

THE **FUTURE**
OF **MOBILITY**
— IS / IN —
DUBAI

Life in DUBAI

Modern. Ambitious. International.

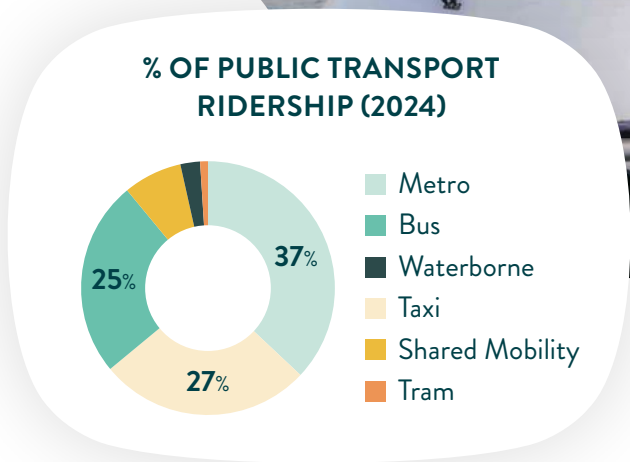
Dubai is a city in transformation – transforming both itself and the public transport sector with leading innovations. And it is the pace of change that makes it so extraordinary.

In 2005, when Dubai’s Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) was formed, the population of the whole Emirate stood at [1.3 million](#). Today, Dubai is home to some 4 million people and has become one of the most visited cities in the world.

To manage – and support the growth of – increasing numbers of global residents and visitors, the city’s public transport system innovated. In 2009, the city launched the world’s longest driverless metro at the time. Then in 2014, Dubai inaugurated a new and modern tram network. There were also huge increases in bicycle and marine networks.

Network length (km)				Change 2006 vs 2024
Mode	2006	2020	2024	
Metro	0	74.3	89.3	/
Bus	2,095	3,810	3,974	+90%
Bicycle	9	463	560.5	+6,128%
Marine	1.35	70.01	151.44	+11,118%
Tram	0	10.6	10.6	/

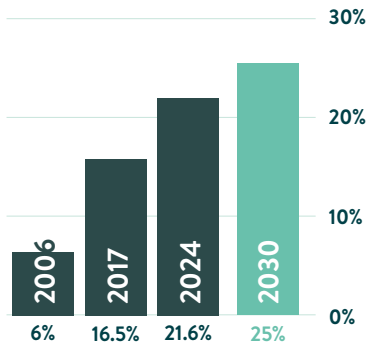
Data from RTA Sustainability Report 2024.



They say build it and they will come, and it is true. In 2024, Dubai broke a ridership record of over 747 million passengers across public transport, shared mobility, and taxis. That’s a jump of 400 million riders from 2017.

Today, those passengers benefit from an extensive and cutting-edge public transport network. In total, after accounting for population, [Dubai offers a bigger mobility system](#) than Hong Kong, Paris, or New York City.

ON TRACK FOR SUSTAINABLE TARGETS



Modal share of public transport and shared mobility

All this means that Dubai is on the path of sustainable mobility. In 2024, public transport and shared mobility made up 21.6% of all journeys – putting the city on track to meet projections of 25%, part of a 42.3% target for all modes of sustainable mobility as outlined in the Dubai Plan 2030.

And the future of mobility is something on the minds of all public transport professionals in Dubai in 2026.

When you join the UITP Summit, you are coming at a big time of change for Dubai:

- ✓ Launch of air taxis
- ✓ Ongoing modal shift
- ✓ Roll-out of autonomous taxis
- ✓ Extensive new cycling network on track for 2026 target
- ✓ And more!

Mode	Lines/Routes	Network length in km	Stations	Vehicles	Ridership 2024 in millions	Change vs 2023*
Metro	2	89.3	53	129	275.4	+6%
Bus	187	3,974	32 (2,501 stops, in/out of Dubai)	1,390	187.7	+8%
Marine	26	151.4	53	210	18	+3%
Tram	1	10.6	11	11	9.4	+6%
Taxi	/	/	/	13,538	200.6	-1%
Shared Mobility	/	/	/	33 bus on demand 400 car-share 1,360 bike-share 14,174 ride-hailing	56	+28%
Total					747	+6.4%

Data from RTA Sustainability Report 2024.

Walking	326**	+6%
Cycling	46.6**	+5%

* RTA: Al Masar 201 **RTA: Press release: Building 6 New Pedestrian and Cyclist Bridges Across Major Roads

INSIGHTS FROM HASHEM ALHENDAWI

UITP Head of MENA

What was your journey to becoming the UITP Head of MENA?

My career has always been about connecting people through better mobility. Over the years, I've worked across global organisations and regional projects in the Middle East, building bridges between innovation, operations, and policy. Joining UITP was a natural step, it's where knowledge, people, and ideas come together.

What makes Dubai a great host for the UITP Summit?

It is historic: the Summit returns to our region after 15 years, and Dubai is the perfect stage. Thanks to the work and bold ambitions of RTA and the support of regional authorities, the city combines world-class infrastructure with bold ambitions for the future, from integrated networks to sustainability leadership. Its role as a global crossroads makes it an ideal meeting point for international leaders. Hosting the world's largest public transport event here will showcase Dubai and RTA's achievements and offer participants a unique perspective on the mobility transformations unfolding in the Middle East.

What should participants look out for during the UITP Summit in Dubai?

In Dubai, participants will discover the latest technologies on the exhibition floor, connect with peers from every corner of the world, and join discussions that set the direction for our industry. The energy of the Summit lies in the mix of global leaders, innovators, and practitioners all in one place.

How will public transport evolve in Dubai over the next 5-10 years?

Dubai is moving from transport as a service to mobility as a seamless experience. RTA is introducing smarter ticketing, more on-demand services, and cleaner, greener fleets. Importantly, the focus will remain on inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring every passenger benefits. Dubai's transport will not only connect the city efficiently, but also enhance the quality of life and support wider climate and sustainability goals.

What is your personal vision for UITP MENA in the years ahead?

Becoming Head of MENA is more than a role for me; it's a responsibility to support members and help shape sustainable, innovative, and people-centred transport across the region. We want to support our members in tackling today's priorities, from sustainability to digitalisation, while preparing for what's next. This means expanding our network, developing talent, and fostering partnerships across borders. Most importantly, it's about keeping people at the centre of mobility; ensuring that every new project, policy, or technology makes daily life easier, greener, and more inclusive.



HIGHLIGHTS OF DUBAI

With every innovation, there has to be an early adopter; a city that tests the limits of technology and provides an opportunity for large-scale commercial deployment. And that's Dubai.



Automated Metro

When Dubai launched its fully driverless metro in 2009, it was the world's most extensive. Running on cutting-edge technology, from operation to fare collection, it was also the first metro system in the Gulf. And it's no surprise that a modern, attractive system attracts passengers – in just two days after launch, nearly 10% of the city's population had used it.

Today, the city operates two lines, Red and Green, with a third on the way. During peak time, trains run every four minutes, creating regular and reliable urban connectivity.

In fact, it's estimated that every dirham spent on the Dubai Metro by 2030 will return 4.3 AED in accumulated benefits. In 2030 alone, that number should add up to 234 billion AED (around €53.8 billion).





Air Taxis

2026 is a big year for transport in Dubai, and not just because of the UITP Summit. The year also marks the launch of commercial air taxi services – the first of its kind in the world!

Launching air taxis entails not just the construction of four vertiports (at the airport, downtown, marina and the Palm Jumeirah), but deep collaboration with manufacturers, all while developing a whole new regulatory framework.

And here’s the result: the air taxis emit zero emissions and are quieter than a helicopter. With space for four passengers, they will require booking, operate on fixed routes, and be integrated into the wider public transport system.

It’s all about making sustainable mobility the way to move in Dubai. For example, an air taxi from the airport to the Palm will take just 10 minutes – down from 45 minutes by car. And if the metro in Dubai is known for impressive views, you can imagine what an air taxi provides.








Autonomous vehicles (AVs)

Dubai has an ambitious target: 25% of all trips should be driverless by 2030. That’s not just automated metros, but buses, marine vessels, taxis, and more. In fact, multimodality is essential to the target. RTA’s Self-driving Transport Roadmap outlines how every mode will contribute to automating mobility in Dubai.

Also in 2026, RTA and several AV technology companies will roll out AVs on Dubai’s roads. By the decade’s end, the goal is to have 4,000 automated vehicles serving passengers.

25% SELF-DRIVING MODAL SHARE TARGET BY MODE

Mode	 Metro/ other Rail	 Bus	 Marine	 Taxi/Shared Mobility	 Beyond PT
% of total trips in 2030	11%	2.6%	~0.1%	~1.8%	9.5%

INNOVATING Dubai

BLUE LINE DUBAI METRO

Dubai's third metro line will level up the city's public transport network. Scheduled for completion in 2029 – 20 years after the metro first launched – it will increase the network's length by a third. Built in cooperation with the private sector, it is estimated to cost 20.5 billion AED (some €4.75 billion) and will feature architectural themes like earth, water, and fire.

And for that investment, RTA projects that the Blue Line will return 2.60 AED for every one spent by 2040, driven by time savings, energy efficiency, reduced road incidents, and lower emissions. Plus, to show how public transport supports economic growth and transit-oriented development, the Blue Line is expected to cut congestion on key roads by 20% and boost nearby land/property value by up to 25%.

Capacity of the Blue Line

46,000
passengers per hour in both directions



Number of trains

28

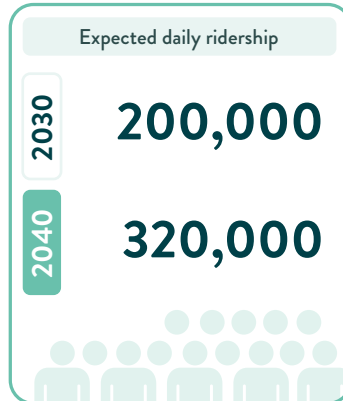
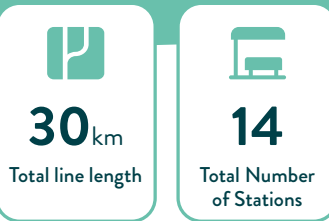
Project Cost

20.5 AED
billion



Completion Date

September 2029

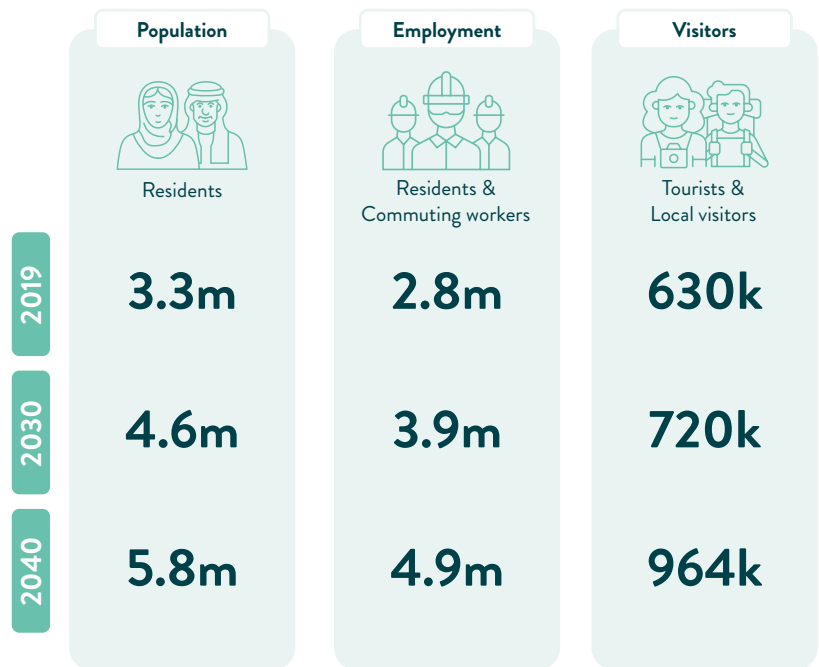


URBAN MASTER PLAN 2040

This is the big one. Dubbed 'The Plan', it's a vital long-term urban planning strategy for Dubai.

While it encompasses many projects, the premise of the plan is simple: to build a 20-minute city, where 55% of people live within 800m of a public transport hub. All in all, residents should be able to access 80% of daily mobility needs by walking and cycling.

Given that more and more people will come to Dubai – to live, work, or simply visit – a plan to make mobility both accessible and sustainable is invaluable.



THE DUBAI WALK MASTER PLAN

Today, 13% of journeys are made by foot or active mobility. But by 2040, the idea is to make that figure 25%! Here's how:



3,300 km
of new walkways



110 new pedestrian
bridges and underpasses



2,300 km
of modernised paths



Across **160**
districts in Dubai

The changes are popular. Where new active mobility measures are implemented, pedestrian satisfaction averages 87%.

MULTIMODAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS (FOR BETTER FIRST- AND LAST-MILE TRIPS)

Dubai has upgraded some 30 stations to make them major mobility hubs. From bicycle parking, shared bikes, to segregated pathways and more, Dubai is making changes to ensure seamless integration between different modes. And by 2027, a further 32 stations will see multimodal upgrades.

This is a key pillar of Dubai's first- and last-mile strategy, which has three priorities: sustainability, shared mobility, and safety of users. In fact, according to Careem, the city's largest bike-sharing operator, three-quarters of all trips bridge the first- and last-mile gap.

ZERO-EMISSIONS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN DUBAI 2050

This is the core plan guiding RTA's drive for sustainability – and the first of its kind in the Middle East. By 2050, RTA aims to fully transition to zero-emission buses and school buses. Before then, 2040 will see clean energy powering all of the city's taxis, as well as limousines... (which serve millions of riders a year).





NEW BUS AND TAXI LANES

Across 2025 and 2026, six new dedicated lanes spanning 13km are expected to increase bus ridership by 10%, improve arrival times by 42%, and cut journey times by 41%. Because a congestion-free bus network is reliable and attractive!



AUTONOMOUS, TRACKLESS TRAMS

RTA is testing self-driving, trackless trams across eight locations in Dubai. Fully electrified, the vehicles are planned to follow a virtual track, guided by lane-tracking technology rather than traditional rails, and can operate for 100km on a single charge. That could promise relatively low costs, fast implementation, and expanded connectivity.

LAUNCH OF MORE DRT SERVICES

RTA first tested demand-responsive transit (DRT) services in 2020, garnering over 2 million rides. Dynamic and booked on-request, DRT pools similar routes in real time. Around 60 DRT minibuses are hitting Dubai's roads thanks to a partnership with three private enterprises. The mini-buses will eventually serve all of Dubai.



BOOMING CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

2026 is a big year for cycling in Dubai – the city is on track to build around 800km of new cycle paths by the year's end. By 2030, the network is forecasted to increase to 1,000km.



MODERNISED BUS SHELTERS

Over 762 bus shelters – around 30% of Dubai's total – are being revamped to improve service quality. From air conditioning to shaded outdoor areas and information screens, the new bus shelters are expected to serve more than 182 million passengers a year.

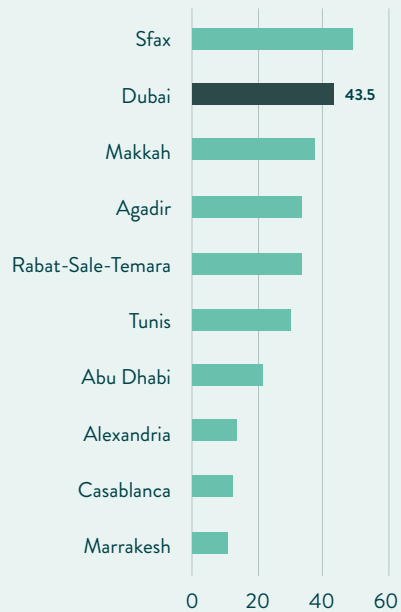
LET'S ZOOM OUT to *MENA*

Just like Dubai, mobility across the Middle East and North Africa is also transforming. Right now, just over a third of the region's 500 million people have convenient access to public transport. In the UAE, that figure is

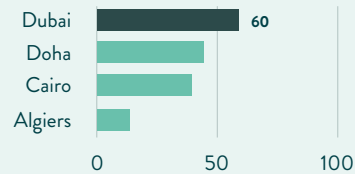
50.8% – closer to the global average than that of other MENA countries.

Against other major cities in MENA, Dubai's metro and bus systems in particular rank highly.

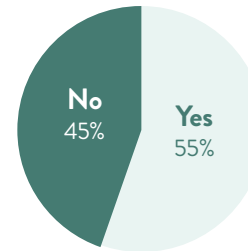
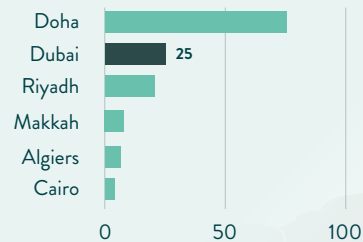
ANNUAL BUS RIDERSHIP PER CAPITA



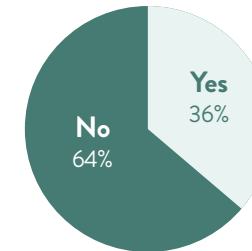
ANNUAL METRO RIDERSHIP PER CAPITA



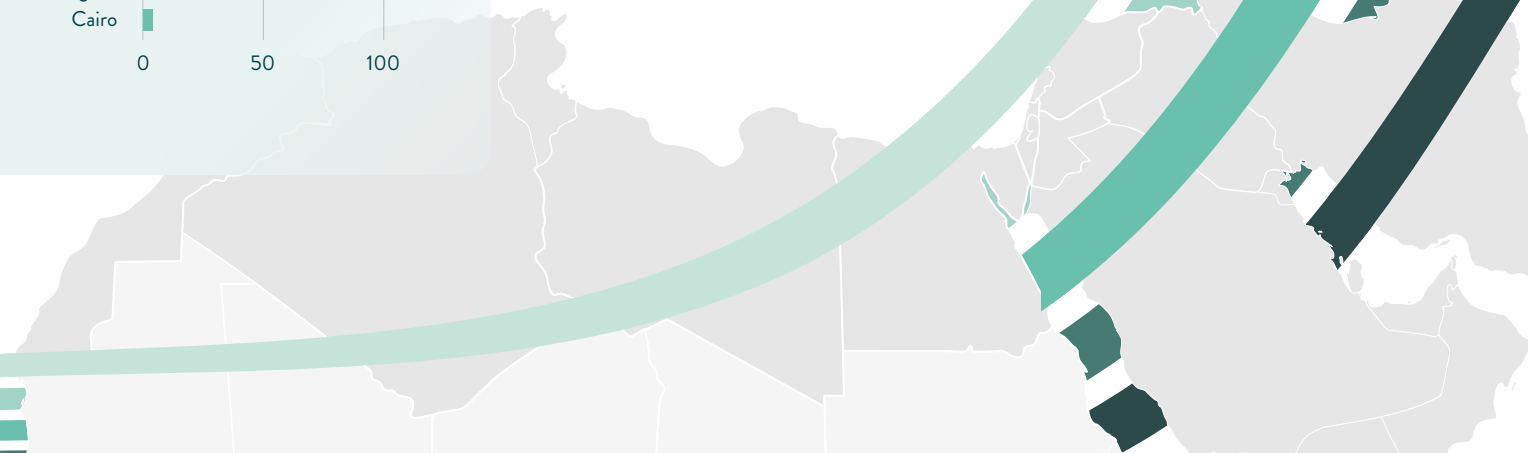
METRO NETWORK LENGTH PER MILLION POPULATION



Average global share of people with convenient access to public transport



Average MENA share of people with convenient access to public transport



Other cities are implementing bold initiatives, bolstered by population growth, economic diversification efforts, and climate targets. There is no shortage of new projects in the region. Here are just a few:



METRO

- **Riyadh** inaugurated its first metro line at the end of 2024, spanning 85 stations.
- **Cairo's** Metro Line 4 will extend the city's network by 42km and support up to 2 million daily passengers. It is in construction and operations are expected to start in 2028.
- **Bahrain** aims to offer its first metro by 2030, initially with a planned length of 29km. That's driven by the Bahrain Economic Vision 2030.
- **Muscat** will follow with a new 50km metro network in 2032.
- **Algiers** will see another 14km added to its metro network by the end of 2026, with two major extensions set to increase metro accessibility (including from the airport).
- **Baghdad** plans to advance Iraq's first metro. The consortium to design, execute, and operate the system has already been chosen.



BRT

- **Amman's** new BRT line – launched in May 2024 – connects Jordan's capital with the industrial city of Zarqa, cutting a 40 minute journey by as much as half.
- **Madinah** is implementing a major BRT project with up to 500 stations, covering up to 90% of the city by 2030.
- **Cairo** plans a ring road BRT to replace traditional microbus services, including some 58 stations and 100 electric buses intended to run with a 10 minute headway.



LRT

- **Casablanca** launched two new tram lines in September 2024, adding 39 stations to the network. In 2025, the new trams are expected to serve over 20 million passengers.
- **Alexandria** – home to the oldest tram network in MENA – will modernise 13.2km of tram track to halve travel times and triple passenger capacity by 2027.

ABOUT THE SUMMIT & LOCAL HOSTS

Join us in Dubai from 21 to 23 April 2026!

With more than 140 years of history, the latest UITP Summit in Dubai will be the not-to-miss high-level event for the public transport sector.

When you attend the UITP Summit, you will also have the chance to experience Dubai's state-of-the-art public transport network. And that makes Dubai the perfect location to host the world's largest public transport gathering!

 Find out more at uitpsummit.org

 Explore UITP at uitp.org

8,000
Attendees



100
Countries



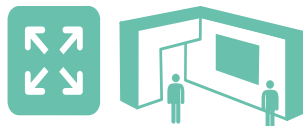
70
Sessions

300
Speakers



100
Press & Media
Representatives

25,000m²



300
Exhibitors



RTA - LOCAL HOST

Dubai is one of the fastest growing cities in today's world, making the provision of high quality infrastructure facilities absolutely imperative. With that in mind, as well as the high priority allocated by the government of Dubai to the provision of an advanced transport network for the people of Dubai, RTA endeavours to improve the public transport facilities and develop roads across the emirate to make travel safer and smoother.

