreast with the changing tax laws across the region, and can help you design, implement and defend tax strategies for your domestic and international operations and transactions.

Technology and Data Privacy. We have genuine industry know-how and substantive experience on strategic information technology (IT) projects in the UAE, and can support you in developing, commercialising and implementing digital and technology solutions whilst managing legal and regulatory risk. We can advise on the implementation of emerging technologies, data management and protection, and mitigation and response to associated cybersecurity risks.

Global scale

An integrated and efficient cross-border approach.

As the UAE's legal and commercial sectors grow in sophistication, more cross-border business opportunities emerge — and no other firm is better positioned to help than Baker McKenzie.

We have more than 160 lawyers across eight key economic centers in the Middle East and North Africa alone — Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Cairo, Casablanca, Doha, Dubai, Istanbul, Jeddah and Riyadh. In each location, our seasoned, multi-skilled team regularly helps clients navigate varied legal and commercial environments through a deep understanding of local cultural and business nuances, as well as international best practices.

As one of the world's first and largest international firms, our lawyers seamlessly collaborate across the region and with colleagues from more than 70 other offices worldwide. Our integrated team enables us to help clients address the most challenging cross-border legal issues with more efficiency, at a lower cost and at a higher level of service. Our collective capability and success in handling complex international deals have made us counsel of choice among the world's leading multinationals.

What others say



Banking and finance



The corporate finance team is composed of very highly qualified and bright individuals who deliver to the highest standard. It is hard to get this level of service outside of London and NY and they have achieved it.

Legal 500 (UAE), 2022



Corporate and M&A



The team's strengths are their ability to leverage their international network and resources to provide assistance in many practice areas; their in-depth local knowledge and strong commercial acumen; their ability to offer pragmatic legal advice.

Legal 500 (UAE), 2022



Arbitration and International Litigation



Communication is brilliant, they have a depth to the team that other firms do not have and there is a strong sense of teamwork and respect. It is clear that clients respect the advice and authority of the team.

Legal 500 (UAE), 2022



Real estate



Respected throughout the region for its expertise in transactional real estate matters. Gives very sage advice and has a wealth of experience.

Chambers Global (UAE), 2021



Tax



Well equipped to handle the full range of tax matters, including VAT and customs duties mandates. Its lawyers regularly act on tax issues stemming from M&A transactions, as well as tax litigation.

Chambers Global (UAE), 2021

Value proposition

We deliver unmatched on-the-ground support that reflects a deep understanding of the country's legal, regulatory and commercial practices. We provide clients with turnkey legal solutions that exemplify single accountability and ownership.

Simple and efficient — one team, one firm, one relationship, one way.

In-depth local experience

Operating in the UAE since 2009, our team advises clients on a full range of legal matters. We also have unique and extensive experience drafting and advising on federal and emirate level laws and legal frameworks. Our long-standing relationships with the government, ministries and family-owned companies give us a unique approach to solving complex legal issues in the region.

Industry-specific knowledge

Our team has worked on some of the most significant and market-leading transactions and cases in the country's key sectors, including banking, energy, maritime, technology, real estate, construction and transportation.

Fully integrated service

Our lawyers work across practices and industries to address all aspects of an issue. We provide clients with the genuine option of working with a single law firm for all local and international needs. This translates into greater transparency on fees, a single point of contact for each mandate, and single accountability — which means less risk for clients and improved efficiency in terms of cost and time.

Truly global reach

As part of the Baker McKenzie network, we can assist clients operating or looking to expand into new markets. Our unmatched global network minimizes cost and time otherwise spent briefing multiple law firms and helps ensure a consistent and seamless response to multijurisdictional matters.

Talented and diverse people

Our team includes fluent Arabic speakers, enabling us to handle all aspects of a matter on our clients' behalf as well as work with both English and Arabic documentation. We respect and celebrate our culture of inclusion, and this was recognized in 2021 with the firm winning "Law Firm of the Year (International)" at the inaugural LexisNexis Women in Law awards.

Navigating legal complexity

As a truly international firm, we are intensely collaborative with each other and our clients, bringing the right talent to address each issue. We understand the subtle complexity of legal and business matters in different cultures and jurisdictions around the world. Our goal is to make complex things simple and understandable, and to deliver pragmatic service that matches the business needs of our clients.

Our community spirit

At Baker McKenzie, we don't just give to the community, we invest in it. One of our goals is to help the local community improve continuously by providing greater access to legal education, knowledge and a firm that understands local needs.

Baker McKenzie helps clients overcome the challenges of competing in the global economy.

We solve complex legal problems across borders and practice areas. Our unique culture, developed over 65 years, enables our 13,000 people to understand local markets and navigate multiple jurisdictions, working together as trusted colleagues and friends to instill confidence in our clients..

Please visit www.bakermckenzie.com to learn more.

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