



MILLIONAIRES ON THE MOVE – AND WITH THE UAE IN SIGHT

COLLABORATIVE SURVEY IDENTIFIES EXPATS' MOTIVATIONS TO RELOCATE TO THE UAE

M/HQ, the UAE's leading wealth optimization platform, assisted Lombard Odier with its 2024 United Arab Emirates (UAE) Expat Study focusing on the needs, goals, and experiences of high-net-worth (HNW) expatriates living in the region. The UAE attracts both Eastern and Western expats with its high quality of life and appealing investment prospects. For the third year running, the Gulf's state rates first worldwide in total inbound number of HNWs.

As part of a panel discussing the Survey's findings, Yann Mrazek, Managing Partner at M/HQ, commented

ON CRITICAL ASPECTS TO CONSIDER WHEN RELOCATING:

When you reroot from Europe, Latin America or Asia, there will inevitably be consequences; these can vary from insignificant to substantial. For one holding a bank account, say, in Switzerland or Singapore, a change in permanent residency will trigger a KYC documentation refresher. This is the inconsequential. On the more impactful end, when going cross border, will my existing health insurance coverage suffice? Should the policy be extended, or a new (domestic) policy be subscribed to? Most important of them all, some people never thought of succession, or of implementing intergenerational legacy planning solutions.

Moving to the UAE - a country with Muslim roots - constitutes a trigger event not to be under considered. We encourage people to (re-)assess their personal situation, to educate themselves on the tools and solutions available locally, and then act, be it by planning for the first time, or by conducting a health check of arrangements implemented pre-migration and decide if these are still fit for purpose. In this context, domestic UAE tools and solutions - in line with M/HQ's thesis 'Structure where you live' - have gained substantial momentum over the past years. One builds a connection here in the UAE; it stands to reason that one should optimize using local tools - golden visa, domestic foundations and other arrangements.

ON HOW FAMILIES CAN TACKLE INTERGENERATIONAL LEGACY PLANNING EFFECTIVELY:

Discussing intergenerational legacy or not is cultural; we prefer talking about business continuity or continuity of management. What if the chairman is incapacitated for the next 6 months? What if the person in charge of overseeing investments and distributing proceeds to family members is no longer able to handle such sensitive tasks? Then it becomes a slightly easier discussion to engage the principal and the family.



ON THE GROWING TRENDS OF FAMILIES WANTING TO KEEP CONTROL OVER THEIR WEALTH MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES:

Families want control – long are gone the days full and discretionary control over strategic family assets is given to foreign-based trustees one would rarely, if ever, meet. Families are increasingly self-educating themselves on wealth management tools and solutions, and manage their own legacy planning and business continuity operation.

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIVACY:

*A steady erosion of privacy has been occurring in many countries. Successful families traditionally prefer discretion and thus are careful about data in the public domain. They do not want multiple data access points and favor direct control over what is theirs, what is shared share willingly with their regulator and their bank/s but not necessarily with the market at large. In this context, **privacy is the new super-currency**. The UAE has recognized this and improved its offering and registrars' features and access to enable international families the option of having their data available publicly or not, while operating in a fully compliant environment.*

"For families serious about wealth management, privacy is the new super-currency."

ON WHY THE UAE HAS BECOME SUCH AN ATTRACTIVE OPTIONS FOR HNWIs:

The UAE is an attractive option for HNWIs for several reasons. The country offers zero income tax and a high quality of life, including world-class infrastructure, healthcare, and education, as well as a safe and secure living environment. Moreover, the UAE offers exceptional investment opportunities on a global scale. Its strategic geographical location provides easy access to markets in Europe, Asia, and Africa, facilitating international business and travel. Furthermore, the UAE's residency programs, such as the Golden Visa and Investor Visas, provide attractive options for obtaining long-term residency, offering stability and security to foreign investors, entrepreneurs and talented individuals who contribute significantly to the country. See our factsheet for detailed insights into Residency options in the UAE, [here](#).

ON FAMILIES FAVORING HIGHLY REGULATED JURISDICTIONS FOR THEIR WEALTH MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES:

Clients are gravitating towards highly regulated jurisdictions. In this context, it is difficult to argue against the UAE and its two common law centres in particular: whitelisted, highly regulated, with a broad menu of tools and solutions, yet flexible, with limited regulatory oversight for proprietary investment. Operating through lower rated, lower barrier-at-entrance jurisdictions is a risk for families from a value preservation standpoint.



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ON THE UAE'S FUTURE TRAJECTORY:

Families want control – long are gone the days full and discretionary control over strategic family assets is given to foreign-based trustees one would rarely, if ever, meet. Families are increasingly self-educating themselves on wealth management tools and solutions, and manage their own legacy planning and business continuity operation.

Twenty years ago, a not unusual scenario was a family member setting roots in the UAE while the Patriarch and family would remain in the home country. The UAE would be a spending ground; the wealth management function would remain home.

Fast forward two decades, and a fundamental shift has occurred: people are now moving here to live, yes, but also to structure and manage their wealth from the jurisdiction.

Ahead of a historical inter-generational wealth transfer across the Gulf, the UAE has had a choice to make: use foreign-based and developed recipes, tools and solutions, and rely on someone else doing the cooking, or create its own original, modern, elevated menu, more in line with regional needs and sensitivities. The UAE opted for the latter with great success, and the world has taken notice: the UAE's wealth management offering now seems to be what the smart money has a craving for too.

"The UAE's wealth management offering is what the smart money has a craving for."

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AUTHOR:



Yann Mrazek
Managing Partner
M/HQ
mrazek@m-hq.com

Who we are

M/HQ is a multi-services platform catering to successful individuals and entrepreneurial families. Our one-stop-shop offering is unique in the Middle East: a holistic and cross-disciplinary combination of a market-leading corporate services firm, a private client specialist team and a regulatory & compliance services practice, all through one single platform.

We have extensive experience advising on a broad range of wealth structuring and legacy planning issues. We particularly assist in establishing and servicing **Family- and Group- Holdings, Single- and Multi- Family offices, Foundations** and other asset consolidation/protection and intergenerational wealth management structures.

Headquartered in the UAE, we are an entrepreneurial firm for entrepreneurial clients.