

Press release

ADGM Kicks Off 2025 with Strong First Quarter Performance

- Assets under management grew **33%** in Q1 2025 from a year earlier
- A total of **119** fund and asset managers now manage **184** funds out of ADGM
- Number of new licences grew, representing an increase of **67%** from Q1 2024
- ADGM has 2,781 operational entities in its ecosystem, a **43%** surge from Q1 2024
- Financial services entities grew **26%** from Q1 2024, to **367** at the end of Q1 2025
- Al Maryah Island workforce surges to over **29,000** individuals, **17%** growth from Q1 2024

Abu Dhabi, UAE, 3 June 2025: ADGM, the international financial centre of the UAE capital, has accomplished another quarter of robust growth and increased global recognition, sustaining momentum from a record-breaking 2024.

In Q1 2025, ADGM achieved significant growth across key metrics, supported by ongoing global investor confidence, regulatory enhancements, and the successful implementation of major initiatives within its expanded jurisdiction on Al Reem Island. Meanwhile, ADGM's focus and strategic initiatives to strengthen ADGM's standing as a leading international financial centre reaffirmed Abu Dhabi's position as a global financial powerhouse and a destination of choice for regional and global entities.

Commenting on ADGM's growth momentum, **His Excellency Ahmed Jasim Al Zaabi, Chairman of ADGM, said,** *"ADGM's Q1 2025 performance marks the beginning of another landmark year. This is not just a reflection of ADGM's capabilities to deliver sustained growth, but also the trust it has gained among global and regional institutions, boosting Abu Dhabi's status as a global financial and innovation hub. As the world's safest and most dynamic jurisdiction for asset and wealth management, ADGM continues to expand and diversify with purpose, welcoming leading firms, deepening international partnerships, and driving digital and sustainable transformation across sectors. ADGM remains committed to contributing towards capital formation and innovation in alignment with the UAE's long-term economic vision."*

Looking ahead, ADGM expects continued growth in the market, reinforced by an increasing interest from international firms across Europe and Asia. ADGM anticipates continued growth as it strengthens its position within these dynamic financial markets.

Diverse Growth Within The ‘Capital of Capital’

The asset management sector was a key indicator of ADGM’s growth last year. During Q1 2025, AUMs grew **33%** compared to Q1 2024. At the end of Q1 2025, **119 asset and fund managers managed** a total of **184 funds** out of ADGM.

As the sole jurisdiction in the region to adopt the **direct application of English common law**, ADGM’s transparency, stability, legal certainty and familiarity with its established regulatory framework have been a key driver to the growing number of global and regional entities setting up. As of Q1 2025, the total number of operational entities in ADGM increased **43% to 2,781**, from the same period a year earlier, while the number of financial services entities increased to **367**, indicating a **26% growth** from Q1 2024.

ADGM continued to attract a diverse set of global firms seeking to tap Abu Dhabi’s unique financial and regulatory infrastructure. The number of new licences grew in Q1 2025, representing an increase of **67%** from Q1 2024. Notable firms establishing a presence during this period include **Skadden, Investindustrial, NewVest, Arcapita, Polen Capital, Seviora, Olive Gaea, TON, and Aquila Group**. These firms represent a range of sectors and position ADGM as the preferred premier international hub for asset management, sustainable finance, legal services, and digital innovation.

Strategic Human Capital Growth

One of ADGM’s strategic focuses under the ‘Capital of Capital’ concept has been human capital. Efforts towards this have resulted in the workforce on Al Maryah Island surging to **over 29,000** individuals, a **17% growth** compared to the same quarter last year. Furthermore, a total of 3,509 new ADGM work permits have been issued to businesses establishing on Al Reem Island.

In line with its focus on human capital, ADGM also introduced new **Employment Regulations**, aimed at enhancing workplace protections while preserving business agility. The updated regulations strengthen ADGM’s appeal as a global talent hub and reinforce its position as a forward-looking jurisdiction committed to inclusive, sustainable economic growth.

ADGM’s Global Outreach and Strategic Engagements

ADGM’s international engagement efforts remained strong throughout Q1 2025, further highlighting its role as a global bridge for the growth of Abu Dhabi’s financial sector.

In January, an ADGM delegation returned to **iConnections Global Alts Miami** to deepen its relationship with hedge funds, private equity firms, and venture capital leaders. The delegation held bilateral meetings in New York and Washington and participated in a headline panel discussion titled “*Abu Dhabi: The Capital of Capital*”, showcasing the emirate’s strategic access to **USD 1.7 trillion** in sovereign wealth capital and its investor-friendly ecosystem.

In February, ADGM participated in the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development’s (ADDED) **high-level delegation to China, aimed at deepening bilateral economic ties between the two countries**. With the UAE-China trade projected to reach USD 200 billion by 2030, ADGM is reinforcing Abu Dhabi’s position as a vital gateway for Chinese capital into the region.

At the beginning of April, a high-level delegation from ADGM travelled to Japan, where they conducted nearly 30 strategic bilateral meetings with leading financial institutions. The discussions focused on key sectors, including private banking, wealth management, and family businesses, reflecting the commitment of Japanese companies to fostering international partnerships and expanding their footprint in the region.

Al Reem Island Integration

During Q1 2025, ADGM completed its jurisdictional expansion to Al Reem Island, which delivered strong results. By Q1 2025, over **600 new businesses** had set up on Al Reem Island, and more than **500 existing Al Reem-based companies** had migrated to an ADGM licence. Currently, a total of **1,100 new entities** operate within ADGM’s expanded jurisdiction.

In January, ADGM introduced **a revised fee schedule, reducing commercial licence costs by 50%** or more for non-financial and retail businesses, further supporting SME growth and diversification. The new structure simplifies the previous tiered model and sets a flat licence fee of AED 1,000, making it significantly more accessible for entrepreneurs and SMEs to establish and scale their operations within ADGM’s jurisdiction.

ADGM’s Strategic Moves for Blockchain Innovation and Tokenisation Frameworks

Reinforcing its position as a regulatory pioneer in digital assets, ADGM in March signed an MoU with **Chainlink**, the industry standard for onchain finance. The partnership will

enable the development of compliant tokenisation frameworks by leveraging Chainlink’s infrastructure and expertise.

Additionally, ADGM welcomed **Stacks Asia** and **Bitgrit** to its ecosystem in Q1 2025, which will leverage **ADGM's world-leading Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) Foundations framework**. These efforts are boosting Abu Dhabi’s profile as a rising blockchain innovation hub at both regional and global levels.

ADGM’s Continued Growth in Sustainable Finance

The **Abu Dhabi Sustainable Finance Declaration** now boasts **170 signatories**, spanning banks, asset managers, investment funds, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Launched in 2019 under the patronage of national financial regulators and ministries, the initiative continues to promote the integration of ESG principles into the financial sector and attract green investment to the region.

Some of the recent names that became signatories include **Aquila Capital, Century Financial, Oryx Global Partners, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and Olive Gaea**.

Driving Innovation Through Technology

ADGM officially launched its all-in-one mobile application to enhance the digital experience for businesses, employees, and residents in Q1 2025. The app offers real-time regulatory updates, compliance tools, licence renewals, and exclusive networking features.

It also introduced a groundbreaking digital platform for real estate transactions, enabling fully virtual sell-and-purchase workflows involving buyers, sellers, and financial institutions—a regional first that reflects ADGM’s commitment to tech-driven transformation.

Empowering UAE Nationals’ Talent: Strategic Collaborations in Technology and AI

During Q1 2025, ADGM Academy successfully created **800 job placement opportunities** for UAE Nationals across nine specialised tracks. These efforts were supported by **23 internationally recognised** upskilling and reskilling certifications.

ADGM Academy signed two strategic agreements, including one with Arab Youth to collaborate on empowering Arab youth and driving innovation in the technology sector.

The Academy also partnered with the Federal Tax Authority to deliver targeted training programs aligned with the national agenda.

Additionally, during Q1 2025, the **ADGMA Research Centre** published **six research papers**, with a focus on the growing impact of AI in the UAE financial sector. These publications underscore AI's central role in advancing the sector's development and innovation.

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About ADGM

ADGM is the international financial centre (IFC) of the capital city of the United Arab Emirates, which opened for business on 21 October 2015. ADGM augments Abu Dhabi's position as a leading financial centre and a business hub, serving as a strategic link between the growing economies of the Middle East, Africa, South Asia, and the rest of the world.

Operating within an international regulatory framework based on the direct application of English Common Law, ADGM governs the entirety of Al Maryah Island and Al Reem Island, collectively designated as the financial free zone of Abu Dhabi.

ADGM is ranked as one of the most preferred and top-ranking IFCs in the Middle East and Africa region. Its progressive and inclusive business ecosystem fosters growth, resilience, and optimism for global financial and non-financial institutions. Growing synergies between ADGM and multiple jurisdictions have positioned the centre as one of the world's most advanced, diverse, and progressively governed financial hubs.

For more details on ADGM, please visit www.adgm.com or follow us on LinkedIn and Instagram: @ADGM
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