ADGM 10 Years

THE CAPITAL OF CAPITAL

ADGM TIMES

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ADGM Records Strong Growth Across Assets, Jobs and Licences in Landmark Year

12,671 Active Licences

+36% Total AUMs within ADGM rise in 2025

3,769 New Licences Issued in 2025

2025

+51% Workforce Growth

44,339 Total Workforce

171 Asset & Fund Managers

244 Funds Managed

347 Financial Institutions

2025 Marked a Defining Chapter in ADGM's Milestones

H.E Ahmed Jasim Al Zaabi, Chairman of ADGM

ADGM delivered another year of solid growth and strategic milestones, reinforcing its role in advancing Abu Dhabi's status as the 'Capital of Capital'.

Building on the strong momentum of recent years, ADGM continued to attract substantial international capital, world-class talent and leading institutions to the UAE capital. At the end of 2025, the number of active licences in ADGM surpassed 12,000, while the number of individuals working within the financial centre increased by 51% to 44,339. Meanwhile, Assets Under Management (AUM) rose 36%, underscoring the sustained confidence in Abu Dhabi as a trusted hub for global asset and wealth managers.

His Excellency Ahmed Jasim Al Zaabi, Chairman of ADGM, said, "2025 marked a defining chapter in ADGM's milestones. We achieved another year of significant growth in our AUMs, reflecting both the confidence of our partners and the strength of our investment strategies. Equally important was our success in attracting leading global players to ADGM, reinforcing our position as a gateway for world-class talent, capital, and innovation. This progress demonstrates the power of a thriving ecosystem, one built on partnerships, long-term value creation, and a solid commitment to excellence. And as we continue to align closely with Abu Dhabi's strategic vision, we remain focused on driving sustainable growth and elevating our competitive advantage to become one of the top five international financial centres in the world."

Deepening Business Activity and Expanding Workforce

The significant growth of Abu Dhabi's financial sector is reflected in the surge of new licences within ADGM, with top global firms choosing the financial centre as their regional hub.

The number of total active licences across ADGM rose 30% to reach 12,671 at the end of 2025, further strengthening its position as the largest IFC in the Middle East and Africa region by this measure.

Meanwhile, the growth in business activity across the IFC continued to attract a diverse and highly-skilled talent pool across Al Reem and Al Maryah Islands. This led to ADGM's total workforce increasing by 51% to 44,339 individuals in 2025 from 29,338 in 2024.

During the year, several leading fintech, digital assets, banking, infrastructure investment, sustainability advisory, global legal services and tech-enabled financial platforms, including Circle, Carta, Bitcoin Suisse, Tradition, Bitgrit, Stacks Asia DLT Foundation, Hidden Roads, Skadden, and Digital Climate Middle East (DCME), Olive Gaea, TON, Animoca Brands, BBVA, Arab Bank (Switzerland) Gulf, Galaxy Digital, Halo Investing, Eurasian Development Bank, iCapital, ERM, and DLA Piper announced setting up in ADGM.

In a global regulatory first, Binance became the first crypto exchange to secure a formal global licence from ADGM's Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA) in December 2025. The licence enables Binance to operate from Abu Dhabi under a comprehensive, world class regulatory framework, reinforcing ADGM's position at the forefront of compliant and progressive digital asset ecosystems worldwide.

Expanding Global Financial Hub

At the end of 2025, ADGM was home to 171 asset and fund managers, which collectively manage 244 funds. A total of 347 financial institutions are now based in ADGM, 80 of which were licensed last year.

Some of the top financial entities that set up offices during that period include Kimmeridge, Fortress, Polen Capital, Adams Street, Arcapita, Aquila Group, Cantor Fitzgerald, Davidson Kempner, DWS, Galaxy (asset management arm alongside digital assets), GMB Limited, HarbourVest, Harrison Street, Investindustrial, KKR, Monroe Capital, NewVest, Oryx Global Partners, PATRIZIA, Partners Group, Plenary ME Infrastructure Partners Ltd., Seviora, UBS Group, and Julius Baer.

Meanwhile, the Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA) issued a total of 120 In-Principle Approvals (IPAs), up almost 32% year-on-year, while 94 new Financial Services Permissions (FSPs) were secured by entities.

Throughout the year, ADGM's wider ecosystem welcomed 3,495 operational entities, almost a 40% increase from a year earlier, underscoring the range of businesses choosing the financial centre as their regional base.

Interview

ADGM Courts - Justice at the Speed of Finance

Linda Fitz-Alan,
Registrar and Chief Executive of ADGM Courts

As Abu Dhabi cements its position as a global financial and fintech hub, the role of ADGM has expanded well beyond regulation and capital flows. At the heart of this ecosystem, ADGM Courts are navigating a surge in complex financial disputes, digital assets, and emerging technologies.

In this interview, Linda Fitz-Alan, Registrar and Chief Executive of ADGM Courts, reflects on leading the authority through a period of rapid growth, balancing efficiency with judicial rigor, and preparing the institution for the next wave of innovation.

From evolving dispute patterns to long-term strategy, she shares insights on maintaining trust in a system designed to move at the speed of modern finance.

You have been leading ADGM Courts through a period of significant growth in financial disputes. What is your approach to managing that expansion while maintaining the quality and efficiency the courts are known for?

Growth in financial disputes is, in many ways, a sign of confidence — confidence in the jurisdiction, in the enforceability of judgments, and in the quality of our bench and procedural framework. Our approach has been to treat expansion as an opportunity to strengthen our reputation, not test it.

First, we focus on judicial capacity and specialization. Financial disputes are increasingly sophisticated, so ensuring that the bench and registry have the right expertise is essential. We have been deliberate about matching case complexity with judicial expertise.

Second, disciplined and tailored case management. As our caseload grows, consistency and predictability become even more important. We regularly review our procedures and case management practices to ensure that cases are determined proportionately, efficiently, and without unnecessary delay. Early engagement with parties, firm timetables and active judicial oversight are central to maintaining efficiency and predictability.

Third, we invest in superior systems and technology. Our unique eCourts Platform and data-driven performance monitoring allow us to scale without compromising service standards. Efficiency should never come at the expense of fairness — but intuitive systems built by experts who live and breathe dispute resolution have allowed us to achieve both.

Finally, culture matters. We emphasize that growth must not dilute quality. The standards for clarity of judgments, timeliness, and litigant experience remain non-negotiable. Our reputation has been built on excellence, and expansion must reinforce, not erode, that foundation.

What patterns are emerging in the fintech and digital asset cases coming through ADGM Courts? What are these disputes telling you about where the sector is headed and where the friction points are?

So far, the Court has seen only a few fintech and digital asset cases, which we believe is a good sign, not a sign that there is a lack of sector maturation. Based on those cases and speaking with our fintech and digital assets colleagues in ADGM, we see it as a sector coming of age. As fintech and digital asset markets institutionalize, the disputes are likely to become more structured and commercially sophisticated. We expect them to be less speculative and more focused on governance, custody, contractual interpretation, and cross-border enforcement.

Institutional counterparties will become increasingly involved, which naturally raises expectations around clarity, accountability and risk allocation. Questions around asset custody, digital ownership structures and jurisdiction will become more prominent.

English common law provides a strong foundation for navigating novel asset classes. Its flexibility allows established legal principles to be applied to emerging technologies without sacrificing rigor. The pattern we foresee is not instability but evolution of a market innovating and refining itself as it grows. And when innovation becomes infrastructure, the rule of law becomes even more essential.

Looking ahead to the next two to three years, what is on your roadmap for ADGM Courts as fintech, crypto, and digital finance continue to evolve?

Our focus has always been disciplined evolution rather than dramatic change. With that in mind, our road map for those sectors is anchored in one objective: Ensuring that the Court remains a stable, forward-thinking and globally connected jurisdiction for digital finance. As digital finance continues its unstoppable advance and becomes core infrastructure, our Court must be equally robust infrastructure — trusted, transparent and reliable.

Over the next few years as we experience the continued rise of digital finance, we will have clear workstreams all designed to ensure that we strengthen judicial expertise and registry capability so that these emerging disputes are handled with specialist insight and precision; maintain our close relationships with the UAE's judiciary and other international commercial courts to ensure clear enforcement pathways; drive technology, including AI-enabled tools, through everything we do and create for the future of international dispute resolution; and provide the stable legal framework in which these dynamic sectors can scale with confidence.

We will also continue to promote mediation as a compelling dispute resolution option for complex financial and digital cases where commercially pragmatic outcomes are key. I am passionate about mediation.

In my view, mediation is perfect for these disputes as parties can explore limitless ways to achieve an amicable resolution confidentially, something that a Judge cannot always deliver. Parties want to remain in control of the dispute, and that is the attraction of mediation.

What has been the biggest challenge in your role so far, and what do you see as the biggest opportunity for ADGM Courts in the current environment?

My biggest challenge, and at the same time tremendous opportunity, has been to trailblaze impactful changes in dispute resolution, not observe or follow them.

As we all embrace the pace, thrill and significance of financial and technological innovation, ensuring that the judiciary evolves in parallel without compromising discipline or consistency is our heavy responsibility and biggest opportunity. As a court, we know we must adapt carefully and deliberately but be in synch with our demographic, especially as we serve a very ambitious and successful international financial center.

And as markets become more complex and cross-border in nature, businesses increasingly seek dispute resolution frameworks that combine familiarity with technological sophistication.

Our greatest opportunity therefore, lies in enhancing our combination of legal certainty grounded in English common law with a pioneering DNA, executed through a fully digital and internationally accessible platform.

Abu Dhabi is positioning itself as a serious fintech hub. How do you strike the right balance between being business-friendly enough to attract innovation while rigorous enough that institutional players trust the system?

Innovation and rigor are not opposing forces. Clarity and predictability are what attract sustainable innovation, and markets function best when participants understand the rules and have confidence in their enforcement.

By applying English common law directly, maintaining independence, and operating through a fully digital system, we provide a framework that is both accessible and disciplined. That predictability reduces friction and builds confidence.

Institutional trust ultimately depends on stability. A court system that is transparent, consistent, and technologically ambitious supports innovation precisely because it provides the certainty and reliability that institutional players demand to enable them to thrive in a jurisdiction.

How would you describe your leadership style in a specialized court system that sits at the intersection of law, finance, and technology?

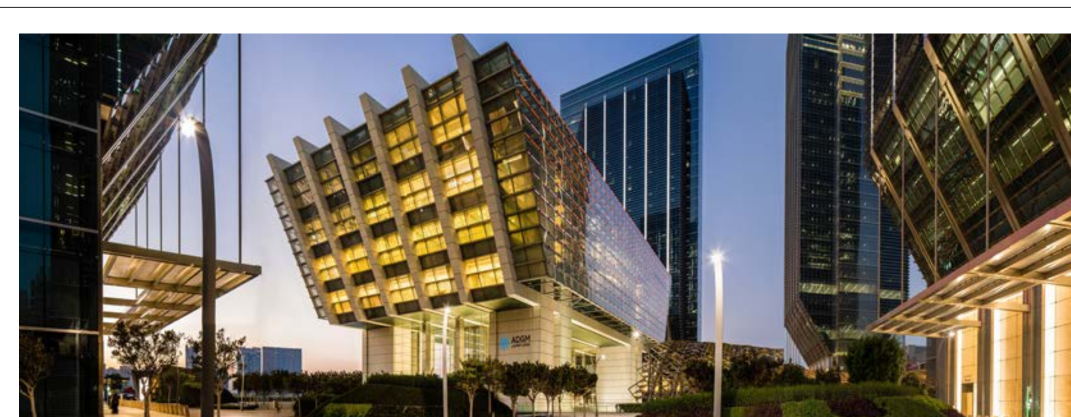
The focus must always be institutional rather than personal. In a specialized court system, leadership is about building durable structures, including governance frameworks, judicial capability and digital infrastructure that operate consistently regardless of market cycles. To those criteria, I would add agility, curiosity and creativity as they are key to sustainability.

I believe that decision making must be evidence based and long-term in outlook — "quick wins" are likely to produce issues down the track. Decision making also requires alignment between legal precision, financial realities and technological transformation.

My priority is to ensure that ADGM Courts remain meticulous in delivery, globally accessible, commercially aware, and structurally prepared for the continued evolution in global finance.

Source: Economy Middle East

Diginex Signs Abu Dhabi Sustainable Finance Declaration, Deepens Engagement with ADGM's Sustainable Finance Community



Diginex Limited, a provider of Sustainability RegTech solutions empowering businesses and governments with advanced ESG, climate, and supply chain data management tools, has signed the Abu Dhabi Sustainable Finance Declaration and is deepening its engagement with ADGM sustainable finance ecosystem through Diginex's existing Abu Dhabi legal entity.

The Abu Dhabi Declaration brings together organizations committed to advancing sustainable finance capabilities in the UAE and supporting the objectives of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. Signing the Abu Dhabi Declaration evidences a collaboration and engagement framework to accelerate sustainable finance adoption across the UAE market.

The UAE is seeking economy-wide climate accountability advances through its Federal Decree-Law No. (11) of 2024 on the Reduction of Climate Change Effects ("Law No. (11) of 2024"). Law No. (11) of 2024 introduces the UAE's expectations in connection with emissions measurement, reporting and decarbonization planning. As the implementation timelines for Law No. (11) of 2024 approach, companies and financial institutions are increasingly seeking practical, auditable solutions to support emissions reporting readiness and transition planning.

By helping organizations establish robust carbon baselines and structured transition pathways, Diginex supports the UAE's Net Zero 2050 objectives while strengthening climate-related transparency and governance.

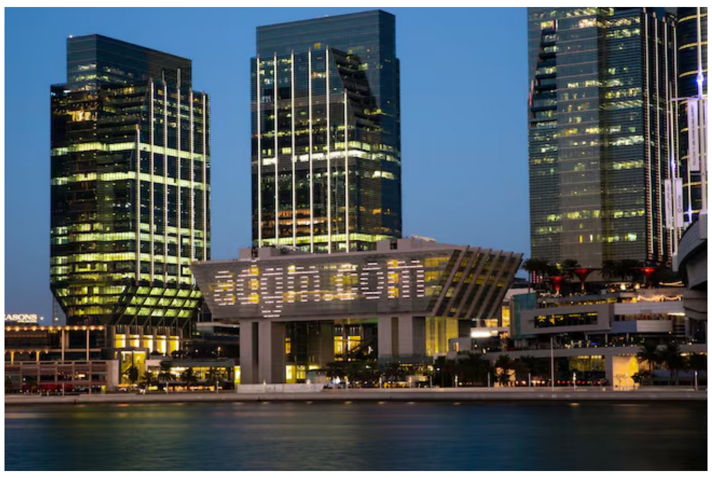
Lubomila Jordanova, Chief Executive Officer of Diginex, commented, "As the UAE's climate agenda evolves, we are bridging the gap between intent and measurable impact. By fortifying data quality and ensuring reporting readiness, we empower organizations to navigate an increasingly complex landscape of regulatory and stakeholder expectations with absolute confidence."

Emil Stigsgaard Fuglsang, Co-Founder at Matter, Diginex's financial markets and risk intelligence business, stated: "Being part of ADGM allows us to work closely with the regional financial ecosystem to support more informed, forward-looking and sustainable capital allocation"

The Abu Dhabi Declaration builds on the UAE's broader sustainable finance agenda. The Abu Dhabi Declaration is a voluntary initiative launched by ADGM in 2019 to deepen green and sustainable investment and support global climate goals. Since its inception with 25 founding signatories, the Abu Dhabi Declaration has grown to more than 170 organizations today, spanning major banks, asset managers and institutional investors.

In addition to the Abu Dhabi Declaration, ADGM has promulgated written sustainable finance regulatory frameworks and ESG disclosure standards designed to support transparency and sustainable capital markets within its jurisdiction. As ADGM's ecosystem continues to expand, reporting a 42% year-on-year increase in active companies alongside rising assets under management. Diginex becoming a signatory to the Abu Dhabi Declaration provides a timely platform to share practical insights and to meaningfully contribute to the adoption of stronger, ESG-ready practices across a rapidly evolving market.

Regulatory Alert: Misrepresentations Made by a Non-ADGM Entity



The Registration Authority of ADGM would like to alert members of the public about misleading representations made by an entity operating under the name Nubia Gold SPV.

The ADGM's RA confirms that Nubia Gold SPV is not incorporated, registered, or licensed with the ADGM's RA and does not appear on ADGM's Public Register of Companies. Any statement or implication that Nubia Gold SPV is incorporated, registered, approved, recognised, or otherwise associated with ADGM is false and misleading; and the ADGM's RA has no connection with this entity or its website.

In some cases, such misrepresentations may form part of a broader fraudulent scheme and may result in significant financial losses to members of the public or potential investors.

It is a serious contravention of ADGM's commercial legislation to misrepresent that an entity is incorporated, registered, or licensed in or from ADGM when this is not the case. This type of misconduct may result in regulatory enforcement action, including the imposition of financial penalties.

The RA is particularly concerned that such false and misleading representations may fraudulently induce members of the public to engage with or invest in non-ADGM entities, based on the incorrect belief that these entities are subject to ADGM's regulatory oversight.

Public Guidance:

- Verify the status of any entity claiming to be incorporated, registered, or licensed in ADGM by searching ADGM's online Public Register of Companies at: www.registration.adgm.com which is free of charge.
- Verify the authenticity of any ADGM licence certificate, or certificate of incorporation, received using ADGM's free document verification tool at: www.registration.adgm.com
- Exercise caution when contacted by any person or entity purporting to be associated with ADGM, particularly where investment opportunities, payment requests, or the provision of personal or financial information are involved.

ADGM Academy, EIF, and NAFIS Launch Programme to Build Emirati Financial Compliance

ADGM Academy has announced the launch of the Financial Compliance Pathways programme, in collaboration with the Emirati Talent Competitiveness Council and the Emirates Institute of Finance (EIF), which aims to develop specialised national talents in the fields of financial compliance and provide direct employment pathways in the private sector across prioritised sectors.

The launch of the programme comes in line with the vision of "Nafis", which aims to empower Emirati talent with quality and sustainable roles in the private sector by designing training pathways aligned with the actual needs of the labour market. In order to enhance the competitiveness of the national economy and contribute to the building of specialised national capabilities in Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter Financing of Terrorism capabilities across the UAE.

The programme is delivered in strategic collaboration with ADGM Academy and the Emirates Institute of Finance (EIF) and has been introduced with the support of the General Secretariat of the National Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financing of Terrorism and Financing of Illegal Organizations Committee (NAMLCFTC) and the UAE Public-Private Partnership Sub-Committee (PPP-SC). The programme will comply with the UAE National Strategy 2024–2027 by the National Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism and Proliferation Financing Committee (NAMLCFTPFC) and the National Action Plan.

The Financial Compliance Pathways programme will develop specialised national human capacity and skillsets that enhance the readiness of the private sector in the areas of AML and Counter Financing of Terrorism capabilities across the UAE. In order to maintain robust and sustainable compliance frameworks across Financial Institutions and Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions, with the creation of sustainable, high-impact employment opportunities for Emiratis.

ADGM Academy is deeply committed to developing future-ready talent and to delivering world-class, industry-relevant education that responds directly to national priorities. This programme reflects our belief that capability building is most effective when education, policy, and market needs are aligned.

His Excellency Ghannam Al Mazrouei, Secretary General of the Emirati Talent Competitiveness Council, said: "This programme represents a qualitative shift from traditional training to sustainable career-building in sectors that are of strategic national importance. Through NAFIS, we are establishing clear pathways that link specialised expertise directly to verified market demand by ensuring Emiratis secure meaningful, long-term roles in AML compliance over the next two years. Anti-money laundering is no longer a technical function alone; it is a pillar of economic security and a key benchmark of our nation's standing as a responsible partner in the global financial system. By investing in Emirati talent as the first line of defence for financial integrity, we are reinforcing our national economy."

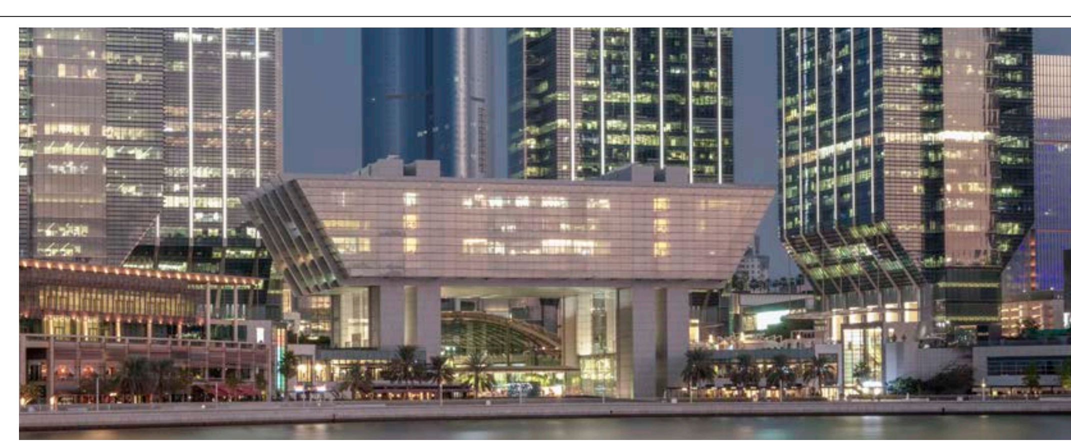
His Excellency Hamid Saif AlZaabi, Secretary General and Vice Chair of the NAMLCFTPFC, said, "The Financial Compliance Pathways programme is about building a strong national talent bench to lead the fight against financial crime in the private sector. Its design reflects genuine partnership, with the Public-Private Partnership Sub-Committee contributing through a survey that captured industry needs and priorities. Working with ADGM Academy and the Emirates Institute of Finance and reinforcing the General Secretariat's wider research and training initiatives, we are turning national policy into skilled Emirati careers that strengthen the UAE's economic security."

His Excellency Hamad Sayah Al Mazrouei, Chairman of ADGM Academy, said, "This programme reflects a shared national commitment to translating the UAE's AML priorities into sustainable private-sector capability. Through close collaboration with EIF and Nafis, we are delivering a clear pathway for Emirati talent to assume critical, future-ready roles that strengthen the resilience and global standing of both financial and non-financial sectors."

Highlighting the importance of national capability-building in financial compliance, Marwan AlMheiri, General Manager of the Emirates Institute of Finance, said, "The programme underscores EIF's strategic role in developing Emirati expertise in critical AML/CFT functions that support the UAE's economic resilience. Through close collaboration with ADGM Academy and with the support of Nafis, we are delivering specialised, internationally aligned training that responds directly to private-sector needs. This initiative represents a practical investment in national talent and contributes to strengthening the UAE's position as a trusted, well-regulated financial centre."

Delivered over eight weeks, the programme integrates technical AML/CFT expertise with workplace readiness. Participants will undertake foundational AML/CFT training, followed by behavioural and professional skills development. Participants will earn three internationally recognised credentials: AML Foundations certification, the globally recognised CAMS (Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialist) certification, and ADGM Academy's Certificate of Completion, validated through an industry-reviewed capstone project.

The ADGM Blueprint: Unbundling Crypto to Meet Institutional Standards



Crypto market structure is shifting from rapid and unrestricted growth to a model defined by regulated infrastructure. While early expansion prioritized speed, the entry of sovereign wealth and pension funds has forced a pivot toward governance and regulation. This evolution coincides with Binance surpassing 300 million registered users in late 2025, a scale that requires institutional-grade controls rather than just retail accessibility.

After receiving a license from ADGM Financial Services Regulatory Authority in December, Binance completed this transition on January 5, when the exchange began trading under full authorization from the FSRA. The move signals a structural realignment designed to meet the rigorous risk mandates of Wall Street and sovereign wealth funds.

A New Standard for Crypto Regulation

The significance of the FSRA authorization lies in the specific architecture it enforces. Historically, crypto exchanges operated as vertical monoliths, bundling custody, execution, and clearing into a single entity. While efficient for retail speed, this model presents unacceptable counterparty risk for large-scale asset managers.

Under the ADGM framework, Binance has unbundled these functions into three distinct, regulated entities. Nest Exchange Limited now operates as the recognized investment exchange, handling the multilateral trading facility. Separately, Nest Clearing and Custody Limited functions as the clearing house and custodian, ensuring that client assets are segregated from trading operations. Finally, Nest Trading Limited acts as the broker-dealer, managing OTC desks and principal-based services.

The architecture deliberately mimics the checks and balances of traditional markets, similar to how the NYSE operates, distinct from the Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation. Legally unbundling execution from custody removes the commingled risk that previously kept institutional risk committees at bay. It resolves the structural conflicts of interest that were common in the industry's earlier years.

Binance Co-CEO Richard Teng highlighted the magnitude of this operational shift. "The ADGM license crowns years of work to meet some of the world's most demanding regulatory standards, and arriving within days of the moment we crossed 300 million registered users shows that scale and trust need not be in tension."

For the end user, the interface remains unified, but the backend operations now offer the peace of mind associated with gold-standard regulatory oversight. This unbundling is precisely the check and balance mechanism that regulators have demanded for years, and its implementation marks the end of the black box exchange model.

The Key to Unlocking Institutional Capital

Institutional capital operates under strict investment mandates. Pension funds and asset managers are often legally barred from trading on venues where custody and execution are commingled. The FSRA license effectively removes this structural barrier, opening the door for capital that has sat on the sidelines.

The appetite for this regulated access is already visible in the data. According to Binance's 2025 Year-End Report, institutional trading volume on the platform grew by 21% over the last year. More telling is the surge in large-ticket flows: OTC fiat trading volume jumped by 210%, a clear indicator that smart money is moving in size.

Confidence in this regulated direction was further validated by a $2 billion investment from MGX, an Abu Dhabi-based technology investor. This is not merely venture capital; it is a strategic allocation from sovereign-level funds that validates the move toward regulated infrastructure.

The ADGM license serves as a bridge between two worlds that have historically operated in isolation: the high-growth, crypto market and the structured, risk-averse world of traditional finance. By aligning its operations with the FSRA's regulatory framework, Binance has unbundled risk from reward.

This regulatory evolution does more than just tick a compliance box. It creates a legitimate pathway for the trillions of dollars sitting in traditional financial institutions to enter the digital asset market. The infrastructure is now built, the risks are segregated, and the capital is beginning to move.

Source: The Street.com

Abu Dhabi Chamber, US Chamber of Commerce to Expand Bilateral Partnerships

The Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry has signed a cooperation agreement with the US Chamber of Commerce to enhance investment opportunities, exchange expertise, and strengthen communication channels between the business communities of Abu Dhabi and the United States.

The agreement comes amid strong economic relations between the United Arab Emirates and the United States, one of the UAE's largest global trading partners. Non-oil trade between the two countries has recorded sustained growth in recent years, supported by expanding cooperation across key sectors including technology, energy, advanced industries, financial services, and healthcare.

According to the latest data from the UAE Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre, bilateral non-oil merchandise trade reached AED111.0 billion during the first nine months of 2025, marking a 10.2 percent year-on-year increase from AED100.7 billion recorded during the same period in 2024.

The UAE hosts thousands of US companies operating across various sectors, while mutual investments continue to grow, reflecting strong confidence in the business environment and economic opportunities in both countries. The agreement aims to build on this momentum by providing an institutional platform to support joint investments and expand private sector cooperation between Abu Dhabi and the United States.

The agreement seeks to broaden cooperation in trade and investment, knowledge transfer, the organisation of economic events, and the exchange of trade delegations. It will also provide a joint platform to support companies and facilitate their expansion into new markets, contributing to sustainable economic partnerships and effective engagement between the two business communities.

The agreement was signed by Ali Mohamed Al Marzooqi, Director-General of the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Steve Lutes, Vice President for Middle East Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce. The signing took place in the presence of representatives from both sides, reflecting the strength of the growing economic ties between the United Arab Emirates and the United States.

Commenting on the agreement, Ali Al Marzooqi said, "The signing of this agreement marks a new milestone in strengthening economic relations with the United States. It reflects the Abu Dhabi Chamber's ongoing efforts to expand international partnerships, support the global expansion of the private sector, and open new avenues for economic and investment cooperation. The United States is a strategic economic partner for the UAE, and we are confident this partnership will create broader opportunities for Abu Dhabi companies to benefit from investment and trade prospects, while enhancing knowledge exchange and supporting global competitiveness.

For his part, Steve Lutes said, "This agreement reflects the US Chamber of Commerce's commitment to strengthening cooperation with our partners in Abu Dhabi and the UAE. We look forward to supporting both American and Emirati companies in exploring new opportunities across investment, technology, and trade, and to strengthening ties between the two business communities in support of sustainable economic growth."

Blackstone Commits $250 Million to UAE Firm

Blackstone Inc. has made one of the first inward private equity investments into the United Arab Emirates since the onset of the Iran war, committing $250 million to a new payments infrastructure platform based in Abu Dhabi.

The buyout giant is investing in Advanced Digital Gaming Technology, a venture aiming to build payments and compliance infrastructure for regulated digital markets globally. ADGT is valued at about $1 billion, according to people familiar with the matter, who requested anonymity to discuss confidential matters.

The move comes weeks after Blackstone President and Chief Operating Officer Jon Gray said a "tipping point" for dealmaking in the Middle East was approaching. The subsequent conflict has raised fresh questions over that trajectory, but the firm's latest investment suggests continued momentum.

Private equity firms including KKR, Carlyle Group and Bain Capital have all been expanding their presence in the Gulf in recent years, opening offices and trying to position themselves for deals tied to privatizations and fast-growing sectors such as technology and digital infrastructure. Instead of treating the region only as a source of funding, many are now trying to build companies there.

Blackstone sees "significant opportunity to deploy capital at scale in the UAE to build companies that can grow both domestically and internationally, despite near-term headwinds," Gray said in a statement on Thursday. The country's strength in travel, leisure and technology makes it an attractive long-term market, he added.

The UAE has borne the brunt of retaliation from Tehran since the US-Israeli war on Iran began on Feb. 28, with energy infrastructure, airports and residential and commercial buildings hit by projectiles and debris. Even so, much of the country remains operational — businesses are open, though many offices have moved to remote work, and regional investors have continued to pursue global deals.

Blackstone's investment comes as regulated gaming begins to take shape in the UAE, underpinning demand for payments and compliance infrastructure.

The country established a federal gaming regulator in 2023, and a year later awarded Wynn Resorts Ltd. the UAE's first commercial gaming operator's license. The Las Vegas-based casino firm is developing a $3.9 billion integrated resort in Ras Al Khaimah. In late 2025, the General Commercial Gaming Regulatory Authority licensed the first internet gaming and sports wagering website.

Against that backdrop, ADGT was formed through a partnership between Blackstone, Abu Dhabi-based investor Raya Holding, and gaming payments firms NRT Technology and Sightline Payments. It is currently the only licensed platform in the UAE able to contract directly with both land-based venues and online platforms, enabling a unified experience for consumers and operators.

Buying, not renting: More expats in Abu Dhabi opting to buy homes, data reveals

More expats in Abu Dhabi are buying homes rather than renting, while overseas investors are also stepping in. This shift is reshaping demand, pricing and competition across the Capital's property market. For residents, it helps explain why prices have risen faster in recent years and why competition for well-located homes has intensified.

New data released by the Abu Dhabi Real Estate Centre shows that resident expatriates and non-resident foreign buyers accounted for 62 per cent of all residential unit sales in 2025. This confirms the growing role of foreign demand in sustaining the market.

The report also found that nearly 69 per cent of the growth in residential unit sales recorded between 2022 and 2025 was driven specifically by resident foreign buyers — expatriates who live and work in the emirate and are increasingly choosing ownership over long-term renting.

Overall real estate transaction values reached Dh142 billion in 2025, up 44 per cent year-on-year, with residential sales rising 67 per cent to Dh76 billion. Foreign direct investment into real estate stood at Dh8.2 billion, with buyers from more than 100 nationalities participating.

Ben Crompton, founding partner at Crompton Real Estate Agents, said the figures reflect a fundamental shift in Abu Dhabi's buyer base and its growing appeal to international capital.

"Abu Dhabi's real estate market has historically had a smaller investor base and opened later to expatriate buyers," Crompton said. "But that narrative is now rapidly evolving, with international capital flowing into the market in unprecedented numbers."

He said the trend raises a broader question about how Abu Dhabi is now being viewed globally. "Is Abu Dhabi becoming a genuine global property investment destination — not just a local one?" Crompton said.

For years, the emirate was seen as a more conservative and measured market, with expatriate ownership initially limited to designated investment zones from the mid-2000s. According to Crompton, that perception has changed visibly in recent years.

"International attention is no longer just regional," he said. "Buyers from established investor markets such as the UK, China, India, Russia and across Europe are now actively looking at Abu Dhabi."

One of the strongest drivers behind the shift has been the emirate's expanding cultural, entertainment and lifestyle offering. Projects such as Louvre Abu Dhabi, teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi and the upcoming Guggenheim Abu Dhabi have helped reposition the city internationally, while major leisure and entertainment developments have broadened its appeal beyond the Gulf.

"These projects generate brand recognition far beyond the region," Crompton said. "They make Abu Dhabi more recognisable as a place to live, visit and invest, and collectively signal that the city has developed strong global cultural and lifestyle pull."

Legal and regulatory reforms have also played a key role in building confidence among foreign buyers, he added.

"Property investment carries risks if it's not properly regulated," Crompton said. "Abu Dhabi has addressed this by imposing stricter requirements on developers, brokers and valuers, and enforcing escrow protections tied to construction milestones."

He highlighted the expansion of the Abu Dhabi Global Market to cover prime areas such as Reem and Maryah Islands as a particularly important step. Operating under English common law with its own courts, ADGM offers a legal framework that many international buyers already understand and trust.

Developer outreach has further widened the buyer pool. Crompton noted that early phases of some residential communities were once dominated by buyers from within the UAE, while more recent launches have attracted a far more international audience.

"Launch statistics from flagship projects like Fahid Island show that roughly two-thirds of buyers came from overseas," he said, describing it as "a dramatic shift". He added that developers such as Aldar Properties have expanded international roadshows and broker networks across Asia, Europe and North America, significantly increasing global awareness of Abu Dhabi's market.

The change in buyer behaviour is already being felt on the ground. Crompton said resident expatriates are increasingly viewing ownership as a long-term lifestyle and financial decision, while non-resident investors are being drawn to Abu Dhabi's narrative of stability, culture and quality of life.

"Not long ago, selling a unit could be a challenge, with buyers highly price-sensitive and cautious," he said. "Today, capital appears to be moving more freely, and investors from around the world are participating with confidence."

Source: Khaleej Times

S&P affirms UAE and Abu Dhabi 'AA/A-1+' ratings with stable outlook

S&P Global Ratings affirmed its 'AA/A-1+' long- and short-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings on the UAE. The outlook is stable. The transfer and convertibility assessment is 'AA+'.

The stable outlook reflects the agency's view that the UAE's large fiscal and external buffers should provide space for policy maneuvering during adverse geopolitical developments or unfavorable hydrocarbon sector dynamics, including disruption in oil production or exports.

"Our ratings on the UAE remain supported by the government's strong fiscal and external positions," the agency said.

It further explained, "Our estimate of the exceptional strength of the government's consolidated net asset position (estimated at 184 percent of GDP in 2026) provides a significant fiscal external and economic buffer to external shocks."

The UAE is the sixth-largest crude petroleum exporter in the world, with reserves largely concentrated in Abu Dhabi. Its proven crude reserves are the fifth largest within OPEC, and the largest of all OPEC members per capita.

"We expect oil production to increase as OPEC+ quotas are gradually lifted. Over the next few years, we also expect the Ghasha gas and Ruwais liquefied natural gas projects to significantly enhance Abu Dhabi's (and in turn UAE's) gas production capacity," S&P noted.

Strong fiscal resilience

At an estimated $48,900 in 2026, GDP per capita is relatively high by global standards, although levels vary across the emirates.

The agency highlighted, "We forecast that the UAE will maintain a general government fiscal surplus over 2026-2029, though this will halve compared with the past four years." The UAE's consolidated fiscal position is an aggregate of the emirates' positions and that of the federal government.

S&P projected that potential disruption in oil production/exports amid ongoing tensions and higher spending across the governments will moderate the surplus to average 2.6 percent over 2026-2029 from an average of almost 6 percent over 2021-2025.

"Our calculations show that oil receipts constitute 45 percent-50 percent of general government revenue. We project that Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah, and Dubai will maintain small surpluses through 2029, given strong growth and their prudent fiscal stance, bolstering UAE's consolidated fiscal position."

The UAE as a whole has accumulated a large net asset position, estimated at over 184 percent of GDP in 2026, which serves as a buffer against oil price fluctuations.

"We calculate government liquid assets at about 210 percent of GDP, which includes funds managed by sovereign wealth funds such as Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) and the EIA, government deposits, and minority listed shares by individual emirates," S&P said.

Abu Dhabi 'AA/A-1+' ratings affirmed; outlook stable

In a similar vein, S&P Global Ratings affirmed its 'AA/A-1+' long- and short-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings on the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, a member of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The outlook is stable.

At the same time, the agency maintained our 'AA+' transfer and convertibility assessment on Abu Dhabi.

"The stable outlook reflects our view that Abu Dhabi's large fiscal and external buffers should provide a buffer for policy maneuvering in very adverse geopolitical developments or unfavorable hydrocarbon sector dynamics, including disruption in oil production or exports," according to the agency.

Why the UAE's Next Competitive Edge is Human Capital

The UAE has earned its reputation as one of the most strategically engineered economies of the 21st century.

In just a few decades, it built a global logistics powerhouse out of desert geography, a tourism magnet out of vision-led storytelling, and a financial hub that competes confidently with the world's most established capital centres. Dubai, Abu Dhabi and the Northern Emirates became gateways for goods, capital and experiences — connected to the world, open for business and optimised for velocity.

But the world has changed its definition of infrastructure.

Ports, warehouses, highways, airports and skyscrapers are no longer the apex assets of national competitiveness. They are now the baseline. Every ambitious economy today is trying to replicate what the UAE has already mastered: frictionless global connectivity, investment-friendly regulation, tourism-driven GDP growth and capital-market sophistication.

The future battleground is not the movement of goods or capital — it is the movement and retention of human talent. Governments celebrate when 30% of their graduates stay in the country after university. The UAE does not have that problem today — its talent import rate is world-class. But the global economy is no longer impressed by attraction. It rewards retention.

If 70% of a country's educated youth feels their future lies elsewhere, that is not an outbound trend — it is a broken infrastructure metric. Economists would treat 30% retention the same way port authorities treat container loss: unacceptable. Yet, in human capital, it is normalised. That normalisation is the problem.

We are entering a world where the most valuable natural resource a country can own is not beneath the soil, but walking on it. And the UAE is better positioned than almost any other nation to win this next wave — not by imitation, but by evolution.

The shift from goods economy to talent economy

Historically, free zones were built for warehouses — special jurisdictions where global companies could store goods, bypass friction, avoid tax complexity and move inventory faster than competitors operating onshore. This model worked perfectly in an industrial world driven by trade in physical assets: crude, commodities, manufactured products, shipping containers and retail supply chains.

And it still works — the UAE has one of the highest logistics-to-GDP contributions in the world, with Jebel Ali ranked among the top 10 container ports globally, and the UAE aviation network among the top five for global air connectivity. The nation did not just build ports; it built ecosystems around them: DMCC for trade, JAFZA-KIZAD for logistics, DSO for technology infrastructure, ADGM and DIFC for finance, DIEZ-RAKEEZ-MASDAR licensing for business agility. Each zone had a purpose. Each purpose was strategic. And each strategy was infrastructure-led.

But infrastructure is no longer physical. It is cognitive.

The new high-growth companies that dominate global market capitalisation — OpenAI, Anthropic, Infinite Reality, Napster AI, Stripe, SpaceX, and even sovereign-aligned startups emerging from the MENA region — are not built on supply chains. They are built on talent chains. The equivalent of port infrastructure today is not where goods are stored — it is where talent is licensed, retained and economically activated.

Consider this: the world's top 10 most valuable companies employ less than 1% of the workforce of the world's largest industrial firms in 1990, yet command 100 times the market capitalisation. That delta is not technology alone — it is the value of human capital in leverage mode.

The UAE is already the number-one destination globally for talent relocation (on a net-migration-per-capita basis). Yet the next strategic question is not how to attract more international entrepreneurs — it is how to retain domestic ones. Specifically: youth, freelancers, solopreneurs, early-stage founders and future knowledge workers who today operate in legal grey zones or delay their entrepreneurial ambitions due to licensing friction, cost barriers or ecosystem opacity.

What the UAE needs next is not another free zone — but a Human Capital Zone.

A jurisdiction built not to store inventory, but to unlock and retain founders.

Human Capital Zones

Talent retention is not an HR strategy. It is a national security strategy.

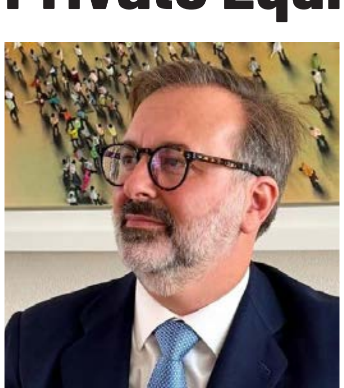
The US, China, the UK, Singapore, India and Saudi Arabia are all aggressively competing for founder retention through startup visas, incubation subsidies, innovation grants, AI infrastructure investments, freelancer enablement and university-to-enterprise fast tracks. But most economies are reacting to the problem.

The UAE can design ahead of it.

The UAE has already proven that when it builds infrastructure, the world comes. Human Capital Zones flip the equation: infrastructure is built so its residents do not have to go anywhere at all.

Source: Gulf Business

Nahda Capital Partners Files for Registration of Inaugural Private Equity Fund in ADGM



Nahda Capital Partners, a newly established private equity platform headquartered in ADGM, has filed for the registration of its inaugural private equity fund this week as it prepares to launch investment activities across the Gulf Cooperation Council.

"Nahda" in Arabic refers to a renaissance a renewal and resurgence. The firm chose the name to reflect its long-term mission of building enduring partnerships and contributing to the development of the region's real economy, with a particular focus on supporting local founders, families and institutions.

Nahda Capital Partners is led by Iñigo de Luna, Founder and Managing Partner, and is building a control-oriented mid-market private equity strategy focused primarily on the UAE, Saudi Arabia and wider GCC. The firm will target resilient founder-led and family-owned businesses benefiting from structural regional growth and increasing institutionalisation, particularly companies undergoing generational transition or seeking institutional capital and operational support to accelerate their next phase of expansion across the GCC.

The founding partners bring significant international experience across private equity and investment banking, with a historical track record generating approximately 36% gross IRR across multiple economic cycles.

Key highlights of the strategy include a majority-investment approach in partnership with founders and family shareholders, and an operational value-creation model focused on professionalisation, operational improvement, governance strengthening, and selective buy-and-build expansion.

Nahda expects to focus on sectors including food production and distribution, healthcare, education, and industrial technology. The firm's investment approach is guided by principles aligned with Sharia-compliant investing, including a focus on real-economy assets, prudent use of leverage, and disciplined governance.

"Nahda Capital Partners was established to partner with high-quality mid-market businesses across the GCC that can benefit from long-term capital and hands-on operational support," said Iñigo de Luna. "These are difficult days and the priority is safety and de-escalation. At the same time, we view this as a severe but temporary shock rather than a change in the long-term trajectory of the UAE and the region. Our conviction has not changed: the GCC is structurally strengthening as a place to build businesses and allocate long-term capital."

Subject to regulatory approval, the firm expects to commence fundraising in the coming weeks, targeting approximately $300 million for its inaugural fund to be managed from ADGM.

Abu Dhabi's Bluefive Capital Invests $50 Million in AI Firm Origen

Abu Dhabi-headquartered Origen, an artificial intelligence firm, has secured $50 million from Bluefive Capital, a global investment platform.

The fresh capital will be used to expand the startup's operations.

Based in ADGM, Bluefive Capital manages billions in assets across private equity, infrastructure, real estate and financial sectors.

With the new funds, Origen hopes to accelerate the design and deployment of its AI products for government services, smart homes and advanced manufacturing.

The firm also looks to hire AI experts and expand its network.

Binance Launches Trading of Ondo Tokenized Stocks on Regulated ADGM Platform

Cryptocurrency exchange Binance has admitted digital securities from Ondo Global Markets for trading on its Multilateral Trading Facility, which operates within the ADGM financial center. The platform is regulated by the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of ADGM.

This is the first time tokenized securities have been admitted for trading under the ADGM framework. For the tokenization market, it signals that such instruments are beginning to appear in regulated financial hubs.

On the Binance MTF platform, investors now have access to ten digital securities from Ondo Global Markets. These tokens are linked to shares of major technology companies and widely traded exchange-traded funds.

Among them are Amazon, Alphabet Class A, Apple, Circle Internet Group, Meta Platforms, Microsoft, NVIDIA, and Tesla. Tokens tied to the SPDR S&P 500 ETF Trust and the Invesco QQQ, which track major U.S. equity indexes, are also available.

The company notes that the digital securities are structured as equity-linked notes — financial instruments whose value is tied to underlying shares or ETFs. This model allows tokenized assets to be issued while complying with existing financial regulations.

Ondo Finance President Ian De Bode said: "By listing Ondo digital securities on Binance, we are expanding access to investments for hundreds of millions of users. The admission of Ondo Global Markets digital securities for trading on Binance MTF within ADGM's regulatory framework marks another important regulatory milestone following approval in the EU last November. These achievements in jurisdictions at the forefront of digital asset securities regulation strengthen Ondo's tokenization model as one of the key standards for major financial centers."

Tokenization of traditional assets is gradually becoming one of the key directions of development in the crypto industry. The concept involves bringing stocks, bonds, funds, and other financial instruments onto blockchain infrastructure, which could accelerate settlement and broaden access to global markets.

According to Boston Consulting Group, the value of tokenized assets could reach $16 trillion by 2030. Major financial institutions are already experimenting with such solutions. In 2024, BlackRock launched its tokenized money market fund BUIDL on Ethereum, while JPMorgan and Citi are developing infrastructure for tokenized bonds and other financial instruments.

Expanding the Lens on Capital and Outcomes - An AVPN Perspective

ADGM THINK

By **Vikas Arora**
- Chief of Impact Investing and Blended Finance, AVPN
and
Jaagruti Didwania
- Manager, Impact investing and Blended Finance, AVPN

Abu Dhabi's financial ecosystem has grown significantly in sophistication and scale and now plays a central and growing role in economic diversification and long-term growth. As the ecosystem continues to mature, there is an opportunity to think more deliberately about the type of growth these investments are shaping, not only in financial terms, but also in how they influence broader economic and social development within and beyond the UAE. This lens is often expressed through different labels in the country — ESG integration, responsible investing, sustainable finance, or impact investing — each reflecting variations in emphasis and approach. Yet at their core, they share a common thread: recognising that financial performance and broader value creation need not be mutually exclusive. In essence, it reflects a "double bottom line" mindset, not as a separate asset class, but as an expanded lens within mainstream investment decision-making that supports long-term value creation and resilience.

Take food systems, water infrastructure, and agri-tech as illustrations. These are sectors that are increasingly central to long-term resilience strategies. Capital deployed in these areas is grounded in fundamentals: efficiency, scalability, and risk mitigation — and rightly so. Yet such investments also shape human livelihoods, supply chain stability, economic resilience, and the long-term stewardship of natural resources. A double bottom line approach asks whether these dimensions can be considered more intentionally alongside traditional risk–return analysis when shaping strategy and allocating capital. It does not redefine investing; it sharpens it by clarifying the kind of growth capital is designed to enable and the broader value it can help unlock.

Many investments anchored in Abu Dhabi already generate effects of this nature. The opportunity now lies in embedding this lens more systematically and extending it through cross-regional capital partnerships. As Abu Dhabi deepens its engagement with emerging markets, particularly across Asia, it connects with ecosystems where similar themes have matured into structured investment strategies and institutional practice. Funds operating in these markets have integrated outcome considerations directly into their investment theses — not as concessionary overlays, but as growth-oriented approaches built around sectors with sustained demand and structural relevance.

For investors based in Abu Dhabi, this presents an opportunity for alignment — linking capital with funds and enterprises that combine financial discipline with clearly articulated impact intent. Capitalising on that opportunity requires shared language, trusted networks, and practical frameworks to ensure that cross-regional capital flows remain commercially grounded and strategically coherent. This is where ecosystem builders like AVPN play a role. Through our Impact Investing and Blended Finance practice, AVPN convenes capital providers, supports the development of practical frameworks, and facilitates cross-regional connectivity to help translate intention into implementation. Headquartered in Singapore, AVPN has, over the last decade, worked across more than 43 markets globally to strengthen the narrative and infrastructure around capital for sustainable and inclusive growth.

Anchored in ADGM and supported by the Presidential Court, AVPN's Impact Investing and Blended Finance practice in the UAE will be formally introduced at Investopia 2026, marking the next step in our engagement with Abu Dhabi's financial ecosystem. We look forward to connecting with the ADGM community as this dialogue continues to evolve.

Binance's Regulatory Leap: What the ADGM License Means for Global Crypto

Processing more than $125 trillion in cumulative trading volume means Binance must ensure greater oversight. This level of economic throughput, which exceeds the GDP of most G7 nations, demands infrastructure capable of matching the capital's weight.

In December 2025, ADGM and its Financial Services Regulatory Authority authorised Binance to operate under such a framework. As of January 5, 2026, the crypto exchange is already operating under the supervision of the ADGM FSRA.

This license marks a distinct shift in market structure. It moves the industry away from its early, unregulated "Wild West" days and firmly into a period defined by institutional-grade compliance. This shift coincides with a massive expansion in the platform's user base, which in December crossed the 300 million registered user mark.

The securing of a global license under this specific, rigorous ADGM framework also serves as a decisive phase for the wider digital asset industry. For years, the sector operated on a "trust us" model, asking users to rely on internal controls and reputation. This licensure signals the market's shift to a "verify us" model, backed by a regulator widely considered a gold standard in global finance.

Binance Co-CEO Richard Teng contextualised this achievement, suggesting that growth and governance are now mutually reinforcing. "The ADGM license crowns years of work to meet some of the world's most demanding regulatory standards," stated Teng. "This arrives within days of the moment we crossed 300 million registered users, which shows that scale and trust need not be in tension," he added.

Institutional capital, specifically the trillions managed by Wall Street firms and sovereign wealth funds, has historically hesitated to enter the crypto space. Their reluctance rarely stemmed from a lack of interest in the assets, but rather a lack of familiar market architecture. They require regulated counterparties, clear liability structures, and audited oversight. This license bridges that g...

Recent data shows Binance commanding nearly five times higher spot trading volume than the second-largest exchange. Bringing nearly half the world's spot volume under a regulated umbrella fundamentally alters the risk profile of the entire asset class.

Abu Dhabi's role here is strategic. Traditional capital centres, such as London and New York, still lead in equity and debt markets, yet Abu Dhabi is claiming the top spot for sophisticated digital assets. The Emirate's regulatory bodies have codified a set of rules that allow for innovation but refuse to compromise on user safety. Consequently, the jurisdiction now functions as a primary connection.

Binance officially began regulated activities under the ADGM framework on January 5, 2026. The most significant aspect of this license is not the paperwork, but the structural overhaul it mandates. The ADGM framework requires the unbundling of services. In the early days of crypto, exchanges acted as the broker, the clearing house, and the keeper simultaneously.

With the platform already handling 217 million daily average trades, this new structure is engineered to handle sovereign-level throughput with absolute regulatory precision.

The market impact of this regulatory alignment is already visible in capital flows. The license offers a trust dividend, bridging the gap for capital that cannot legally or policy-wise enter unregulated environments.

The signal of this shift came via a $2 billion investment from MGX, an Abu Dhabi-based technology investor. Sovereign-level capital does not move without due diligence, and this injection confirms that regulated infrastructure is now the prerequisite for industry growth. The funding supports the broader shift seen in Binance's internal data. The exchange saw its institutional user base expand by 9...

The ADGM license effectively acts as the ROI for years of massive compliance spending. Binance increased its compliance budget by 30% throughout 2025, expanding its team to more than 645 full-time specialists. For the platform's 300 million users, the license offers peace of mind that their assets are held in a framework that mirrors the safety of traditional banking, backed by the $1 billion SAFU.

The receipt of the FSRA license under the ADGM framework marks the official transition of crypto from a niche experiment to mainstream financial infrastructure. Binance has voluntarily placed its operations under one of the strictest regulatory regimes in finance, showing that safety will be the primary competitive advantage in the crypto market's next phase.

Source: Economic Times

Ascentium Acquires Clara, Expanding into ADGM

Ascentium, a leading global business services platform headquartered in Singapore, has acquired Clara, the largest licensed corporate service provider in ADGM. This acquisition significantly expands Ascentium's footprint in the Middle East via Clara's established presence in the UAE.

Clara is a critical partner for businesses looking to operate within the UAE's premier common law financial centres. Clara supports a diverse client base from startups and SMEs to law firms, venture capitalists, investors, accelerators and government-related entities. It is recognised for its regulatory expertise, and reliable delivery across incorporation, governance and ongoing compliance, all backed by its state-of-the-art software application.

The acquisition supports Ascentium's plans to expand into key strategic jurisdictions by partnering with established, regulated, values-aligned businesses with strong client propositions. By joining Ascentium, Clara gains access to a global platform, enhanced service capabilities and investment capacity, empowering clients to scale internationally while continuing to uphold the highest regulatory standards.

Lennard Yong, Founding Management and Group CEO of Ascentium, commented: "ADGM is an important addition to Ascentium's global platform, and Clara is the market leader. Their regulatory standing, trusted client relationships and leading technological operating system make them an ideal addition to Ascentium as we continue to expand across the Middle East."

Kathryn Burke, Managing Director of Clara, said: "Ascentium has built a platform where people lead and technology enables. By joining Ascentium and aligning with this shared value, we can combine human insight with the power of innovation to help clients navigate increasingly complex, cross-border regulatory environments with confidence, while giving Clara the scale and reach to take our expertise to the next level."

Polygreen Establishes Regional Holding Company in ADGM, Reinforcing UAE's Position as a Hub for Green Investment

Polygreen, a global circular economy and environmental solutions group, has officially established Polygreen Holding in ADGM as its holding platform for the United Arab Emirates.

The establishment of Polygreen Holding in ADGM marks a strategic milestone in the Group's regional growth and long-term commitment to the UAE's sustainability, circular economy, and green investment agenda. As part of this milestone, Polygreen has also signed the Abu Dhabi Sustainable Finance Declaration, aligning its regional investment strategy and operating model with ADGM's ESG principles and the UAE's Net Zero 2050 Strategy.

Polygreen is an international group with established operations in Europe and a rapidly expanding footprint in the Middle East. Through Polygreen Holding in ADGM, the Group will lead and consolidate its UAE investments and future regional developments, supporting the deployment of scalable circular economy infrastructure and impact-driven projects across the region.

In the UAE, Polygreen's operational portfolio includes:

- "Evogreen", delivering advanced hazardous waste recycling, environmental remediation, and emergency response services, including rapid intervention for distressed vessels and marine environmental incidents
- "Again, Please", a large-scale reusability systems platform providing circular solutions for cities, events, venues, hospitality, and public spaces, replacing single-use packaging with measurable environmental impact
- "Polygreen International DMCC", an expansion of the services related to environmental remediation and emergency response mainly for marine accidents to the wider Middle East area beyond UAE.

Together, these entities position Polygreen as an integrated circular economy platform within the UAE — combining infrastructure, operational capability, and scalable implementation models.

As part of its UAE expansion strategy, Polygreen Holding is planning to scale circular infrastructure across Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and the Northern Emirates, including the development of additional reuse systems capacity, advanced waste recovery and treatment solutions, marine environmental response capabilities, and new circular economy investments aligned with national sustainability priorities. The Group is actively exploring partnerships with government entities, financial institutions, developers, and industrial operators to support large-scale deployment and long-term regional growth.

Across the UAE, Polygreen's projects are designed to support the UAE Circular Economy Policy, enhance resource efficiency, reduce emissions, and accelerate the transition to a low-carbon, regenerative economy.

Commenting on the establishment of Polygreen Holding in ADGM, Athanasios Polychronopoulos, Chairman and CEO of Polygreen, said: "The UAE has positioned itself as a global leader in sustainability and green finance. Establishing Polygreen Holding in ADGM allows us to structure and scale our regional investments from a world-class financial centre, mobilizing partnerships and capital to deliver circular economy solutions across the UAE and the wider Middle East."

"Signing the Abu Dhabi Sustainable Finance Declaration reinforces our belief that sustainability and financial discipline must go hand in hand. Circular economy is not an aspiration for Polygreen — it is our operating model and our long-term regional growth strategy."

With its regional holding structure now established in ADGM, Polygreen will continue to expand its UAE and Middle East portfolio, invest in scalable circular infrastructure, and support commercially viable sustainability solutions aligned with national and regional climate ambitions.

SUDOKU

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Difficulty Rating: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

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Difficulty Rating: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

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WORD SEARCH

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JEBEL JAIS
HEART OF SHARJAH
DUBAI CREEK
SIRBANIYAS
AL AIN OASIS
SAQR PARK
UAQ FORT
JUBAIL
FUJAIRAH FORT
DIBBA

PREVIOUS EDITION SOLUTION

A	R	S	L	R	E	L	R	E	S	P	E	C	T
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MAZE