



مصرف الإمارات العربية المتحدة المركزي
CENTRAL BANK OF THE U.A.E.

United Arab Emirates
Monetary, Banking & Financial Markets Developments

2021 – 1st Quarter Report
May 2021

Introduction

As part of its commitment to promote economic and financial stability and growth in the UAE, the Central Bank of the UAE actively fosters a stable and efficient financial system by providing effective central banking services. The *United Arab Emirates Monetary, Banking and Financial Markets Developments Report* is one of the many avenues through which the Central Bank seeks to keep its stakeholders informed.

This report discusses the monetary and banking activities as well as developments in the UAE financial markets during the first quarter of 2021. The report also reviews ratios of annual change over the period from March 2020 to March 2021.

Monetary Developments

Money Supply **M₁**, which comprises Currency in Circulation outside Banks (Currency Issued - Cash at banks) plus Monetary Deposits, increased by 7.1% (q-o-q) during the first quarter of 2021.

On an annual basis, there was a 18.4% (y-o-y) climb in the monetary aggregate **M₁**, reaching AED 642.3 billion at the end of March 2021.

Money Supply **M₂** (**M₁** plus Quasi Monetary Deposits (Resident Time and Savings Deposits in Dirham, plus Resident Deposits in Foreign Currencies)), also increased by 0.6% (q-o-q) during the first quarter of 2021.

On an annual basis, there was a 2.2% (y-o-y) increase in Money Supply **M₂**, reaching AED 1,487.5 billion at the end of the first quarter of 2021.

Money Supply **M₃** (**M₂** plus government deposits at banks and at the Central Bank) fell by 0.2% (q-o-q) during the first quarter of 2021.

On an annual basis, there was a 3.1% (y-o-y) growth in Money Supply **M₃**, reaching AED 1,766.4 billion at the end of March 2021.

Typically, the money supply **M₂** is considered the best indicator for the availability of liquidity in the economy, as it comprises currency in circulation outside banks, in addition to various deposits of all the resident sectors in dirham denomination, except for the deposits of the government sector in the UAE. Statistical data show that at the end of the first quarter of 2021, there was a q-o-q increase in **M₂**. The rise in **M₂** during the first quarter of 2021 was mainly due to a 0.6% quarterly increase in the non-government resident deposits standing at AED 1,391.6 billion at the end of March 2021.

Table 1 - Monetary Developments in the UAE**(In Billions Dirhams - End of Period)**

	2020								2021		
	First Quarter		Second Quarter		Third Quarter		Fourth Quarter		First Quarter*		
	Amount	Quarterly Change (%)	Amount	Quarterly Change (%)	Amount	Quarterly Change (%)	Amount	Quarterly Change (%)	Amount	Change (%)	
										Quarterly	Annual
Money Supply (M₁)	542.7	5.4%	557.4	2.7%	568.0	1.9%	600.0	5.6%	642.3	7.1%	18.4%
Money Supply (M₂)	1454.9	3.0%	1458.0	0.2%	1468.7	0.7%	1478.5	0.7%	1487.5	0.6%	2.2%
Money Supply (M₃)	1714.1	-0.2%	1752.3	2.2%	1805.7	3.0%	1769.3	-2.0%	1766.4	-0.2%	3.1%

Source-** Data received from banks operating in the UAEM₁** = Currency in Circulation Outside Banks (Currency Issued - Cash at banks) + Monetary Deposits**M₂** = M₁ + Quasi-Monetary Deposits**M₃** = M₂ + Government Deposits

*Estimates, subject to revision

Banking Sector Development

1- Banks Operating in the UAE

The number of locally incorporated banks remained constant at 21 banks at the end of the first quarter of 2021. The branches of these locally incorporated banks decreased to 534 branches at the end of March 2021. The number of electronic banking service units of these banks increased to 35 units at the end of the first quarter of 2021. The number of Cash Offices decreased to 22 Cash Offices at the end of March 2021.

The number of GCC banks continue to remain steady during the first quarter of 2021 at 6 banks, with 5 branches. The number of other foreign banks remains unchanged at 21 banks with 68 branches. The number of electronic banking service units of these banks remains steady at 23 units at the end of the first quarter of 2021. The number of cash offices remains invariable at one cash office during the first quarter of 2021.

The technological and structural advancements in the UAE financial sector has resulted in increased accessibility of mobile banking applications, online banking and ease in the use of automated teller machines (ATM) for the past several years. These improvements continue to pay off by enhancing smooth operations of the banking system.

At the end of the first quarter of 2021, the number of financial institutions licensed by the Central Bank, i.e., Wholesale Banks, Representative Offices, Finance Companies, Moneychangers and Offices for Intermediating in Currency Trading & Money Market Operations reached 10, 83, 21, 94 and 11, respectively.

The total number of ATM of banks operating in the UAE reached 4,343 by the end of March 2021.

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Table-2 Banks, Other Financial Institutions & ATM										
2018 - 2021										
	2018	2019				2020				2021
	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar*
Locally Incorporated Banks										
Main Branches	22	22	22	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Additional Branches	743	733	713	664	656	640	611	559	541	534
Electronic Banking Service Units	33	33	34	33	33	34	33	32	34	35
Cash Offices	34	34	33	31	31	31	31	26	23	22
GCC Banks										
Main Branches	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Additional Branches	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5
Foreign Banks										
Main Branches	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Additional Branches	76	75	75	75	75	74	74	73	68	68
Electronic Banking Service Units	21	21	21	21	22	22	22	23	23	23
Cash Offices	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Wholesale Banks	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	10	10
Representative Offices	99	97	98	87	87	87	86	86	86	83
Finance Companies	26	24	23	23	23	23	22	22	22	21
Moneychangers	123	123	123	123	104	102	100	97	97	94
Offices for Intermediating in Currency Trading & Money Market Operations	11	9	9	9	11	11	11	11	11	11
ATM	5,303	5,279	5,229	5,187	5,076	4,937	4,685	4,542	4,422	4,343

Source: Banking Supervision Department and UAESWITCH

*Estimates, subject to revision

2- Bank Assets and Loans

At the end of the first quarter of 2021 total assets of banks operating in the UAE decreased by 0.4% (q-o-q), reaching AED 3,175.9 billion. During the period between March 2020 and March 2021, the total assets of banks operating in the UAE increased by 1.5% (y-o-y).

Gross credit also decreased by 1.4% (q-o-q), reaching 1,754.4 billion at the end of March 2021. On an annual basis, gross credit decreased by 0.8%.

3- Customer Deposits

At the end of the first quarter of 2021, total deposits of resident and non-resident customers with banks operating in the UAE fell by 0.2% (q-o-q), reaching AED 1,881.3 billion. Resident deposits decreased by 0.3% (q-o-q), reaching AED 1,677.8 billion at the end of the first quarter of 2021. Non-resident deposits rose by 0.5% (q-o-q), reaching AED 203.5 billion by the end of March 2021.

On an annual basis, Resident deposits increased by 2.6% and Non-resident deposits decreased by 6.1%.

4- Capital and Reserves

Aggregate Capital and Reserves of banks operating in the UAE decreased by 3.7% (q-o-q), reaching AED 378.1 billion at the end of the first quarter of 2021. At the end of the first quarter of 2021, Total Capital Adequacy Ratio stood at 17.9%, remaining well above the 13.0% Capital Adequacy Ratio, including the 2.5% Capital Conservation Buffer requirement and the 8.5% Tier1 Ratio, prescribed by the Central Bank regulations in compliance with the Basel III guidelines.

Although the Capital Conservation Buffer remains at 2.5%, banks are allowed to tap into the capital conservation buffer up to a maximum of 60% without supervisory consequences, effective 15 March 2020. The Domestic Systemically Important Banks' (D-SIBs) buffer remains the same; however, they are allowed to use 100% of their D-SIB buffer without supervisory consequences, effective 15 March 2020.

Capital adequacy ratios measure the amount of a bank's capital expressed as a percentage of its risk weighted exposures. A high capital adequacy ratio provides protection to depositors and promotes the stability and efficiency of the financial system of an economy. Effective December 2017, banks in the UAE follow Basel III principles for calculating the Capital Adequacy Ratios in line with the Guidelines issued by the Central Bank.

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Table- 3: Banking Indicators

(End of Month, Figures in billions of Dirhams unless otherwise indicated)

	2019		2020								2021		% Annual Change
	Dec	Quarterly Change (%)	Mar	Quarterly Change (%)	Jun	Quarterly Change (%)	Sep	Quarterly Change (%)	Dec	Quarterly Change (%)	Mar*	Quarterly Change (%)	
Total Assets	3082.9	2.0%	3128.0	1.5%	3190.2	2.0%	3252.5	2.0%	3188.0	-2.0%	3175.9	-0.4%	1.5%
Banks' Investments in Central Bank CDs	160.2	4.2%	144.6	-9.7%	178.5	23.4%	151.3	-15.2%	129.3	-14.5%	147.4	14.0%	1.9%
Shariah Compliant Certificates of Deposits	37.5	3.9%	33.1	-11.7%	46.4	40.2%	53.1	14.4%	45.3	-14.7%	50.3	11.0%	52.0%
Gross Credit ⁽¹⁾	1758.6	2.2%	1768.2	0.5%	1791.0	1.3%	1804.6	0.8%	1779.0	-1.4%	1754.4	-1.4%	-0.8%
Personal Loans to Residents	332.4	-0.4%	330.2	-0.7%	324.7	-1.7%	326.7	0.6%	329.5	0.9%	330.9	0.4%	0.2%
Total Deposits ⁽²⁾	1870.2	3.8%	1851.9	-1.0%	1866.2	0.8%	1907.2	2.2%	1884.5	-1.2%	1881.3	-0.2%	1.6%
Capital & Reserves ⁽³⁾	392.9	4.1%	369.9	-5.9%	382.5	3.4%	389.8	1.9%	392.8	0.8%	378.1	-3.7%	2.2%
Capital Adequacy Ratio ⁽⁴⁾	17.7%	0.0%	16.9%	-4.5%	17.6%	4.1%	18.0%	2.3%	18.2%	1.1%	17.9%	-1.6%	5.9%
Tier-1 Ratio	16.5%	0.0%	15.8%	-4.2%	16.4%	3.8%	16.9%	3.0%	17.1%	1.2%	16.7%	-2.3%	5.7%
Common Equity Tier 1(CET 1) Capital Ratio	14.7%	0.0%	13.9%	-5.4%	14.7%	5.8%	15.1%	2.7%	14.9%	-1.3%	14.7%	-1.3%	5.8%

⁽¹⁾ Includes credit to residents and non-residents: loans to non-banking financial institutions, Trade Bills Discounted and Loans and Advances to the Government and Public Sector, Private sector (corporates and individuals) in local and foreign currencies.

⁽²⁾ Net of inter-bank deposits and bank drafts, including commercial prepayments.

⁽³⁾ Excluding subordinated borrowings/deposits, but including current year profit.

⁽⁴⁾ Total Capital Ratio , Tier 1 Ratio and CET 1 Ratio for the period starting from Dec 2017 are calculated according to the Basel III Guidelines issued by CBUAE vide Circular 52/2017 .Whereas CAR for period prior to Dec 2017 are according to Basel II Guidelines.

*Estimates, subject to revision

5- Foreign Assets of the Central Bank

At the end of the first quarter of 2021, the Central Bank's foreign assets increased by 1.1% (q-o-q), reaching AED 392.4 billion. This increase was mainly ascribed to quarterly increases in Foreign Securities by 2142.6% (a quarterly increase of AED 85.9 billion) and Other Foreign Assets by 25.7% (a quarterly increase of AED 9.2 billion), overshadowing a reduction in Current Account Balances & Deposits with banks abroad by 26.1% (a quarterly decrease of AED 90.7 billion)

From March 2020 to March 2021, Central Bank Foreign Assets increased by 0.4% (y-o-y).

6- Abu Dhabi and Dubai Financial Markets Values

Abu Dhabi's quarterly average Financial Market Index rose by 17% during the first quarter of 2021. The quarterly average Market Capitalization of companies listed at the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX) increased by AED 101 billion reaching AED 826.7 billion at the end of the first quarter of 2021. The Quarterly Traded Value also increased by 74.7% during the first quarter of 2021 reaching AED 50.3 billion.

On an annual basis, the Abu Dhabi Financial Market Index fell by 3.3%.

Dubai's quarterly average Financial Market Index showed an increase by 9.2% during the first quarter of 2021. The quarterly average Market Capitalization of companies listed on the Dubai Financial Market (DFM) increased by AED 25.2 billion reaching AED 353.9 billion at the end of the first quarter of 2021. Quarterly Traded Value rose by 4.8% during the first quarter of 2021 reaching AED 15.4 billion.

On an annual basis, the Dubai Financial Market Index decreased by 14.1%.

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Table 4: Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX) Indicators

	2019				2020				2021
	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar
Number of listed Companies	70	70	70	70	69	69	69	73	74
General Share Price Index**	5085.8	5080.5	5180.3	5071.4	4597.4	4219.3	4447.4	4890.1	5723.2
<i>Quarterly Variation (%)</i>	4.6%	-0.1%	2.0%	-2.1%	-9.3%	-8.2%	5.4%	10.0%	17.0%
<i>Annual Variation Y-o-Y (%)</i>	9.2%	10.9%	9.5%	7.5%	2.3%	-4.4%	-9.3%	-11.1%	-3.3%
Market Capitalization (Billion AED)**	520.0	527.9	538.6	528.6	497.5	483.9	672.7	725.7	826.7
Quarterly Traded Values (Billion AED)	10.9	12.7	11.2	9.9	10.1	9.5	17.0	28.8	50.3

*Source: Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX)***Table 5: Dubai Financial Markets (DFM) Indicators**

	2019				2020				2021
	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar
Number of listed Companies*	67	67	67	66	66	67	65	65	64
General Share Price Index**	2612.7	2682.0	2819.4	2730.2	2383.9	1975.6	2189.9	2366.5	2585.3
<i>Quarterly Variation (%)</i>	-1.8%	2.7%	5.1%	-3.2%	-12.7%	-17.1%	10.8%	8.1%	9.2%
<i>Annual Variation Y-o-Y (%)</i>	-19.1%	-18.5%	-14.2%	-7.6%	-4.4%	-8.5%	-13.9%	-17.8%	-14.1%
Market Capitalization (Billion AED)**	347.4	355.2	368.2	371.3	338.9	289.2	307.6	328.7	353.9
Quarterly Traded Values (Billion AED)	11.3	12.8	13.9	13.5	14.2	16.9	19.3	14.7	15.4

includes foreign companiesSource: Dubai Financial Markets (DFM)*

**The Quarterly Share Price Index and the Quarterly Market Capitalization are measured as the quarterly average of monthly observations.

***The annual variation of the Share Price Indices are measured as the yearly averages of monthly observations.