



ADGM TIMES

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Monthly Newsletter

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ADGM Strengthens Strategic Engagement with China

ADGM led a high-level delegation to China this month, headed by H.E. Rashed Al Blooshi, Chief Executive Officer of ADGM's Registration Authority, to deepen strategic ties between Abu Dhabi and one of the world's most dynamic economies, and to advance the next phase of UAE-China economic collaboration.

The visit underscored ADGM's continued commitment to strengthening cross-border partnerships with Chinese institutions, investors, and enterprises, while showcasing Abu Dhabi's evolving ecosystem as a trusted destination for long-term investment, innovation, and growth.

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ADGM Welcomes 4,000 Participants to its Third Virtual Career Fair, Strengthening Abu Dhabi's Global Talent Pipeline

ADGM, in partnership with eFinancialCareers, has successfully concluded its third Virtual Career Fair, reaffirming its commitment to advancing talent development and strengthening Abu Dhabi's position as a leading global financial hub for human capital. Held in April, the first of the two-part event focused on the Capital Markets and Wealth & Risk Management sectors and brought together a highly curated pool of professionals and prominent employers from across the financial services landscape.

The event welcomed approximately 4,000 candidates from over 27 countries and featured 33 leading employers, with participation from entities across ADGM's expanding ecosystem. This year's edition introduced a more targeted format, incorporating enhanced candidate screening and segmented sessions to facilitate deeper, more meaningful engagement between employers and

prospective talent.

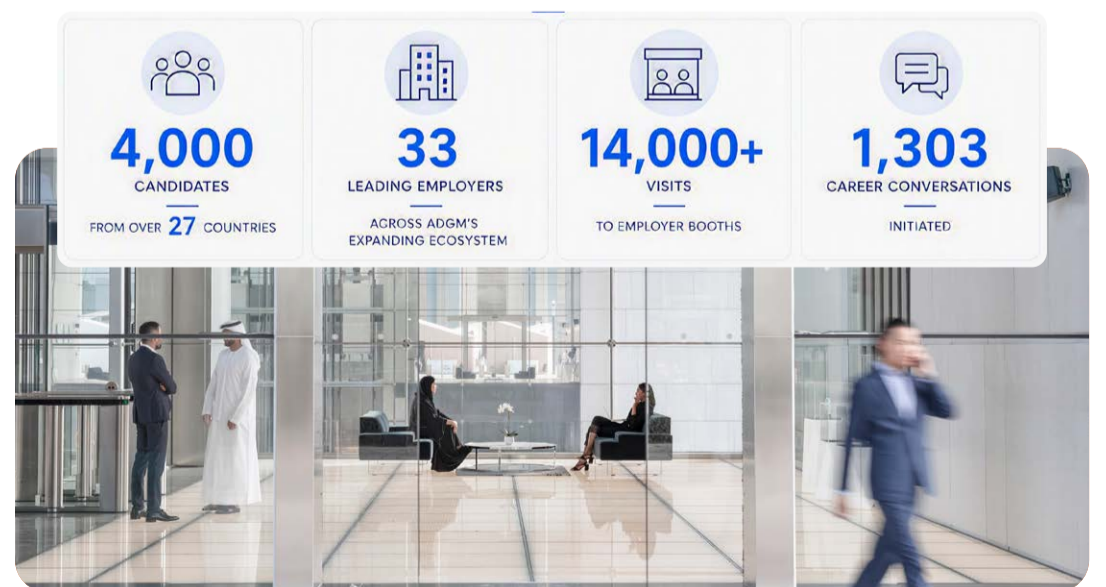
As part of its continued efforts to enhance talent accessibility, ADGM also introduced plans to integrate its Job Portal into future editions of the Virtual Career Fair series. This initiative aims to further streamline recruitment pathways and strengthen connectivity between employers and professionals within ADGM's ecosystem.

Commenting on the success of the event, Salem Al Darei, CEO of ADGM Authority, said, "ADGM's Virtual Career Fair continues to evolve in response to the growing demand for specialised talent across Abu Dhabi's dynamic financial ecosystem. This year's sector-focused approach has enabled more targeted connections between employers and high-calibre professionals, reinforcing the event's role as a strategic platform for talent engagement. The strong participation reflects Abu

Dhabi's rising prominence as a centre for finance and wealth management. As ADGM's growth as an international financial centre continues to support Abu Dhabi's broader economic ambitions, human capital remains central to this progress, and our commitment to the emirate's long-term talent development grows stronger."

The Virtual Career Fair continues to attract strong global participation, underscoring ADGM's growing reputation as a destination of choice for financial talent. There was also strong participation from UAE nationals looking to advance their careers through this platform in the Capital Markets and Wealth & Risk Management sectors.

Major industry players such as Citi UAE, HSBC Bank, Grant Thornton, Finstreet, Tradition, Al Maryah Community Bank, Black Swan Group, Xanara, Waystone, Lunaro, AMINA Bank, Marex Capital, BDO,



Crowe, Michael Page, Robert Walters and many others were among the participating employers who led career conversations during the fair. There were over 14,000 visits to employer booths, where professionals engaged with ADGM, HSBC, Black Swan Group, Al Maryah Community Bank, Robert Walters, and Citi. Of these visits, 1,303 led

to career conversations.

Most of the registered candidates were from the UK, US, India, France, Singapore, Denmark, Hong Kong, China, South Africa, the Philippines, and other global markets rich in talent. They spanned a broad range of more than 31 sub-sectors within the overall Capital Markets and Wealth & Risk Management sectors,

including Banking, Consulting, Wealth Management, Digital Banking & Fintech, Real Estate, Private Equity, Venture Capital, Family Offices and more. Building on the success of this event, ADGM will host the second instalment of its Virtual Career Fair series in October 2026, dedicated to FinTech & Digital Assets.

ADGM Academy CEO: Capital is Booming as is the Demand for the Right Skills

Abu Dhabi's rapid ascent as a global financial hub has created a striking paradox. While capital is pouring in, the talent needed to manage it effectively is rising just as rapidly.

With the emirate positioning itself as the 'capital of capital', the pressure is mounting to find not just more professionals, but the 'right ones'.

From his vantage point, Mansoor Jaffar, chief executive of ADGM Academy & Research Centre, the challenge is clear. The talent pipeline is expanding, but the fit is often missing.

'There has been a clear shift,' Jaffar said. 'Five years ago, recruitment was based largely on competencies. Today, the focus has shifted to skills.'

He further added: 'Skills are now the defining factor; they differentiate individuals based on their ability to use tools and techniques effectively in real-world roles.'

This distinction is crucial. As Abu Dhabi attracts unprecedented inflows of foreign investment and ultra-high-net-worth individuals, the demands placed on financial professionals have grown more complex and specialised.

The traditional mix of technical knowledge and leadership capability is no longer sufficient. Instead, firms are seeking a hybrid skillset that blends financial expertise with technological fluency, regulatory awareness, and a forward-looking mindset.

'Across sectors, the key skills are becoming quite clear,' Jaffar explained. 'These include AI literacy, data-driven decision-making, and the ability to incorporate AI into investment strategies. Sustainability literacy is also becoming important.'

Yet supply has not kept up with demand.

Research conducted by ADGM Academy pointed to a widening gap between 'available' talent and 'right' talent, a mismatch that is becoming a defining feature of the UAE's financial labour market.

While the country has succeeded in attracting professionals from around the world, retention and alignment remain persistent hurdles. 'That's a key challenge,' Jaffar admitted. 'While attraction has been successful, retention and fit remain issues.'

The reasons are twofold.



Global talent is highly mobile, often drawn by competing financial centres offering similar incentives. At the same time, the rapid evolution of roles, especially in wealth and asset management, means that job requirements are changing faster than traditional education and training systems can respond.

This has created a market where vacancies exist alongside underutilised talent, simply because candidates lack the precise mix of skills now considered 'non negotiable.'

The stakes are particularly high in wealth and asset management, where Abu Dhabi's success hinges on delivering highly tailored services to a growing base of wealthy clients.

'Abu Dhabi is attracting UHNWs, and with that comes new expectations of personalised service, deep expertise and strong relationship management,' Jaffar said. 'Each of these areas require specialised skills, but at the core, AI capability is now fundamental.'

Compounding the issue is the need to integrate technical expertise with strong ethical and regulatory grounding, which is a hallmark of Abu Dhabi's financial ecosystem.

'It's a combination of skills, ethics, and regulatory understanding that defines successful professionals in this ecosystem,' he added.

To close the gap, ADGM Academy is shifting its focus from simply supporting talent inflows to building a sustainable domestic pipeline and has launched the School of Wealth and Asset

Management.

SWAM's plans include upskilling through foundation programmes for new and mid-career professionals, training Emirati nationals to global standards and executive education for senior leaders, integrating topics such as AI, behavioural finance, risk governance, and future skills development.

The academy's initiatives are not just designed to fill today's gaps but also to anticipate tomorrow's needs to develop continuous learning pathways that keep pace with industry change.

'We are seeing a major shift, from importing global talent to producing it locally. Our differentiation lies in our focus on imparting practical knowledge and not just theory,' Jaffar said.

This is, however, a long-term solution to an immediate problem.

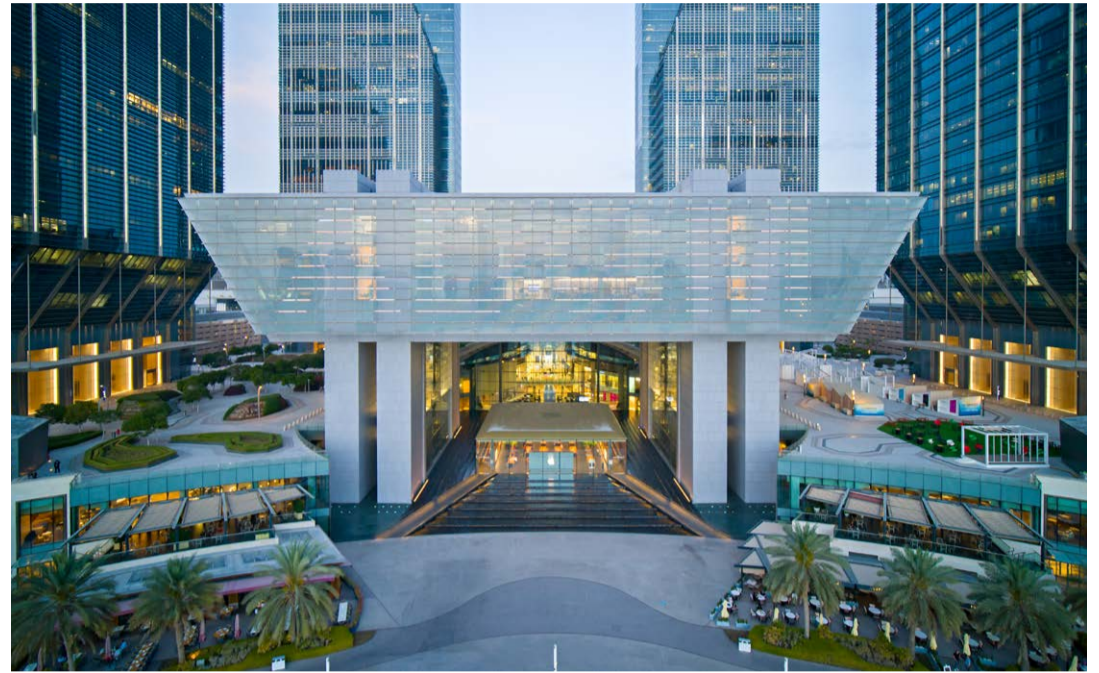
In the short term, the mismatch between capital and capability is likely to intensify, particularly as Abu Dhabi's ambitions accelerate. New financial institutions, family offices, and investment firms continue to set up shop, each competing for a limited pool of highly skilled professionals.

'The result is a tightening labour market where quality, and not quantity, is the defining constraint,' Jaffar said.

For a city aiming to lead global finance, attracting capital may be the easy part. Building the human capital to manage it in lockstep with market needs is the real test.

Source: CityWire

ADGM FSRA Finalises Enhancements to its Anti-Money Laundering Framework



The Financial Services Regulatory Authority of ADGM has finalised enhancements to its regulatory framework for anti-money laundering, counter-terrorist financing, counter-proliferation financing and sanctions compliance. The formalisation of the updated framework follows industry engagement and feedback received in

response to Consultation Paper (CP) No. 1 of 2026.

The amendments include appropriate revisions to the Financial Services and Markets Regulations 2015 (FSMR) and the Anti-Money Laundering and Sanctions Rulebook (the AML Rulebook) to reflect developments in federal laws and align with evolving international

best practices, including the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). As such, the enhancements will have minimal impact on existing compliance requirements, as reflected by most of the industry feedback received during the consultation period.



and discussions covering the economy, investment, trade, banking, finance, digital assets, artificial intelligence, technology, energy, real estate, and mobility, while also exploring future economic trends and sustainable growth opportunities across the region and globally.

Opening the summit, H.E. Sheikh Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahyan stated that the event was taking place at a time filled with challenges. H.E. said: "Despite these difficult circumstances, the United Arab Emirates continues to demonstrate resilience, stability, unity, and confidence in the future. This steadfastness reflects the nature of our nation, shaped by the vision and leadership of H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE. Under his leadership and guidance, our country has demonstrated calmness, discipline, solidarity, and determination, while showcasing the strength of its institutions, the resilience

of its economy, and the enduring value of openness and constructive engagement with the world."

H.E. added: "The continued prosperity of our region requires regulatory cooperation in areas such as artificial intelligence, financial technology, cybersecurity, digital assets, and cross border trade. We must also continue our commitment to the green transition through clean energy, sustainable finance, and resilient infrastructure." H.E. highlighted that we must invest in people through education, training, scientific research, and technology, while fostering work environments that enable individuals to confidently adapt to rapid change."

During his keynote address, H.E. Abdulla Bin Touq Al Marri said: "We are meeting at an unusual moment. The region has gone through one of its most serious conflicts in decades. From an economic perspective, the key message is clear: the UAE remains open, operational, and predictable.

The encouraging news is that our economy entered this period from a position of strength. Between 2021 and 2025, real GDP growth averaged around 5%, while non-oil growth remained above 6.2%".

He added: "Beyond the immediate phase, and over the medium term, our focus remains on structural growth and pressing harder on the right levers. One of those levers is growth capital. Another lever is talent. A third lever is supply chains."

On the sidelines of the summit, several sessions focused on strengthening economic resilience amid global shifts, in addition to discussions on the future economy, the UAE's financial landscape, the digital assets economy, artificial intelligence and technology, energy, mobility transformation, growth opportunities in Abu Dhabi, and the power of trusted media in a changing world.

Economy Middle East Summit Attracts More Than 1,500 Decision Makers

The third edition of the Economy Middle East Summit was held under the theme "The Economy of Tomorrow: The UAE Emerges Stronger", in the presence of H.E. Sheikh Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence; H.E. Abdulla Bin Touq Al Marri,

UAE Minister of Economy & Tourism; H.E. Sheikh Abdulla bin Mohammed bin Butti Al Hamed, Chairman of the UAE National Media Authority; and H.E. Mohamed Ali Al Shorafa, Chairman of the Department of Municipalities and Transport in Abu Dhabi, alongside ministers, policymakers,

leading investors, and private sector thought leaders.

Held in partnership with ADGM at Rosewood Abu Dhabi, the event brought together more than 1,500 decision makers from both the public and private sectors. The summit featured a wide range of specialized sessions

ADGM's FSRA and Hellenic Capital Market Commission Sign MoU to Strengthen Cross-Border Regulatory Cooperation

The Financial Services Regulatory Authority of ADGM and the Hellenic Capital Market Commission have announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, establishing a formal framework for cooperation and mutual assistance between the two Authorities.

The MoU was signed by Emmanuel Givanakis, CEO of the FSRA of ADGM, and Ms. Vasiliki Lazarakou, Chair of the HCMC.

The MoU provides a practical framework for the FSRA and HCMC to work

together on the supervision and regulation of capital markets, including structured information exchange and mutual assistance within their respective mandates, helping to strengthen market integrity and investor confidence across both jurisdictions; it also supports cooperation on shared priorities such as combating money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing, and ensuring compliance with relevant sanctions.

Emmanuel Givanakis, the CEO of the FSRA of ADGM,

said, "The MoU with HCMC marks an important step in further strengthening FSRA's international regulatory cooperation. By deepening engagement with key global counterparts, we continue to reinforce our commitment to upholding the highest standards of market integrity, transparency, and effective supervision."

The Chair of the HCMC, Ms. Vasiliki Lazarakou, stated, "This agreement further strengthens the HCMC's international cooperation with important regulatory

authorities outside the European Union, contributing to more effective supervision and enhancing market confidence."

The agreement demonstrates the Authorities' shared focus on practical collaboration that helps regulators respond to cross-border activity with greater coordination, strengthens investor protection, and supports the integrity and resilience of global capital markets.



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Abu Dhabi Investment Forum – Shanghai 2026 – AIM Talks China 2026 – Guangzhou

The delegation participated in the Abu Dhabi Investment Forum, held on 11 June 2026 in Shanghai, an exclusive gathering convening top business leaders, advisors, and investors to explore the opportunities presented by Abu Dhabi as the capital of the UAE. Organised by the Abu Dhabi Investment Office in collaboration with key Abu Dhabi government entities including ADGM, the Forum brought together senior leadership from Shanghai, UAE government representatives, and prominent Chinese enterprises across financial services, advanced manufacturing, mobility, technology, healthcare, energy, logistics, and digital innovation.

H.E. Rashed Al Blooshi delivered the Opening Remarks at the Forum, setting the tone for a day of strategic dialogue, MoU signings, panel discussions, and fireside chats featuring leading figures from CICC, BYD, Geely Holding Group, Miral, Aldar, KEZAD Group, and other major institutions.

In his address, H.E. Al Blooshi highlighted the strength of the UAE-China partnership and ADGM's rapid growth trajectory: "Today's forum marks another important milestone in the historic and growing relationship between the UAE and China. As two nations committed to long-term growth, innovation and global connectivity, our partnership continues to create new opportunities for collaboration across trade, finance, investment and technology."

ADIF Shanghai 2026 builds on the momentum of previous engagements, including the 2024 Shanghai Investment Summit and the inaugural ADIF Shanghai in 2025, which together have led to strategic agreements with more than 30 anchor investors and the establishment of operations in Abu Dhabi by companies such as Ant International, CaoCao Mobility, and Fosun Pharma. The Forum is part of a broader series of activations designed to deepen Abu Dhabi's engagement with priority international markets and connect global capital with global opportunity.

Following the Shanghai engagements, H.E. Al Blooshi participated as an honourable speaker at the AIM Talks China 2026, held on 17-18 June at Jumeirah Guangzhou, in the Tianhe CBD. Jointly hosted by the UAE Ministry of Foreign Trade and the AIM Global Foundation, the event aligned with the UAE's 2031 National Investment Strategy, China's Belt and Road Initiative, and the 15th Five-Year Plan, aiming to establish an efficient channel for trade, investment, industrial synergy, and technological cooperation between the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the Middle East.

H.E. Al Blooshi joined the high-level Leaders' Panel alongside senior leaders from the Agricultural Bank of China, Danube Group, XPENG HT Aero, and Mobvista. The panel explored how the UAE's strategic geographic location, world-class logistics, and business-friendly regulatory ecosystem can serve as a launchpad for Chinese enterprises seeking international expansion, and how UAE-China collaboration can shape the next generation of resilient, technology-enabled global supply chains.



UAE Delegation Discusses Ways to Transform Global Climate Commitments into Concrete Action Ahead of COP31



The United Arab Emirates participated in the Bonn Climate Meetings with a clear strategic and implementation-focused approach. These meetings included the sixty-fourth session of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB64) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which took place in Bonn, Germany from 8th to 18th June.

The UAE's participation highlighted its commitment to promoting global sustainable development and coordinating international

efforts to accelerate climate action across mitigation, adaptation and resilience with the aim of driving climate finance, technology transfer, capacity building and strengthening community resilience, including through climate finance, technology development and transfer, capacity building, and enhanced community resilience in response to the growing impacts of climate change.

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment led the UAE delegation in the

negotiations. The delegation includes Dr. Alanoud Abdullah Alhaj, Assistant Under-Secretary for Green Development and Climate Change Sector at MOCCAE, alongside a team of negotiators and a group of experts and representatives from key national entities.

Participating entities included the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Interior (MOI), the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in

addition to the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy (AGDA), the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, ADGM, the Federal Youth Authority (FYA) and the Arab Youth Centre (AYC), as well as representatives from the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation (SHF). This broad participation reflects the UAE's integrated, whole of government approach to strengthening its leadership in global environmental forums.

CMA, Sandoq Al Watan, ADGM Academy, Celebrate Graduation of 3rd Financial Market Pioneers Programme



ADGM Academy, the knowledge arm of ADGM, in collaboration with the UAE Capital Market Authority and Sandoq Al Watan, celebrated the graduation of the third cohort of the Financial Market Pioneers Programme.

This programme represents a flagship national initiative, designed to prepare young UAE Nationals with specialised financial market knowledge, practical exposure and professional capabilities to contribute to the continued development of the UAE's capital markets. It reflects a shared commitment by Capital Market Authority, Sandoq Al Watan and ADGM Academy to advancing youth empowerment, human capital development and economic diversification while supporting the UAE's position as a leading regional and global financial hub.

This year, 28 Emirati youth completed the programme, bringing the total cumulative number of graduates across its three cohorts to 86. Through specialised learning, practical exposure and direct engagement with market professionals, participants gained the knowledge and confidence required to navigate the evolving financial landscape.

H.E. Waleed Saeed Al Awadhi, CEO of the UAE Capital Market Authority, said: "The future of the UAE's financial markets will be shaped by national talent capable of leading through innovation, responsibility and market knowledge. Through the Financial Market Pioneers Programme, we are investing in a new generation of Emiratis who will contribute to the continued development and global competitiveness of the UAE's capital markets.

The strong progress of the programme over the past three cohorts reflects a broader national commitment to building sustainable financial capabilities and preparing future market leaders."

H.E. added that the graduation of a new cohort of Emirati youth today marks another step forward in empowering and preparing a generation capable of keeping pace with the rapid transformations taking place in the financial sector. He highlighted that equipping young people with knowledge, practical skills, and experiences that enhance their ability to contribute effectively to the development of the financial sector aligns with the UAE's vision of reinforcing its position as a global financial and economic hub.

H.E. Mohammed Al Sharyani, Board Member of ADGM Academy, said: "The Financial Market Pioneers Programme reflects ADGM Academy's commitment to developing future-ready national capabilities in sectors that are central to the UAE's long-term economic growth. Through specialised learning, practical exposure and collaboration with our strategic partners, the programme equips young UAE Nationals with the knowledge, confidence and market understanding needed to contribute meaningfully to the future of the country's financial sector."

The graduation of the third cohort reinforces the Financial Market Pioneers programme's role in advancing specialised skills, strengthening financial market capabilities and preparing Emirati professionals for sustainable, high-impact careers across the UAE's financial sector.

ADGM's FSRA Issues Notice Regarding Unauthorised Domains Misusing Sarwa's Name



The Financial Services Regulatory Authority of ADGM would like to bring to the attention of the financial services community and members of the public the existence of a number of domains that falsely purport to be associated with Sarwa Digital Wealth (Capital) Limited (Sarwa), an entity duly authorised and regulated by the FSRA.

Domains of concern:

- <https://apply.sarwa.email>;
- <https://meetify.cloud/sarwa/interview>;
- <https://hr.sarwa.me>;
- <https://sarwa.team>;
- <https://sarwa.com.co>; and
- <https://indeed.sarwa.me> (together the "Domains")

Sarwa has confirmed to the FSRA that it has no connection to, and is not responsible for, any of the Domains. The Domains appear to be impersonating Sarwa, including by falsely presenting themselves as part of an employment or recruitment process operated by Sarwa.

The FSRA would like to make it clear that the Domains are not associated with or operated by Sarwa. Members of the public, job seekers and others who encounter the Domain are advised to exercise caution and to refrain from providing personal or financial information through them. Sarwa has confirmed that its only official careers site is <https://careers.sarwa.co/>.

ADGM COMMUNITY

Hub71 Startups Raise \$2.7 Billion as Abu Dhabi Strengthens Position as Global Tech Hub



Startups within Abu Dhabi's global tech ecosystem Hub71 have raised more than Dh9.9 billion (\$2.7 billion) in funding and generated Dh5.4 billion (\$1.5 billion) in revenue by the end of 2025, underlining the emirate's growing status as a global destination for high-growth technology companies.

According to Hub71's 2025 Impact Report, startups within the ecosystem secured Dh2.2 billion (\$599 million) in funding and generated Dh645 million (\$175 million) in revenue during 2025 alone, reflecting continued growth across the platform's expanding community.

Since its launch in 2019, Hub71's community has

grown to 390 startups, with 295 companies supported through its programmes that connect founders with investors, corporates, regulators, talent and strategic partners.

Applications from startup founders around the world rose 62 per cent year-on-year in 2025, with Hub71 receiving more than 5,000 applications and welcoming 52 new startups into its ecosystem. The increase highlights Abu Dhabi's growing appeal as a base for companies seeking capital, commercial opportunities and expansion across the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

Mohamed Al Khoori, Head of Marketing and Communications at Hub71, said Abu Dhabi's key value

proposition lies in the strength of its wider innovation ecosystem.

"Startups that move to Abu Dhabi or launch their products here benefit from a wider ecosystem that includes regulators, investors, corporates, talent partners and international cross-border partners, all working together to support innovation and growth," he said.

Al Khoori added that Hub71 continues to expand its offering beyond its initial focus on seed to Series A startups by working closely with partners such as the Abu Dhabi Investment Office and ADGM to support companies at later stages of growth.

Lunate Launches First Sharia-Compliant, Dividend-Paying ETF



Lunate, the Abu Dhabi-based investment manager, said its first GCC Sharia-compliant, dividend-paying exchange-traded fund is due to list on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange on June 23.

The ETF will track the Solactive GCC shariah dividend index, which comprises dividend-paying, sharia-compliant equities from across the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The index includes companies from the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, spanning high-growth

sectors such as materials, telecommunications, energy and industrials, Lunate said in a statement.

The ETF aims to distribute dividends semi-annually.

"This is the first sharia-compliant ETF globally to offer investors access to multiple GCC markets in a single dividend-paying product," Sherif Salem, partner and head of public markets at Lunate, said.

The ETF listing is Lunate's 20th on the ADX and 22nd across the UAE, he added.

ADX Group CEO Abdulla

Salem Alnuaimi said the listing supports the exchange's growing ETF trade and that activity more than tripled in value year on year to AED155 million (\$42 million) in the first quarter of 2026 as investors seek diversified exposure to indexes and themes.

Lunate Capital will manage the ETF, while the Bank of New York Mellon will serve as the global custodian. The Solactive GCC shariah dividend index is maintained by Solactive AG, a Germany-based financial index provider.

Mashreq Collaborates with Neovision Wealth Management, Red Lions Capital on Private Markets Investment Infrastructure

Mashreq has collaborated with ADGM-authorized fund manager Neovision Wealth Management Ltd and research and technology firm Red Lions Capital in connection with an investment executed through an ADGM-domiciled fund structure.

The investment was facilitated via the Digital Investment Platform, a solution supported by Red Lions Capital, with fund management services provided by Neovision

in its capacity as an FSRA-regulated fund manager.

The transaction utilised integration with Allfunds, supporting operational efficiency and investor record management within an institutional framework designed to support investor confidentiality.

This collaboration reflects ongoing developments in the provision of private markets access solutions for Professional Clients

within ADGM's regulatory framework.

"Innovation is the core of Mashreq's DNA. For nearly six decades, Mashreq has pioneered several firsts across the financial landscape. This partnership builds on that legacy. Access to technology company investments has traditionally been limited to institutional investors, but Mashreq is changing that. By providing our high-net-worth and family office clients with

institutional quality access to pre-IPO opportunities, we are further strengthening our existing private equity offering and taking the lead in redefining what sophisticated asset allocation looks like in this region," said Vipul Kapur, Global Head of Private Banking at Mashreq.

"This transaction reflects the demand for institutional-quality access to private markets for wealth clients in the region. Private wealth clients

have historically faced barriers to participating in this asset class. By providing proprietary research and technological solutions to ADGM-regulated managers like Neovision, Red Lions Capital is helping to address those barriers. This ecosystem enables partners like Mashreq to enhance investor choice and access alternative opportunities," said Stephen Richards Evans, Chairman and Partner, Red Lions Capital

Dr Ryan Lemand, Founder

and CEO, Neovision Wealth Management said: "We are pleased that the ADGM fund structure we manage, supported by the research and technology capabilities of Red Lions Capital, has facilitated this transaction. We look forward to continuing to provide fund management services to banking partners across the GCC."

MBRIF Partners with Numou to Expand Financing Pathways for Innovation-Led Businesses in the UAE



The Mohammed Bin Rashid Innovation Fund, an initiative launched by the Ministry of Finance to support the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in the UAE, has signed a partnership with Numou, a subsidiary of ADGM, to expand financing pathways for innovative businesses supported by MBRIF and further strengthen support for startups and high-potential companies across the country.

Under the partnership, innovative businesses supported by MBRIF will gain broader access to financing options through Numou's digital marketplace, alongside workshops and community sessions focused on financing awareness. These efforts are intended to give founders practical guidance on the financing landscape and help them make more informed decisions as they grow. The agreement will also create a two-way referral pathway, enabling eligible startups referred through Numou, where relevant, to be considered for MBRIF's Guarantee Scheme and Innovation Accelerator.

Fatima Yousif Alnaqbi, Acting Assistant Undersecretary for the Support Services Sector at the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry's representative at MBRIF, said: "Strengthening access to financing is a critical part of enabling innovative businesses to expand operations and contribute more meaningfully to the UAE's economic future. Our partnership with Numou reflects MBRIF's continued commitment to delivering high-quality financing solutions and

strategic resources that open up new market opportunities for innovators, enabling them to grow with confidence and contribute meaningfully to building a competitive, knowledge-based economy."

This collaboration also reflects Numou's continued evolution in enhancing how financing is accessed and deployed, with a growing emphasis on linking funding more closely to verified business activity and commercial opportunities. By enabling more transparent, data-informed interactions between SMEs and financing providers, Numou is supporting more effective capital allocation and strengthening the foundations of a resilient and growth-oriented SME ecosystem in the UAE.

Mohamed Al Binali, General Manager of Numou, said: "Our partnership with MBRIF marks an important step in advancing the UAE's vision to strengthen how SMEs access and utilise financing within the business ecosystem. As Numou continues to evolve, we are focused on connecting financing more directly to real economic activity, supported by deeper data-driven insights that enhance transparency and decision-making. By working closely with MBRIF, we are reinforcing Numou's commitment to enabling SMEs, particularly innovation-led businesses, to access the right capital at the right time, empowering them to grow, scale, and contribute meaningfully to the nation's resilient and diversified economic agenda."

Plada Launches from ADGM, Positioning Abu Dhabi at the Forefront of the Emerging FamTech Sector

ADGM is already an attractive base for technology startups in fintech, climate tech, artificial intelligence, and digital assets. But a new tech startup called Plada Limited has added family technology (famtech) to the list of innovative sectors finding a home in the Capital of Capital. According to the company, ADGM's regulatory clarity, support system for tech startups, and vibrant ecosystem of investment in technology made it a natural home for a venture seeking a foothold in a market projected to surpass US\$10 billion by 2035.

The parent-to-parent networking platform, Plada, was launched by a husband-and-wife team after facing significant challenges in organizing playdates for their son with other children who shared common interests. They realized that other parents faced similar issues in making meaningful connections and developed a platform designed to help families build

meaningful connections within their communities.

According to industry estimates, hundreds of billions of dollars are invested into platforms targeting entertainment, commerce, logistics, dating, and professional networking, while institutional focus towards the needs of modern families is largely absent. From social media to educational platforms, the dominant architecture of consumer technology today continues to optimize for the individual, and user profiles, advertising models, and engagement metrics are largely designed around solitary interaction. Plada believes this has created a structural blind spot in the global technology market and aims to address it by targeting the economic, social and behavioral dynamics of the family unit, viewing families as interconnected ecosystems involving parents, caregivers, communities, schools, healthcare providers,

and financial institutions.

The UAE presents a strategic launch market for such a platform. The country combines high smartphone penetration, digitally connected consumers, a large expatriate population, and strong governmental emphasis on family cohesion and community wellbeing. Against the backdrop of the UAE's designation of 2026 as the Year of Family, Plada's positioning aligns well with broader national conversations around social resilience, quality of life, and future-ready communities.

The company believes that famtech should not be viewed solely through the lens of developmental needs or parental controls. Instead, Plada describes family infrastructure as a foundational social layer that influences education outcomes, consumer behaviour, community participation, urban resilience, and long-term economic productivity. Real-world



interactions are critical for social cohesion; therefore, the startup blends its digital platform with community activation through events, partnerships, and educational collaborations.

The company also believes the future value of family platforms will extend beyond user subscriptions and advertising, pointing instead to the long-term potential of data-driven insights that could help inform sectors such as education, retail, urban planning, wellness, insurance, hospitality, mobility, and community services.

The Middle East is a Long-Term Conviction, Not a Tactical Allocation

By Nicolaas Alberts, Head of the Middle East, Ninety One



At Ninety One, we have long believed that periods of uncertainty require discipline, perspective and taking views for the long term. That philosophy underpins our commitment to the Middle East. Recent tensions involving Iran have added geopolitical uncertainty across the region and wider global markets, but they have not altered our conviction that this is a centre of investment. Near-term volatility does not detract from the region's long-term structural trajectory or its growing importance in the global economy.

Ninety One was founded in South Africa in 1991, in a period of profound political and economic transition. We have built our business by investing through periods of uncertainty and developed a philosophy that still guides us. The most compelling opportunities are often created in times of disruption -- for investors with discipline, perspective and a

long-term mindset.

So, the Middle East, to us, exemplifies opportunity. It is a region undergoing profound economic transformation, and we see it as a potent engine of growth among emerging and developing markets. The region remains central to global energy and trade flows, reinforcing both its systemic importance and the need to navigate geopolitical developments with care. In particular, Abu Dhabi has established itself as a global financial centre and a key hub for international capital, supported by strong institutions and a clear long-term vision.

Our commitment to the region is longstanding. For more than two decades, we have invested alongside sovereign partners across the Middle East, and we are continuing to deepen our presence in the region. Our offices in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh reflect that

commitment to be present, closer to our partners, adjacent to the markets, and better positioned to contribute to the region's long-term development. Being on-the-ground is central to how we invest — with local insight, long-term partnerships and a commitment to building alongside the region.

We currently deploy approximately \$6.5 billion on behalf of international clients across sovereign lending, corporate credit and listed equities in the region. This capital reflects our high-conviction approach and our confidence in the region's long-term trajectory.

Moreover, we are continuing to expand our regional investment and client teams in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh, inclusive of the appointment of Victoria Harling, CIO- Middle East, who has relocated to the region, with the ambition of building a business that is locally anchored and globally connected. We believe this combination — global expertise with local presence — is critical in periods of heightened uncertainty.

As economies diversify away from hydrocarbons, we are seeing opportunities across sovereign and corporate credit, as well as equities, supported by strong structural reforms and

policy momentum. Ambitious reform programmes in the GCC are accelerating diversification and expanding the opportunity set for international investors. At the same time Abu Dhabi continues to strengthen its position as a global financial hub through long-term economic planning, capital market development and institutions such as ADGM.

Policy continuity, openness to trade and investment, and strong sovereign balance sheets continue to underpin the region's resilience. Our strategy is aligned with the region's ambition to deepen capital markets, attract global investment and support economic diversification. The development of regional debt markets is particularly compelling. As these markets mature, they have the potential to support domestic investment while attracting international capital at scale.

For Ninety One, the Middle East is not a short-term allocation decision. It is a strategic priority. We are not just investing in the Middle East. We are building with it, for the long term, because we believe the region will remain central to the future of the global economy.

Changer.ae, DeScript Labs Ink MOU to Enable Digital Asset Payments with AED Settlement

Changer.ae Limited, a regulated virtual asset custodian based in Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DeScript Labs INC, a provider of digital asset settlement and merchant technology solutions.

The MOU establishes a framework for collaboration between the two companies, combining Changer.ae's regulated digital asset custody and conversion capabilities with DeScript Labs' merchant technology infrastructure, including its PayTheFly

solution.

Through this collaboration, the parties aim to explore compliant and efficient pathways that allow businesses to accept digital assets from customers while receiving settlement in fiat currency. The initiative is intended to support a more seamless connection between the digital asset economy and traditional financial infrastructure, while helping merchants reduce exposure to digital asset volatility.

The collaboration is expected to be particularly relevant

across high-value sectors in the UAE, including real estate, automotive, and luxury retail, where local and international customers may seek alternative ways to complete transactions using digital assets.

For merchants, the proposed model would enable customers to pay using digital assets while the business receives converted AED funds, creating a familiar fiat settlement experience supported by custody, compliance, and settlement processes through Changer.ae's regulated framework.

The parties will also explore

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A New Era for Global Banking: Dhabi Launches at ADGM



Dhabi launched in ADGM as a complete global banking experience designed to empower individuals and businesses to grow beyond borders.

Built with a human-first philosophy at its core and amplified through intuitive digital delivery, Dhabi reimagines banking for modern global citizens, those who live, earn, and grow across countries, cultures, and economies.

Strategically headquartered within ADGM, Dhabi delivers effortless digital access, personalized banking services, and cross-border financial freedom, all grounded in the trust, security, and transparency that define a new generation of banking.

Dhabi builds on the heritage of Finance House PJSC - a

publicly listed institution with over two decades of excellence in delivering trusted financial services across the UAE. As a wholly backed initiative, Dhabi benefits from the strength, credibility, and infrastructure of its parent, while charting a bold, independent course as ADGM's first homegrown full-fledged banking services institution.

Dhabi's launch comes at a time when global mobility and evolving lifestyles are reshaping financial needs. With curated current accounts, savings, and fixed deposit solutions for individuals and businesses, Dhabi offers a premium banking experience that empowers clients to manage their money across markets effortlessly and securely.

"True financial freedom

should transcend borders," said Mohamed A. Alqubaisi, Chairman of Dhabi and Founder of Finance House Group. "With Dhabi, we are redefining what global banking can be, offering a platform built for those who see opportunity, growth, and belonging not in one country, but across the world. Dhabi is not just a new chapter for us; it's a new standard for banking without borders."

With its launch in ADGM, Dhabi builds on the reputation of Abu Dhabi emerging as a new premier destination for global banking. Designed with international ambition and regional strength, Dhabi sets a new standard for client-centric, globally connected financial services originating from the ADGM in UAE.

Blue Owl Strengthens Global Presence with Abu Dhabi Office



Blue Owl Capital announced the opening of its new office in ADGM, strengthening Blue Owl's global and regional footprint and underscores its long-term commitment to the Middle East and focus on best supporting clients in the region.

"Over the last decade, the Middle East has emerged as both a strategic global market and a sophisticated investor across asset classes, particularly alternatives," said Haitham Abdulkarim, Managing Director, Senior Executive Officer of Blue Owl's Abu Dhabi office. "We believe proximity to clients is fundamental to understanding their objectives and building lasting partnerships. As our platform continues to

grow, expanding into Abu Dhabi - one of the region's leading financial centers - was a natural evolution for the firm, enabling us to meet clients where they are and in a jurisdiction that supports long-term partnerships and institutional growth."

Doug Ostrover and Marc Lipschultz, Co-Chief Executive Officers of Blue Owl, said: "With longstanding relationships in the Middle East, establishing an office in Abu Dhabi was a natural next step as we continue to deepen our work and relationships in both the UAE and the broader region. Today's announcement reflects our conviction in this incredibly important area and our commitment to strengthening

the relationships we have developed over many years. This is not a new market for us; it represents the next phase of our growth in the region."

Comprised of members of Blue Owl's Institutional Capital and GP Stakes teams, the new Abu Dhabi office will be Blue Owl's regional headquarters in the Middle East and help Blue Owl expand its presence in the UAE - a preeminent global financial hub supported by world-class institutional investors and ADGM's internationally recognized regulatory framework. The new office is Blue Owl's seventh office in the EMEA region and its twenty-third globally.

Arvind Ramamurthy, Chief Market Development Officer at ADGM said: "We are pleased to welcome Blue Owl to ADGM as it continues to expand its presence in the region. The firm's decision to establish an office in Abu Dhabi reflects the growing depth and sophistication of the region's private capital landscape, as well as the increasing role ADGM plays in connecting global asset managers with institutional investors. Blue Owl's presence will further strengthen our ecosystem by broadening the range of capabilities and expertise within ADGM's fast-growing community of leading global firms. As the international asset management hub, ADGM remains committed to enabling firms like Blue Owl to scale and contribute to long-term growth from Abu Dhabi."

Bitexen MENA and Bitexen Custody Obtained Financial Services Permissions from the FSRA of ADGM



Bitexen MENA has been granted a Financial Services Permission to operate a Multilateral Trading Facility in relation to virtual assets and fiat-referenced tokens, and Bitexen Custody has been granted an FSP to Provide Custody services in relation to virtual assets and fiat-referenced tokens, by the FSRA of ADGM.

The milestone marks a definitive leap forward in Bitexen Group's strategic global expansion, reinforcing its commitment to delivering secure, transparent, and regulated virtual asset services to both institutional and retail clients across the MENA region and beyond.

As part of its long-term international growth strategy, Bitexen Group has selected ADGM as the operational headquarters for regulated entities within Bitexen Group. This choice recognises the UAE's leadership in financial innovation, digital asset regulation, and institutional adoption. These regulatory permissions granted by the FSRA of ADGM empower Bitexen MENA and Bitexen Custody to deploy a comprehensive ecosystem for the seamless trading and

safekeeping of virtual assets and fiat-referenced tokens within one of the world's leading regulatory jurisdictions for digital assets.

ADGM's pioneering virtual asset regulatory framework, introduced in 2018, has positioned Abu Dhabi as a premier global hub for regulated digital asset activities and the preferred destination for next-generation financial innovation.

The Group's expansion into UAE, in the ADGM, reflects not only its commitment to regulatory excellence, but also its broader vision to build institutional-grade infrastructure supporting the next generation of digital finance.

With its ADGM entities, Bitexen Group enters the UAE market as an established operator with years of experience managing large-scale digital asset platforms, advanced security systems, and technology-driven financial products.

Looking ahead, Bitexen Group aims to be a cornerstone contributor to the global tokenisation infrastructure, supporting the development of regulated digital asset ecosystems spanning tokenised

real-world assets, blockchain-native financial products, and institutional market infrastructure.

Kemal Cenk Erdem, Chairman of Bitexen MENA and Bitexen Custody, commented:

"Receiving these Financial Services Permissions from ADGM represents a defining milestone for Bitexen Group and underscores our deep, long-term commitment to the UAE and the wider MENA region.

We are proud to establish our presence within one of the world's most progressive financial centres and look forward to delivering secure, transparent, and trusted virtual asset trading and custody solutions to both institutional and retail investors.

Abu Dhabi will sit at the very heart of Bitexen Group's international expansion as we continue building regulated digital asset infrastructure for global markets.

We extend our sincere appreciation to ADGM for fostering an environment that supports innovation while maintaining the highest regulatory standards."



Cont. to Page 5 -C3

commercial clearing solutions for corporate entities, including the conversion of digital assets into fiat on behalf of corporate partners. This is intended to support smoother treasury operations, improve settlement efficiency, and facilitate compliant local and

cross-border transaction flows between digital asset holders and traditional business networks.

Changer.ae Limited operates under the regulation of the Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA) in ADGM and is licensed to provide

custody services, arrange deals in investments, and dealing in investments as agent. The company provides secure and compliant digital asset solutions for retail and professional clients.

Copper ME Expands ADGM Footprint After FSRA Approval for Virtual Asset Custody and Investment Services

Copper Securities Limited, a member of the Copper Group, has received In Principle Approval from the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of ADGM, in respect of its Variation of Permission to expand the scope of its regulated activities relating to digital asset.

The IPA represents a significant regulatory milestone and follows Copper ME's December 2025 announcement outlining its intention to broaden its regulated services offering from ADGM. The IPA enables Copper ME to proceed with the next phase of regulatory engagement, including demonstrating full operational readiness, ahead of seeking the relevant Financial Services Permission.

Abu Dhabi, widely regarded as a rapidly growing digital asset market has been a strategic priority for Copper Group as institutional adoption of digital assets accelerates across the region. Over the past few years, the region has been establishing itself as a global hub for the industry, driven primarily by regulatory clarity and strong capital markets. The IPA will pave the way for Copper ME to offer, subject

to final FSRA approval, a full suite of institutional grade infrastructures and services to clients, including but not limited to:

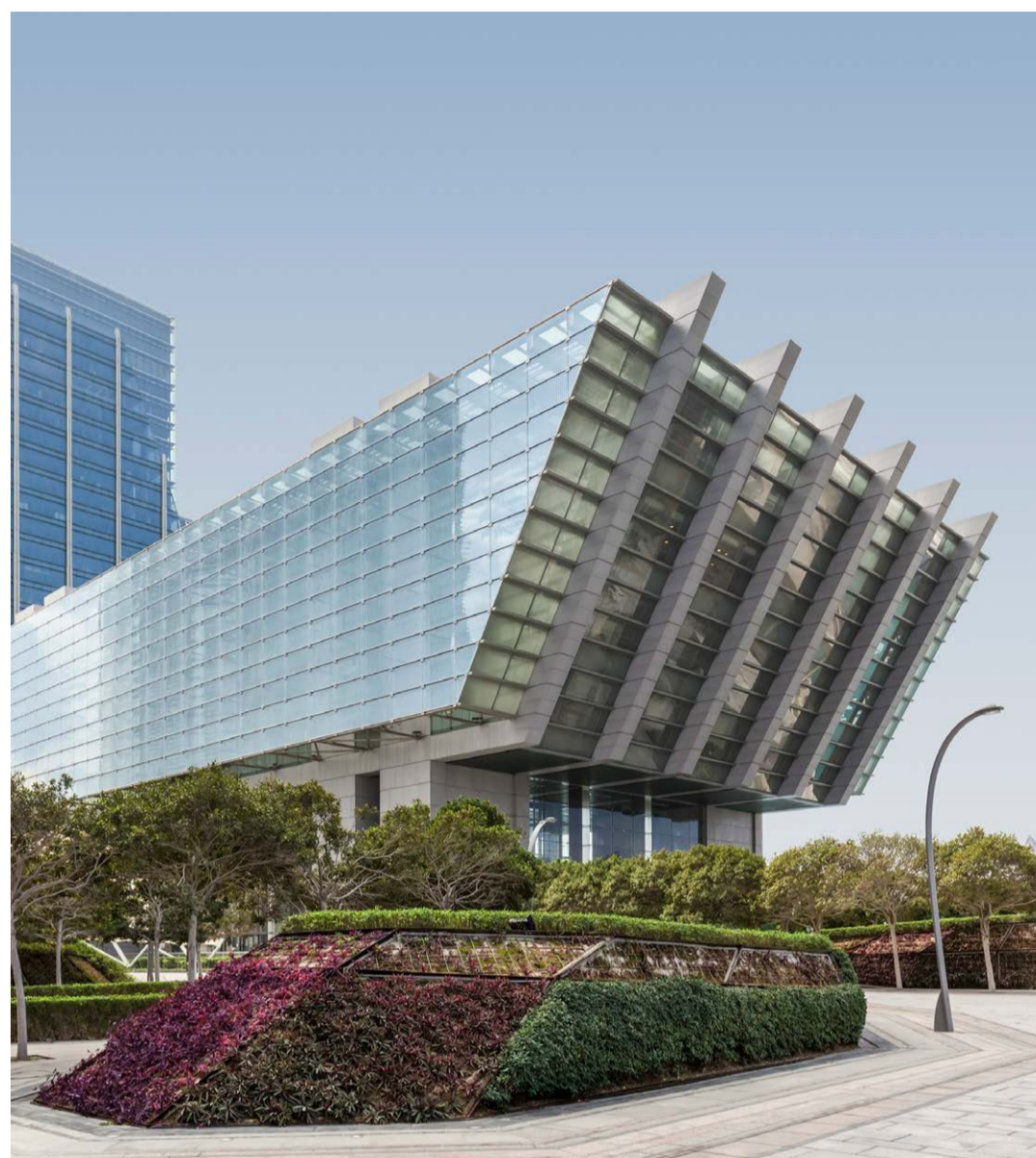
- Secure digital asset custody that is built to the highest standards of governance and risk management.
- A gateway to ClearLoop, Copper's off-exchange collateral management infrastructure that improves capital efficiency whilst mitigating counterparty risk.
- Rewards programs, enabling compliant, yield generation opportunities for institutional participants.
- Tokenized Money Market Fund (MMFT) brokerage that will facilitate access to digital financial products.

Subject to final approval, Copper ME intends to expand its ADGM based platform to deliver institutional grade digital assets custody, settlement, collateral management, and related investment solutions, leveraging the Copper Group's proprietary technology, global connectivity, and risk focused operating model.

Amar Kuchinad, Chief Executive Officer of Copper Group, commented: "Copper

provides financial market infrastructure and regulated financial services to institutions accessing the blockchain-based economy. This IPA reflects the strength of ADGM as a jurisdiction for global institutions seeking regulatory clarity and confidence as markets move on chain. We see the Middle East, and ADGM in particular, as central to our global strategy, and today's milestone reinforces that commitment."

Arvind Ramamurthy, Chief Market Development Officer at ADGM, commented: "We congratulate Copper ME on receiving their IPA. This milestone underscores the strength of ADGM's digital assets ecosystem and our progressive regulatory framework that supports responsible innovation across custody, trading, and tokenisation. We continue to see strong momentum from global and regional firms choosing ADGM as their platform for expansion, and we look forward to seeing Copper ME as it progresses towards full authorisation and scales its operations in Abu Dhabi."



Cantor Receives ADGM Approval, Expanding Middle East Investment Banking Platform



Cantor, a premier global investment bank and part of the Cantor Fitzgerald group of companies, has announced that the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of ADGM, has granted the firm approval to conduct regulated financial activities within the financial centre.

The approval, confirmed through the issuance of a Financial Services Permission, marks a significant milestone in Cantor's strategic expansion across the Middle East. The authorization follows the opening of the firm's Abu Dhabi office in December 2025.

"Establishing our presence in Abu Dhabi reflects Cantor's long-term commitment to strategically important markets that are increasingly shaping global capital flows," said Sage Kelly, Co-Chief Executive Officer and Global Head of Investment Banking at Cantor. "The Middle East continues to experience strong economic

momentum, rising investment activity and significant institutional capital formation. Our presence within ADGM positions us to better serve clients seeking opportunities both within the region and across international markets."

Led by Ali Khalpey, Head of Middle East, Investment Banking & Capital Markets, Cantor's Abu Dhabi office will serve as a regional hub for the firm's investment banking and capital markets activities. Cantor currently operates two dedicated teams in the region: an Equities platform with full sales, trading and research capabilities serving sovereign wealth funds and local, regional and global institutional investors active across the Middle East; and an Investment Banking team focused on mergers and acquisitions and capital markets advisory.

"Abu Dhabi has rapidly established itself as a leading international financial

center and a gateway to one of the world's most dynamic investment environments," said Mr. Khalpey. "With our Abu Dhabi office now fully operational, we look forward to strengthening relationships with clients, investors and strategic partners across the region while contributing to the continued growth of the local capital markets ecosystem."

"We are pleased to welcome a premier global financial institution like Cantor to the ADGM as the firm continues to expand its presence in the region," said Arvind Ramamurthy, Chief Market Development Officer at ADGM. "Cantor's decision to establish operations in Abu Dhabi reflects the growing demand among leading global financial institutions to access the investment opportunities emerging across the Gulf and broader Middle East."



Franklin Templeton Expands UAE Presence with Onshore Abu Dhabi Licence

Franklin Templeton has announced that it has secured licences from the UAE Capital Market Authority for its entity in Abu Dhabi, marking a significant step in its long-standing commitment to the UAE.

With this development, Franklin Templeton now operates across all three financial jurisdictions in the UAE: onshore Abu Dhabi, ADGM and Dubai International Financial Centre.

"The UAE is an increasingly important market for global asset management, but long-term success here depends on being close to clients and deeply connected to local priorities," said Matthew Harrison, Head of EMEA and

Americas ex-US at Franklin Templeton. "This milestone not only reinforces our commitment to the market but also enables us to offer clients a broader range of investment services, combining our global capabilities with deep local expertise."

Franklin Templeton has been active in the UAE for more than 25 years, steadily growing its footprint and deepening relationships with investors across the region. The new entity in Abu Dhabi underscores the firm's continued investment in the UAE and its confidence in the country's role as a leading global financial hub.

Sandeep Singh, Head of CEEMEA and Head of

Global Official Institutions at Franklin Templeton, added, "With offices now across all three financial jurisdictions, we are uniquely positioned to serve clients across the UAE's key regulatory environments, while strengthening our ability to bring Franklin Templeton's global investment expertise to areas that matter locally, including retirement savings and end-of-service solutions."

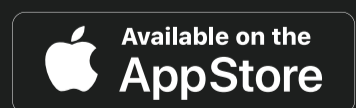
Through its expanded presence, Franklin Templeton aims to further enhance its ability to deliver tailored investment solutions while supporting clients across the UAE with a comprehensive suite of capabilities.



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Abu Dhabi Chamber and Invest Shanghai Join Forces to Boost Economic Alliance

The Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry has boosted a monumental economic alliance with the Shanghai Foreign Investment Development Board (Invest Shanghai). Signed during the prestigious Abu Dhabi Investment Forum, this strategic Memorandum of Understanding bridges two of the world's most dynamic financial landscapes.

Industry sources added that this landmark agreement accelerates cross-border trade, unlocks high-growth market channels, and establishes a robust institutional framework for sustainable, long-term capital flows.

Led by H.E. Ali Mohamed

Al Marzooqi, Director General of the Abu Dhabi Chamber, and Mr. Xue Feng, President of Invest Shanghai, the partnership converts diplomatic synergy into high-value marketplace realities. This corporate alliance sets a new benchmark for bilateral innovation, positioning both metropolitan capitals as elite, interconnected global hubs for trade and enterprise.

This corporate pact arrives at a time of unprecedented commercial momentum. The region continues to experience growth of Chinese enterprise across high-value sectors, including financial services, advanced manufacturing, construction, and global

trade. Highlighting this rapid expansion, new memberships by Chinese companies with the Abu Dhabi Chamber surged by a remarkable 85% in 2025 compared to 2024.

The newly forged framework systematically eases market entry, enhances dedicated investor services, and opens seamless avenues for joint investment promotion. By leveraging their expansive overseas networks and elite business intelligence, both entities are actively constructing premium trade corridors that empower the private sector to capture next-generation industrial opportunities.



Four factors driving Abu Dhabi's Property Boom and Future Growth

Abu Dhabi is steadily laying the foundations needed to ensure sustained long-term demand for real estate, supported by robust national frameworks, regulatory transparency, and strategic infrastructure investments, according to a report by Object 1.

The report highlighted that Abu Dhabi has entered a pivotal phase in its real estate journey, emerging as one of the most attractive destinations in the UAE for both end-users and investors in 2026.

With the capital's population

projected to exceed six million residents by 2040, the report noted that this growth is expected to generate sustained, long-term demand for residential properties and urban infrastructure. It identified four key factors that are set to shape the next phase of Abu Dhabi's real estate expansion.

According to the report, the first and most significant driver is the government-backed direction of the market. Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 lies at the heart of the emirate's

real estate trajectory, serving as a long-term roadmap aimed at transforming Abu Dhabi into a diversified economy with reduced reliance on oil revenues.

The strategy continues to guide sustainable urban expansion, infrastructure development, and enhanced connectivity across the emirate, providing a strong foundation for resilient growth and reinforcing long-term confidence in Abu Dhabi's property market.

The report identified Abu

Dhabi's strategic location as the second major growth catalyst. Positioned at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa, the UAE provides access to a significant share of the world's population within an eight-hour flight radius, supported by a world-class network of airports, seaports, and highways.

Key infrastructure assets, including Khalifa Port and Zayed International Airport, are further strengthening Abu Dhabi's appeal among international property

buyers. The report noted that the benefits of this global connectivity are reflected in Object 1's buyer data, which shows strong interest from investors and purchasers across India, the European Union, the UAE, Türkiye, and the CIS countries.

According to Object 1, Abu Dhabi's ecosystem is further strengthened by globally recognized institutions such as the ADGM and innovation hubs including Hub71.

These platforms continue to attract international

companies, highly skilled talent, and investment capital, creating sustained demand for both residential and commercial real estate across the emirate.

Looking ahead, the report expects property demand in Abu Dhabi to remain robust even as new supply enters the market, helping maintain a healthy and balanced pace of price growth that benefits buyers.

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How Abu Dhabi is Transforming into a Global AI and Startup Powerhouse

By Yara Abi Farraj
Economy Middle East



Abu Dhabi is rapidly transforming from a city known primarily for its energy wealth and sovereign investors into a rising global hub for artificial intelligence (AI), startups and entrepreneurship. Over the past decade, the emirate has accelerated efforts to build a diversified, innovation-driven economy, creating an ecosystem where startups and AI-native companies can be founded, funded and scaled. Backed by organizations such as Hub71, the Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO)

and Mubadala, Abu Dhabi is leveraging its financial strength and long-term vision to attract global entrepreneurs, talent and technology firms. This strategy is beginning to yield tangible results. Abu Dhabi has broken into the world's top 50 emerging startup ecosystems after the value of its ecosystem surged 3,057 percent to \$73.4 billion, according to the 2026 Global Startup Ecosystem Report by Startup Genome and the Global Entrepreneurship Network. The emirate climbed to the

#41-50 range globally from #51-60 a year earlier, reflecting sustained progress driven by increased startup activity, stronger access to capital and a growing concentration of talent and technology companies. The milestone underscores Abu Dhabi's ambition to establish itself as a world-leading center for innovation and economic growth in the decades ahead. Abu Dhabi's competitive advantage lies in a combination of abundant capital, strong support programs, large-scale corporate demand and

regulatory certainty, a mix that few jurisdictions are able to offer within a single ecosystem. While the emirate hosts the world's largest concentration of sovereign wealth funds, that financial strength is increasingly translating into tangible opportunities for technology startups. According to an analysis by Startup Genome, startups in Abu Dhabi raise larger seed and Series A rounds than their counterparts across leading GCC and MENA ecosystems, while also reaching key funding

milestones faster. The median startup in Abu Dhabi secures a Series A round roughly 36 months after formation, significantly ahead of regional peers. The ecosystem benefits from a growing pool of patient capital that is increasingly directed toward technology and innovation. The quality of funding, mentorship and startup support is helping young companies scale at an accelerated pace. Abu Dhabi startups transition from seed funding to Series A at a rate of around 31

percent, highlighting the ecosystem's ability to nurture high-potential businesses. Companies supported by Hub71 perform even better, with 42 percent advancing to Series A, among the highest success rates in the region. These figures underscore the rapid maturation of Abu Dhabi's startup ecosystem and strengthen its appeal to founders seeking both financial backing and the resources needed to grow. Increasingly, entrepreneurs are finding that the emirate offers not only access to capital, but also the right support at critical stages of development. Beyond funding, Abu Dhabi's concentration of large enterprises provides startups with something many ecosystems struggle to offer: immediate access to major customers. Unlike many markets where startups must pursue thousands of fragmented customers, entrepreneurs in Abu Dhabi can tap into a concentrated network of globally scaled organizations within a single jurisdiction. This creates a powerful environment for testing, deploying and scaling innovative solutions, making corporate demand one of the emirate's most distinctive advantages. →



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Abu Dhabi has also built a regulatory framework designed to attract global businesses and investors. ADGM, which operates under English common law and maintains its own courts and financial regulator, provides the legal certainty familiar to companies and investors in major financial centers such as London, New York and Singapore.

The transparent regulatory environment has helped establish Abu Dhabi as a growing hub for fintech and digital assets, attracting major international players, including Binance. Combined with its access to capital and strong corporate ecosystem, this framework is reinforcing Abu Dhabi's position as an increasingly attractive destination for technology companies seeking to expand globally.

Abu Dhabi is rapidly establishing itself as a global center for AI and enterprise technology, supported by a growing ecosystem of research institutions, infrastructure projects and investment platforms. Two key organizations are helping cultivate a local base of AI talent: the Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI), the world's first university dedicated exclusively to AI, and the Technology Innovation Institute (TII).

The emirate is also making significant investments in AI infrastructure. MGX is building toward a \$100 billion commitment to AI infrastructure and applications. Meanwhile, Stargate UAE,



a one-gigawatt compute cluster forming part of the planned five-gigawatt UAE-U.S. AI Campus in Masdar City, is being developed by Khazna Data Centers, a G42 company, in partnership with OpenAI, Oracle, Nvidia, Cisco and SoftBank. The project's first 200-megawatt phase is expected to come online in 2026.

At the center of Abu Dhabi's AI ambitions is G42, the technology group backed by Mubadala and chaired by Sheikh Tahnoon bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Microsoft's \$1.5 billion investment in G42 in 2024, coupled with U.S. approval for the export of Nvidia's most advanced AI chips to the company, has further strengthened the emirate's position.

Together with TII's Falcon models and MGX's financial backing, Abu Dhabi is

building an end-to-end AI ecosystem spanning compute infrastructure, research, open-source models and large-scale deployment capabilities.

Creating a launchpad for AI-native startups

These investments are opening opportunities for a new generation of AI-native companies. Enterprise solutions focused on finance, supply chains, back-office operations and customer service can be deployed across multiple industries without interfering with a company's core intellectual property.

With a concentrated network of sovereign entities and major corporations acting as customers, Abu Dhabi offers startups a launch market capable of turning innovation into revenue and long-term growth.

Fintech and digital assets gain momentum

Abu Dhabi is also strengthening its position in financial technology and digital assets through regulation. ADGM's common-law framework, dedicated financial regulator and supportive sandbox environment provide fintech companies, exchanges, payment firms and asset managers with a clear and predictable operating environment.

The framework has attracted a growing number of global players, reinforcing Abu Dhabi's ambitions to compete in highly regulated, trust-based segments of financial technology and digital assets.

The emirate is also seeking to capitalize on its long-standing strengths in energy to build a new generation of cleantech companies. As industries worldwide work to decarbonize

while meeting the rising energy demands of AI, Abu Dhabi's combination of energy expertise, infrastructure and access to capital positions it to support companies operating at the intersection of energy, water and intelligence. This convergence could create new opportunities for startups developing solutions aimed at powering a more sustainable and technology-driven future.

The road ahead for Abu Dhabi's startup ecosystem

For Abu Dhabi, the growth of its startup ecosystem carries implications that extend far beyond technology. A stronger innovation landscape is helping accelerate economic diversification beyond oil, creating high-value jobs and attracting global entrepreneurs, investors and talent to the emirate. As more startups establish themselves

and scale, they contribute to a growing network of expertise, capital and collaboration, creating the density needed for a self-sustaining innovation economy.

With the artificial intelligence era still in its early stages, the regions that successfully combine capital with market demand, infrastructure with talent and long-term vision with execution are likely to shape the industries of the future.

Abu Dhabi has spent the past decade assembling those foundations and is now moving rapidly to deploy them. For founders, investors and technology professionals seeking the next frontier of innovation, the message is increasingly clear: the Gulf's AI-native future is taking shape in Abu Dhabi, and the opportunity to be part of that transformation is now.



The Premier International Financial Centre

Strategically located in the capital of the UAE, ADGM is the fastest growing international financial centre in the MENA region. Operating within an international regulatory framework, based on direct application of English Common Law, the financial freezone consisting of Al Maryah and Al Reem islands, with its vibrant, progressive, and inclusive ecosystem, is the ideal platform for both financial and non-financial businesses to thrive.

Discover why ADGM is ranked as one of the top IFCs globally.

Path to
Forward 

PUZZLES

SUDOKU

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Difficulty Rating: ☆☆☆☆☆

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Difficulty Rating: ☆☆☆☆☆

PREVIOUS EDITION SOLUTION

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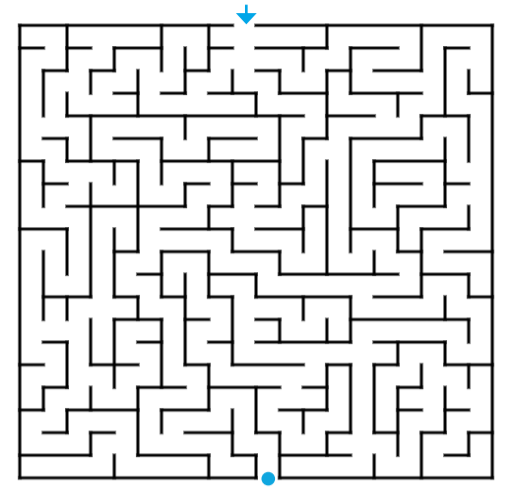
WORD SEARCH

R	T	A	S	O	Y	G	O	T	U	I	I	E	
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P	E	I	E	O	T	I	E	E	T	I	S		
S	E	S	C	X	E	I	T	L	I	S	N	V	E
T	N	C	P	P	X	S	A	I	T	O	C	R	E
N	G	U	S	E	C	F	C	A	T	S	U	E	I
X	A	S	U	R	E	A	I	B	O	R	G	S	E
N	G	T	P	I	L	C	N	I	N	B	U	E	C
O	E	O	P	E	L	T	U	L	A	T	P	S	I
T	M	M	O	N	E	I	M	I	C	T	T	R	T
E	E	R	C	N	O	M	T	E	C	E	R	U	
T	N	R	T	E	C	N	O	Y	C	E	E	E	C
R	T	C	T	O	E	N	C	E	R	A	C	T	I

- SERVICE
- COMMUNICATION
- ENGAGEMENT
- EXPERIENCE
- SATISFACTION
- SUPPORT
- EXCELLENCE
- RELIABILITY
- TRUST
- CUSTOMER

R	T	D	C	E	A	A	L	I	A	L	E	H	P
A	A	I	N	T	E	L	L	I	G	E	N	C	E
T	T	S	R	C	A	I	G	A	A	E	A	M	O
A	A	R	R	T	F	A	S	A	A	T	L	D	R
L	D	R	E	A	T	N	P	C	S	A	I	S	R
A	P	R	O	M	P	T	P	A	O	G	R	A	A
I	T	G	A	I	T	A	I	H	I	A	T	L	R
C	U	E	T	H	I	F	U	T	U	R	E	R	T
I	S	A	N	E	C	P	A	P	P	I	R	O	N
F	O	T	I	O	O	L	E	N	G	R	B	A	E
I	S	E	A	R	C	H	I	A	M	T	P	D	L
T	I	E	L	L	D	E	I	G	A	E	P	I	A
R	E	A	I	L	S	T	E	H	P	A	R	S	A
A	T	R	A	M	S	G	C	R	T	A	A	G	L

MAZE

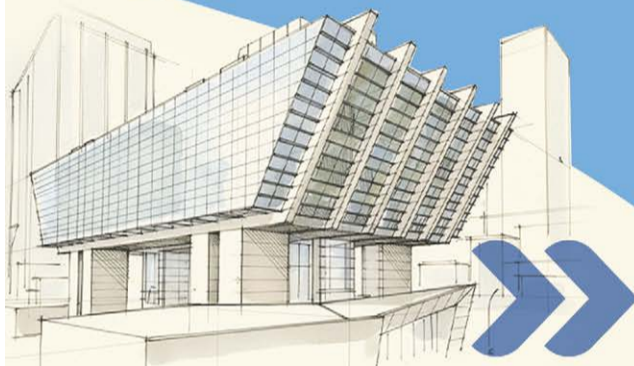


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We're Upgrading the ADGM Building

From Monday, 16 February 2026



ADGM Personnel Relocated to Al Khatem Tower

From 2 March 2026

ADGM Courts Relocated to Al Maqam Tower

From 2 March 2026

ADGM Service Centre The Galleria L2/C, Near Waitrose

Now Open

Business as Usual
All Services will Continue Through the Usual Channels

adgm.com

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