Emirates launched daily, non-stop flights to Budapest in October 2014 and also opened a new Customer Contact Centre in Budapest in the same month.

The Budapest-Dubai route was launched with an Airbus A330 aircraft and achieved almost 80% seat factor in its first year of operation. Due to increase in demand, this was soon upgraded to a larger capacity Boeing 777-300ER in December 2015, which also introduced a First Class product in the market. Since its launch in 2014, Emirates has carried over 524,000 passengers between Budapest and Dubai.

Impact on Hungarian employment and economy
Currently 308 Hungarian nationals are employed by the Emirates Group. During the same month of the launch of the Budapest route, Emirates also inaugurated a new Customer Contact Centre based in Budapest, which represented a multi-million dollar investment in the local economy and supports 300 local jobs. The employee count at the Contact Centre is expected to match its full capacity of 300 in the future, which would make it Emirates’ second largest service centre in the world after Dubai.

Emirates’ unique connectivity
Currently, Emirates is the only carrier offering a daily service between Hungary and the UAE. Emirates’ Budapest route significantly enhances Hungary’s global long-haul connectivity, offering passengers travelling from Budapest the chance to reach 14 Emirates’ destinations in the Middle East, 19 destinations in South Asia, 24 destinations in the Far East, seven destinations in Australasia and 22 destinations in Africa through efficient one-stop connectivity via Dubai.
 Connectivity plays an important role in enabling tourism, international business relationships, Foreign Direct Investment and international trade. In Europe, connectivity is mainly provided by a few large hub airports such as Frankfurt and Paris, as a result of which intercontinental connections from other cities in Europe often require an additional stopover. This creates a connectivity gap. Emirates helps bridge that gap by serving more non-hub centres through its global network.

Hungary-UAE trade relations

The UAE is Hungary's largest Arab trading partner with annual trade between the two countries valued at €189 million in 2016. Emirates’ daily service helps facilitate the trade of goods and services between Hungary and the UAE and beyond, and will also support the government’s effort to assist local SMEs with greater access the Middle East markets. The majority of the exports on Emirates from Hungary are comprised of chemical products bound for North Asia and Asia Pacific, while imports into Hungary are dominated by semi-conductors, telecommunication devices and components, electronics, and personal and household goods coming in from Asia.

Open Skies for a stronger Europe

International aviation competition is currently high on the European Union agenda. Opening markets with main trading partners is an urgent necessity if the EU is to bridge its connectivity gap with the rest of the world. Liberalised aviation markets create new routes for people to travel, work and goods to be exchanged. It is not surprising that key representative bodies, including Airports Council International (ACI Europe) with Budapest International Airport among its members and the European Travel Commission which is supported by the Hungarian Tourism Agency Ltd., recently called on policy-makers to prioritise free aviation market access, including with Gulf countries. Some European legacy carriers in France and Germany disagree with this. But why should valuable direct international air links, which are so important for business and tourism, be limited to a few European airlines and a few European hubs with higher ticket prices, longer travel times and passenger inconvenience as consequences?

About Emirates

Emirates is the largest airline in the world in terms of international passenger carriage. Established in 1985, the company’s growth has been measured in line with the demand for air travel. With 266 efficient aircraft in service today, Emirates operates a global network of 156 destinations in 84 countries across six continents, independently of the three global airline alliances. Emirates launched passenger services to three new destinations in 2017 – Newark in the US, Phnom Penh in Cambodia and Zagreb in Croatia.

Myth vs. Fact: Setting the record straight

Some of our competitors claim that Emirates competes unfairly or negatively impacts the aviation market. Such misconceptions, when repeated often enough, can ultimately be accepted as fact. Below we aim to address some of these allegations levelled against Emirates.

Myth: Emirates is heavily subsidised by the Dubai Government.

Fact: Emirates is a consumer-focused, commercial airline, operating a financially transparent and non-subsidised business model. Our funds are raised on a fully commercial basis through a wide range of sources including operating leases, commercial asset-backed debt and equity from investors. Our financial accounts are audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers in full compliance with International Financial Reporting Standards, and are publicly available at http://www.emirates.com/english/about/investor_relations/investor_relations.aspx and have been since 1993-94.

Emirates has been profitable for the last 29 years and rather than receive subsidies as erroneously alleged, Emirates has in fact paid its state shareholder over US$3.9 billion in dividends up to and including its 2016-17 financial year.

Myth: Emirates receives free fuel and does not pay to use infrastructure in Dubai.

Fact: In the 2016-17 financial year, Emirates’ fuel costs totalled US$5.7 billion and comprised 25% of operating costs, wholly comparable with other large long-haul carriers. Shell, one of Emirates’ main fuel suppliers in Dubai and abroad, recently confirmed that it does not give Emirates preferential treatment. Emirates also pays the full published landing charges at Dubai International Airport – as do the 100 other airlines that fly to and from this airport. Similarly, Emirates pays the same airport handling fees to the ground-handling agent as would a similar high volume airline customer.

Myth: The social conditions in which some of Emirates’ employees work are unacceptable.

Fact: As a responsible multinational company, Emirates complies with the labour laws in each of the countries that we operate in. To attract and retain top talent Emirates offers competitive salaries and benefits. Emirates currently employs over 64,000 staff of over 170 nationalities worldwide. Emirates’ status as an excellent employer is shown by its high staff retention rates with more than 15,000 staff having worked for the company for 10 years or longer, of which 3,000 have worked for over 20 years.