

A grayscale photograph of a business meeting. In the foreground, a person's hands are visible, one holding a pen over a document with various charts and graphs. In the background, other people are seated around a table, some with their hands clasped, suggesting a collaborative work environment. The overall tone is professional and analytical.

Cooper Fitch
**SALARY
GUIDE
2019**

**LEGAL
UAE**



UAE SALARY GUIDE 2019

LEGAL

Legal firms are in need of real estate litigation and arbitration lawyers.

Commercial legal disputes are on the rise in the Emirates; there are constant efforts to put an effective dispute resolution method in place. To ensure the prevalence of qualified UAE lawyers, the Ministry of Justice, in collaboration with the DIFC Academy of Law, has secured an 'Authorised Body' status for lawyers practising in the Emirates, which enables them to qualify as solicitors in England and Wales.

High demand for corporate lawyers is putting pressure on the region's talent supply.

There is an increase in banking, compliance and regulatory and legal positions in the region while there is a limited local talent supply. A significant number of private practice firms are looking to the United Kingdom and the United States to relocate talent where there is no qualification shortage or limitations internationally.

“There is an increase in banking, compliance and regulatory, legal positions in the region while there is a limited local talent supply.”

Bilingual and Western-educated lawyers earn the highest salaries.

We are seeing an increase for paralegals and senior associates, particularly on the corporate side and an increase in legal firms seeking Capital Markets, M & A and PPP transactions experts at the associate and senior associate levels. Bilingual and Western-educated lawyers who can manage internal and external relationships and drive business growth are demanding premium salaries.

Professionals in the UAE are expressing concerns regarding intrinsic appreciation in the workplace.

We see many industry organisations allowing more flexibility and mobility regarding the work environment and office hours. Private practice offices have been developed to match the standards of international firms. The legal marketplace is very competitive, and employers are always keen on retaining their employees, especially partners who drive growth and lead teams.

Legal firms are to increase their hiring by 10 to 15 per cent.

Partner and team movements to other organisations will continue to be a challenge within the private practice in 2019. High performing partners and teams will continue to be on the radar for firms practising in the Emirates. Employers need to focus on the development of their team and create a collaborative work environment. Strong bonus pools, flexible working arrangements and exciting projects are the key drivers that help retain top-tier candidates. Retention of candidates will be even more important in 2019-2020 with the arrival of Expo 2020 and Vision 2021. The public sector and governmental entities are strongly aligned with Vision 2021 especially when it comes to capital markets and construction.



UAE SALARY GUIDE

Welcome to the Cooper Fitch Salary Guide for United Arab Emirates in 2019. Our guide provides salary expectation ranges for mid-level to senior professionals and hiring across the Emirates and insights on the employment market, key drivers for change and expected patterns in 2019. This is based on observations made in 2018 with both job seekers and clients in the region by our subject matter experts. Cooper Fitch is based in the United Arab Emirates since 1997 specialising in recruitment, executive search and HR advisory services.

Cooper Fitch estimates the GDP growth for the Emirates will be approximately 4 per cent in 2019. However, there is a consensus that it could be as high as 5-6%. With oil prices at an average of \$71 per barrel in 2018, we are optimistic that oil prices will remain steady in 2019. However, we are not expecting any significant increase in salary ranges in 2019.

We predict an improvement in the employment market in 2019. In the previous years, the market saw a significant restructuring in organisations, particularly in the banking sector which affected employment rates and adversely influenced salary levels. We see more job stability in 2019 albeit there are more planned mergers, particularly with some Abu Dhabi based banks.

With the continual drive to the Emirates' Vision 2021, we see the need for improvements in economic reforms. At the moment, oil contributes to around 35% of the UAE government revenues. As 2021 approaches, we see the Emirates focusing on human capital to support its diversification and generate better revenue. Also, as part of its vision, the introduction of VAT in 2018 has brought diversity to the country's economic revenue streams and also encouraged transparency for businesses.

The biggest challenge faced by organisations in 2018 is the retention of their top performing teams and individuals. Jobs seekers have faced bigger challenges in the past as salaries have decreased; there has been a significant increase in the number of candidates available in the market. In the unfortunate event where someone loses their job, the period required to find a new vocation has become longer.

The previous years' reduction in oil prices has caused companies to lose confidence in the market which in some cases has made them hesitant about making key hires. We have also noticed a reduction in the retail and luxury retail sectors in 2018. There is a lack of consumer confidence, but we expect improvements in both markets in 2019.

We hope you find the insights presented interesting and useful and we welcome any feedback. If you would like specific data on your market, please feel to contact me directly.



Trefor Murphy
CEO & Founder
tmurphy@cooperfitch.ae

UAE SALARY GUIDE 2019

LEGAL

ROLE		MIN	MAX
PRIVATE PRACTICE REGIONAL FIRMS	Legal Secretary	15,000	20,000
	Paralegal	16,000	25,000
	Newly Qualified	20,000	35,000
	Associate	30,000	50,000
	Senior Associate	40,000	70,000
	Counsel	50,000	85,000
	Partner	70,000	120,000+
PRIVATE PRACTICE US & UK FIRMS	Legal Secretary	18,000	25,000
	Paralegal	18,000	30,000
	Newly Qualified	30,000	45,000
	Associate	30,000	50,000
	Senior Associate	50,000	75,000
	Counsel	75,000	100,000
	Partner	80,000	200,000+
IN HOUSE	Legal Secretary	15,000	20,000
	Paralegal	15,000	24,000
	Junior Legal Counsel/Advisor	25,000	40,000
	Counsel	45,000	65,000
	General Counsel	50,000	80,000
	Director	50,000	120,000+

The salary ranges provided are in AED and represent a monthly salary inclusive of basic and any allowances. Salaries provided are exclusive of any bonus, guaranteed or otherwise.

UAE SALARY GUIDE 2019

UNDERSTANDING THIS GUIDE

METHODOLOGY

The salary information provided in this guide has been compiled by dedicated researchers across Cooper Fitch's subject matter experts, from our Research team to our Managing Partner group. Our experts are in regular contact with both employers and job seekers across our specialist sectors in the Emirates.

SALARY DATA

The salary ranges in this guide are indications of the market rate for mid-level to senior positions for hiring and new career opportunities in 2019. This salary data is based on placements made in 2018 and our teams' specialist knowledge. The information presented in this document should be used as a general guide only with intent to provide an approximate framework to gauge what a typical professional is likely to earn in the region. All salary data provided is exclusive of any bonus payments, guaranteed or otherwise.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Cooper Fitch provide in-depth compensation and benefits analysis, for more information please contact tmurphy@cooperfitch.ae.