

**SPECIAL REPORT**

# fdi Intelligence

October/November 2020 | [fdiintelligence.com](http://fdiintelligence.com)



## Global Free Zones of the Year 2020

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**fdi**  
FREE ZONES  
OF THE YEAR  
2020

# Global Free Zones of the Year 2020 – Winners

THE UAE'S DMCC TAKES HOME THE TOP PRIZE IN **fdi**'S GLOBAL FREE ZONES OF THE YEAR FOR A SIXTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR. **JACOPO DETTONI** REPORTS



Still on top: Dubai's DMCC is the overall winner of **fdi**'s Free Zones of the Year 2020

"2020 HAS PLACED IMMENSE PRESSURE ON US ALL, BUT THIS AWARD REASSURES US THAT WE ARE ON THE RIGHT TRACK"

Ahmed Bin Sulayem, executive chairman and CEO, DMCC

## Winners – global



**Winner: Global**  
DMCC, United Arab Emirates

The reign of the Dubai-based DMCC as the world's top free zone continues. The DMCC has come on top of **fdi**'s Global Free Zones of the Year for the sixth consecutive year in 2020. A favourite of the judges, the zone has once again managed to impress with its combination of

operational results and cutting-edge governance and marketing strategy, with some key improvements pushed through in 2019 to refine its overall business proposition.

The managing company highlights that 39 system upgrades were implemented to enhance customer experience and improve operational efficiency in 2019, thus achieving nearly 100% digital services, whose value skyrocketed as the Covid-19 pandemic brought digital onboarding and aftercare services to the fore. Additionally, the DMCC partnered with Etisalat Digital to

transform Jumeirah Lakes Towers into an innovative smart and sustainable district, powered by a 5G network. It also collaborated with Dubai-based logistics powerhouse DP World to provide DMCC members with solutions for warehousing located in the Jebel Ali Free Zone and Port, thus providing additional value for customers who previously could not access warehousing solutions within the free zone.

At the same time, it launched a coffee trade centre and renovated its diamond hub to strengthen its role as a key commodity trading nexus in the Middle East. This strategy won the DMCC new tentants of the calibre of Renault Middle East and a flurry of Chinese companies of the likes of China National Chemical Engineering, CITIC Construction and Shandong Hi-Speed Group, testament also to its marketing efforts in east Asia. With its 68 commercial and residential towers, the DMCC hosts more than 17,500 companies (about 2000 new companies registered in 2019 alone) which employ 60,000 people.

#### Highly commended

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

Tanger Med Zones has been highly commended in fDi's 2020 Global Free Zones of the Year, rising to second place from fifth in the 2019 ranking. This is the first time an African zone ranks that high in the ranking, which is testament to the tremendous rise of the network of zones developed by operator Tanger Med around the Tanger Med port on the Gibraltar Strait, one of Africa's busiest.

Tanger Med Zones is made up of four main ventures that form an integrated business proposition spanning automotive and manufacturing, logistics, and offshore services: the Tanger Free Zone, the Tanger Automotive City, the Tetouanshore and Tetouan Park. The whole complex generated €8.8bn worth of exports in 2019, up 10.9% from a year earlier, according to company figures. Overall, the zones hosted about 1000 export-oriented firms employing some 90,000 people at the end of 2019.

Operator Tanger Med Group strengthened the automotive cluster in 2019, which features top original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) such as Renault, PSA and Ford, by adding a 24,000-sq-metre automotive logistics platform and carrying out a first 120ha expansion of the Tanger Automotive City. Italian automotive supplier Magneti Marelli stood out among the companies that pushed through big expansion of local operations in 2019.

## fDi's Global Free Zones of the Year – Top 10 Zones Globally



Rank	Freezone	Country
1	DMCC	United Arab Emirates
2	Tanger Med Zones	Morocco
3	Łódź Special Economic Zone	Poland
4	Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone	China
5	Cayman Enterprise City	Cayman Islands
6	Mahindra World City Chennai	India
7	Coyol Free Zone	Costa Rica
8	Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone	UAE
9	Mauritius Freeport	Mauritius
10	Freeport of Ventspils	Latvia

### Winners – regional



#### Winner: Africa

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

Tanger Med Zones topped the African ranking as Morocco consolidates its role as a manufacturing and trading hub strategically located between Europe, Africa and the Atlantic basin. Its network of zones has proven fertile soil for the development of an ever-growing automotive cluster. Other major clusters such as aeronautics are also being developed. The addition of logistics platforms and services centres integrates Tanger Med Zones' offering and puts tenants in a position to make the most of the proximity with the Tanger Med Port, a powerhouse in its own right with its nine million containers annual capacity and connection to another 186 ports around the globe.

#### Highly commended: Africa

Mauritius Freeport, Mauritius

The Mauritius Freeport has been highly commended among African zones. Better known as a tourist paradise, the country has been developing a major logistics hub next to the port of capital Port Louis within the territory of the Mauritius Freeport.

"The strategic location of Mauritius has attracted major shipping lines, express courier services and freight-forwarding companies to the Freeport logistics platform," the company says. "Through these players, Mauritius has developed competitive logistics at the seaport and airport."

Freeport activities have been boosted by the ongoing upgrade of the adjacent seaport, including a \$300m investment to construct a breakwater to reduce downtime at the port during bad ►

## Winners

**OVERALL WINNER**

DMCC, UAE

**Highly commended**

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

**REGIONAL WINNERS****Winner – Africa**

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

**Highly commended – Africa**

Mauritius Freeport, Mauritius

**Winner – Asia-Pacific**

Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone, China

**Highly commended – Asia-Pacific**

Mahindra World City Chennai, India

**Winner – Europe**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland

**Highly commended – Europe**

Free Port of Ventspils, Latvia

**Winner – Americas**

Cayman Enterprise City, Cayman Islands

**Highly commended – Americas**

Coyol Free Zone, Costa Rica

**Winner – Middle East**

DMCC, UAE

**Highly commended – Middle East**

Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone, UAE

**SME WINNERS****Winner – Global**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland

**Highly commended – Global**

Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone, UAE

**Winner – Africa**

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

**Highly commended – Africa**

Alaro City FZC in the Lekki Free Zone, Nigeria

**Winner – Asia-Pacific**

Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone, China

**Highly commended - Asia-Pacific**

Mahindra World City Chennai, India

**Winner – Europe**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland

**Highly commended – Europe**

West of England Enterprise Zone, UK

**Winner – Americas**

Cayman Enterprise City, Cayman Islands

**Highly commended – Americas**

Zona Franca Santander, Colombia

**Winner – Middle East**

Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone, UAE

**Highly commended – Middle East**

KIZAD (Khalifa Industrial Zone,

Abu Dhabi), UAE

**LARGE TENANT WINNERS****Winner – Global**

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

**Highly commended – Global Oil & Gas**

Free Zone, Onne, Nigeria

**Winner – Africa**

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

**Highly commended – Africa**

Oil &amp; Gas Free Zone, Onne, Nigeria

**Winner - Asia-Pacific**

Special Economic Zone 'Pavlodar', Kazakhstan

**Highly commended - Asia-Pacific**

Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone, China

**Winner – Europe**

Freeport of Ventspils, Latvia

**Highly commended – Europe**

Free Zone Pirot, Serbia

**Winner – Americas**

Coyol Free Zone, Costa Rica

**Highly commended – Americas**

Panamá Pacífico, Panama

**Winner – Middle East**

KIZAD (Khalifa Industrial Zone, Abu Dhabi), UAE

**Highly commended – Middle East**

Ajman Free Zone, UAE

**SPECIALISM AWARDS****Appliances**

Free Economic Zone Gomel-Raton, Belarus

**Automotive**

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

**Aviation** West of England Enterprise Zone, UK**BPO**

Montego Bay Free Zone, Jamaica

**Financial and Professional Services**

Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone, UK

**IT**

Freeport of Ventspils, Latvia

**Life Sciences**

Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone, China

**Logistics**

Kaliningrad Special Economic Zone, Russia

**Medical Devices**

Coyol Free Zone, Costa Rica

**Oil and Gas** Oil & Gas Free Zone, Onne, Nigeria**Pharmaceuticals** Special Economic Zone 'St. Petersburg', Russia**Renewables Investments**

Arvand Free Zone, Iran

**Robotics**

Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, Poland

**Shipbuilding**

Special Economic Zone Lotus, Russia

**Textiles**

Ontustik Special Economic Zone, Kazakhstan

**Wood Products**

Nkok Special Economic Zone, Gabon



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**Methodology**

fDi's Global Free Zones of the Year Awards 2020 acknowledge the most promising free zones across the world. For this year's awards, fDi invited free zones, government entities and investment promotion bodies to complete a short survey detailing their zone's attractiveness, facilities and incentives offered to investors. In total, 61 entries were received from free zones across the world. A panel of judges from fDi was appointed and studied each location.

Judges nominated their winning and runner-up locations in each region, as well as their top zones for SME and Large Tenant categories. In addition, some locations which were particularly outstanding have been acknowledged with honourable mentions and bespoke awards. We have also compiled a top ten ranking of zones, based on the weighting model as follows.

	<b>WEIGHTING</b>
% increase in occupied space 2017-2018	10
Number of SMEs 2018	1.25
% increase in SMEs 2017-2018	2.5
Nominal increase in SMEs 2017-2018	2.5
Number of large tenants 2018	1.25
% increase in LTs 2017-2018	2.5
Nominal increase in LTs 2017-2018	2.5
Total number of employees 2018	2.5
% increase in number of employees 2017-2018	5
Nominal increase in employees 2017-2018	5
Total scores of judges' results	65

weather conditions, as well as by the expansion of the Freeport area. The national Economic Development Board has declared two additional freeport zones.

**Winner: Asia-Pacific**

Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone, China

Shanghai's Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone has been named the top free zone in the Asia-Pacific region, and also clinched a fourth place in the global ranking. Established in 1990, the zone is China's largest. It has a diversified mix of industries, with the most recent focus being life sciences, data centres, smart manufacturing, and electronic information, creating cluster effects. Some 117 multinational corporations set up their Asia-Pacific and Chinese headquarters in Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone as of the end of May 2020, more than anywhere else in the Chinese mainland, zone officials highlight.

**Highly commended: Asia-Pacific**

Mahindra World City Chennai

A joint venture between Mahindra Group and Tamil Nadu Industrial Corporation, the Mahindra World City Chennai was highly commended among Asia-Pacific zones. The zone offers plug and play infrastructure for tenants willing to set up within its territory, as well as co-located residential space with social infrastructure, making it an integrated urban area managed by one of India's largest conglomerates. Some 68 renowned multinational companies are active within its premises, the zone says. They feature names of the likes of BMW, BASF, Lincoln Electric, DormaKaba and Parker. The zone is also developing one of the largest urban forest projects in India using the Miyawaki method developed by Japanese botanist and Blue Planet Prize winner Akira Miyawaki.

**Winner: Europe**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland

The Łódź Special Economic Zone in Poland stands out as the top zone for Europe in fDi's Global Free Zones of the Year 2020. The zone also featured third in the global overall ranking. The zone has made progress in its efforts to become a centre of Industry 4.0 at the heart of central and eastern Europe. Foreign investors committed to new investment project worth €530m in 2019, the zone says.

Advanced manufacturing and research and development activities featured highly among the new business

permits issued in 2019 given that the Polish economic zone legislation has been updated to boost investment with higher-added-value content. The Łódź Special Economic Zone has also been evolving its offer with a broad range of services aimed at tech start-ups and small and medium enterprises, with a particular focus, among others, on the development of 5G industrial use cases.

**Highly commended: Europe**

Freeport of Ventspils, Latvia

The Freeport of Ventspils boasts a diversified base of manufacturers, tenants belonging to the logistics and services sectors, including powerhouse names like US consultancy firm Accenture. The zone has spent efforts in developing its infrastructure and marketing activities to strengthen its brand. It has also been working with local stakeholders such as vocational education institutions to develop local talent in high-added-value sectors like IT, telecommunications, electronics, astronomy, engineering and mechanical engineering.

**Winner: Americas**

Cayman Enterprise City, Cayman Islands

Since launching in 2011, Cayman Enterprise City has become an offshore beacon of companies active at the forefront of innovation and new technologies. Some 258 international companies were active in the zone at the end of 2019, company figures show, with almost half of them (46.2%) belonging to the so-called Cayman Tech City. The zone is midway through a \$67m expansion plan aimed at developing a purpose-built hub for digital businesses. The long-term vision entails the development of one million square feet of world-class office space, residential areas, restaurants, and amenities to further diversify Cayman's economy. Total investments are estimated in the order of \$500m.

**Highly commended: Americas**

Coyol Free Zone, Costa Rica

The Coyol Free Zone (CFZ), located in the outskirts of Costa Rica's capital San José, hosts seven international medical devices companies and stands at the heart of the country's prowess in the sector: Costa Rica is Latin America's second largest exporter of medical devices after Mexico. Several of them carried out major expansion projects in the 2019, including landmark investor Medtronics. The CFZ also stands out of the recruiting and training services it provides for its tenants. ▶



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2020

WINNER: GLOBAL

OVERALL



**fDi**  
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2020

WINNER: MIDDLE EAST

OVERALL

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Vaibhav Mittal, Mahindra World City and Origins, Chennai

**Winner: Middle East**  
DMCC, UAE  
(see global awards)

**Highly commended: Middle East**  
Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone, UAE

The Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone (Rakez) encompasses a network of five zones scattered across the emirate. It hosts about 15,000 companies, most of them small and medium-sized enterprises, active in 50 industries. Rakez stood out for the variety of incentive packages it introduced in recent months, which include a support package for female entrepreneurs, new incentives for both manufacturers and start-ups, as well as a 50m dirham (\$13.6m) Covid-19 relief fund to support tenants through current market uncertainties. The pandemic has also accelerated the digitisation of Rakez’s services. Today, onboarding of new tenants can happen in full digital mode, also thanks to an expanding range of e-payment services.

Covid-response package designed by the Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone (Rakez) in the past months. The zone approved an 50m dirham (\$13.6m) relief fund which, among other things, offer SMEs a 15% discount on renewals, a 25% discount on new dependent visas, and 100% waivers for cheque postponement fees, package downgrade fees, activity change fees and security deposit for new visa requests. Besides, the zone offers up to 25% off on set-up packages with guaranteed lifetime renewal rates for newcomer start-ups.

**Winner: Africa**  
Tanger Med Zone, Morocco

Tanger Med Zone set up a €35m Covid-19 stabilisation and recovery fund to support and assist SMEs and start-ups.

**Highly commended: Africa**  
Alaro City FZC in the Lekki Free Zone, Nigeria

Located within the Lekki Free Zone in Lagos, the Alaro City is an integrated city with commercial and residential offerings that is now developing an SME enclave where a ‘shared facilities strategy’ will be adopted in optimising the operations of companies within the enclave, the company says. The enclave will focus on developing smaller industrial and logistics plots, typically between 1000 and 5000 square metres.

**Winner: Asia-Pacific**  
Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone, China

Shanghai’s Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone has made efforts to design a compelling business proposition for SMEs. Among the most recent initiatives in this direction are the Shanghai Free Trade No.1 Life Science and Technology Industrial Park, a service-oriented biomedical professional platform integrating head-quarters, exhibition space, scientific research, pilot testing and production that was built to incubate promising SMEs and start-ups in life science.

The park benchmarks world-leading life science clusters by initiating what the zone calls a “CRO+CDMO+CSO+CAPITAL” one-stop service platform that focuses on development and production of biological innovative drugs, medical devices and life science technology services, fostering an innovation ecosystem of technological industries.

**Highly commended: Asia-Pacific**  
Mahindra World City Chennai

As a joint venture between Mahindra Group and Tamil Nadu Industrial ▶

## Winners – SMEs



**Winner: Global**  
Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland

The Łódź Special Economic Zone has been developing a compelling proposition of innovative start-ups and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as it strives to become a benchmark for Industry 4.0 in the region. The zone set up Spark 2.0, an accelerator programme developed with 11 industrial partners to support Industry 4.0 innovation, which also worked to find solutions across the board to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is also running the 5G Technology Accelerator, which brings together start-ups and businesses to develop 5G industrial use cases and create smart factories.

“We find the 5G accelerator special, because it not only offers soft-landing, mentorship and equity-free funding but also a customer-in-waiting – all bundled into one programme,” says Balaji Renukumar, managing director of Sensfix, a US-based start-up that decided to open its European chapter within the Łódź Special Economic Zone. Overall, the zone issued 104 new business permits for SMEs in 2019, up 37% from a year earlier, company’s figures show.

**Highly commended: Global**  
Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone, UAE

SMEs are one of the main pillars of the



# PRIME LOCATION FOR GLOBAL SUCCESS

The global platform emerged as a hub of the present and future of Automotive, Aeronautics, Electronics, Food Processing, Textile, and Cloud Computing.

**For the past 20 years, Tanger Med has evolved to become a global force in attracting Foreign Direct Investment to Morocco and a key influencer in the development of industry in the continent of Africa and the Mediterranean Region. The industrial and trade platform is strategically located on the Strait of Gibraltar, with only 14km away from Spain.**

At the conjunction of major maritime routes, the Tanger Med group offers extensive access to target markets through Tanger Med Port, #1 in Africa and the Mediterranean Region, and the industrial platform through Tanger Med Zones, operator and developer of industrial and IT related parks and free zones.

The industrial platform of Tanger Med constitutes a logistics, industrial, and cloud-computing hub fully connected to global trade flows, thus providing a platform for enabling business and developing competitiveness.

Developed over a total area of 16 million square meters, Tanger Med Zones has successfully attracted 1000 multinational companies from 30 countries, creating 75 000 direct jobs and generating 5,5 Billion Euros of direct investment.

This global industrial platform, strengthened by the Tanger Med port complex, has important assets and ensures a value proposition in line with the expectations of global players:

- A strategic positioning at the crossroad of major maritime traffic and a few days away from target markets;
- A one-stop-shop service for all administrative processes;
- An integrated package providing a platform for investment and a major infrastructural offer with a large land reserve;

- Integrated management of the different zones of activities by a single operator;
- A multinational industrialist securely established.

FDI in Tanger Med Zones is on the rise, with total investment in the platform soaring to 500 Million Euros in 2019, with an increase of 2.7% in the previous year. World's leading high-performance companies including Continental, DHL, Lear, Hands Corporation, JTEKT, Valeo among others decided to extend their presence in Tanger Med by constructing new facilities to benefit from the outstanding services and low-cost investment.

Tanger Med Zones also is attracting attention as a center for exporting to other African countries. In 2015, Tanger Med formed the Africa Economic Zones Organization (AEZO). The Organization aims to support the African Economic Zones throughout the continent and strengthen relationships within its ecosystem with a devoted focus on growth and prosperity.

Tanger Med Zones offers a value proposition for these companies:

- A one-stop-shop for registration and incorporation process
- 24-hour customs services
- State-of-the-art infrastructure zones with a full range of services
- Ready-to-use industrial plots for sale
- Ready-to-use modular warehouse units for lease
- Ready-to-use office workspace to accommodate service providers

#### **TANGER MED ZONES INCENTIVES:**

In addition to its unique location, international investors can also benefit from the free zone's

special taxation regime. This includes total exemption from the VAT, patent and urban taxes, dividend and profit shares, registration fees and stamp duty on capital operations; plus five years' exemption from corporate tax (with a rate of only 8.75% after that).

#### **TANGER MED COVID-19 RESPONSE**

Covid-19 funds: TANGER MED group contributed last March a total amount of 35 Million Euros (MDH 300 million) to the Special Fund for the Special Fund for the Management of the Covid-19 pandemic in Morocco.

#### **SUPPORTING OUR CLIENTS AND PARTNERS DURING THIS TURMOIL PERIOD**

The Return to Work Safely Protocol for all national and international companies located within the Tanger Med Zones platforms is outlined to sustain companies and workers to put standards and rules in place. These must align with the requirements placed by the state of Tangier, Ministries of Health, Industry, and Employment as well as the World Health Organization in aim to restrict the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Furthermore, the reopened industry is ceaselessly monitored throughout the ramp-up of manufacturing operations, with the direct support of Tanger Med Zones during the whole chain of the reopening economy.

#### **MEASURES ADOPTED TO SUPPORT THE PROGRESSIVE REOPENING**

- Maintaining a continuous communication and perpetual assistance to customers and partners within
- Extend digitization services to Tanger Med clients
- Respect and enforce the health measures recommended by the health authorities (ground marking of individual working areas, installation of physical barriers such as screens or plastic sheets, social distancing protocols, reducing the number of passengers on bus shuttles, work from home policy etc.).
- Mandatory body temperature readings for each employee/agent/visitor, as well as carrying out a COVID 19 screening test
- Appropriate instructions to workers (disseminate awareness campaigns and post instructions at workstations).
- Continuous distribution of personal protective equipment (masks and hydro alcoholic gel)
- Implementation of strict cleaning and disinfection rules on workspaces and transport
- Regular monitoring and audit of the application of these security measures

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Charlie Kirkconnell, CEO, Cayman Enterprise City

Corporation, Mahindra World City Chennai offers companies fast approval and other support from the local government, which can generate particular benefits for SMEs with limited resources available for things like compliance and bureaucracy. Its ‘plug-and-play’ infrastructure makes available necessary amenities such as power, water, roads and waste management. In-house operations and maintenance ensure shorter turnaround time for companies to start their operations.

**Winner: Europe**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland

(see global SME awards)

**Highly commended: Europe**

West of England Enterprise Zone, UK

The West of England Enterprise Zone set up several major initiatives to cater to the needs of SMEs: Workforce of the Future, Investment Activator Programme (IAP) and Trading Better Online. Workforce for the Future is an £8m programme that will work with SMEs to help them develop their future workforce, meeting their current and future needs. The IAP and Trading Better Online are new initiatives to support existing companies and incentive potential investors. As companies look to recover from Covid-19, both initiatives in turn support businesses looking for investment and seeking to adopt new technologies and practices to better their online presence to rebound and increase revenue, thus accelerating a return to growth.

**Winner: Americas**

Cayman Enterprise City, Cayman Islands

Cayman Enterprise City launched a series of public discussion in July 2019 to engage with its tech community. A few weeks later, it launched the Cayman Code Academy to ‘provide engaging learning opportunities for Caymanians to become work-ready programmers and software engineers’, the company said. The zone also began to look more closely at its processes and procedures through the exercise of complying with the Data Privacy Laws that were passed in September 2019. Overall, 258 SMEs were active in the zone at the end of 2019, up by 10.7% a year earlier, the company says.

**Highly commended: Americas**

Zona Franca Santander, Colombia

The zone was highly commended for its SMEs strategy among zones in the

Americas region. It has been active in developing local talent through agreements with education institutions, as well as the organisation of business meetings to leverage and strengthen local companies on the issues of, among others, internationalisation and business development.

**Winner: Middle East**

Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone, UAE

(see SME global awards)

**Highly commended: Middle East**

KIZAD (Khalifa Industrial Zone, Abu Dhabi), UAE

Khalifa Industrial Zone has been highly commended for its SME strategy among zones in the Middle East. Kizad announced a special incentives package for SMEs, making more than 75 of its 100 free zone services free of charge.

**Winners – Large tenants**



**Winner: Global**

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

Tanger Med Zones has strengthened its role as a major destination for large tenants in industries such as automotive and aerospace. Operator Tanger Med Group developed a new 24,000-square-metre automotive logistic platform and expanded the Tanger Automotive City to streamline the operations of the original equipment manufacturers active in the zone. Some marquee automotive tenants of the likes of Magneti Marelli, Furukawa and GMD pushed through major expansions in 2019.

**Highly commended: Global**

Oil & Gas Free Zone, Onne, Nigeria

The Oil & Gas Free Zone in Onne, Nigeria has been strengthening its offering for major oil and gas producers and services companies through a comprehensive set of incentives, as well as major infrastructure developments such as the newly commissioned harbour mobile cranes and a 600-hectare land reclamation project that is planning to break ground in the near future.

**Winner: Africa**

Tanger Med Zones, Morocco

(see large tenants, global awards)



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Igors Udodovs, deputy CEO, Freeport of Ventspils Authority

#### Highly commended: Africa

Oil & Gas Free Zone, Onne, Nigeria

(see large tenants, global awards)

#### Winner: Asia-Pacific

Special Economic Zone 'Pavlodar', Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan's Special Economic Zone 'Pavlodar' came up with the strategy 'Plug in your business' to allow every new entrepreneur to start a business within a short time (becoming a resident of SEZ 'Pavlodar' takes only a week) in the field of chemistry, petrochemistry and metallurgy. The zone also ran an analysis for investors and tenants to identify business potential not only in the territory of Pavlodar region but also in the territory of Kazakhstan, Russia and Central Asia. The zone also joined the World Free Zones Organisation with the aim of recognition and information support.

#### Highly commended: Asia-Pacific

Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone, China

The Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone has established an investment management system built on pre-establishment national treatment and an ever-shortening negative list to improve openness and transparency; a trade supervision system based on trade facilitation to cut down red tape and paperwork for business registration and operation; a financial innovation system aimed at capital account convertibility and opening up in the financial service sector to attract foreign capital and help domestic companies go global; and a regulatory system focused on transforming government functions to provide a stable regulatory environment. In addition, temporary adjustments have been made on both national and local levels to laws and regulations, in order to provide legal guarantees for the zone.

#### Winner: Europe

Freeport of Ventspils, Latvia

The Freeport of Ventspils is in the process of developing new rental production spaces that will generate an increase of 25% in the freeport authority's supply of rental industrial real estate. The project was half-completed in 2019, and the remaining work is planned for 2020. With regards to the availability of a skilled workforce, the freeport tenants can benefit from well-developed vocational education in required fields and skilled labour. Ventspils has one of the best bases for

higher education in the Baltics, the company says.

#### Highly commended: Europe

Free Zone Pirot, Serbia

Free Zone Pirot worked with the local customs to develop a software platform called "Team Sharing" for digitisation, integration and automation of export/import processes in the zone. While expanding in area by 14.8% in 2019, the zone is now developing a logistics centre that will enable hauliers to shift transit goods from road to railway. At the same time, a new project to expand the zone by 200 hectares (522 hectares in the long run) is at the stage of local planning documents, the zone says.

#### Winner: Americas

Coyol Free Zone, Costa Rica

Coyol Free Zone hosts the operations of 29 companies, seven of them ranked among the top 30 medical device companies in the world. These are Medtronic, Abbott Medical, Philips, Cardinal Health, MicroVention-Terumo, Smith & Nephew and Hologic. Constant government support for multinational companies located in Costa Rica have been provided to ensure operational continuity with the least possible impact during unprecedented times. Providing constant communication and guidance to multinationals on new regulations, business facilitation and policies, as well as rigorous infrastructure, have allowed companies to work from home maintaining quality standards.

#### Highly commended: Americas

Panamá Pacífico, Panama

Panamá Pacífico already hosts several large tenants of the likes of Japan's Hino Motors and South Korea's Samsung, among others, and is now planning to upgrade its offer through the construction of additional warehousing and office space. Besides, the zone is set to benefit from a range of major infrastructure projects being developed by the national government to leverage the logistic potential of the isthmus, including a new logistics corridor to better connect the north of the country and a fourth bridge on the Panama Canal.

#### Winner: Middle East

KIZAD (Khalifa Industrial Zone, Abu Dhabi), UAE

For large tenants, KIZAD launched a Polymers Park in partnership with major industry players such as ADNOC and ►



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Coyol Free Zone

**DR SAMIR HAMROUNI**

# Hit but not sunk

THE PANDEMIC HAS IMPACTED FREE ZONES, BUT THEIR NIMBLE GOVERNANCE GAVE THEM A CHANCE TO ADJUST QUICKLY, THE CEO OF THE WORLD FREE ZONES ORGANIZATION TELLS JACOPO DETTONI

**T**he Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted trade and investment. For their key role in global value chains, free zones across the globe have been in the eye of the investment storm for months now. However, their special regulation and governance regimes makes them more nimble than national governments, thus giving them a chance to adjust to the pandemic quicker, Dr Samir Hamrouni, CEO of the World Free Zones Organization, tells fDi.

**Q**What has been the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on free zones globally?

**A**Free zones are usually focused on specific global value chains sectors, such as manufacturing, logistics, global service offshoring, finance, or life science healthcare. Those that supported heavily impacted sectors like non-essential goods were affected, but not as much as their host economies. This is largely due to their ability to better handle complex integrated supply chains logistics due to their streamlined regulations and more fluid corporate governance.

Where trade around the world slowed down due to border closures and restrictions on certain goods, free zones have used their special status to help keep trade flows alive. Since almost a quarter of global trade is channelled through such zones, it is safe to say that free zones saved many businesses from shutting down while keeping safe, clean shipping lanes open.

The unique regulatory environment in free zones has also allowed them to react more quickly to precautionary measures imposed by governments worldwide. Due to their small physical size relative to their host economies, they were able to roll out new procedures for trade transactions quickly and safely. This approach, in coordination with free zone developers and authorities, allowed for blended company operations that combined teleworking with on-site presence to tackle pandemic need supply chains. This kept employees and workers in those zones safe while they continued to work, particularly in zones focused on essential goods like medical equipment.

**Q**How will free zones adjust to the pandemic and the new normal in global markets?



**"SINCE FREE ZONES ARE MAJOR CONDUITS FOR KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER, THEY CAN ALSO LEAD THE WAY IN TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS"**

**A**There are three major trends emerging from the crisis economy: digitisation, resilience and transparency. The pandemic has merely accelerated these existing trends at a record pace.

Free zones have been at the forefront of digitisation for many years now, implementing sophisticated systems to increase productivity in port operations and manufacturing facilities. The Jebel Ali Free Zone Authority in the UAE introduced 5G technology to its port, one of the 10 largest in the world, in 2019. And in 2017, Dubai Airport Free Zone digitised many of its internal operations to enable blockchain transactions. Free zones are already digitally operational and are more likely to lead the way by example for countries and industries to follow in their wake.

Free zones are also more resilient than host economies due to their carefully managed size. Information travels faster



within and between free zones, something that the World Free Zones Organization supports diligently by sharing updates with its global members regularly throughout the year. Training and reskilling take place fluidly within free zones for the same reason. Most importantly, free zones are able to adapt and react to changes very well both because they are highly digitised and because their optimised operation size allows them to roll out new procedures in record time.

Streamlined regulation and governance is also fully compliant with transparency in free zones. The World FZO's Safe Zone programme was developed to showcase this transparency in free zones by tracking dozens of key indicators to demonstrate clean trade credentials. As the world moves towards more transparent trade, free zones are there again ahead of the pack.

### **Q Governance, policies, specialisms – where do you see room for improvement in free zone models moving forward?**

**A** The key improvement that free zones can channel is to improve dialogue with the public sector. This is particularly relevant to local production, logistics, and Tier 1 suppliers to the services industry. By integrating free zones more tightly with their host economy counterpart suppliers, they will be able to contribute even more value to local and regional economies and their sustainability goals. This requires clear communication lines to government bodies dealing with trade regulation and foreign policy.

The pandemic has pushed governments towards protectionism, impacting global value chains significantly as countries seek more local and domestic production. The World Trade Organization estimates that global trade flows could contract by up to 32% this year. Free zones are perfectly positioned to restart these flows. With careful consulting, governments can test fresh policies and strategies in free zones before rolling them out domestically. Free zones can also be used to maintain open borders in a more controlled fashion as we emerge from the crisis because they are easier to monitor due to their specific, ring-fenced status. Insulated from political pressures, free zones can serve the economy as neutral instruments in an increasingly polarised world.

And since free zones are also major conduits for knowledge transfer, they can also lead the way in technological advancements. By specialising in specific business sectors, free zones can be catalysts for supply chain clusters as innovations hubs that leverage local and regional suppliers to drive global trade. As we link these free zones together with more uniform regulation, we could develop a parallel supply chain that could provide the ultimate resilience in the face of future economic shocks.

### **Q Do you believe that zones will evolve towards models of charter cities, thus becoming integrated urban areas with special jurisdiction and governance? Particularly as the current crisis squeezes out public budgets...**

**A** Free zones are essentially prosperity vectors for local economies. They attract foreign direct investment, mostly from private investors but also from public funds in the case of cross-border partnerships like we have seen between China and zones in sub-Saharan Africa. Free zones create jobs and facilitate exports for their host economy. They do so because they enjoy special regulations and fiscal systems, but mostly because they function as apolitical ecosystems. In that sense, they are different from charter cities.

Free zones work well because they are interconnected. The similarities between fiscal regulations in different free zones around the world create natural hubs, nodes, and corridors for trade that are driven by economic momentum. Our work at the World FZO goes in that direction, aiming to harmonise regulation of free zones around the world to create predictability in business transactions while promoting transparency and clean trade. This harmony can best be achieved by economic players that support government goals but are not directed by them.

This does not mean free zones should remain isolated from their host country. On the contrary, free zones that integrate closely with the local economy are those that are likely to build the most resilience. Moreover, since they will provide more value to their host government, they will be able to command more fiscal independence, a key factor in attracting foreign direct investment.

### **Q What other element will be key to the success of free zones in a post-Covid environment?**

**A** Global standards are the cornerstone of efficient and effective free zones. Since most of them are designed for global trade, adopting standards that align with other free zones is crucial to success.

That is why the World FZO is aligned with other multilateral organisations like the OECD, the World Trade Organization, the World Customs Organization and Universal Postal Union among others to define clear standards for free zones to adopt and promote as they join the global stage.

At the same time, it is important to develop flexibility in those standards so that each free zone can adapt to the specific needs and competences of their host economy. It is this delicate balance that we must address together, using regular, constructive, and open-minded discussions that will help both existing and new free zones to prosper fruitfully in the international business landscape. ■

**Bespoke Awards**



**5G readiness**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland  
Innopolis Special Economic Zone, Russia

**Academic collaboration**

Zona Franca Santander, Colombia  
Coyol Free Zone, Costa Rica

**Access to raw materials**

Special Economic Zone 'Pavlodar', Kazakhstan

**Cluster development**

Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow, Russia

**Connectivity**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland  
Free Zone Pirot, Serbia

**Covid-19 support**

Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow, Russia  
Free Zone Pirot, Serbia  
Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone, UAE

**CSR initiatives**

Manisa Industrial Park, Turkey

**Data protection**

Cayman Enterprise City, Cayman Islands

**Deployment of technology**

Ceará FTZ, Brazil

**Diversity initiatives**

Free Economic Zone Gomel-Raton, Belarus  
Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone, UAE

**Economic impact**

Queen Alia International Airport Free Zone, Jordan  
Manisa Industrial Park, Turkey

**Efforts to improve transparency**

North Macedonia Free Zone, North Macedonia

**Employee wellness**

Montego Bay, Jamaica

**Events organised**

Cayman Enterprise City, Cayman Islands  
Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, Poland

**Expansions**

Zona Franca del Pacífico, Colombia  
Liepaja Special Economic Zone, Latvia

**Export boosters**

Ceará FTZ, Brazil  
Free Zone Pirot, Serbia

**Facilities upgrades**

Cayman Enterprise City, Cayman Islands

Ajman Free Zone, UAE

**Flexible space**

Innopolis Special Economic Zone, Russia

**Freezone 4.0**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland

**Future mobility**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland

**Gateway award**

Mauritius Freeport, Mauritius

**Incentives**

Mahindra World City Jaipur, India  
ESBAS - Aegean Free Zone, Turkey  
Ajman Free Zone, UAE

**Industry 4.0**

Łódź Special Economic Zone, Poland  
Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, Poland

**Infrastructure upgrades**

Mauritius Freeport, Mauritius  
Panamá Pacífico, Panama  
Katowice Special Economic Zone, Poland  
Foreign Trade Zone No. 68 - El Paso, Texas, US

**Local transport**

Klaipeda Free Economic Zone, Lithuania

**Marketing slogan**

Free Zone Pirot, Serbia

**New investments**

Zona Franca Santander, Colombia  
Liepaja Special Economic Zone, Latvia  
Katowice Special Economic Zone Co., Poland  
Kaliningrad Special Economic Zone, Russia

**Belt and Road Initiative**

Great Stone Industrial Park, Belarus

**Ones to watch**

Alaro City FZC in the Lekki Free Zone, Nigeria  
SEZ Stupino Quadrat, Russia

**Overcoming adversity**

Daegu Gyeongbuk Free Economic Zone, South Korea

**PPP**

Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow, Russia

**Real estate flexibility**

Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow, Russia

**Recruitment assistance**

Coyol Free Zone, Costa Rica

**Red tape reduction**

Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow, Russia  
ESBAS - Aegean Free Zone, Turkey  
Ajman Free Zone, UAE

**Relocation services**

Kaliningrad Special Economic Zone, Russia

**Research hub**

Dubna Special Economic Zone, Russia

**Site conversion**

Arvand Free Zone, Iran  
Montego Bay, Jamaica

**Skills development**

Ceará FTZ, Brazil  
Katowice Special Economic Zone, Poland

Special Economic Zone Production and Industrial Type 'Alabuga' Russia

**Smart strategies**

Zona Franca Santander, Colombia  
Katowice Special Economic Zone Co., Poland

Free Port of Ventspils, Latvia

Katowice Special Economic Zone Co., Poland

**Start-up support**

Special Economic Zone 'Pavlodar', Kazakhstan  
Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, Poland  
Alaro City FZC in the Lekki Free Zone, Nigeria

Free Zone Pirot, Serbia

**Supplier development**

North Macedonia Free Zone, North Macedonia  
KIZAD (Khalifa Industrial Zone, Abu Dhabi), UAE

**Supporting surrounding area**

Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone, UK

**Sustainability**

Zona Franca Metropolitana, Colombia  
Coyol Free Zone, Costa Rica  
Mahindra World City Chennai, India  
Klaipeda Free Economic Zone, Lithuania  
SOHAR Freezone, Oman  
Ajman Free Zone, UAE

**Talent pool**

Ceará FTZ, Brazil  
Panamá Pacífico, Panama  
Katowice Special Economic Zone, Poland

**Thought leadership**

Mahindra World City Chennai, India

**Trade facilitation**

SOHAR Freezone, Oman

**Workforce amenities**

Innopolis Special Economic Zone, Russia  
Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow, Russia

Borouge in 2019. With volume rebates on raw materials, shorter transits and lower batch sizes, access to training, research and product development, polymer packaging plant and mega distribution centre for polymer raw materials, the park aims to produce between 300 and 400 kilotonnes of plastic products a year, creating up to 7000 jobs and contributing \$2.5bn to GDP by 2025. A food cluster was also launched as the hub for food processing, storage and distribution, serving the major markets in the region, as well as a metal cluster for regional and global upstream, midstream and downstream metals industry.

**Highly commended – Middle East:**  
Ajman Free Zone, UAE

The Ajman Free Zone is carrying out a sustainable warehouse project to facilitate the expansion of existing tenants within its premises. It consists of 82 new warehouses all applying a sustainability rule to reduce electricity consumption. Also, the zone is in the final stages of opening a logistics corridor to serve the industrial zone and Ajman

Port to ease the transformation of goods between the two locations for import and exports.

**Winners –  
Specialism Awards**

**Specialism: Appliances**  
Free Economic Zone Gomel-Raton, Belarus

Lithuanian supplier of household appliances KTD Group picked the Free Economic Zone Gomel-Raton in Belarus to start production within the borders of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and use the zone as a base to serve the EEU's market of 170 million people. The zone also held a conference with Sweden's IKEA for Belarusian enterprises interested in working with the company.

**Specialism: Automotive**  
Tanger Med Zones

Tanger Med Zones have become the ▶

"THIS RECOGNITION HAS FURTHER SOLIDIFIED OUR OUTSTANDING REPUTATION AS A WORLD-CLASS HUB FOR BUSINESSES SEEKING TO ESTABLISH A STRONG REGIONAL MARKET FOOTPRINT"

Ali Abdulla Bin Towaih Al Suwaidi, director general, Ajman Free Zone



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In 22 years, the Free Economic Zone Gomel-Raton has earned the status of a reliable business partner. It is located in the south-east of the Republic of Belarus in the Gomel Region. Today, 71 companies with backing from 18 countries across the world call it home. This zone has a special legal regime which allows a tenant to reduce the burden of taxes and duties by 40%. Gomel-Raton's unique geographical location on the borders of Russia and Ukraine makes it attractive for European investors seeking entry to the CIS markets. Join us!



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“OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS BIRMINGHAM HAS SEEN AN INFLUX OF GLOBALLY RENOWNED FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BUSINESSES. IT IS REWARDING TO BE RECOGNISED FOR THE TALENT WE HAVE AND AS A LEADING HUB FOR THE SECTOR WITHIN THE UK”

Tim Pile, chairman, GBSLEP

base of original equipment manufacturers of the likes of Renault, PSA and Ford. The zones’ authorities have expanded the Tanger Automotive City, and developed an Automotive Logistics Platform as a consolidated logistical platform to optimise the logistical flows toward the original equipment manufacturers to transport materials to overseas destinations like Europe, Asia and America.

**Specialism: Aviation**

West of England Enterprise Zone, UK

Global aerospace giants Airbus, Rolls-Royce and GKN picked the Filton Enterprise Area, one of the seven enterprise zones and areas in the West of England, to leverage its location, strong profile and access to a highly skilled workforce. Recently, Airbus opened its Wing Integration Centre, a £40m facility which will accelerate the development of future wing design as the industry looks to reduce its carbon footprint. In addition, GKNs £32m Global Technology Centre will offer 10,000 square metres of collaborative research space to host 300 highly skilled engineers to develop the next level of advanced manufacturing and Industry 4.0 processes to enable a higher rate of aircraft structure production.

**Specialism: BPO**

Montego Bay Free Zone, Jamaica

The Montego Bay Free Zone has become the largest employer within the city of Montego Bay with leading business process outsourcing companies such as Concentrix and Teleperformance operating in the zone. Local authorities have built a purpose-designed building to increase the comfort and convenience of customers.

**Specialism: Financial and Professional Services**

Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone, UK

Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone has been central to the city’s rise as an alternative to London for some functions in the field of business and professional services. The focus on those key sectors (business and professional services, financial services, digital media, creative industries and ICT) in which Birmingham has a competitive advantage in conjunction with intelligent targeting of site marketing aims “to minimise displacement and maximise real growth”, the zone says. Global companies of the likes of HSBC, PwC and DLA Piper feature among the city’s recent wins.

**Specialism: IT**

Freeport of Ventspils, Latvia

The Freeport of Ventspils has paid increasing attention to the development of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) cluster through the implementation of an ICT industry growth strategy to support the development of tech start-ups. A business support centre, business incubator and a support package including co-working space and office premises are now available free of charge to start-ups that set up within the zone.

**Specialism: Life Sciences**

Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone, China

The Life Science and Technology Industrial Park, a service-oriented biomedical professional platform integrating headquarters, exhibition, scientific research, pilot test and production was built to incubate promising SMEs and start-ups in life sciences. It benchmarks world-leading life science clusters by initiating a one-stop service platform that focuses on development and production of biologically innovative drugs, medical devices and life sciences technology services, fostering an innovation ecosystem of technological industries.

**Specialism: Logistics**

Kaliningrad Special Economic Zone, Russia

The Kaliningrad Special Economic Zone in Russia’s exclave Kaliningrad offers the availability of two types of railway gauge – broad gauge (standard of Eurasian Economic Union countries) and narrow gauge (European standard) – as the trans-European transport corridors passes through the region, connecting China and Europe in eight days of transit time.

**Specialism: Medical Devices**

Coyol Free Zone, Costa Rica

The Coyol Free Zone in Costa Rica has been instrumental to the country’s rise as a major exporter of medical devices in Latin America. The zone hosts the operations of 29 companies, seven of them ranked among the top 30 medical device companies in the world. These companies are Medtronic, Abbott Medical, Philips, Cardinal Health, MicroVention-Terumo, Smith & Nephew and Hologic.

**Specialism: Oil and Gas**

Oil & Gas Free Zone, Onne, Nigeria

Located just off Port Harcourt, Nigeria’s

main hub for the oil and gas industry, the Oil & Gas Free Zone of Onne is the base for major oil producers like Mobil, Chevron, Shell and Total, as well as oil services providers like Halliburton and Schlumberger. The zone is in the process of augmenting the value of its strategic location by strengthening its port and heavy machinery infrastructure.

#### Specialism: Pharmaceuticals

Special Economic Zone 'St. Petersburg', Russia

The Special Economic Zone 'St. Petersburg' hosts several major domestic and international pharmaceutical companies such as Russian Biocad, the zone's largest tenant, which is planning to open a second local pharmaceutical complex by the end of 2020, and Switzerland's Novartis. As part of the development of the zone, the managing company will create an innovation centre by the end of 2021. In this centre, residents will be able to rent free office and industrial premises.

#### Specialism: Renewables Investments

Arvand Free Zone, Iran

Mostly known for its activity in the oil and gas and petrochemical industries, the Arvand Free Zone is developing an 11-hectare, 10MW solar farm to provide tenants with green energy and improve its environmental footprint.

#### Specialism: Robotics

Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, Poland

The Pomeranian Special Economic Zone in Poland has launched the Industrial Robots Programming Centre, one of the first such centres in Poland, which makes it possible to develop skills in the field of automatic control and robotics and thus places the zone at the forefront of the Industry 4.0 revolution.

#### Specialism: Shipbuilding

Special Economic Zone Lotus, Russia

In 2019, the company Naval Design International became the first tenant of SEZ Lotus to produce locally and ship interior decoration panels for sea and river vessels as well as for offshore fleets. In future expansion phases, the company plans to produce ceiling panels and specially ▶

"THIS AWARD IS THE RESULT OF MANY YEARS OF WORK WITH A SERIOUS POLICY IN TERMS OF THE ENVIRONMENT. THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE BELIEVED IN OUR PROJECT"

Jorge Salamanca Gallo,  
Zona Franca Metropolitana

## SPOTLIGHT ON GREAT STONE INDUSTRIAL PARK ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE



# GREAT STONE SHOWS THE WAY

**Great Stone Industrial Park is widely regarded as one of the most important and fastest growing Free Economic Zones in Eastern Europe. The park is a manufacturing hub situated to provide tariff free entry into the Eurasian market and located close to the European market.**

Great Stone's logistics sub-park was developed to support the Silk Road Economic Belt's logistics corridor and contribute heavily to international trade and cooperation. September 2020 was a significant step forward in the development of the park's inter-modal rail freight terminal with the formation of "Eurasian Railway Gateway" CJSC, an international company planning to construct and operate a €30m rail freight terminal within the park. It is expected to be one of the largest terminals on the Northern Corridor of the new Silk Road and provide a strategic linkage on this increasingly popular trade route.

The park's newly constructed Innovations Centre was officially opened in October 2020. It provides a fantastic platform for innovative startups to develop commercially viable products before transitioning to full scale production in the park.

Approximately 63,000m<sup>2</sup> of self-built production facilities have been completed and the park continues to construct new buildings, for rent or sale.

Investments in rail infrastructure and the provision of additional facilities for development increases the park's potential and helps transform Great Stone into a truly international investment platform.

Presently Great Stone has approximately 70 residents with investment capital from numerous countries, such as, China, USA, Austria, Germany, Israel, and Switzerland. The

park is home to manufacturers of special robotics, unmanned vehicles, laser equipment, industrial ventilation and air conditioning systems, LED-products, energy-efficient vehicle glass, vehicle motors and medical devices, amongst others.

Investors continue to be attracted by the park's unique and flexible offering. Great Stone is firmly committed to providing the most favorable preferences which generate real operational savings, advanced investor support services, as well as cost competitive leasing and utility rates.

The park continues to meet and exceed the needs and wants of its residents by constantly looking for new ways to assist and innovate. For example, simplified customs and payment procedures and extended visa permits are some recent examples of this.

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“BEING HIGHLY COMMENDED FOR THE REGIONAL AWARD FOR ‘AMERICAS’ IS A MOTIVE TO BE PROUD OF AS WELL AS A HUGE RESPONSIBILITY THAT ENCOURAGES US TO KEEP WORKING ON STRATEGIES THAT ALLOW US TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE REGIONAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT”

Margarita María Herrera Calle, CEO,  
Zona Franca Santander

equipped rooms for vessels (for example, refrigerators, washrooms and kitchens).

**Specialism: Textiles**

Ontustik Special Economic Zone, Kazakhstan

The Special Economic Zone of Ontustik, in southern Kazakhstan, was created as a platform for the formation of a textile cluster in the country. The zone occupancy rate has now reached 95% and work is in progress to expand the zone’s area to 500 hectares from 200 hectares, to make space for new tenants.

**Specialism: Wood Products**

Nkok Special Economic Zone, Gabon

The Nkok Special Economic Zone in Gabon has become a reference for the local timber industry thanks to the large availability of okume veneer in the area, one of the top raw materials for the production of plywood. Among others, two Indian companies, CCentury and Greenply are active within the zone, alongside domestic Gabon Wood Industries.

**Winners –  
Bespoke Awards**



**5G Readiness**

The Łódź Special Economic Zone in Poland launched a 5G Technology Accelerator combining start-ups and businesses to develop 5G industrial use cases and create smart factories together with industrial partners Miele, Wielton, Indigo Nails and Polish Energetic Group. So far, each partner received a dedicated technology transfer on the 5G potential provided by the zone and Ericsson. The programme received 150 applications from start-ups from Poland, Hungary, the UK, the US, India, Russia and African countries ready to develop their products with the use of 5G.

The Innopolis Special Economic Zone in Russia has launched a 5G network in test mode to boost its activities in the digital economy.

**Academic Collaboration**

The Zona Franca Santander in Colombia signed three agreements with the region’s academic sector (SENA, Universidad Santo Tomás and Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana) with the aim of facilitating access to high-quality education and thus contributing to the skills and competencies of the human talent of established companies and their family nucleus.

Coyol Free Zone in Costa Rica has strengthened its alliance with the Technological University of Costa Rica. This alliance has allowed hundreds of students to be trained in the areas of productivity, quality, logistics, innovation, technology and English, and to opt for technical and master’s degrees.

**Access to raw materials**

The Special Economic Zone ‘Pavlodar’ in Kazakhstan is located in the Pavlodar region, which is a large industrial centre of Kazakhstan with a diversified industrial complex. The total value of the reserves of solid minerals in the region is estimated at \$460bn.

**Cluster development**

The Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow, Russia, is considering expanding its cluster territory by 92 hectares: 23 hectares of greenfield, 29 hectares of brownfield for the construction of offices and production facilities available for lease and 40 hectares for a new urban site.

**Connectivity**

Digital connectivity in the Łódź Special Economic Zone has been boosted by pilot projects in 5G connectivity and its industrial use cases.

The construction of the Pan-European Corridor X which connects the city of Belgrade to Sofia and Istanbul will augment Free Zone Pirot’s strategic position in the Balkans and easy connection to Corridors IV and VIII, which offer the shortest traffic link to Italy, Turkey and Greece.

**Covid-19 support**

The Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow has halved rental rates for 100 tenants in order to enable stable business activity during the Covid-19 pandemic.





Free Zone Pirot launched the ‘Healthy Free Zones’ programme, in which the health and hygiene of workers and companies are taken care through restriction and termination of official travel of employees in order to reduce the spread of the virus; working from home for anyone who can; and additional security measures at logistics and customs terminals.

Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone in the UAE allocated 50m dirham (\$13.6m) to ease the impact of the pandemic on its tenants. The zone also went full-on digital on set-up processes, allowing clients to apply without physical presence and original documents.

**CSR initiatives**

The Manisa Industrial Park in Turkey ▶

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Anuj Bindal, Mahindra World City Jaipur

built two libraries and an innovation laboratory for two suburban schools going through financial difficulties as part of its corporate social responsibility project ‘Little Stars’.

#### Data protection

The **Cayman Enterprise City** in the Cayman Islands began looking more closely at its processes and procedures through the exercise of complying with the Data Privacy Laws that the country passed in September 2019.

#### Deployment of technology

Improvements were made to the **Ceará Free Trade Zone**’s Integrated Customs Control System (SICA), such as the lifting of gates with a mobile APP function, simplified scheduling for the Customs Clearance Area, a paperless project that almost ended the use of paper in all gates procedures, automatic parameterisation of the Merchandise Transfer Report that made possible the optimisation of every logistics procedure in the zone.

#### Diversity initiatives

In 2019, the **Free Economic Zone Gomel-Raton** in Belarus organised a forum for women of three neighboring regions: Gomel oblast (Belarus), Smolensk oblast (Russia) and Dnipro oblast (Ukraine). The forum’s topic, “Economics and culture as the drivers of regional development”, allowed businesswomen of three countries to learn new skills and gain business knowledge, discuss current events, share success stories and tools to improve their careers, and build goodwill despite the adversities of recent years.

The **Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone** in the UAE launched the Rakez BusinessWomen Package designed to support female entrepreneurs with at least 6200 dirham (\$1688) per year. It comes with a licence, eligibility for a UAE visa as well as a zero-balance bank account.

#### Economic impact

The **Queen Alia International Airport Free Zone** in Jordan is promising to drive change in the region as it positions itself as hub for the reconstruction of the nearby countries which have been affected by conflict.

The **Manisa Industrial Park** in Turkey generated \$7.2bn in foreign trade in 2019 and about 55,000 jobs. Across 10 million square metres, the park hosts more than 223 manufacturing companies, of which around 42 are foreign direct and foreign shared investors from a total of 15 different countries.

#### Efforts to improve transparency

North Macedonia ranked 10th globally in the World Bank’s 2019 Ease of Doing Business report, and the **North Macedonia Free Zone** believes the government’s new economic plan has created a favorable atmosphere and conditions allowing the country to position itself as a viable choice for multinationals, with transparent terms for all investors.

#### Employee wellness

The **Montego Bay Free Zone** in Jamaica has organised events to support employee wellness and wellbeing such as an open day, mini expos and health fairs, in a push to attract top-level talent.

#### Events organised

**Cayman Enterprise City** has organised in 2019 a series of events called Tech Talks specifically designed for its growing community of technology professionals. Since July 2019, it has produced 11 such events and topics have included blockchain, data protection and community roundtable discussions. They have welcomed a significant number of recent graduates and local talent to participate in community roundtable discussions. Moreover, the monthly series of events provides regular opportunities for industry professionals to network, find new talent and engage with global experts.

The **Pomeranian Special Economic Zone** in Poland enabled networking by organising several events including BioTech Daily AI Games – Hackathon AI, Hackerspace Game Jam, Pomeranian 3D Print Days Industry 4.0, eco-ON Molanote Laboratories: B&R base for enterprises, Marine Industry Security Forum, regular meetings with investors and a unique project entitled ‘Zone in every commune’.

#### Expansions

**Liēpāja Special Economic Zone, Latvia:** JM Properties invested €7m in a new production facility of 11,000 square metres and technical equipment.

**Zona Franca del Pacífico, Colombia:** Rodriguez Lopez (Spain), one of the top three largest ambulance assemblers in Europe, began operations in the zone in 2018, and in 2019 expanded its warehouse by 100%, which will enable it to serve the Latin-American market in a cost-efficient way.

#### Export boosters

The choice of the Port of Rotterdam to become a shareholder in the **Ceará Free Trade Zone** boosts the strategic profile of the zone in the global markets. The Port of Rotterdam gives the zone a global standard for its management, logistics and technology. ▶





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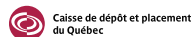
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Ramy Jallad, CEO, RAKEZ Group

The **Pirot Free Zone** developed a software platform called ‘Team Sharing’ for digitalisation, integration and automation of export/import processes in the zone.

#### Facilities upgrades

**Cayman Enterprise City** is midway through a \$67m expansion plan aimed at developing a purpose-built hub for digital businesses. Works valued at \$36m are underway to upgrade the zone’s facilities.

**Ajman Free Zone** in the UAE has launched several new facilities in 2019, including two new modern business centers, a freelancer and pioneers hub and furnished and unfurnished offices.

#### Flexible space

The **Innopolis Special Economic Zone in Russia** set up a coworking facility for start-ups and SMEs at the technology park named after AS Popov, with 124 workplaces.

#### Freezone 4.0

The **Łódź Special Economic Zone** has launched an Internet of Everything (IoE) hub located in the centre of Warsaw, the capital of Poland. It is part of Cambridge Innovation Centre, a US ecosystem of innovation, entrepreneurship and impact. CIC opened in Poland (the second in Europe, after Rotterdam) and co-created four hubs in co-operation with different institutions (cosmic, proptech, trusttech and IoE). IoE means connection of people, processes, data and devices focusing on Industry 4.0, gathering different strategic and founding partners operating within IoT, 5G, smart manufacturing and working together on boosting innovation for the zone’s investors.

#### Future mobility

Major car producers are developing their offer of hybrid and electric cars within the **Łódź Special Economic Zone**, which in turn is stimulating the creation of a supply base able to provide state-of-the-art products.

#### Gateway award

The **Mauritius Freeport** is a gateway for trade between Asia, Europe and Africa with particular focus on agreements such as, among others, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Southern African Development Community. The location of Mauritius has attracted major shipping lines, express courier services and freight-forwarding companies to the freeport’s logistics platform. Through these players, Mauritius has developed competitive logistics at the seaport and airport.

#### Incentives

Some of the incentives offered by the **Mahindra World City Jaipur** in India include an investment subsidy of 75% of state tax due and deposited for seven years; exemption from payment of 100% of electricity duty and land tax for seven years; exemption from inspections under state laws for three years; and exemption from payment of 100% of stamp duty.

In the **Aegean Free Zone (ESBAS)** in Izmir, Turkey, manufacturing companies are exempt from corporate tax. This exemption has now been extended to the following services: maintenance, repair, assembly, disassembly, handling, sorting, packaging, testing, labelling and warehousing services that are provided to customers who export services abroad.

The **Ajman Free Zone** introduced new incentives to cope with the global crisis triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic, which include, among others, exemptions from licensing fees and late renewal fines; for licence cancellation, 50% discount on accumulated fines; and 40% discount on labour accommodation rent.

#### Industry 4.0

The **Łódź Special Economic Zone** attracted new investment projects in automotive, household appliances, pharmaceuticals and packaging in 2019. With a highly technological component, these investments highlight the role of the zone in bringing central Poland’s economy into the fourth industrial revolution. The zone is also offering the Spark 2.0 acceleration programme and the 5G technology accelerator to foster local talent to connect with industry partners and develop Industry 4.0 applications.

The **Industrial Robots Programming Centre** at the **Pomeranian Special Economic Zone** in Poland is one of the first centres in Poland which enables employees to improve their skills and helps students of vocational schools choose a career related to automatic control and robotics. The training centre is an element of a project whose aim is to revive and activate the area of the former shipyard.

#### Infrastructure upgrades

**Mauritius Freeport** has undergone major infrastructure upgrade, which includes a new fully-fledged cargo terminal and extension of the cargo and freeport area at the airport to accommodate light industries. New investments have been allocated to the port in order to expand its capacity, boost productivity and competitiveness. The Mauritius ►



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"I AM DELIGHTED WITH OUR ABILITY TO EXCEED OUR RESIDENTS' EXPECTATIONS AS WE CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THE PARK AND ATTRACT MORE INVESTORS TO JOIN US"

Adam Ross Jones, project manager for Europe and America, Great Stone Industrial Park Development Company

Ports Authority, with the participation of the private sector, will invest more than \$300m to construct a breakwater to reduce downtime at the port during bad weather conditions.

The **Zona Franca del Pacífico** in Colombia initiated the development of a new expansion project of 15 hectares, representing a 27% growth in available area for tenants. Besides, the zone built 11,000 square metres of warehouse space available for industrial and logistics projects. For the second half of 2020, a project of four modular warehouses of 640 square metres will be developed to attract new companies.

The **Katowice Special Economic Zone** in Poland has increased its offer by more than 400 hectares in 14 locations. The offer of production and warehouse space has increased by 50 hectares in 16 locations. The zone also plans to include another 200 hectares of greenfield areas in eight locations, and expand the offer of production and warehouse space by several dozen hectares.

The **Foreign Trade Zone No. 68** in El Paso, Texas, expects to reap benefits from the I-10 Connect Project that is completely modifying the entrance from the Bridge of the Americas Port of Entry to Interstate 10 and US Highway 54. This is a \$96m project to move cargo, passengers and pedestrians easier through the Port of Entry. Also, the Montana Expressway Project is connecting the 375 Loop to Global Reach and Spur 601. This \$370m project will allow cargo shipments to move from the Ysleta Port of Entry to the Butterfield Trail

Industrial Park and the airport without stopping for traffic signals.

#### Local transport

The **Klaipeda Free Economic Zone** in Lithuania has been taking further steps to increase its connectivity with the city and the rest of the country by preparing free land plots for new developments to facilitate sustainable urban mobility. Over the past 12 months, the zone has completed and launched additional 4 km bicycle and pedestrian paths within and beyond its territory. Two new car parks were also added.

#### Marketing slogan

**Free Zone Pirot, Serbia**

"Build and work free."

#### New investments

The **Zona Franca Santander** in Colombia attracted two major BPO companies in 2019: Majorel, a benchmark in the BPO industry with more than 50,000 employees in 29 countries, and Accedo Technologies, a Nicaraguan company with extensive experience in BPO and 100% bilingual operation in the zone. It also announced the investment of Cecropia Solutions, a US company active in software development.

**Liepaja Special Economic Zone** attracted new investment in manufacturing with companies like, among others, LSEZ SIA Caljan (telescopic belt conveyors), Interspiro (respiratory protection and equipment for diving, fire-fighting and rescue operations), ▶



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Sam Ryong Choi, commissioner, DGFEZ

Expedit (interior solutions in the Nordics), UPB Group (design, production, logistics, construction and offers integrated solutions for glass, steel, concrete structures, and in energy and mechanical engineering), Tinby (polyurethane solutions) and Baltic Lingerie Group (lace and fabrics) deciding to locate in the zone.

New investments attracted by the **Katowice Special Economic Zone** in Poland feature Weber-Stephen Products (a manufacturer of grills), MonoSol Poland (a manufacturer of water-soluble films for packaging), Cobex Polska (a manufacturer of electrodes and cathodes) and Otokumpu Distribution Polska (a stainless steel processing factory).

In 2019, Swiss-Swedish producer of electrical equipment ABB opened an engineering center in the **Kaliningrad Special Economic Zone**. Yandex, the biggest Russian IT company, also planned to undergo the process of redomiciliation, changing its registration address from the Netherlands to the Kaliningrad Special Economic Zone.

#### **Belt and Road Initiative**

The **Great Stone Industrial Park** in Belarus is at the core of the country's participation in China's Belt and Road initiative, which has prompted Chinese companies including China Merchants Group to set up shop in the zone.

#### **Ones to watch**

Alaro City is a new integrated, mixed-use city planned of more than 2000 hectares in the **Lekki Free Zone**, Nigeria. Developed by Africa's new city builder Rendevour, Alaro City offers tenants plug-and-play infrastructure in a strategic location with easy access to capital Lagos's airport and seaport. Some 20 companies are moving or expanding their presence in Alaro, the company says. The new city aims to create 200,000 new jobs.

**Special Economic Zone Stupino Quadrat** in Russia is developing industrial coworking space for SMEs and manufacturing start-ups for contract production. The zone has also built a private railway connecting its facilities with the national railway system. The zone authority plans to make it a good platform for effective investments, but also territory of happiness, “a place where everyone has an opportunity to develop and implement their best personal and business qualities”, the authority says.

#### **Overcoming adversity**

Although it lacks the investment appeal of other zones in South Korea due to its location and low regional recognition,

the **Daegu Gyeongbuk Free Economic Zone** in South Korea has been developing selected IT convergence, cutting-edge medical care, hi-tech materials and energy as the four major growth industries to boost the local economy. According to the results of the performance evaluation of the Free Economic Zone Authority organized by the South Korean ministry of trade, industry and energy in July 2019, the zone stood out for its performance in development strategy, leadership, and development project strategy.

#### **PPP**

**Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow** in Russia pioneered the implementation of the PPP offset agreement in Russian healthcare between Russian BIOCAD and the Moscow city government. This agreement will facilitate the national strategy to fight cancer and reduce production costs of treatments. A third offset agreement between Germany's GEMAMED and the Moscow government in December 2019 launched the production of medical devices for stoma patients.

#### **Real estate flexibility**

**Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow** applies a flexible approach to prospective and current tenants, as they can choose cleanroom facilities, brownfield production sites, engineering and laboratory buildings or rent a plot of land.

#### **Recruitment assistance**

**Coyol Free Zone** in Costa Rica supports tenants in their hiring processes through exclusive services designed to seek, pre-select, train and evaluate potential candidates. These programmes introduce potential job applicants to the basics of medical device manufacturing. During Covid-19 all programmes were adapted to operate successfully under a virtual mode. The zone also offers evaluation and personnel selection services to streamline recruitment processes and keeps an online database with more than 90,000 users who aspire to find a job opportunity in the industry. It also organises job fairs, either face-to-face or virtually.

#### **Red tape reduction**

**Special Economic Zone Technopolis Moscow** in Russia has also been promoting digitisation through the development of Agile Centre, a single information window that aggregates city-wide opportunities with the public sector, from property auctions to procurement.

In the **Aegean Free Zone (Esbas)** in Izmir, Turkey, investors can find a one-stop shop that eliminates bureaucracy and delays. The zone offers streamline set-up procedures for both foreign companies and joint ventures.

The **Ajman Free Zone** in the UAE has fully automated its processes to support ease of doing business, integrated its systems with other government entities for faster transactions, and provided companies with extra convenient payment channels such as Ajman e-pay and Al Ansari Exchange.

**Relocation services**

The government of the Kaliningrad region compensates moving costs for qualified staff coming to the **Kaliningrad Special Economic Zone** from other parts of Russia. Compensation amounts to \$7500 and can be used both to cover the relocation costs and to make a downpayment on the mortgage loan.

**Research hub**

In May 2019, a new innovation and technology centre came to fruition in the

**Dubna Special Economic Zone.** Premises designed for assembly and knowledge-intensive production will be rented out to different companies. The new resident companies are going to invest more than \$14m in their projects and create almost 1000 jobs.

**Site conversion**

Alongside its typical operations in oil and gas and petrochemicals, **Arvand Free Zone** in Iran is converting more than 100 hectares of unused land into arable and agricultural lands for the optimal use of its water and soil resources.

**Montego Bay Free Zone** in Jamaica converted older factory buildings to new, comfortable office spaces to accommodate its tenants from business process outsourcing and other industries.

**Skills development**

Next to the **Ceará Free Trade Zone** in Brazil is located the Federal Institute of Education, the largest vocational and training center in Latin America. In 2019, 435 students graduated from the institute, representing more than ▶

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Anton Alikhanov, governor, Kaliningrad region



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Janusz Michałek, president,  
Katowice Special Economic Zone

8000 hours of training classes, meeting the demand of companies located in Ceará State.

**Katowice Special Economic Zone** has continued and implemented new programmes as part of its Professional Hub in 2019. They include the Leader’s Academy developing managerial competencies together with the Silesian University of Technology and entrepreneurs and a dual education project in the mining and metal industry.

**Special Economic Zone Alabuga** in Russia opened a STEM centre for the training of highly qualified personnel in September 2019. The centre aims to train 100 students every year in the four important areas: laboratory chemical analysis, mechatronics, electrical engineering and automated control systems.

#### Smart strategies

**Zona Franca Santander** in Colombia has adopted policies for the prevention of money-laundering, which are framed within the integrated management system of the organisation. They apply to all activities carried out by the zone.

**Free Port of Ventspils** in Latvia has been participating in the Baltic Loop initiative to identify and prevent bottlenecks of passenger and freight transport in the east-west corridor of the Baltic Sea and to deal with issues related to interlinking of different transport hubs by reducing travel time and decreasing carbon dioxide emission levels. It also did proactive work on a previously signed co-operation agreement

with the China-Belarus Industrial Park Great Stone, thus creating a co-operation platform between the two zones.

**Katowice Special Economic Zone**, together with the city government of Zabrze and other partners, started working on the redevelopment of 48 hectares of brownfield areas of closed local mine and coking plants to create an attractive investment space.

#### Start-up support

**Special Economic Zone ‘Pavlodar’** in Kazakhstan has developed strong partnerships with some of the country’s financial institutions such as the DAMU Entrepreneurship Development Fund, the Development Bank of Kazakhstan, JSC “National Agency for Technological Development”, National Welfare Fund “Samruk-Kazyna”, National managing holding “Baiterek” to become fertile ground for start-ups and SMEs.

The Gdansk Science and Technology Park managed by the **Pomeranian Special Economic Zone** in Poland is supporting the development of SMEs and start-ups from the ICT, life sciences and power industry. In 2019, it supported 67 SMEs, including those involved in research and development.

Alaro City FZC in the **Lekki Free Zone** in Nigeria has been developing an SME enclave where a shared facilities strategy will be strongly adopted to optimise the operations of companies within the enclave. The enclave will focus on developing smaller-sized industrial and logistics plots.



Free Zone Pirot in Serbia covers up to 70% of maximum eligible costs for the realisation of an investment project for SMEs and start-ups.

**Supplier development**

North Macedonia Free Zone is leveraging a government programme to support the establishment of a local supply base and promote co-operation between local suppliers and foreign investors.

The cluster-based approach developed by Khalifa Industrial Zone (Kizad) in Abu Dhabi, UAE, puts businesses in close proximity to their suppliers and customers, adding to the overall cost-effectiveness for the investors.

**Supporting surrounding area**

The Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone in the UK has been successful in enabling the accelerated transformation of Birmingham’s city centre. Since its establishment in 2011, the enterprise zone has attracted £800m of private sector investment, with £200m of this within 2019/20 and secured a range of occupiers such as BT, HMRC, PWC, DLA Piper, The Prince’s Trust, HSBC and HS2.

**Sustainability**

Zona Franca Metropolitana in Colombia is planning to develop solar energy to supply part of the park’s energy demand.

With a vision of sustainability and environmental awareness, Coyol Free Zone in Costa Rica changed 90% of irrigation sprinkler systems to drip systems, cutting water consumption by 40% during the past 12 months. Also, 96.16% of the electric power consumed by the zone during 2019 was from renewable sources, and 10 buses with a Euro 5 gas treatment system were incorporated into the transport fleet.

Mahindra World City Chennai is developing one of the largest urban forest project in India in an area of 60.7 hectares with 400,000 tree saplings. This initiative when completed will ensure Mahindra World City Chennai is carbon-neutral.

The management of Klaipeda Free Economic Zone in Lithuania has become more outspoken when it comes to sustainability and the circular economy, educating society via events and the media. All these efforts are in line with ►

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Carlos Wong, managing director, Coyol Free Zone



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Eimantas Kiudulas, CEO, Klaipeda Free Economic Zone

the blue/bio economy ambitions that were enshrined in the Klaipeda 2030 strategy by the city municipality and supported by the local academic community.

The sustainable warehouse project at **Ajman Free Zone** in the UAE aims to reduce the use of electricity by, among other things, using photovoltaic panels to generate part of the needed energy; energy-efficient LED lights; raising the insulation coefficient of the surfaces and walls so that the heat exchange is reduced and thus the energy required for cooling is reduced; using smart water and electricity meters to monitor consumption, as well as monitor any water leakage; and using eco-friendly air conditioning system.

Together with Shell Development Oman, **SOHAR Free Zone** in Oman signed an agreement that will see the provision of clean energy solutions through the facilitation of solar photovoltaic projects. The development will focus on meeting the energy demands of industrial tenants within the zone.

#### Talent pool

Next to the **Ceará Free Trade Zone** in Brazil is located the Federal Institute of Education, the largest vocational and training centre in Latin America. In 2019, 435 students graduated from the institute, representing more than 8000 hours of training classes, meeting the demand of companies located in Ceará State.

**Panamá Pacífico** has been developing a Talent Hub focused on training the workforce based on the needs of companies, thus promoting the strengthening

of logistics and service clusters and a strengthened commercial community (company, employee, retail, government and suppliers).

**Katowice Special Economic Zone** in Poland launched with its local institutional partners a project whose purpose is to improve the quality of vocational education for 1190 students from 18 schools in co-operation with employers, and to create an educational cluster.

#### Thought leadership

With its focus on environmental harmony and sustainability, **Mahindra World City Chennai** believes it will ensure higher productivity and health benefits for the people working and living inside or nearby.

#### Trade facilitation

**SOHAR Free Zone** in Oman believes that the Secured Bonded Corridors initiative, launched by the Directorate General of Customs, will facilitate trade and ease of doing business and, eventually, bring new investment into the zone.

#### Workforce amenities

**Innopolis Special Economic Zone** in Russia has developed unique living and work environment for company employees and their family members with first-class business, social, educational and engineering infrastructure

In 2019, a new sports complex with a swimming pool, gym and innovative sensory diagnostics equipment was opened at **Technopolis Special Economic Zone** in Moscow. ■



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# 4 DESTINATIONS 1 OBJECTIVE: MAKE IN INDIA

Leading Integrated Industrial Ecosystem: Manufacturing • Services • Skill Development



## Mahindra World City

- Developments in Chennai & Jaipur, together spans more than 4,500 acres
- In Partnership with State Govt. TIDCO & RIICO respectively
- Co-located SEZ, DTA and Social & Residential Infrastructure

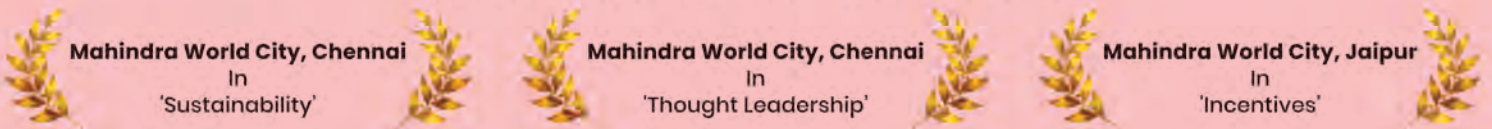
## Origins By Mahindra World City

- Development in Ahmedabad & Chennai, together spans more than 1,000 acres
- Strategic partnership with IFC and Sumitomo Corporation respectively
- High quality plug-n-play infrastructure

Home to 160+ premier companies from 20+ countries & growing



— Winner of Global Free Zones of the Year 2020 —



Contact us today to enable your Make In India plan:

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