

Al Gharbia, meaning 'western' in Arabic and formerly known more prosaically as the Western Region, accounts for 83 percent of the total land mass of Abu Dhabi (and 71 percent of the whole of the UAE). In total it covers over 60,000 square kilometres yet has only 10 percent of the Emirate's population – just 120,000 inhabitants. On the other hand it produces around 40 per cent of the country's GDP, some AED 115 billion pa, because it has rich oil and gas reserves.

[Originally published in Abu Dhabi Week vol 2 issue 28]