

Dubai Clear and Nasdaq Dubai Receive European Securities and Markets Authority “ESMA” Tier 1 Recognition

- Status makes Dubai the only market in the MENA region with ESMA recognised Tier 1 CCPs.
- Recognition confirms that Dubai Clear and Nasdaq Dubai operate under regulatory and risk frameworks aligned with EU market infrastructure standards.

Dubai, 7 January 2026: Dubai Clear, a subsidiary of Dubai Financial Market (DFM), and Nasdaq Dubai, the Middle East’s leading international financial exchange, announced that they have been formally granted Tier 1 Third-Country Central Counterparty (CCP) recognition by the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), effective 31 December 2025.

This recognition makes Dubai Clear and Nasdaq Dubai the only central counterparties (CCP) in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to achieve ESMA Tier 1 status, underscoring UAE’s financial market infrastructure credibility and Dubai’s emergence as a globally recognised centre for internationally aligned post-trade services.

The Tier 1 designation enables Dubai Clear and Nasdaq Dubai to attract market participants and institutions from European Union Countries as clearing members, strengthening cross-border connectivity between both markets in Dubai and Europe’s capital markets and enhancing and to reinforce their role as a bridge between regional issuers and global investors.

ESMA’s decision confirms that Dubai Clear, regulated by the UAE Securities and Commodities Authority (SCA), and Nasdaq Dubai, regulated by the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA), operate under regulatory frameworks aligned with the European Market Infrastructure Regulation (EMIR). It reflects the strength and maturity of Dubai’s regulatory environment and its alignment with international best practices in risk management and market oversight.

Hamed Ali, CEO of Dubai Financial Market and Nasdaq Dubai, said: “This milestone reflects the progress Dubai has made in building market infrastructure that global investors recognise and rely on. ESMA Tier 1 recognition strengthens Nasdaq Dubai’s ability to connect regional opportunities with international capital and supports Dubai’s Capital Markets Development Strategy by enhancing access, efficiency, and investor confidence.”

Fatma Bin Qedad, General Manager of Dubai Clear, said: “ESMA’s Tier 1 recognition marks a significant step in Dubai Clear’s international growth journey. It enhances our ability to support cross-border activity and deliver efficient, resilient clearing services aligned with global standards.”

As Dubai’s licensed central counterparties, Dubai Clear and Nasdaq Dubai play a central role in ensuring the resilience and integrity of the emirate’s post-trade environment, supporting the long-term growth and international integration of Dubai’s capital markets. The recognition highlights the growing cooperation between UAE and European regulators and reinforces Dubai’s long-term commitment to transparency, financial stability, and world-class market infrastructure.

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About Dubai Clear:

Dubai Clear LLC is an independent central counterparty (CCP) and the designated clearing house for securities traded on the Dubai Financial Market (DFM). Established as a legal entity in 2020, Dubai Clear undertakes all clearing, settlement, and risk management functions for DFM, acting as the central counterparty to every trade executed on the DFM trading platform and providing settlement assurance to mitigate counterparty risk. The company operates under a robust risk-management framework supported by world-class technology developed by Nasdaq and is licensed and regulated by the UAE Securities and Commodities Authority (SCA). Dubai Clear is committed to supporting market integrity, enhancing liquidity, and aligning with international best practices in clearing and post-trade services. It has also been admitted as a Primary Member of the Global Association of Central Counterparties (GACCP), further reinforcing its participation in the global clearing community.

About Nasdaq Dubai:

Nasdaq Dubai is the international financial exchange serving the region between Western Europe and East Asia. It welcomes regional as well as global issuers that seek regional and international investment. The exchange currently lists shares, derivatives, Sukuk (Islamic bonds), conventional bonds and Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs). The majority shareholder of Nasdaq Dubai is Dubai Financial Market with a two-thirds stake. Borse Dubai owns one third of the shares. The regulator of Nasdaq Dubai is the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA).

About Dubai Financial Market:

Dubai Financial Market (DFM) was established as a public institution with its own independent corporate body. DFM operates as a secondary market for the trading of securities issued by public shareholding companies, bonds issued by the Federal Government or any of the local Governments and public institutions in the country, units of investment funds and any other financial instruments, local or foreign, which are accepted by the market. The DFM commenced operations on March 26, 2000 and became the first Islamic Shari'a-compliant exchange globally since 2007. Following its initial public offering in November 2006, when DFM offered 1.6 billion shares, representing 20 per cent of its paid-up capital of AED 8 billion, DFM became a public joint stock company, and its shares were listed on 7 March 2007 with the trading symbol (DFM). Following the IPO, the Government of Dubai retained the remaining 80 per cent of DFM Company through Borse Dubai Limited. www.dfm.ae

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