

## ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ENTRY AND RESIDENCY PERMITS IN THE UAE

As part of its efforts to reinforce the UAE's reputation as a desirable destination to live, work, and invest in, the UAE has recently approved executive regulations of the Federal Decree-Law on Entry and Residence of Foreigners.

The executive regulations detail the types and conditions of entry visas and residence permits. With the new system of entry and residence, the UAE hopes to attract and retain global talent, increase the competitiveness and flexibility of the job market, and promote a sense of stability among residents and their families. The executive regulations of the Federal Decree-Law on Entry and Residence of Foreigners shall come into force after ninety days from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

### **A. Golden Residence Scheme**

In order to attract and retain talent, the UAE has updated the Golden Residence rules. Beneficiaries will receive more benefits, including 10 years of renewable residency.

### **Major Amendments**

A number of substantial changes are made to the Golden Residence Scheme in order to simplify eligibility criteria and expand beneficiary categories. Here are the major changes:

- The Golden Residence holder is now allowed to sponsor his/ her family members, including spouse and children regardless of their age, and to sponsor support services (domestic) laborers without limiting their number.
- There are no restrictions on the duration of stay outside of the UAE in order to keep the Golden Residence valid.
- There are other benefits for family members that allow them to stay in the UAE in the event of the death of the original holder of the Golden Residence until the end of their permit duration.
- The 10-year residence is granted to entrepreneurs, investors, exceptional talents, scientists and professionals, outstanding students and graduates, humanitarian pioneers, and frontline heroes.

### **Categories:**

#### Scientists and Professionals

Scientists and researchers with high achievements and influence in their field can apply for this residence after being recommended by the Emirates Scientists Council. It is essential that the candidate has obtained a Ph.D. or master's degree in the disciplines of engineering, technology, life sciences, and natural sciences from the best universities in the world, along with substantial research achievements.





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Golden Residence Visa Professional applicants should have a valid employment contract in the UAE and should be classified at the first or second occupational level according to the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization's classification, which is aligned with the International Standard of Classification of Occupations by the International Labour Organization (ILO). Applicants must have at least a bachelor's degree, and salaries must not be below AED30,000 per month.

## Exceptional Talents

This residence is granted to top talents in vital fields such as culture, art, sports, digital technology, inventors, and innovators. It is awarded based solely on talent regardless of educational qualification, employment status, monthly salary, or professional level. A recommendation or approval of a federal or local government entity is required.

## Investors

Under the new amendments, investors can now obtain the Golden Residence when buying a property with a loan from a specific local bank or when buying one or more off-plan properties of no less than AED2 million from approved local real estate companies.

## Entrepreneurs

An entrepreneur should own or be a partner in a startup registered in the country in the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) category and generates annual revenues of not less than AED1 million. However, an official business incubator, the Ministry of Economy, or the local authorities are required to approve a startup idea, in order to qualify for a Golden Residency. A founder (one of the founders) of a previous entrepreneurial project(s) that was sold for a total of not less than AED7 million, can be entitled to the Golden Residence.

## Outstanding Students and Graduates

Golden residency can be granted to high-achieving students in UAE secondary schools, as well as outstanding graduates from UAE universities and top 100 universities around the world and are selected according to specific criteria, including their academic performance (cumulative average), graduation year, and university classification.

## Humanitarian Pioneers

This residency is for distinguished members of international and regional organizations, outstanding members of associations of public benefit, recipients of recognition awards in humanitarian fields, and distinguished volunteers and sponsors of humanitarian efforts.

## Frontline Heroes

Golden residency can be granted to frontline workers with extraordinary efforts in a crisis like the Covid-19 pandemic.



## **Benefits for Golden Residency Visa holders:**

- 10-year renewable residence
- Duration of stay outside UAE does not nullify the Golden Residence
- No maximum number of support service labours
- Entry visa valid for 6 months with multiple entries to proceed with residence issuance
- No sponsor or employer required
- Residence for family members including spouse and children with no age limit
- In the event of the death of the original holder of the Golden Residence, family members can stay in the UAE till the end of their residence permit

## **B. Entry Visas**

The new Entry and Residence Scheme offers 10 types of entry visas with simplified requirements and more benefits. New benefits will be introduced for entry visa holders.

- No required host or sponsor for the first time.
- Flexible visa durations that meet the needs of the visitors and the purpose of the visit.
- All entry visas are available for single or multiple-entry and can be renewed for a similar period(s) and are valid for 60 days from their issuance date.

## Types of Entry Visas

### Job Exploration

This visa was created to attract young talents and skilled professionals to the country to explore job opportunities. It does not require a host or a sponsor. Those classified in the first or second or third skill level as per the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization are eligible to apply. Fresh graduates of the best 500 universities in the world are also eligible to apply, as long as they have at least a bachelor's degree or its equivalent.

### Business

Entrepreneurs and investors can explore business and investment opportunities in the UAE easily without a need for a sponsor or host.

### Tourist Visa & Multi-Entry Tourist Visa

The UAE introduced a 5-years multi-entry tourist visa in addition to the regular tourist visa sponsored by tourism establishments. The 5-year multi-entry visa does not require a sponsor and it allows the person to stay in the country for up to 90 continuous days, and it may be extended for a similar period, provided that the entire period of stay does not exceed 180 days in one year. Applicants for this visa must provide proof that they have at least USD4,000, or its equivalent in foreign currency, in their bank account within the last six months prior to submitting their application.

### Visit Relatives or Friends

In accordance with the amendment, visitors who are relatives or friends of UAE citizens or residents are eligible for this entry permit. It does not require a sponsor or a host.

### Temporary Work Mission

This type of visa is intended for those who have a temporary or project-based assignment and is sponsored by the employer. The employer must provide a temporary work contract or a letter clarifying the purpose of the visit and proof of health and fitness to work.

## C. Residency Permits

The new system for residence visas and entry permits offers new types of residence permits for investors, skilled employees, self-employment, and family members. The new types provide customized benefits to each category.

### Work

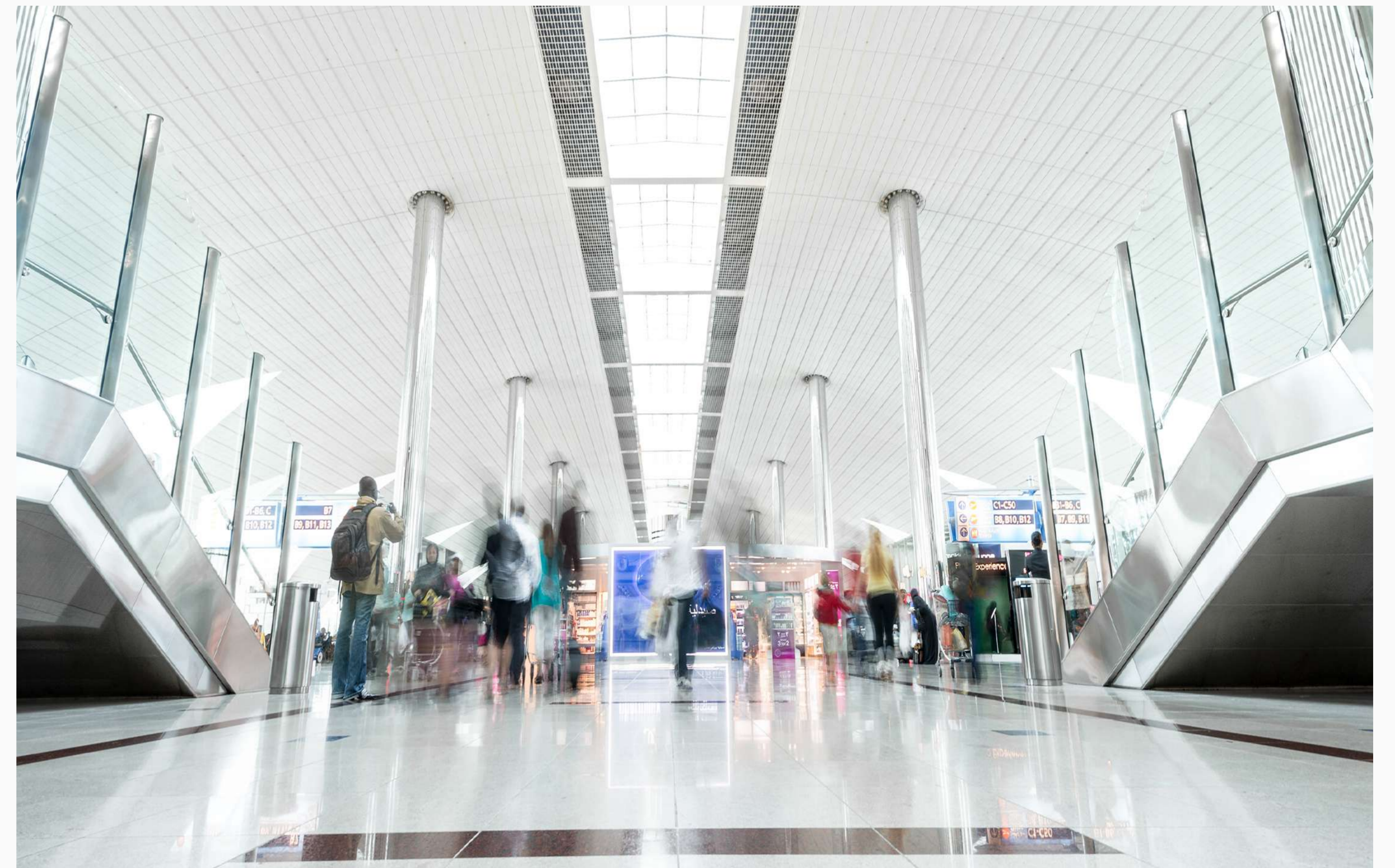
#### 1. Green Residence for Freelancers (Self-employment)

This visa type provides a 5-year residency for freelancers and self-employed individuals without requiring a sponsor or employer in the UAE. It requires:

- a freelance/ self-employment permit from the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization,
- minimum educational level should be a bachelor's degree or specialized diploma, and
- the annual income from self-employment for the previous two years should not be less than AED360,000, or that the applicant proves financial solvency throughout his/her stay in the country.

#### 2. Standard Employment Residence

Unlike the green residence visas, this type of visa is only valid for 2 years.



### Study and Training

The entry permit visa type is for trainees and students participating in training and study classes and/or internship programs. Universities or education or research institutions licensed in the country, as well as governments or private entities, can sponsor studies. Detailed information about the study, training, or internship program and its duration is required in a letter issued by the institution.

### Medical Treatment

This type of visa is for visitors seeking medical care from the UAE. The visa shall be sponsored by a medical establishment.

### GCC Residents

This is granted to residents of the GCC countries and their escorts.

### Emergency

This visa is available to travelers, sailors, flight crews, and those in medical or flight emergency situations.

### Diplomatic Affairs

This is an entry visa reserved for holders of diplomatic, special, and United Nations (UN) passports.



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### 3. Green Residence for Skilled Employees

For skilled workers, this new residency program provides a 5-year residency without a sponsor or employer. The applicants should have:

- a valid employment contract and should be classified in the first, second or third occupational level as per the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization,
- a bachelor's degree or equivalent education is required, and
- the salary should not be less than AED15,000 per month.

### **Investment**

#### Green Residence for Investors and Partners

Investors can apply for this visa which will give them a 5-year residency for establishing or participating in commercial activities. It replaces the previous residence that was valid for 2 years only. Requirements include:

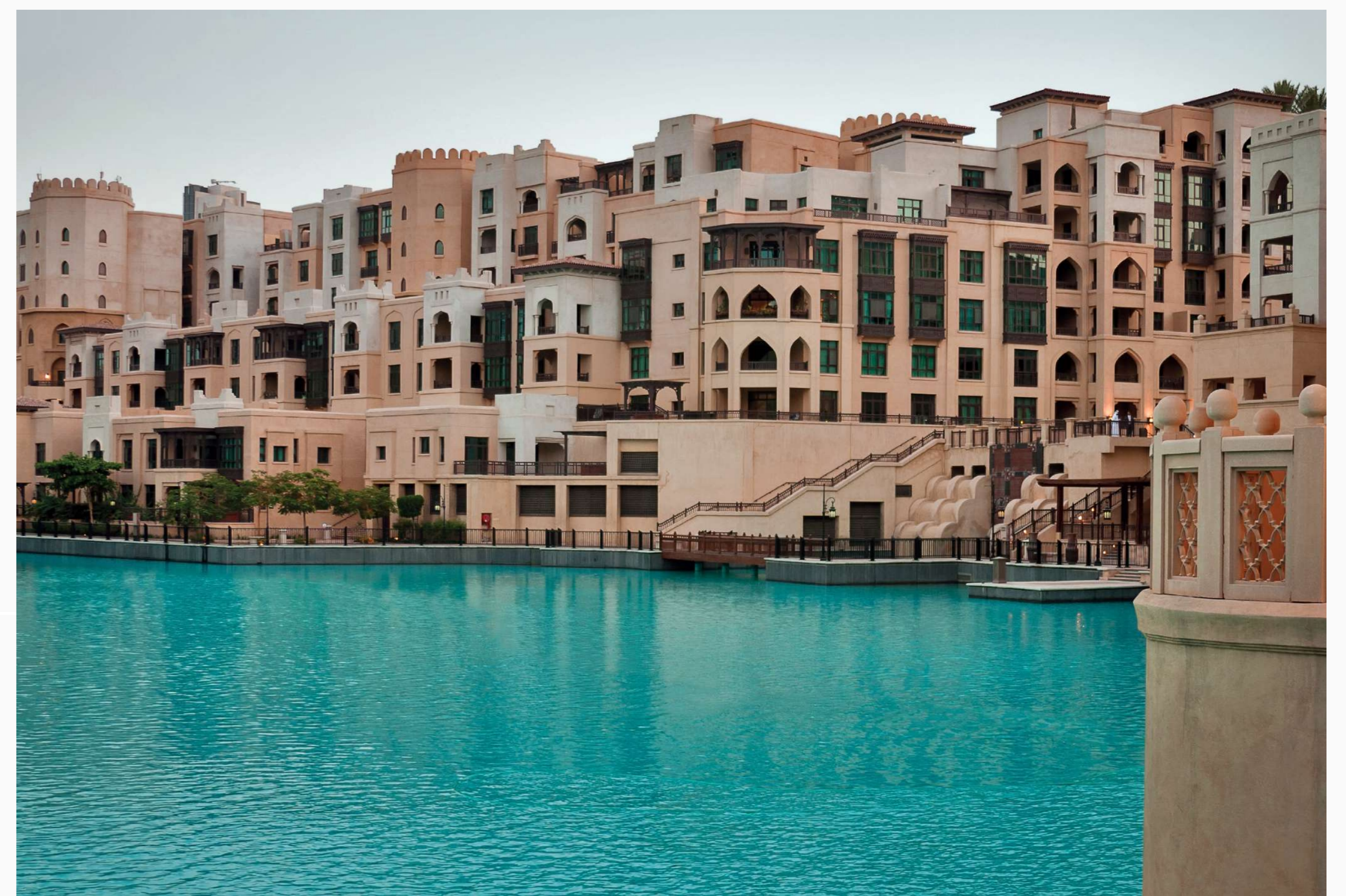
- approval of the investment and proof of investment,
- the total invested capital will be calculated if the investor (partner) has more than one license, and
- approval of the competent local authorities is mandatory.

### **Education**

This residency permit is granted to students enrolled in educational entities and is valid for 2 years and is sponsored by the licensed educational establishments in the UAE.

### **Live**

1. Remote Work Residence – visa is issued for 1 year with no sponsor required.
2. Retirement Residence – visa is issued for 5 years with no sponsor required.
3. Real Estate Owner's Residence – visa is issued for 2 years with no sponsor required.
4. Humanitarian Residence – permit issued for humanitarian cases.
  - a. A female resident whose UAE husband passed away and she has a child or more.
  - b. The parents or children of UAE citizens who hold foreign passports.
  - c. Spouse and Children of GCC citizens who hold foreign passports.



### **Family member visa**

- Allows residents to easily issue residence permits for their family members, including spouses and children.
- Children may now be sponsored at the age of 25 (previously 18), with no age limit for unmarried daughters.
- Children of determination are granted a residence permit, regardless of their age.
- Green Residences holders are permitted to issue residence permits for their first-degree relatives, and in all cases, the validity of the residence of the family members shall be the same duration as the original residence holder.

The recent development on the Entry and Residence permits in the UAE reflects the goals of the government in supporting the country's competitiveness in the tourism, economic and educational sectors.

If you have any questions or need residence advice, please contact our experts or email us at [office@slglaw.cc](mailto:office@slglaw.cc).

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