



MARKET INTELLIGENCE
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

2026

UAE Salary Guide

*A boutique recruitment
practice.*

FINANCE / BANKING & INVESTMENTS / HUMAN RESOURCES / LEGAL /
SALES & MARKETING / STRATEGY / TECHNOLOGY / DATA & AI /
PRODUCT & DESIGN / REC2REC

Contents

Foreword	03
Finance & Accounting	04
Banking, FinTech & Investments	06
Human Resources, People & Talent	09
Legal, Compliance & Governance	11
Sales, Marketing & Growth	14
Strategy & Transformation	17
Technology & Digital	19
Data, Analytics & AI	21
Product, Project, Program & Design	23
Rec2Rec	25
About this guide	27

HOW TO READ THIS GUIDE

All figures are monthly fixed salaries in AED thousands, covering basic salary plus housing, transport and other fixed allowances. Bonus, commission, equity and other variable pay are excluded. From is the typical entry point for the level, Mid is where most offers land, and To reflects the upper end for strong candidates or larger organizations.

Legal private practice is shown separately for regional, UK and international, and US firms. Rec2Rec figures show base salary, with commission covered separately.

FOREWORD

A year of change

I've spent the past decade in recruitment, six years of it here in the UAE, and I can't remember a year when the market moved in as many directions at once. For most of that time, salary conversations followed a fairly predictable rhythm. Budgets rose a little each year, candidates moved for a meaningful step up, and the difference between a good offer and a great one usually came down to allowances rather than base pay.

This year the rhythm changed, even though the economy kept its momentum. Real GDP grew 6.2% in 2025, non-oil activity grew faster still at 6.8%, and DIFC alone added more than 2,500 active companies over the year. That growth hasn't lifted every salary equally. Where skills are genuinely scarce, in AI engineering, direct tax, compliance and senior in-house legal roles, pay has kept climbing, and employers are going above their own ranges to secure the right person. In functions where talent is more plentiful, ranges have held steady or narrowed, and candidates expecting a sizable jump on moving have often found offers closer to their current package than they hoped.

You'll see that pattern on every page of this guide. Two people with the same title can now sit at very different points in the same range, depending on the skills they bring and the sector they work in, which is why some of the ranges that follow are wider than you might expect.

The guide covers the functions we recruit into across the UAE: Finance, Banking and Investments, Human Resources, Legal, Sales and Marketing, Technology, Data and AI, Product and Delivery, Strategy and Transformation, and the recruitment industry itself. The figures are benchmarked against published market data and checked against what we see in live briefs and offers. They're meant to start a conversation, and I'm always glad to have one.

Kay Nyanzira

Managing Director, Sid & Gamble

PRACTICE AREA

Finance & Accounting

Regulation and growth are asking more of UAE finance teams at the same time.

AED 50m

Annual revenue at which mandatory e-invoicing begins on January 1, 2027. All VAT-registered businesses follow on July 1, 2027.

Source: UAE Ministry of Finance

Finance has been one of the busiest functions in the UAE this year, and the reasons are as much regulatory as commercial. Corporate tax returns for December year-end companies were due on September 30, 2026, transfer pricing documentation now applies to larger groups, and e-invoicing becomes mandatory in stages through 2027. Companies that kept finance lean through the first corporate tax cycles are now hiring for tax, reporting and systems capability at the same time.

The strongest demand sits with financial controllers who can run consolidation across several entities, FP&A leaders who partner with the business rather than simply report to it, and tax managers with direct tax experience. Pay at the senior end still varies widely with company size, which is why the ranges for CFO and Group CFO roles run wider than anywhere else in this section.

ROLES IN DEMAND

Financial Controller
FP&A Manager
Tax Manager, Direct Tax
Group Reporting Manager
Finance Business Partner

SKILLS IN DEMAND

Group consolidation
UAE corporate tax and transfer pricing
ERP and e-invoicing implementation
Commercial finance partnering
Treasury and cash management

MARKET NOTE

Finance hires who have already been through an e-invoicing implementation will be in short supply as the 2027 deadlines approach, so it pays to move early.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

Salary ranges

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
Senior Finance			
Group / Regional CFO	90	120	173
Chief Financial Officer	61	88	115
Finance Director	58	68	80
FP&A Director	48	56	68
Financial Controller	35	45	55
FP&A Manager	32	39	46
Finance Manager	25	33	40
Controlling and Accounting			
Finance Business Partner	28	34	40
Credit Manager	24	30	35
Senior FP&A Analyst	18	22	27
AR / AP Manager	20	25	32
Payroll Manager	18	22	26
Financial / Management Accountant	18	23	25
General Ledger Accountant	13	17	20
Tax and Treasury			
Treasurer / Head of Treasury	53	75	85
Tax Director	60	83	103
Tax Manager	27	33	40
Treasury Manager	35	42	49
Indirect Tax / VAT Manager	25	34	45
Internal Audit			
Head of Internal Audit	50	65	75
Internal Audit Manager	30	38	45

PRACTICE AREA

Banking, FinTech & Investments

Capital keeps arriving in the UAE, and the teams that manage it are growing to match.

17.9%

Growth in bank credit across the UAE in 2025, alongside deposits up 16.2%.

Source: Central Bank of the UAE

Financial and insurance activity grew 10.4% in 2025, making it one of the fastest-growing parts of the economy, and both financial centers are expanding quickly. DIFC is now home to more than 500 wealth and asset management firms, while assets under management in ADGM rose 48% over the year. Family offices, fund managers and private banks continue to set up in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, and each one needs investment, operations, compliance and client-facing talent from the day it opens.

Fintech adds a second layer of demand. Payments, digital banking and wealth platforms are hiring commercial and compliance profiles who can work at the pace of a growth company while meeting the standards of a regulated institution. Across banking and investments, experienced compliance leaders and relationship managers with portable client books remain the hardest roles to fill, and offers for them tend to sit toward the top of the ranges that follow.

ROLES IN DEMAND

Relationship Manager,
Private Banking

Investment Associate,
Private Equity

Compliance Officer and
MLRO

Fund Operations Manager

Investor Relations Manager

SKILLS IN DEMAND

Portable client relationships
DFSA and FSRA regulation

Fund structuring and
operations

Financial modeling

AML and financial crime

MARKET NOTE

Fintech roles map to the Technology, Product and Compliance ranges elsewhere in this guide. Growth-stage firms often add equity to the package, which these ranges don't include.

BANKING, FINTECH & INVESTMENTS

Banking

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
Corporate and Wholesale Banking			
Head of Corporate / Wholesale Banking	88	113	135
Senior Relationship Manager	48	56	65
Relationship Manager	33	41	50
Wealth and Private Banking			
Head of Wealth / Private Banking	100	127	154
Wealth Relationship Manager	30	38	45
Assistant Relationship Manager	23	28	34
Investment Banking			
Managing Director	100	131	161
Vice President	45	60	75
Associate	26	35	44
Analyst	20	25	30
Risk and Compliance			
Chief Risk Officer	81	103	126
Head of Risk	60	69	80
Chief Compliance Officer and MLRO	75	101	123
Compliance Manager / MLRO	40	52	67
Risk Manager	35	45	55
Compliance Officer	35	45	55
AML / KYC Analyst	19	22	26

BANKING, FINTECH & INVESTMENTS

Investments

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
Private Equity and Venture Capital			
Chief Investment Officer	100	140	185
Managing Director / Partner	95	135	160
Investment Director / VP	65	76	90
Senior Associate	50	60	70
Associate	35	40	55
Analyst	20	28	35
Asset Management and Funds			
Portfolio / Fund Manager	38	50	65
Head of Distribution / Fundraising	70	93	110
Fundraising / Institutional Sales VP	50	70	90
Investor Relations Manager	38	46	58
Fund Operations and Finance			
Chief Operating Officer	80	105	140
Head of Operations	48	56	68
Fund CFO	90	130	160
Middle Office / Investment Operations	25	31	38
Fund Accountant	18	26	35

PRACTICE AREA

Human Resources, People & Talent

Emiratization, structure and scale are reshaping what UAE employers need from HR.

2%

Increase in Emiratization across skilled roles required in 2026 of private sector companies with 50 or more employees.

Source: Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization

HR in the UAE carries a responsibility few other markets ask of it. Private sector companies with 50 or more employees are working toward a 2% rise in Emiratization across skilled roles in 2026, with the first half of that target due by June 30, and the work of meeting it sits largely with HR and talent acquisition. The employers handling it well treat it as a talent strategy with real career paths attached, and they look for HR leaders who can build those paths.

Organizations that grew quickly over the past few years are also formalizing what they built. We're seeing more briefs for reward specialists to bring structure to pay, for organizational design and talent management leads, and for HR business partners who can cover several countries from a Dubai base. Talent acquisition leadership is in steady demand wherever companies are hiring at volume, and more HR teams now expect people analytics capability as standard rather than as a specialist add-on.

ROLES IN DEMAND

HR Business Partner, multi-country
Head of Talent Acquisition
Compensation & Benefits Manager
Organizational Development Manager
People Analytics Specialist

SKILLS IN DEMAND

Emiratization planning and delivery
Multi-country employee relations
Job architecture and reward design
High-volume talent acquisition
HR analytics and HRIS

MARKET NOTE

MOHRE's Nafis platform gives employers access to a wide pool of Emirati talent across specializations, and it's the first place we point clients who are building an Emiratization plan.

HUMAN RESOURCES, PEOPLE & TALENT

Salary ranges

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
Generalist			
VP HR / Chief Human Resources Officer	85	118	150
HR Director	60	75	90
Head of HR	53	63	73
HR Business Partner	30	40	50
HR Manager	30	38	45
HR Generalist / Specialist	18	24	28
People Analytics Specialist	20	26	32
Talent Acquisition			
Head of Talent Acquisition	50	65	80
Talent Acquisition Manager	40	50	55
Talent Acquisition Partner / Specialist	30	35	40
Reward			
Head of Reward / C&B	58	68	78
Compensation & Benefits Manager	35	43	50
Compensation & Benefits Analyst	20	26	30
Organizational Development and Talent			
Organizational Development Director	52	65	78
Talent Management Director	52	64	77
Organizational Development Manager	40	50	55
OD / Talent Specialist	26	30	34
Learning and Development			
Head of Learning & Development	45	57	71
Learning & Development Manager	35	40	45
Learning & Development Specialist	17	21	25

PRACTICE AREA

Legal, Compliance & Governance

The UAE's financial centers are growing, and the legal teams that serve them are growing with them.

8,844

Active registered companies in DIFC at the end of 2025, up 28% on the year.

Source: Dubai International Financial Centre

DIFC ended 2025 with 8,844 active registered companies, including more than 500 wealth and asset management firms, and ADGM passed 11,900 active licenses by the third quarter. Every one of those firms needs legal support, whether from an in-house team or outside counsel, and that shows up in steady demand for lawyers with funds, financial regulation and corporate transaction experience.

In-house, employers increasingly want sector depth from day one, particularly in investments, real estate development and financial services regulation, along with working knowledge of the DIFC and ADGM frameworks. In private practice, corporate, funds, finance and disputes remain the core of lateral hiring, and pay now differs so sharply between regional, UK and US firms that this guide shows each separately. Compliance and governance have also become career paths in their own right, and experienced leaders in both remain difficult to find.

ROLES IN DEMAND

Senior Legal Counsel,
Investments

Head of Legal, Financial
Services

Senior Associate, Corporate
and M&A

Funds Associate

Head of Governance, Risk
and Compliance

SKILLS IN DEMAND

DIFC and ADGM regulatory
frameworks

Fund formation and
governance

M&A and joint ventures

Real estate development

Arabic and English drafting

MARKET NOTE

Private practice pay varies more widely than any other function in this guide, and the upper end of each range is typically set by the US firms active in the region.

LEGAL, COMPLIANCE & GOVERNANCE

In-house, compliance and governance

Monthly fixed salary, AED
thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
In-house			
General Counsel / Chief Legal Officer	85	110	140
Head of Legal / Legal Director	65	80	90
Senior Legal Counsel	50	60	70
Legal Counsel	35	44	50
Paralegal	17	25	33
Compliance and Governance			
Chief Compliance Officer	88	101	128
Head of Compliance	55	70	83
Head of Governance, Risk and Compliance	64	73	83
Compliance Manager	37	48	58
Governance Manager	38	46	53
Compliance Specialist	25	32	35

LEGAL, COMPLIANCE & GOVERNANCE

Private practice

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	REGIONAL FIRMS			UK AND INTERNATIONAL			US FIRMS		
	FROM	MID	TO	FROM	MID	TO	FROM	MID	TO
Partner	82	144	174	88	157	189	135	188	222
Counsel / Legal Director	66	100	114	69	103	120	87	130	153
Senior Associate	44	54	70	55	65	80	70	93	120
Associate	32	41	47	39	48	60	52	68	83
Newly Qualified	22	31	35	29	37	40	49	56	63
Paralegal	16	22	27	19	26	30	26	30	35
Legal Secretary	14	18	22	17	23	27	22	26	30

HOW FIRMS COMPARE

US firms pay at the top of the market at every level, and the gap is widest for newly qualified lawyers and associates. UK and international firms sit between US and regional pay, while regional firms offer a wider spread that reflects the range of firms in that group.

READING THE RANGES

Partner ranges cover both junior and tenured equity partners, so a newly promoted partner will typically sit nearer the From figure. Counsel includes Legal Director and Of Counsel titles. Bonuses are not included.

PRACTICE AREA

Sales, Marketing & Growth

Commercial hiring follows investment into the UAE, and 2025 gave it plenty to follow.

6.8%

Growth in the UAE's non-oil economy in 2025, taking it to AED 1.5 trillion.

Source: Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre

Construction grew 11.1% in 2025, financial and insurance services 10.4% and real estate 7.9%, and each of those sectors relies on sales and business development teams to turn growth into revenue. Regional headquarters continue to settle in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, bringing senior commercial and marketing roles with real decision-making authority into the country.

The profile clients ask us for has shifted with that. A strong network still opens doors, but the sales leaders receiving the best offers can also show how they built pipeline and how they forecast. In marketing, budgets keep moving toward performance, CRM and content that can be measured. Customer success and account management have grown into careers of their own as more businesses sell subscriptions and long-term contracts, and retention is now watched as closely as new revenue.

ROLES IN DEMAND

Regional Sales Director
Business Development Manager
Key Account Manager
Customer Success Manager
Performance Marketing Manager

SKILLS IN DEMAND

Consultative and solution selling
Pipeline and forecast discipline
Government and enterprise relationships
Performance and CRM marketing
Arabic and English fluency

MARKET NOTE

Many sales roles carry commission or bonus worth a substantial share of fixed pay. The ranges in this guide cover fixed monthly salary only, so compare total packages before judging an offer.

SALES, MARKETING & GROWTH

Sales and customer

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
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Sales, B2B

Chief Commercial Officer / VP Sales	68	85	108
Regional Sales Director	53	60	66
Country Sales Manager	35	45	52
Regional Sales Manager	35	40	50
Business Development Manager	25	30	34
Key Account Manager	20	26	35

Sales, Consumer and FMCG

Sales / Commercial Director	52	59	65
Country Manager	40	50	60
Regional / GCC Sales Manager	30	35	40
Key Account / National Account Manager	19	23	30

Customer Success and Account Management

Head of Customer Experience / Success	60	68	75
Customer Success Manager	27	34	40
Account Director	35	38	40
Senior Account Manager	26	29	32
Account Manager	15	19	22
Account Executive	13	16	20
Business Development Executive	11	15	18

SALES, MARKETING & GROWTH

Marketing

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
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Marketing and Communications

Chief Marketing Officer	85	100	125
Head of Marketing / Marketing Director	55	63	70
Marketing Manager / Category Manager	35	40	45
PR / Communications Manager	30	34	40
Senior Brand Manager	35	40	45
Trade Marketing Manager	23	28	33
Brand Manager	25	31	38
Communications Director	60	69	76

Digital and Growth

Head of Digital Marketing	45	53	60
Senior Digital Marketing Manager	33	40	48
Digital Marketing Manager	25	33	40
CRM Manager	25	30	32
Social Media Manager	18	24	30
SEO / SEM Manager	15	20	25
Growth Marketing Manager	20	30	40
Content Manager	23	28	33

PRACTICE AREA

Strategy & Transformation

National ambition has made strategy and transformation a standing function in UAE organizations.

AED 3tn

GDP target for 2031 under the We the UAE 2031 vision, double the level when the vision was launched.

Source: UAE Government

The UAE has set long-range targets for nearly every part of its economy, from digital government to industrial growth, and both government entities and private groups have built permanent teams to deliver against them. Strategy, PMO and transformation roles that once came and went with individual programs now sit inside the organization, report to the CEO or COO and are measured on outcomes over several years.

That has changed the profile employers ask for. Consulting experience still carries weight, particularly from the large strategy and advisory firms, but hiring managers increasingly want people who have also delivered change from the inside and can show what happened after the recommendations were made. Movement between consulting and in-house roles runs in both directions, and senior in-house strategy pay now compares well with the equivalent consulting grade.

ROLES IN DEMAND

Head of Transformation
Strategy Director
Digital Transformation Manager
Head of PMO
Engagement Manager

SKILLS IN DEMAND

Operating model design
Program and PMO leadership
Board-level stakeholder management
Business cases and financial modeling
Change management

MARKET NOTE

Consulting ranges show fixed pay only. Bonuses at director and partner level can add a substantial share on top.

STRATEGY & TRANSFORMATION

Salary ranges

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
In-house Strategy and Transformation			
Chief Strategy Officer	112	126	140
Strategy Director	52	65	88
Head of Transformation	50	63	75
Senior Strategy Manager	48	55	61
Digital Transformation Manager	48	58	68
Strategy Manager	31	38	45
Change and Transformation Manager	32	46	75
Process Improvement / Business Excellence	35	48	72
Strategic Partnerships Manager	30	35	40
Strategy Analyst	18	21	23
Management Consulting			
Partner	85	128	182
Director	58	79	107
Senior Manager	45	59	77
Manager / Engagement Manager	34	43	55
Senior Consultant	22	31	43
Consultant	15	23	31
Analyst / Associate	18	24	31

PRACTICE AREA

Technology & Digital

Technology hiring in the UAE has become more senior and more selective.

19.4%

Target share of GDP for the UAE's digital economy under the national Digital Economy Strategy, double its level at launch.

Source: UAE Government

Government entities and large enterprises continue to fund transformation programs at scale, and what they need most now are the people who can govern and deliver them, from CIOs and heads of architecture to engineering leaders and security heads with real delivery behind them. Employers are hiring more selectively than in earlier years, and a candidate's track record on large programs counts for as much as their technical depth.

Cybersecurity and cloud remain the foundation under all of it, and experienced security architects and cloud leads still command a premium over other technical roles at the same level. In software engineering, demand is strongest for engineers who have built and run products at scale, and engineering leaders who can grow a team quickly without losing quality are among the most sought-after hires in the market.

ROLES IN DEMAND

Cloud Architect
Cybersecurity Architect
Head of Engineering
DevOps Lead
Chief Information Officer

SKILLS IN DEMAND

Cloud security and resilience
Enterprise architecture
Large program delivery
Platform engineering
Vendor and stakeholder management

MARKET NOTE

Roles that cover the wider GCC from a UAE base, or carry responsibility for critical national systems, typically sit toward the upper end of the ranges in this guide.

TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL

Salary ranges

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
Leadership			
Chief Information Officer	80	118	150
Chief Technology Officer	60	108	150
Chief Information Security Officer	70	100	120
IT Director	53	68	83
Chief Digital Officer	90	115	141
Head of IT	45	55	70
Cloud, Infrastructure and Architecture			
Enterprise Architect	43	51	60
Cloud Architect	40	45	60
Solutions Architect	36	42	50
DevOps Lead / Manager	40	50	60
Head of Infrastructure	40	50	60
DevOps Engineer	21	31	40
Cloud Engineer	20	29	35
Cybersecurity			
Cybersecurity Architect	35	46	58
IT Security Manager	33	45	55
Head of Information Security	40	53	65
Penetration Tester	19	28	40
Security Analyst	18	24	30
Software Engineering			
Head of Engineering	45	55	65
Engineering Manager	41	49	55
Senior Software Engineer	25	32	36
Full Stack Developer	25	30	35

PRACTICE AREA

Data, Analytics & AI

AI has moved from pilot to production in the UAE, and hiring has followed.

2017

The year the UAE appointed the world's first Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence.

Source: UAE Government

The UAE made AI a national priority early, and its National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence 2031 shows in how employers here are hiring. Organizations have moved past experiments and into deployment, so demand has shifted toward people who can put models into production, keep them running and tie them to measurable business outcomes.

AI and machine learning engineers, data engineers and MLOps specialists are the most sought-after profiles, and data leadership has moved closer to the executive table, with Chief Data and Chief AI Officer roles appearing in organizations that had no such title a few years ago. Strong data governance has become as important as model building, particularly in financial services and government, where every AI deployment has to stand up to regulatory scrutiny.

ROLES IN DEMAND

- AI / ML Engineer
- Data Engineer
- MLOps Engineer
- Head of AI
- Data Governance Manager

SKILLS IN DEMAND

- Production AI and MLOps
- Generative AI engineering
- Data platform engineering
- Data governance and privacy
- Turning models into business outcomes

MARKET NOTE

Experience with Arabic language models and NLP is particularly valued, given the investment the UAE is making in Arabic language AI.

DATA, ANALYTICS & AI

Salary ranges

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
Leadership			
Chief Data Officer	80	100	120
Chief AI Officer	110	130	150
Head / Director of AI	65	83	100
Head of Data Science	65	80	90
Head of Data and Analytics	60	70	75
Head of Data Governance	62	70	78
Data Science and AI			
Data Science Manager / Lead	50	63	75
AI Solution Architect	35	43	50
Data Scientist	35	45	55
Senior AI Engineer	35	40	45
AI / ML Engineer	28	38	47
Generative AI Engineer	30	38	45
MLOps Engineer	30	38	45
AI Product Manager	30	37	45
Data Engineering and Analytics			
Data Engineering Manager	43	51	60
Data Architect	40	50	60
Data Engineer	25	30	35
Analytics / BI Manager	32	40	50
Data Governance Manager	35	48	58
Data Analyst	20	28	35

PRACTICE AREA

Product, Project, Program & Design

Building products and delivering programs have become core business capabilities in their own right.

2,525

New active companies registered in DIFC in 2025, up 39% on the previous year.

Source: Dubai International Financial Centre

Every new business, platform and government service launched in the UAE needs people who can decide what to build, deliver it on time and make it easy to use. Product management has matured quickly here, and employers now look for product leaders who can connect customer insight, engineering and commercial targets, rather than managers who simply run a backlog.

On the delivery side, program directors and PMO leads with experience of large transformation programs remain in steady demand, particularly across government and financial services, while Agile roles are increasingly expected to bring delivery leadership as well as process. Design has followed a similar path, and experienced product designers and UX leaders are valued for their judgment on what to build as much as for the quality of their work.

ROLES IN DEMAND

- Head of Product
- Product Manager
- Program Director
- Head of PMO
- Product Designer

SKILLS IN DEMAND

- Product strategy and discovery
- Agile delivery at scale
- Stakeholder and vendor management
- User research and UX
- Data-informed decision making

MARKET NOTE

Product and design salaries at growth-stage companies often come with equity, which the ranges in this guide don't include.

PRODUCT, PROJECT, PROGRAM & DESIGN

Salary ranges

Monthly fixed salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
Product			
Chief Product Officer	70	88	100
Product Director	58	65	73
Head of Product	48	59	70
Product Manager	30	39	48
Product Owner	28	34	40
Program, Project and Delivery			
Program Director	50	60	70
Program Manager	40	47	54
Head of PMO	38	54	68
IT Project Manager	30	43	50
Delivery Manager	30	38	45
Scrum Master / Agile Lead	30	40	45
Business Analyst	20	28	33
Design			
Head of Design / UX Director	45	53	60
Product Designer	25	30	35
UX / UI Designer	20	29	35

PRACTICE AREA

Rec2Rec

The UAE recruitment industry has grown alongside the economy it serves.

4,122

New jobs created in DIFC in 2025, up 9% on the year.

Source: Dubai International Financial Centre

New company formation, regional headquarters relocations and Emiratization programs all create demand for agency and in-house recruiters, and Dubai now supports everything from global staffing groups to specialist boutiques. That breadth gives consultants more choice than most markets offer, and agencies compete hard for billers with a proven record in the region.

Base salaries in agency recruitment sit below other professional functions at the same seniority because commission makes up a large share of earnings, and that share grows with seniority. When candidates compare offers, the commission rate, threshold and payout timing usually matter as much as the base, and we spend as much time on those terms as on the headline number.

ROLES IN DEMAND

Senior Consultant, 360
Principal Consultant
Team Lead / Manager
Executive Search Associate
In-house Talent Acquisition
Partner

SKILLS IN DEMAND

Proven UAE billings
Business development and
desk ownership
Specialist sector network
Executive search
methodology
ATS and CRM discipline

MARKET NOTE

Commission structures vary widely, from flat percentages to tiered models with quarterly thresholds. A higher base with a steep threshold can pay less over a year than a modest base with a low one.

REC2REC

Salary ranges

Monthly base salary, AED thousands

ROLE	FROM	MID	TO
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Agency Recruitment

Director / Country Manager	70	90	120
Associate Director	30	40	45
Team Lead / Manager	25	30	35
Principal Consultant	22	27	32
Senior Consultant, 3 to 5 years	18	20	22
Recruitment Consultant, 1 to 3 years	10	15	18
Associate Consultant / Resourcer	8	10	12

In-house Talent Acquisition

Head of Talent Acquisition	50	65	80
Talent Acquisition Manager	40	50	55
Talent Acquisition Partner / Specialist	30	35	40

Agency commission

Typical share of fees billed

Associate Consultant	5% to 8%
Recruitment Consultant / Senior Consultant	8% to 12%
Principal Consultant / Team Lead	10% to 15%
Associate Director / Director	Override on team billings

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Sid & Gamble UAE Salary Guide 2026 covers permanent roles in the UAE across the functions we recruit into. Ranges are benchmarked against published UAE salary data and refined through our work with clients and candidates. Individual packages vary with company size, sector, scope of role and the strength of the candidate, so each range is a guide rather than a guarantee.

SOURCES

Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre, UAE GDP 2025

Central Bank of the UAE, Annual Report 2025

Dubai International Financial Centre, 2025 annual results

Abu Dhabi Global Market, Q3 2025 results

Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization, Emiratization targets 2026

UAE Ministry of Finance and Federal Tax Authority, corporate tax and e-invoicing timelines

UAE Government: We the UAE 2031, Digital Economy Strategy, National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence 2031

ABOUT SID & GAMBLE

Sid & Gamble is a boutique recruitment practice based in Dubai. We work across Finance, Human Resources, Legal, Sales & Marketing, Technology and Rec2Rec, in ten markets across the Middle East, Europe, Asia and North America.

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