

Title:

UAE's Imbalanced Demography Poses Concerns

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523

Summary:

Dubai and UAE's rising expatriate population is generating much concern these days. The administration requires looking at it very seriously before things get too complicated to be resolved.

Keywords:

expatriates, immigration, demography, politics, society, travel, leisure, dubai apartments, dubai hotel apartments, dubai furnished apartments

Article Body:

Even as Dubai's rising expatriate population is being projected as a measure of its association with the outside world, many historians, media experts and political observers are looking at the same phenomenon with some concern these days. Very recently, an editorial in the Gulf News stated how eight out of every ten people living in the UAE were born abroad. This was expected to reach up to nine out of every ten by the year 2015. This scenario might become even more imbalanced by the year 2025, when the expatriate community will almost score ten out of every ten native citizens counted. This analysis is however hypothetical in kind, and there are factors overlooked by the author, which might actually decide a totally different demographic scenario in the years to follow.

First of all, the current crop of construction projects are expected to be over in the next 5 to 10 years, which will force up to 50% of the UAE's expatriates to go back to their homelands. The expatriate population will still continue to remain quite significant though, as the properties being developed now will mostly be bought by the offshore clients later. The projected scenario of the Gulf News article can only arise, if the authorities kept announcing more and more new projects in the years to come. This could again be called a distant possibility, as no nation can ever dream of having an endless growth.

However, some related issues of these demographic upheavals might require attention by the authorities sooner than later. For example, outsiders can buy homes and properties but no land on which they were made. This limits their ability to have a say in the matters of policymaking in the UAE. How long will they continue to stay and share their knowledge, time and wealth if disallowed

to have even the basic rights of a tenant? Remember, the UAE and Dubai are heavily dependent on both the cheap and the highly skilled labor from other nations. The local economy will crumble immediately the day outsiders were asked to leave the UAE. Either the ethnic Arab community will have to be self-reliant or be ready to provide greater rights to the expatriate community, to continue having an association that has benefited all involved.

There is no scope for any permanent citizenships being granted to the outsiders, as it can seriously interfere with the ethnic interests. But, what many observers are asking right now, is to let the outsiders have more say as tenants, and thus ensure their continuation in the UAE's economy. Unless it was done so, the expatriates might think of moving away to other locations, thus curtailing the UAE's commerce.

This brings us to the belief that the imbalanced demography of the UAE will have to be addressed by its administrators, so that their economic achievements didn't get wasted down. It will be in the interest of all parties involved to have a lasting alliance between the ethnic Arabs and the outsiders. Despite the fact that no overnight solutions could be achieved for the above stated matter, one will still require looking for the answers for the sake of tomorrow.