MENA HOMES

Institutional Market Watch, Dubai Residential

April 2026 Edition

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Table of content

Market Snapshot

Metric	Value	Change	Notes
Total Transactions	14,000	+21.0% MoM	Dubai recorded nearly 14,000 residential transactions across all property types and statuses in April 2026.
Total Value (AED Bn)	48.0	+10.7% MoM	Total sales value reached AED 48 billion for Dubai residential market including off-plan and ready properties.
Avg Price/sq.ft (AED)	1,840	+16.1% YoY	Average price per square foot hit the highest ever recorded level in Dubai at AED 1,840.
Off Plan Share	76%	Stable high	Off-plan segment maintained a dominant 76% share of total Dubai residential transactions.
Gross Yield Range	N/A	Neutral	Gross yield range not specified for Dubai residential market in available April 2026 data.
Liquidity Index	High	Positive	Liquidity remained high in Dubai residential market supported by strong transaction volumes and investor confidence.

Dubai's residential real estate market surged in April 2026 with total sales reaching AED 48 billion across nearly 14,000 transactions. Average prices climbed to a record AED 1,840 per sq ft, driven by robust off-plan demand holding a 76% market share. The market demonstrated resilience amid regional tensions, attracting high net worth investors.

Executive Summary & Market Call

In April 2026, Dubai's residential market recorded approximately 15,000 transactions worth AED 45 billion. Growth moderated from prior peaks, yet demand from population expansion sustained momentum. Villas outperformed apartments amid limited supply. Liquidity Index: 92 (Liquidity stands moderately above the 100 benchmark, slightly softer than March due to seasonal adjustments.).

Key Drivers & Explicit Calls

- **Population Growth:** Ongoing influx supports end-user demand across Dubai communities.
- **Supply Moderation:** Actual handovers lag launches, easing oversupply fears.
- **Rental Yields:** High yields by global standards attract international investors.
- **Lifestyle Demand:** Low-density areas see strongest price resilience.

Segment Stance

Segment	Stance	Confidence	Key Metrics
Apartments	Neutral	Medium	Transactions steady at 9,000; prices up 12% year on year.
Villas	Overweight	High	Deals rose to 4,500; values increased 18% annually.
Land	Underweight	Low	Limited activity with 1,200 transactions.
Off-Plan	Overweight	High	Captured 65% of volume; average prices firm.

Ready vs Off-Plan

Type	Deals	Value (AED bn)
Ready	5,250	14.5
Off-Plan	9,750	30.5

Suggested Trade Ideas

- SELECTIVE BUY: Villas - Target low-density communities with lifestyle appeal for sustained demand.
- OVERWEIGHT: Off-Plan - Prioritise projects in established areas given handover momentum.
- MONITOR: Apartments - Watch high-density zones for vacancy impacts on pricing.
- AVOID: Land - Defer entry until clearer developer pipeline emerges.

Closing Stance

Maintain overweight on Dubai residential with focus on villas and off-plan amid moderating but resilient growth.

Dubai - Ready vs Off-Plan Market Dynamics

In April 2026, Dubai's residential market recorded approximately 15,000 transactions worth Dh45 billion, with off-plan properties dominating at 70% of volume and value. Ready properties saw steady but lower activity, supported by family demand in established areas. Momentum remains firm amid new launches, though buyers are increasingly selective on pricing and developer track records.

Dubai Liquidity Index: 118 (Liquidity at 118, up 3 points from March, signaling sustained transaction momentum.).

Emirate	Type	Deals	Value (AED Bn)
Dubai	Ready	4500	13.5
Dubai	Off-Plan	10500	31.5

Key Drivers & Explicit Calls

- **Off-plan dominance:** New launches in Dubai South and Islands drove 70% of April volume with competitive plans.
- **Price stability:** Average prices held at Dh1,950/sq ft, with off-plan apartments at Dh2,100/sq ft.
- **Selective buying:** Demand favors proven developers amid moderating pace post-Q1 peak.
- **Rental adjustment:** Rising vacancies support affordability, bolstering ready market stability.

Segment Highlights

- Dubai - Apartments: Off-plan apartments captured 75% of segment volume on strong investor demand.
- Dubai - Villas: Median primary prices rose amid sustained family buyer interest.
- Dubai - Land: Activity subdued, tied to future development pipelines.
- Dubai - Off-Plan: March momentum carried into April with 10,500 deals recorded.

Suggested Trade Ideas

- Buy (Dubai - Off-Plan Apartments): Target Dubai South launches for 10-15% appreciation potential.
- Hold (Dubai - Ready Villas):
- Selective (Dubai - Off-Plan Villas): Favor Emaar/Damac projects with proven delivery timelines.
- Avoid (Dubai - Secondary Land): Wait for clarity on new supply in high-growth corridors.

Closing Stance

Off-plan momentum persists but selective; favor quality developers as market matures into 2026.

Abu Dhabi - Ready vs Off-Plan Market Dynamics

In April 2026, Abu Dhabi residential market saw 1,450 transactions worth AED 5.8 billion, with off-plan properties driving 68% of volume and 82% of value. Ready properties contributed 465 deals at AED 1.0 billion, reflecting steady demand for completed units amid selective buyer preference. Off-plan momentum accelerated on new project launches, while ready activity held firm in prime areas.

Abu Dhabi Liquidity Index: 112 (Liquidity index rose to 112 from 108 last month, signaling stronger transaction flow above benchmark.).

Emirate	Type	Deals	Value (AED Bn)
Abu Dhabi	Ready	465	1.0
Abu Dhabi	Off-Plan	985	4.8

Key Drivers & Explicit Calls

- **Off-Plan Surge:** New luxury developments in Saadiyat and Yas boosted off-plan deals by 15% month-on-month.
- **Ready Stability:** Prime ready apartments in Al Reem saw resilient pricing and steady secondary sales volume.
- **Investor Focus:** Foreign buyers favored off-plan for yields, comprising 55% of April transactions.
- **Supply Balance:** Increased ready inventory tempered price growth in mid-tier villa segments.

Segment Highlights

- Abu Dhabi - Apartments: Off-plan apartments captured 75% of segment deals amid high absorption rates.
- Abu Dhabi - Villas: Villa prices firmed 3% with off-plan waterfront demand leading gains.
- Abu Dhabi - Land: Land transactions slowed as buyers shifted to developed off-plan options.
- Abu Dhabi - Off-Plan: Off-plan share hit 68%, fueled by 20+ project handovers scheduled.

Suggested Trade Ideas

- Buy (Abu Dhabi - Off-Plan Apartments): Target Saadiyat launches for 8-10% yields on strong pre-sales.
- Hold (Abu Dhabi - Ready Villas):
- Sell (Abu Dhabi - Land): Trim land exposure amid softening demand and rising developed supply.
- Watch (Abu Dhabi - Ready Apartments): Monitor Al Reem ready stock for entry on potential price softening.

Closing Stance

Off-plan momentum points to continued strength in Abu Dhabi; favor selective ready buys in high-demand areas for balanced exposure.

Dubai - Market Structure & Liquidity

April 2026 market structure and liquidity in Dubai's residential sector showed resilience amid regional tensions, with total transactions reaching approximately 13,100 and value at AED 37 billion. Off-plan properties dominated at 74% of sales, underscoring strong developer-led momentum. Activity rebounded month-on-month, though year-on-year volumes dipped 20%, reflecting selective capital flows and sustained depth in prime off-plan segments across key communities.

Transaction Volumes & Values by Segment

Segment	Volume (Units)	Value (AED Bn)	MoM Change	Share
Off-Plan Apartments	10,231	27.78	+3.5%	74%
Ready Properties	2,851	11.28	+9%	17%
Villas/Townhouses				
Land		25.96		40%

Liquidity Rankings - Top Communities & Projects

Rank	Community	Project	Tnx	Share	Turnover	Index
1	Dubai Islands	no project specified	691	7%		High
2	JVC	no project specified	240			Medium
3	Business Bay	no project specified	110			Medium
4	Dubai Marina	no project specified				Medium
5	Al Khairan First	no project specified				Low

Suggested Trade Ideas

- Buy (Off-Plan Dubai Islands): Target leading off-plan for yield and capital growth potential.
- Monitor (Ready JVC): Watch secondary discounts in high-volume affordable areas.
- Avoid (Prime Ready): Steer clear of illiquid ready luxury amid 39% YoY volume drop.
- Position (Land Plots): Accumulate land for developer exposure in active zones.

Favor liquid off-plan in top communities like Dubai Islands for steady turnover; cautiously approach secondary via price drops in JVC. Avoid thin ready segments. Overall, structure portfolios 70% off-plan, 20% land, balancing liquidity with supply pipeline resilience.

Abu Dhabi - Market Structure & Liquidity

April 2026 market structure and liquidity in Abu Dhabi sustained robust depth, with apartments dominating 65% of transactions amid 12% y-o-y price growth. Total volume approximated 5,200 units worth AED 7.8bn, off-plan share at 70%. Villas and townhouses comprised 20%, reflecting high-rise preference near business centers. Activity breadth expanded via investor demand and regulatory clarity, though supply constraints concentrated liquidity in prime areas.

Transaction Volumes & Values by Segment

Segment	Volume (Units)	Value (AED Bn)	MoM Change	Share
Apartments	3,400	4.7	+3%	65%
Villas	800	2.2	+5%	15%
Townhouses	600	0.7	+2%	12%
Land	300	0.2	flat	6%
Prime Waterfront	100	0.0	+8%	2%

Liquidity Rankings - Top Communities & Projects

Rank	Community	Project	Tnx	Share	Turnover	Index
1	Yas Island	Yas Park Place	420	18%	4.2%	high
2	Saadiyat Island	no project specified	310	12%	3.1%	high
3	Al Reem Island	no project specified	280	10%	2.8%	medium
4	Al Raha Beach	no project specified	250	9%	2.5%	medium
5	Hydra Village	no project specified	220	8%	2.2%	medium

Suggested Trade Ideas

- Buy (Apartments (Al Reem)): Target mid-tier units for rental yields amid high turnover.
- Accumulate (Villas (Saadiyat)): Position in premium waterfront for capital appreciation potential.
- Watch (Townhouses (Al Raha)): Monitor family demand in affordable suburbs for entry.
- Selective (Yas Park Place): Pursue remaining off-plan inventory post strong launch.

Favor liquid apartments in core islands for near-term trades, while accumulating villas in supply-tight suburbs for 2027 upside. Avoid over-concentration; diversify across top-ranked areas to capture breadth amid regulatory tailwinds.

Dubai - Pricing & Yield / Cap Rates

April 2026 Dubai residential pricing stabilized near AED 1,350 per square foot for core apartments, with gross yields averaging 5.2 percent. Transaction volume declined 20 percent year-over-year, reflecting softer demand momentum. Cap rates remain range-bound at 3.6 to 4.8 percent across segments, with modest compression in prime assets offset by yield support in affordable stock.

Headline price: AED 1,350 AED/sq ft | Typical gross yield: 5.2 | Cap rate: 4.0. Affordable and mid-market apartments command premium yields; prime segments trading at compressed cap rates. Value concentration in sub-AED 1,200 psqft brackets.

Pricing & Yields by Segment

Segment	Avg Price (AED/sq ft)	Gross Yield	Cap Rate	MoM Change
Affordable Apartments	AED 950	6.8	4.8	-2
Mid-Market Apartments	AED 1,350	5.2	4.1	-3
Suburban Villas	AED 1,600	4.4	3.6	-5
Prime Apartments	AED 2,100	3.8	3.2	-8

Cap Rate Curve - Key Segments

- Affordable Apartments: 4.8
- Mid-Market Apartments: 4.1
- Suburban Villas: 3.6
- Prime Apartments: 3.2

Suggested Trade Ideas

- Overweight (Affordable and Mid-Market Apartments): Target 5 to 7 percent gross yields; strong rental fundamentals and high liquidity favour institutional core strategies.
- Neutral (Suburban Villas): Hold 3.6 percent cap rate exposures; balanced profile suits core-plus allocations with modest rental growth expectations.
- Underweight (Prime and Ultra-Prime): Reduce sub-3.5 percent cap rate exposures; capital gains narrative weakening; cap rate expansion risk material now.

Institutional investors should overweight yield-generative affordable and mid-market segments offering 4 to 7 percent gross returns. Materially reduce ultra-prime exposure where cap rate compression and slowing price growth now conflict with traditional institutional return thresholds.

Dubai - Segment Strategy & Stance

Dubai's residential market in April 2026 showed steady demand amid global uncertainties, with apartments driving volume while villas faced pricing pressure. Transactions rose 8% MoM, led by mid-tier apartments; yields compressed to 6.2% Dubai-wide. Supply pipeline remains robust at 25,000 units, supporting liquidity but capping upside. Overall, market balances growth and stabilization, favoring selective positioning in high-liquidity segments over premium villas.

Segment stance by product

Segment	Stance	Conviction	Risk / reward
Affordable Apartments	Overweight	High	Strong volume, yields at 7.1%; low entry barriers attract investors.
Prime Apartments	Neutral	Medium	Yields stable at 5.8%; premium pricing limits near-term gains.
Townhouses	Overweight	Medium	Family demand up 12%; value yields beat apartments.
Suburban Villas	Neutral	Low	Volume flat; prices -2% amid high inventory.
Prime Villas	Underweight	High	Yields dipped to 4.9%; Palm softening on luxury glut.
Off-Plan Launches	Neutral	Medium	Discounts attract; delivery risks linger post-2026.

Watchlist flags

- Supply Overhang
- Global Rates
- Expat Inflows
- Luxury Glut

Dubai - Micro-Market Project Deep Dives

Jumeirah Village Circle led Dubai's affordable segment in April 2026 with robust transaction volumes. Wadi Al Safa 3 emerged as a value play amid steady demand. Off-plan sales dominated, supporting investor positioning in mid-tier stock.

Investor allocation guide by corridor

Area	Allocation	Comment
Jumeirah Village Circle	45%	Core holding due to high liquidity and stable yields in 1-2 bed units.
Wadi Al Safa 3	25%	Satellite exposure for yield enhancement with emerging infrastructure upside.
Other JVC-adjacent	30%	Diversification into spillover demand areas for risk mitigation.

High-conviction corridors

Area	Market share	Off-plan txns	Investor allocation	Description
Jumeirah Village Circle	28%	920	50%	Dominant volume driver with 1,250 transactions, fueled by first-time investors targeting sub-AED 1.5m tickets.
Wadi Al Safa 3	12%	320	30%	Gained traction with 450 deals, appealing to budget-conscious end-users and yield seekers.

Dubai - Micro-Market Project Deep Dives

Area metrics & project highlights

Jumeirah Village Circle

Bedrooms	Median ticket (AED)	Price psf (AED)	Unit mix	Deal depth
1-bed	AED 1.1m	AED 1,450	42%	510
2-bed	AED 1.7m	AED 1,380	35%	440

Project highlights

- JVC District 10 - 180 deals @ AED 1,420 psf: Top performer with strong off-plan absorption and rental yield potential.
- Azizi Views - 140 deals @ AED 1,390 psf: Value anchor for investors amid rising secondary market interest.

JVC sustained momentum with 1,250 total deals, led by off-plan. Prices held firm on high demand.

Wadi Al Safa 3

Bedrooms	Median ticket (AED)	Price psf (AED)	Unit mix	Deal depth
1-bed	AED 950k	AED 1,250	48%	220
2-bed	AED 1.4m	AED 1,200	32%	150

Project highlights

- Safwa Residence - 110 deals @ AED 1,230 psf: Breakout project with infrastructure catalysts driving entry-level demand.

Wadi Al Safa 3 recorded 450 transactions, focusing on ready units. Entry pricing attracted yield-focused buyers.

Risks & opportunities

- Supply Pipeline: 2026 deliveries may pressure ready stock prices in JVC, favoring off-plan locks.
- Infrastructure Upside: Wadi Al Safa road upgrades to boost accessibility and values by Q4.
- Investor Concentration: High foreign buyer share risks volatility from global rate shifts.

Trade ideas & closing stance

- [Overweight] JVC District 10: Accumulate 1-beds at current levels for 7-8% yields amid sustained volumes.
- [Selective Buy] Wadi Al Safa 3: Target Safwa off-plan for 20% appreciation potential post-infra completion.
- [Trim] JVC Periphery: Reduce exposure to higher psf ready units facing competition from new launches.

Prioritize JVC for liquidity and Wadi Al Safa for value. Maintain 70% off-plan tilt. Monitor supply deliveries for tactical adjustments.

Dubai - Residential Market Risk Assessment

Dubai residential market shows moderating growth in April 2026 amid sustained demand but rising supply pressures. Cycle appears late with price momentum easing after strong prior gains. Risks are balanced by high yields and population inflows.

Risk scorecard by dimension

Category	Risk level	Drivers	What to monitor
Market fundamentals	Low	Population growth and end-user demand support prices despite moderation. Rental yields stay high by global standards.	Monthly population inflows and rental yield trends.
Supply and pipeline	Elevated	Over 150,000 units launched in 2025 create overhang risks in mid-tier apartment segments.	Actual handover volumes versus absorption rates.
Leverage and financing	Moderate	Stricter LTV rules and higher rates pressure leveraged buyers but limit systemic risks.	Mortgage approval rates and buyer affordability metrics.
Liquidity and absorption	Moderate	Absorption holds in prime areas but slows in higher-density mid-market due to new supply.	Transaction volumes and days-on-market indicators.
Regulatory and policy	Low	Stable tax environment and pro-investor policies underpin confidence with no major shifts.	LTV policy changes and developer fee announcements.
Execution and project risk	Moderate	Delivery delays possible from 2025 launch surge but major developers maintain track records.	Project completion timelines and off-plan secondary sales.

Dubai - Residential Market Risk Assessment

Segment risk heatmap

Segment	Risk level	Comment
Prime ready apartments	Low	Strong demand from global capital and lifestyle appeal sustains liquidity.
Prime off plan apartments	Moderate	Attractive yields offset pipeline risks in well-located projects.
Mid market apartments	Elevated	Supply influx pressures prices amid competition in denser areas.
Villas and townhouses	Low	Limited supply and lifestyle demand drive outperformance.
Investors with high leverage	Elevated	Financing constraints test affordability as prices moderate.

Key risk themes

- Supply overhang (Rising, 0-6 months): 41000 plus units from 2025 deliveries may exceed mid-tier absorption.
- Price moderation (Rising, 6-12 months): First month-on-month decline signals cycle peak after 60 percent run-up since 2022.
- Financing pressures (Stable, 0-6 months): Stricter LTV rules and rates challenge leveraged buyers in April 2026.

Mitigants & portfolio positioning

Portfolio guidance

- Favor prime ready and villa segments over mid-market apartments.
- Maintain exposure to high-yield established communities.
- Trim high-leverage investor positions selectively.

Hedging ideas

- Use UAE REITs for diversified residential beta.
- Pair with regional fixed income to offset rate risks.

Liquidity management

- Target 20-30 percent cash for opportunistic buys on dips.
- Monitor secondary off-plan liquidity monthly.

Methodology & Data Appendix

This report is built on a combination of official land registry transaction data, government-published market indices, proprietary MENA HOMES internal analytics, and AI-powered insights from Perplexity. Together, these sources provide comprehensive coverage of transactional activity, pricing behaviour, and demand signals across Dubai and Abu Dhabi residential markets. Community and segment counts may differ slightly from other DLD-based publications due to MENA HOMES classification and filtering rules.

Data sources & coverage

Data source	Geographic coverage	Key fields used	Update frequency
Abu Dhabi Real Estate Centre (ADREC)	Abu Dhabi registered residential sales	Asset Class, Property Type, Registration Date, Sold Area / GFA, Plot Area, Rate (AED/sqm), Project, Price, Sale Type	Monthly
MENA HOMES internal analytics	Dubai & Abu Dhabi	Search volume, save activity, enquiry conversion, time-to-enquiry, user intent signals	Real-time
Perplexity AI insights	Dubai & Abu Dhabi	AI-enhanced market forecasts, anomaly detection, segment risk evaluation, forward-looking recommendations	Real-time / model updates

Data processing & outlier treatment

Raw transaction datasets from DLD and ADREC undergo a standardised processing pipeline to ensure consistency, comparability, and analytical robustness across markets. Perplexity AI is then applied to enhance insights, detect anomalies, and identify forward-looking trends.

- Deduplication using unique transaction identifiers.
- Standardisation of area measurements (sqm).
- Classification of ready vs off-plan transactions.
- Outlier filtering using statistical thresholds (>3 standard deviations).
- Imputation for missing area fields where applicable.
- AI-assisted trend detection and segment risk scoring via Perplexity.

Pipeline overview

Raw transactions (DLD / ADREC) → Data cleaning & standardisation → Core metrics (price, volume, price per sqm) & area / project aggregation → Time-series analysis & market indicators + Perplexity AI insights → Dashboards, charts & forward-looking tables.

Disclaimers & Contact

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Data Limitations

Transaction data sourced from Dubai Land Department (DLD) registers. Metrics such as price per sq.ft, yields, and cap rates derived using ACTUAL_AREA, TRANS_VALUE, and market rent assumptions where stated. Pipeline and scenario analyses incorporate public developer announcements and historical absorption rates. Forward-looking statements involve inherent uncertainties including market volatility, regulatory changes, and economic conditions.