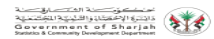


Sharjah's Commitment to Safeguarding Cultural Heritage



Organization: Government

Data Type: Official statistics, Administrative data

Region: Local

Timeline: 2026 - 2029

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Sponsoring Organization:

Statistics and Community Development Department

Supporting Organization(s):

Objective:

The objective of the Emirate of Sharjah's is to develop a Cultural Availability Index which is aligned with the UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics and which corresponds to SDG 11.4.

The commitment seeks to:

- Establish a national reference model that classifies cultural domains such as heritage, performing arts, visual arts, books, media, and design.
- Develop quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure the state of cultural heritage and its contribution to development.
- Strengthen institutional coordination among museums, archives, libraries, and cultural centers with national statistical offices.

In doing so, the commitment aims to position the Emirate as a regional leader in cultural sustainability, where heritage is not only preserved but actively contributes to social, economic, and creative progress. It further highlights the importance of national statistical offices in monitoring cultural statistics and strengthen partnerships between cultural entities and statistical offices.

Description:

The Emirate of Sharjah's commitment to safeguarding cultural heritage seeks to confront the mounting risks facing both cultural and natural heritage amid rapid modernization, urban expansion, and social change. The Emirate recognises that heritage, tangible and intangible alike, is a cornerstone of collective identity, continuity, and sustainable community life. Yet these invaluable assets are increasingly vulnerable to neglect, loss, and the erosion of traditional knowledge and practices.

In light of the Emirate's various recognitions by UNESCO (Cultural Capital of the Arab World (1998), Capital of Islamic Culture (2014), World Book Capital (2019), and the Faya Palaeolandscape as a World Heritage site (2025), the Emirate strives to continue preserving and honouring its cultural identity. This includes integrating heritage into planning, education, and cultural production, so that Sharjah continues to grow as a city that pays tribute to its past while shaping a resilient, culturally rich future for generations to come. Through this commitment, the Emirate of Sharjah aims to protect, document, and revitalise its heritage while ensuring that development remains rooted in history, identity, and creative spirit.

Key activities include mapping and documenting cultural assets across all fields such as: heritage sites, performing and visual arts, crafts, publishing, and design, alongside developing comprehensive databases and inventories. The initiative also seeks to strengthen cooperation between entities responsible for cultural production and preservation and national statistical offices, as well as community participation.

Strategically, the commitment ensures that heritage conservation becomes a shared responsibility across sectors, and where research, education, and creative expression are supported.

The ultimate outcome of the Index is to reinforce the Emirate of Sharjah's position as a leader in culture driven development and identity preservation in the region and internationally, where countries can adopt a similar process of monitoring cultural production.

Progress will be monitored through **accurate and timely data collection**, Strengthened by **active partnerships and cross sector cooperation**. Success will be evaluated through measurable outcomes and **capacity building efforts** that ensure sustainability and long term impact.