



BEACON LEGAL
SPECIALIST LEGAL RECRUITMENT.

THE MIDDLE EAST SALARY & MARKET REPORT 2023

2022/23

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MARKET SUMMARY

The UAE has been a popular destination for lawyers for many years, thanks to its growing economy, business-friendly policies, low tax rates and high standard of living for expats. The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the UAE's economy, but the region has been recovering at an impressive rate and is expected to continue to do so in the coming years. The region is benefiting from significant sovereign and international investment, which in turn has increased the demand for legal services, year on year. Emerging economies, such as Saudi Arabia, are benefiting from unprecedented levels of sovereign investment in line with their mid to long term growth plans.

The large international law firms recruited steadily throughout the year and there was growth in areas such as Projects and Infrastructure, Private Equity, M&A and Finance. We expect this trend to continue into the second half of 2023.

Legal salaries increased across the globe in 2022 and most firms across the UAE followed suit. With rising inflationary pressures, tax-free jurisdictions continue to gain popularity as a destination of choice for lawyers looking to maximise their income.

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WORKING IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The recruitment market for legal professionals saw significant improvement during 2022, which continued notably as the year progressed, post-pandemic. Most demand came from top US and UK firms in Dubai, acting on growth mandates from their respective headquarters and the global boom in transactional work. There were a number of high profile and high value Partner and team movements in deal focused practice areas, which consequently drove salaries up as firms scrambled to retain talent.

Dubai continued to lead the charge as the most desirable destination for foreign lawyers. Working as a lawyer in Dubai can provide exposure to a diverse range of clients and legal systems, giving lawyers the opportunity to expand their skill set and gain valuable international experience on region leading work.

Dubai is known for its high standard of living, modern amenities, world-class healthcare facilities and a vibrant cultural scene. Dubai is also a safe city with low crime rates, making it an ideal place for lawyers to live and work.

Abu Dhabi also became an increasingly popular locale, with a number of top US firms attracting candidates through significant salaries and remuneration packages. With countless mega-projects currently underway, we experienced an increase in demand for Projects (including Project Finance), Energy and Infrastructure and Construction (both back-end and front-end) Lawyers. In years gone by, typically mid-level lawyers 3-5 PQE were the most in demand, but so far in 2023 we have noticed a significant shift in a focus to more senior hires (5+ PQE), as Partners were targeting technically strong candidates who required less supervision and had the ability to run matters independently.

The competitive salaries and tax benefits of the UAE, coupled with high standard of living, make Dubai and the UAE an attractive destination for lawyers.

REMUNERATION

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*At the time of writing: 10,000 Emirati Dirham = 4,070AUD = 2,228GBP

Silver Circle/UK Firms

PQE LEVEL	AED Monthly	AUD equivalent (April 2023)
NQ	33,000 - 35,000	13,200 - 14,000
1	35,000 - 39,000	14,000 - 15,600
2	40,000 - 45,000	16,100 - 18,000
3	42,000 - 47,000	16,900 - 18,900
4	45,500 - 53,500	18,500 - 21,700
5	51,000 - 58,000	20,700 - 23,500
6	54,000 - 65,000	21,900 - 26,400

Magic Circle Firms

PQE LEVEL	AED Monthly	AUD equivalent (April 2023)
NQ	35,000 - 37,000	14,000 - 15,000
1	40,000 - 42,000	16,100 - 16,900
2	46,000 - 51,000	18,700 - 20,700
3	48,000 - 52,000	19,500 - 21,100
4	53,000 - 60,000	21,500 - 24,400
5	58,000 - 65,000	23,500 - 26,400
6	62,000 - 68,000	25,200 - 27,600

US Firms (Cravath annual scale)

PQE LEVEL	USD Annually	AUD equivalent (April 2023)
NQ	175,000 - 205,000	260,000 - 305,000
1	180,000 - 215,000	270,000 - 320,000
2	190,000 - 225,000	280,000 - 335,000
3	200,000 - 250,000	300,000 - 370,000
4	225,000 - 295,000	335,000 - 440,000
5	250,000 - 345,000	370,000 - 515,000
6	275,000 - 370,000	410,000 - 550,000

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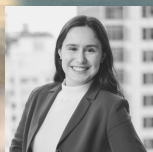
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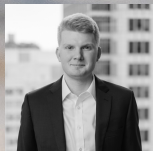
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