

An initiative of the European Union



ECCP MATCHMAKING EVENTS ★

EU-UAE MATCHMAKING EVENT

In the Context of WETEX

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

1-3 OCTOBER 2025

INFO SESSION | 3 SEPTEMBER | 9:30-10:30 CEST



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY & TOURISM



الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الاقتصاد والسياحة



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ECCP MATCHMAKING EVENTS ★

WELCOME



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY & TOURISM



الإمارات العربية المتحدة
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Housekeeping Rules

- This webinar is scheduled to last **1 hour**
- **This webinar will be recorded** and published on ECCCP
- All participants are in **listen-in mode**
- To ask a question, please **type it into the Q&A box**

Agenda

9:30 – 9:40

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Christophe Guichard, DG Grow, European Commission

Sandor Szelekovszky, Head of Trade and other Policies Section, EU Delegation to UAE

Tariq Al Suwaidi, Director of the New Economy Department, Ministry of Economy UAE

9:40 – 10:05

Setting the Scene: Market Access Information

Dr. Jan-Phillip Kramer, Head of EU Services, Prognos/ ECCP Team member

Ms. Fatima Al Hajri, Director of the Investment & Talent Attraction Department, Ministry of Trade, UAE

Mr. Mohammad Al Mufleh, Investment Expert, Ministry of Trade, UAE

10:05-10:10

Overview of the Forthcoming Mission

Teodora Jilkova ,Veritas Cluster / ECCP Team Member

10:10-10:20

Presentation of WETEX and World Green Economy Summit

Aanal Patwari, Deputy Head International engagement and business affairs, Dubai Electricity & Water Authority, organisers of WETEX

10:20-10:30

Next Steps towards the matchmaking event and technical webinar

Teodora Jilkova ,Veritas Cluster / ECCP Team Member

Welcoming Remarks

Christophe Guichard, DG Grow, European Commission

Sandor Szelekovszky, Head of Trade and other Policies Section, EU
Delegation to UAE

Tariq Al Suwaidi, Director of the New Economy Department, Ministry
of Economy & Tourism, UAE

Setting the Scene: Market Access Session

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Setting the scene: Market access information session

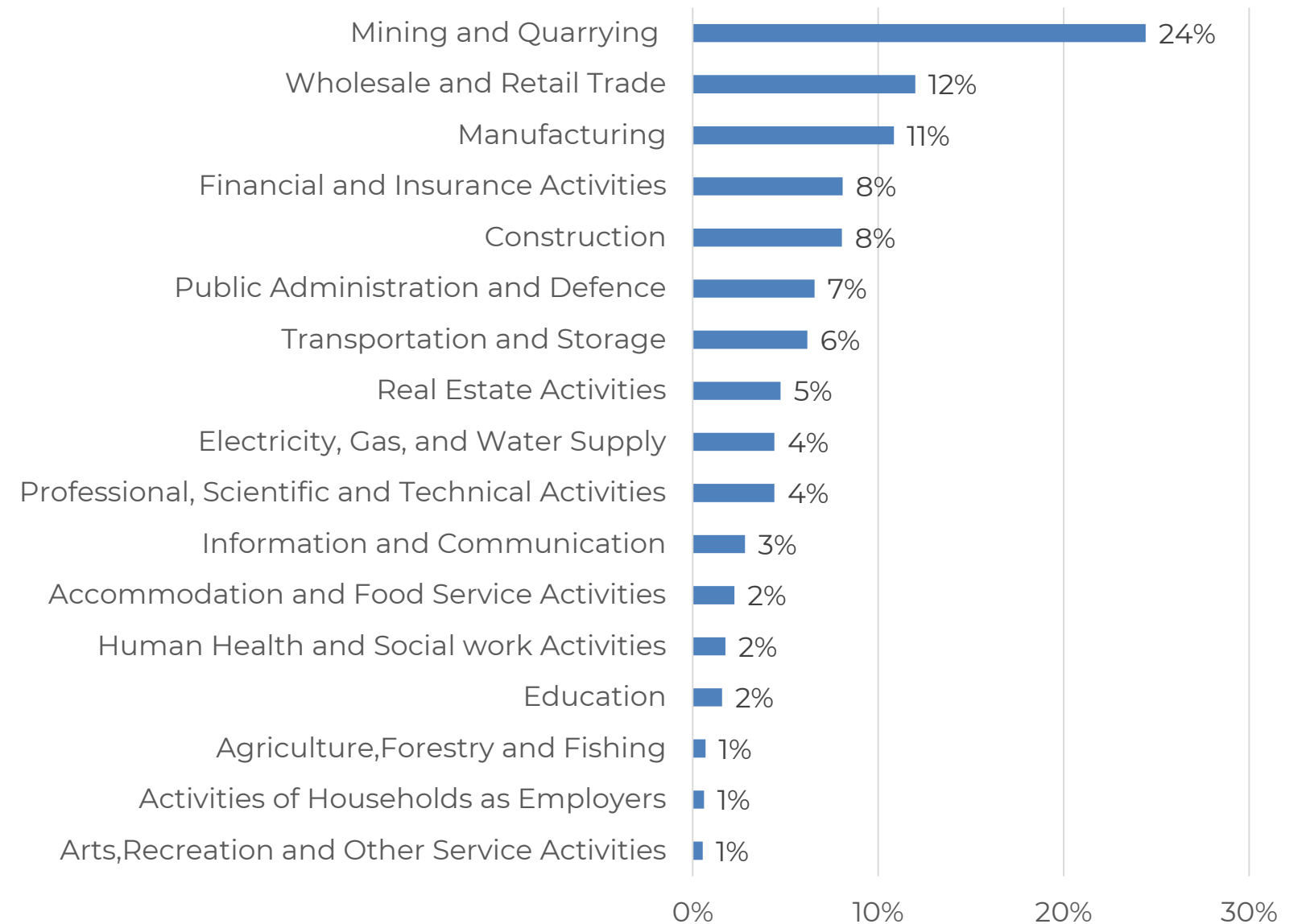
Dr Jan-Philipp Kramer

Team leader 'Data & Policy', Prognos/ECCCP

Economic profile of United Arab Emirates

- In 2023, the economy had a total **GDP** of EUR **475 billion**
- **GDP per capita PPP** reached **EUR 77,550** in 2023
- UAE's average **economic growth** has been a solid **4.1%** over the last two decades
- **Mining and Quarrying** remains the **key economic sector**, representing 24% of the annual GDP
- Other notable sectors include **Wholesale and Retail Trade** (12%), **Manufacturing** (11%), and **Financial and Insurance Activities** (8%)

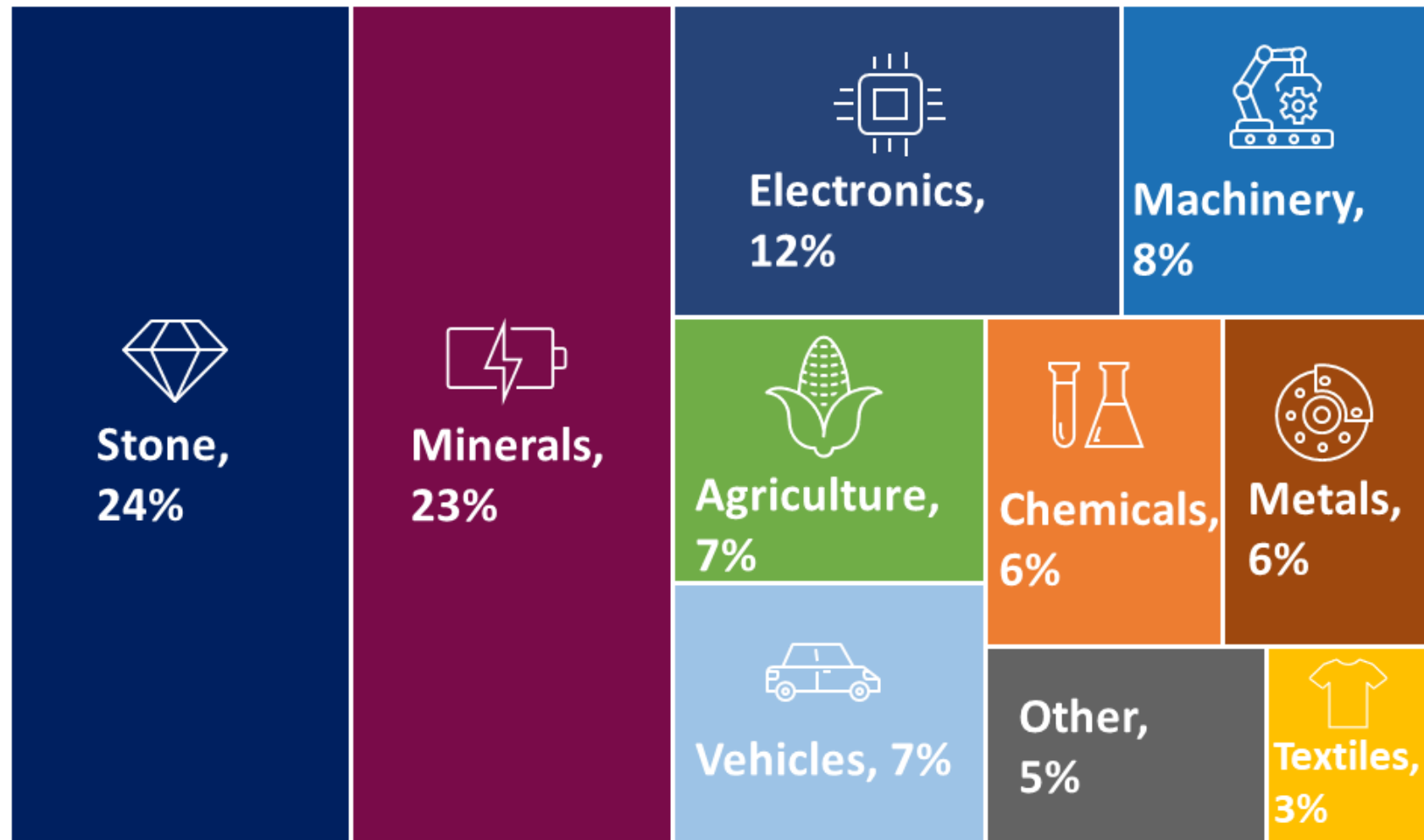
GDP share by sector in the UAE, in 2023



Source: ECCP (2025), own calculation based on UAESTat

Economic profile of United Arab Emirates

UAE's export sectors composition by share of total exports (2023)



- **Stone** (24%) was the most exported good in 2023, mostly in the form of gold and diamonds
- **Minerals** (23%) stood second, largely crude and refined oil
- Together, stone and minerals accounted for 47% of total exports, underscoring the **vital role of natural resources in the UAE economy**
- **Electronics (12%) and machinery (8%)** were the leading non-resource exports, **pointing to potential avenues for greater economic diversification**

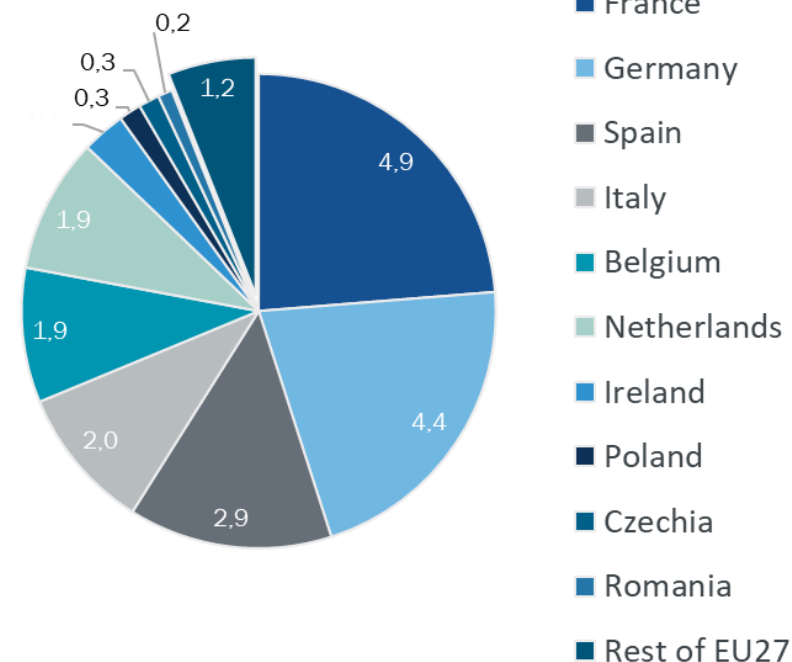
Source: ECCP (2025), own calculation based on Atlas of Economic Complexity

EU27 and the UAE: Analysis of business & value chains

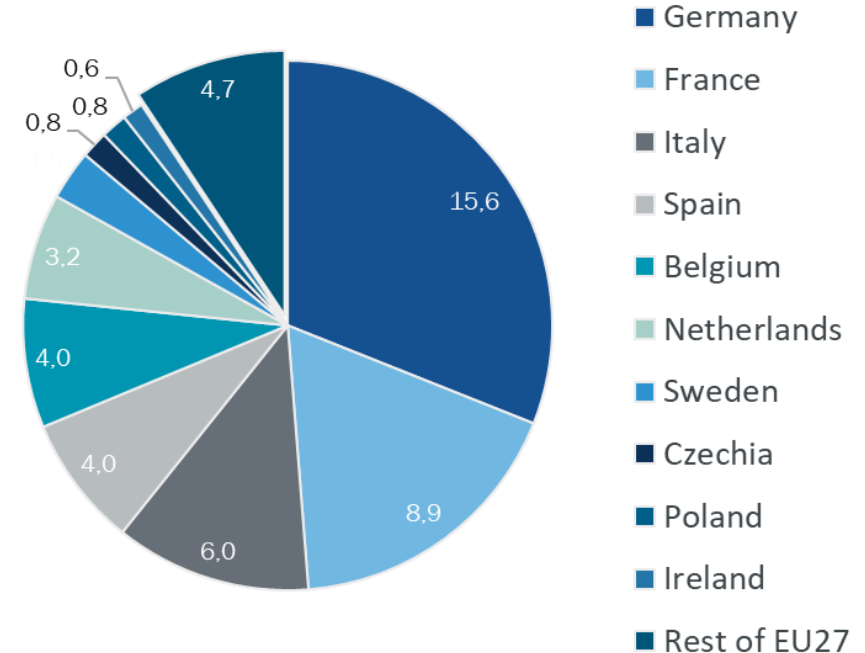
- **Trade concentration:** Germany and France dominate flows, making up ~50% of both EU imports (€4.9 bn + €4.4 bn) and exports (€16.8 bn + €8.9 bn) to the UAE.
- **Import structure:** Mineral fuels (42%), manufactured goods (29%), and machinery & transport (16%); key imports: petroleum oils, aluminium, diamonds, vessels.
- **Export structure:** Machinery & transport (~40%), chemicals (16%), manufactured articles (16%); top exports: motor vehicles, diamonds, telephone sets, medicaments.
- **Framework:** No EU–UAE trade deal; cooperation under the 1988 EU–GCC Agreement, with the EU as GCC's 2nd largest partner (11.1% of trade).

Overview of the 10 most important EU27 trading partners for the UAE, by imports and exports in 2022, in billion EUR

Import of EU 27 from the UAE, in bn €



Export from EU 27 to the UAE, in bn €



Source: ECCP (2025). Own calculation based on UN Comtrade data.

EU27 and the UAE: Toward a bilateral Free Trade Agreement

- In 1988 EU and 6 GCC states signed the **EU–Gulf Cooperation Council(GCC) Cooperation Agreement**
- In **April 2025**, EU and UAE officially launched **negotiations** for a bilateral **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**
- **Milestone** as the first such trade deal with a Gulf nation
- Decisive **shift from stalled region-to-region talks toward bilateral agreements**
- The agreement aligns with the **EU's Global Gateway initiative**, advancing trade, investment, and economic security objectives



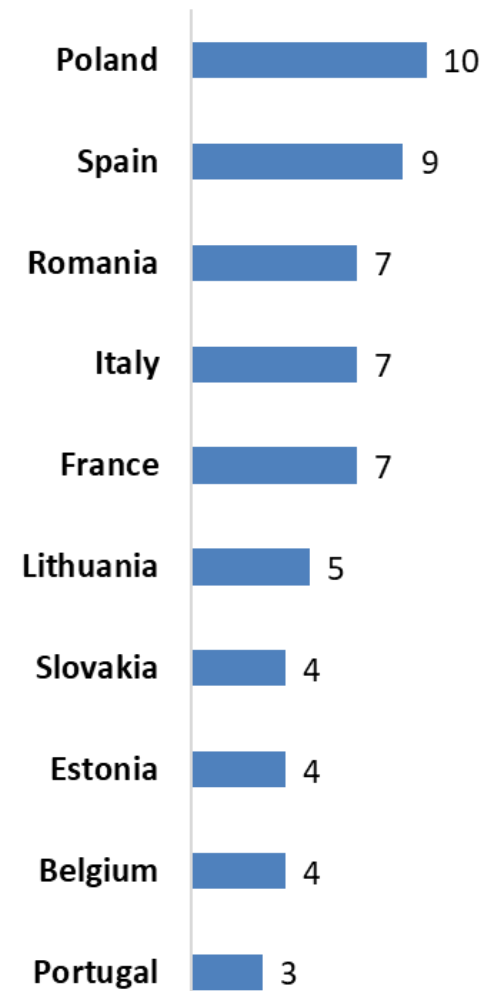
Objectives and benefits of the EU-UAE FTA

- **Reduce tariffs** on goods, simplify customs procedures, and facilitate smoother trade flows
- **Improving market access** for services and fostering digital trade cooperation
- **Strategic focus** on renewable energy, green transition, green hydrogen and critical materials, supporting the **twin transition**
- **Enhance EU supply chain** resilience and boost economic and strategic ties with the Gulf
- **Regulatory convergence**, facilitating easier compliance and innovation

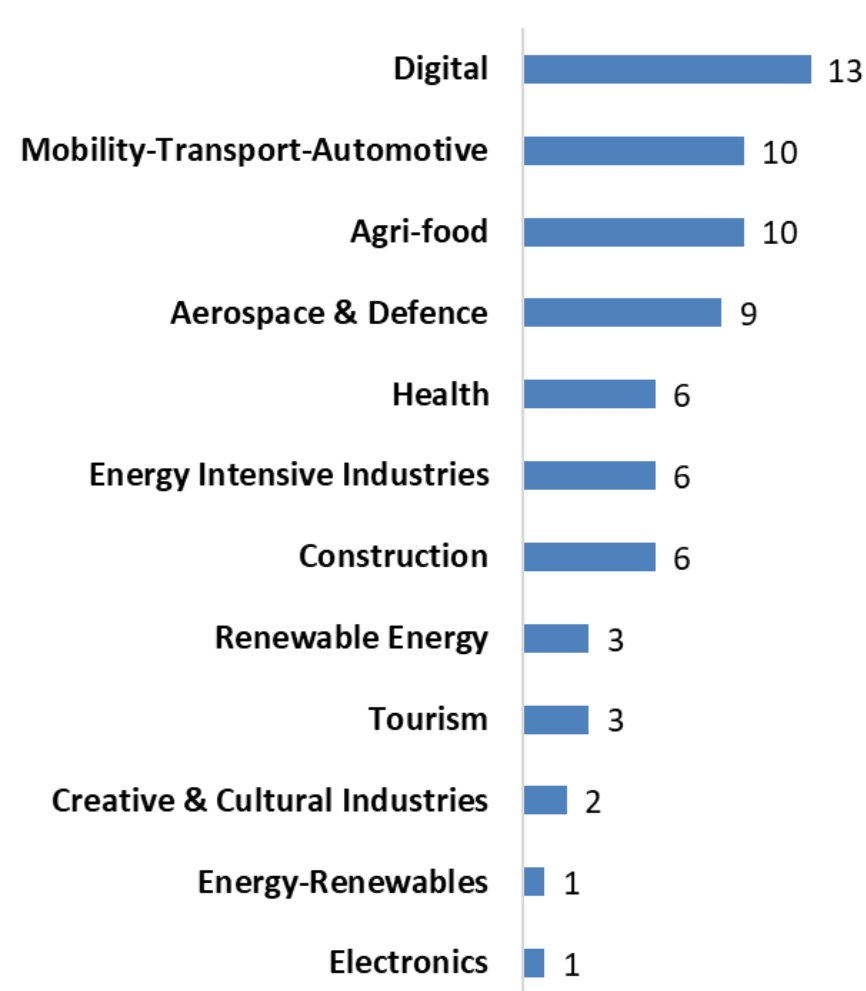
UAE as a target market for EU27 cluster organisations

Top 10 EU countries that target the UAE & their ecosystems

Top EU27 countries that target the UAE



Ecosystems of EU27 cluster organisations that target the UAE



- The UAE are among the **top 10 most target market** of cluster organisations in EU27 countries
- **Poland and Spain** are the countries with the most cluster organisations that **target the UAE market**
- Most cluster that target the UAE market can be assigned to the **Digital, Mobility-Transport-Automotive**, and **Agri-food industrial ecosystems**
- **Three active Euroclusters projects** in the field of
 - Digital Health (Desire),
 - Cultural & Creative Industries (CreaThriv-EU),
 - & textile/construction/ advanced manufacturing (xBuildEU)

Source: ECCP (2025).

UAE Cluster landscape and policy

National Cluster Strategy

- The government **supports cluster initiatives** with funding and regulatory backing, aiming to boost trade and investment, create jobs, enhance talent and productivity, and foster cross-emirate collaboration
- The strategy is closely aligned with the **UAE's long-term goals of economic diversification and industrial development**

A new cluster initiative that launched in **April 2025** is the **Health, Endurance, Longevity, and Medicine (HELM)** cluster:

- Located in **Masdar City** and supported by the **Abu Dhabi Investment Office** and **Department of Health**
- Focus on **life sciences innovation**, including biotechnology, AI-enabled healthcare, and medical technologies
- projected to contribute more than AED 94 billion (EUR 22 billion) to Abu Dhabi's **GDP**, attract **investments** exceeding AED 42 billion (EUR 10 billion), and create approximately 30,000 **new jobs** by 2045

Target sectors for clusters



Financial Services



Hospitality and Tourism



Aerospace and Defense



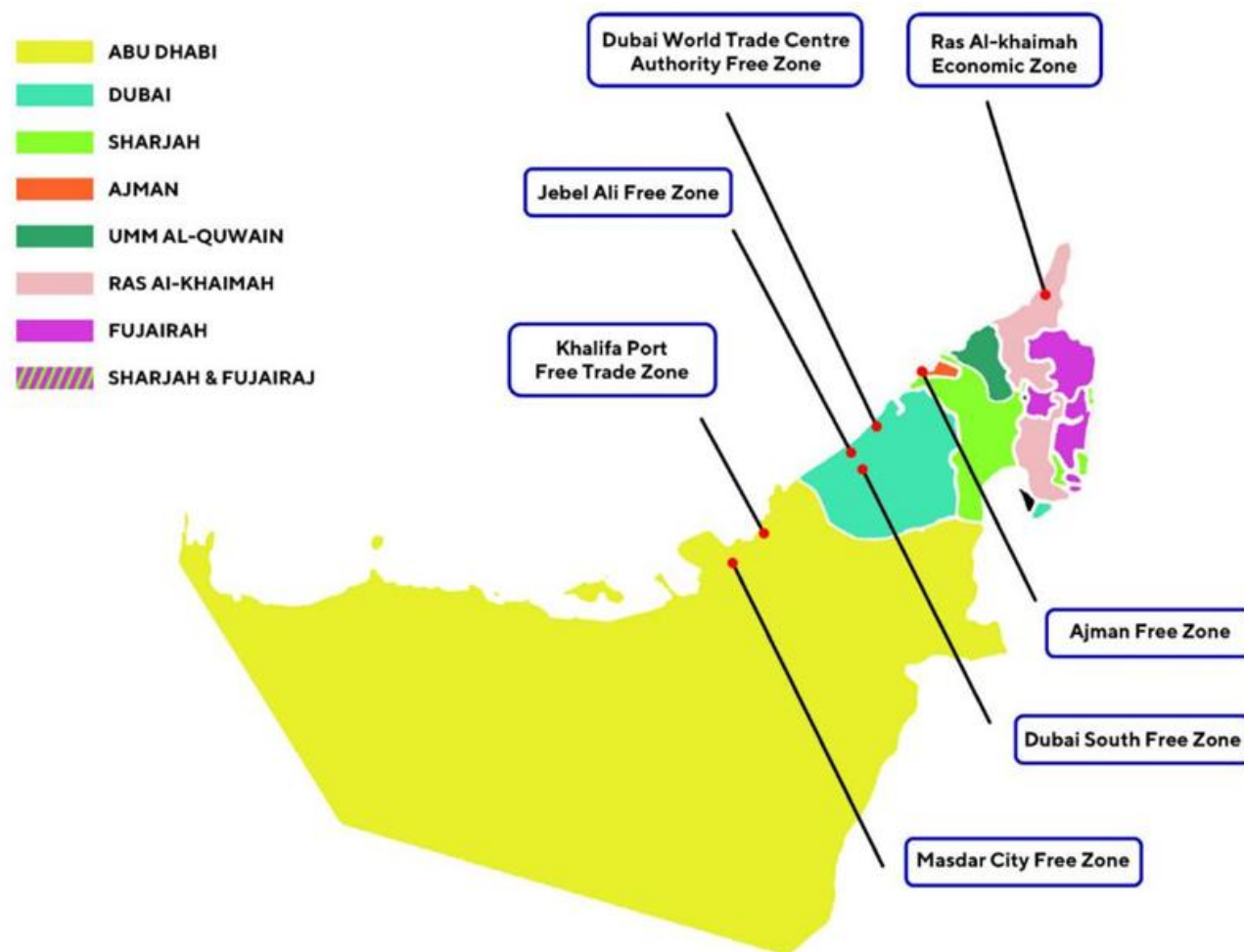
Analytics, Communications, Services, Equipment



Food Sector

UAE Cluster landscape and policy

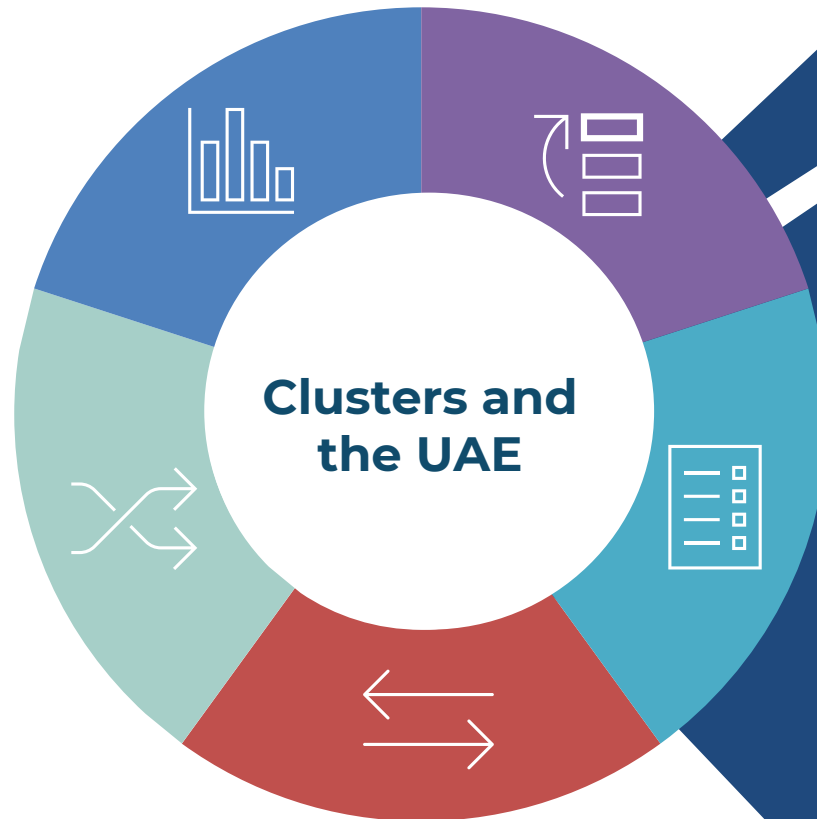
UAE economic free zones



Source: Horizon Biz Consultancy (2023)

- In addition to the National Cluster Strategy, **free zones** are a **key driver of business and sector development**
- The UAE hosts **40+ free zones** across the seven emirates:
 - Dubai: 28 zones
 - Abu Dhabi: 6 zones
 - Sharjah: 5 zones
- **Examples:**
 - **Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC):** focuses on innovation, AI-driven programmes, and collaboration among companies and start-ups
 - **Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority (DSOA):** supports sustainable growth through 11 industry clusters, covering areas such as mobility, cybersecurity, and sustainable development

Concluding remarks



UAE's diversification and EU ties make it a prime hub for cluster collaboration in digital, mobility, agri-food, and life sciences.

- **Strong economic fundamentals:** With a GDP of €475 bn and per capita PPP of €77,550 (2023), the UAE combines sustained 4.1% growth with resource-driven strengths in mining (24% of GDP) and diversification in trade, manufacturing, and finance.
- **Diversification in motion:** While resources dominate exports (47%), rising shares of electronics and machinery signal new growth frontiers.
- **Deepening EU-UAE ties:** Trade is concentrated in Germany and France (~50% of flows), with negotiations for the first bilateral EU-UAE FTA (2025) marking a decisive shift in Europe's Gulf strategy.
- **Dynamic cluster engagement:** The UAE is among the EU27 clusters' top 10 target markets, with strong links in digital, mobility, and agri-food, complemented by active Euroclusters and new initiatives like the HELM life sciences cluster in Masdar City.
- **Innovation hub potential:** 40+ free zones and new cluster initiatives (e.g. HELM in life sciences) reinforce the UAE's role as a magnet for investment, talent, and technology.

Thank You!

Setting the Scene: Market Access Session

Ms. Fatima Al Hajri, Director of the Investment & Talent Attraction

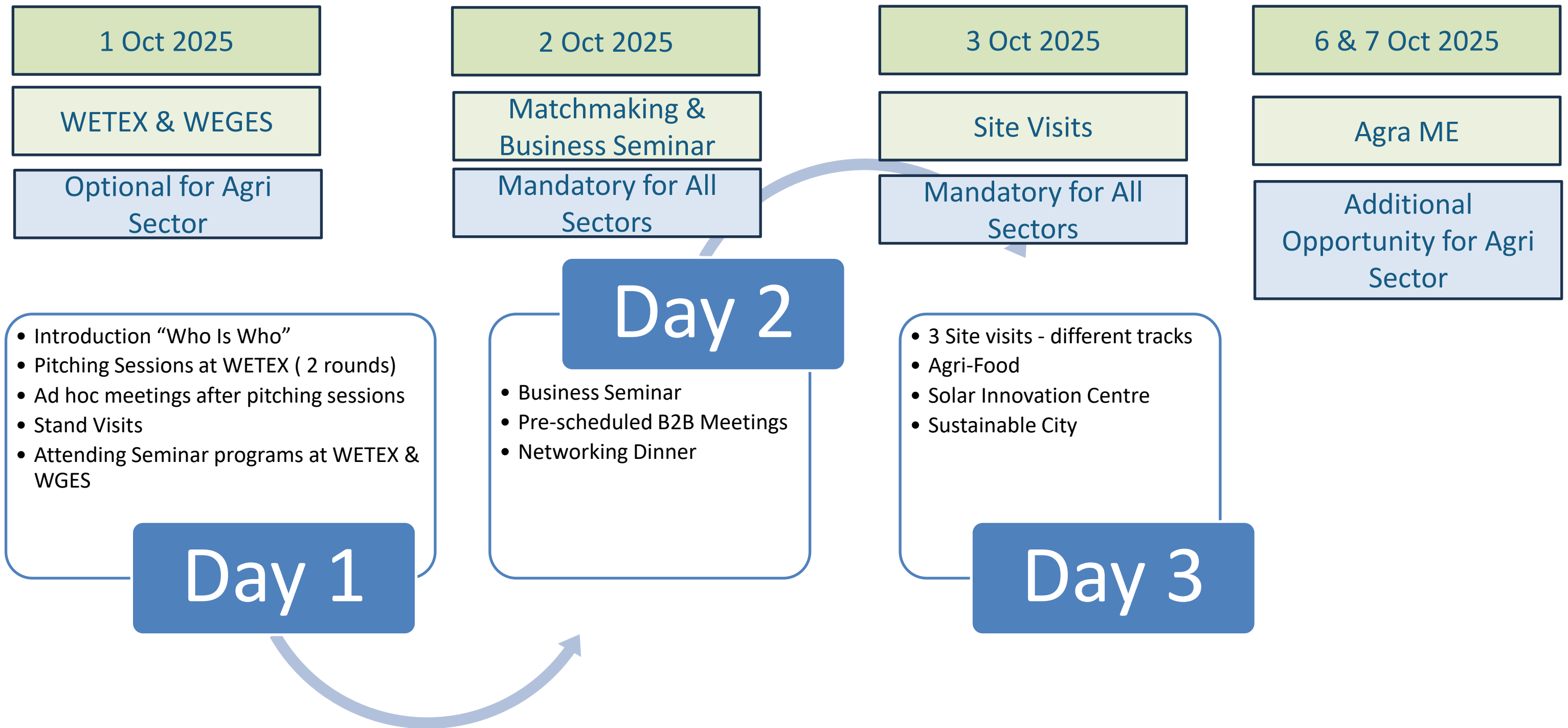
Department, Ministry of Trade, UAE

Mr. Mohammad Al Mufleh, Investment Expert, Ministry of Trade, UAE

Overview of the forthcoming mission

Teodora Jilkova

Cluster Manager / ECCP Team member



Presentation of WETEX and WGES

Aanal Patwari

Deputy Head International engagement and
business affairs, Dubai Electricity & Water
Authority, organisers of WETEX

Next Steps and Q & A

Teodora Jilkova

Cluster Manager / ECCP Team member

- **Hotel:** Book your accommodation (options have been provided)
- **Site Visits:** Sent your passport copy for entry clearance
- **Agri Sector:** confirm if you want to join the activities on 1st Oct
- **Agri Sector:** Register for AgraME (we will send the link)
- **Technical Webinar:** **Save the date**, 16 September, 9:30 – 10:30 CEST
- Join the **LinkedIn Group**
- Check the **Seminar Programme** at WETEX & WEGES
- **Pitching Sessions** at WETEX: Follow the email instructions and deadlines
- **Cluster Berst Practices:** Follow the email instructions and deadlines
- **Optional Networking activities** (1 Oct): Info will follow, please respond

Thank You!