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# THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SMART CITY POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

UAE: DUBAI EXPO CITY, UAE: MASDAR CITY, QATAR: LUSAIL CITY, KSA: THE LINE PROJECT



## DUBAI EXPO CITY

Reduction in operational carbon footprint by 45% by 2030 and 80% by 2040.  
 Creating 35,000 jobs per year.  
 1,039,000 full-time equivalent job-years.

## MASDAR CITY

Generating USD 24 to 32 billion to the UAE's economy.  
 Diverting 15,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.  
 Creating 30,000 to 50,000 jobs.

## LUSAIL CITY

Offsetting 65 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.  
 24 kilometre waste-pipe network constructed underneath the city.  
 Creating 170,000 jobs.

## THE LINE PROJECT

Introducing AI-enabled communities which are powered by 100% clean energy.  
 USD 48 billion will be contributed to GDP by 2030.  
 Creating 380,000 jobs.

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Analysing smart city projects across the GCC has helped me inform the extent to which technology has impacted sustainable policy making, reaping economic benefits, measured through GDP growth and employment figures.

Does technology contribute to the Net Zero 2050 strategy, or rather prove to be an instrument of detriment? This question influenced my curiosity about how successfully Smart City policies combine the emerging trends of AI and Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) frameworks to generate economically prosperous outcomes. Establishing 'Sustainable Cities & Communities' as the 11th of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reinforces the global urge for action towards sustainable initiatives and amplifies my eagerness to explore policy solutions towards this.

### Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Middle East to collectively invest around USD 320 billion by 2030 - 14% of GDP.

56% of firms integrated AI within businesses practices.

### Sustainability:

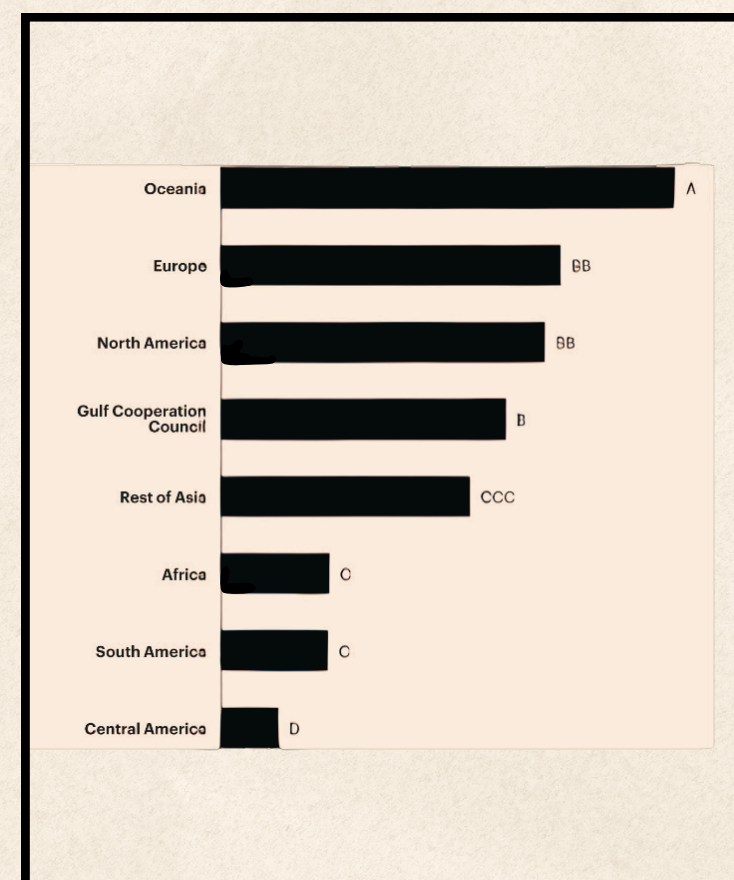
50% of firms currently hold a formally documented and fully embedded strategy.

CSO: sustainable leaders in the C-suite.

### Limitations:

Increased cybersecurity risks have resulted in a growing market, set to exceed USD 28 billion in 2025.

UAE and KSA face talent deficits, at 24% and 30% respectively.



Average Smart City Technology Rating (Kearney Analysis, 2024)