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Brookfield, Blackstone and HSBC Are Doubling Down on the UAE. Here's Why That Matters...

While overseas investors weigh headline risk, the world's largest institutions are committing balance sheet capital to the UAE. Brookfield, Blackstone and HSBC have all deepened their positions in 2026, and the DIFC has just ...

HIGH	7.8	4 August 2026	7/10
INVESTOR IMPACT	SIGNIFICANCE SCORE	EVENT DATE	SOURCE RELIABILITY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

01

Brookfield, Blackstone and HSBC Are Doubling Down on the UAE. Here's Why That Matters More

A report from Alexander Johnson Group, published in Luxury Lifestyle Magazine on 4 August 2026, sets out why institutional capital is still moving into the UAE despite recent regional tension. Brookfield, which manages over 1 trillion dollars globally, has formed a joint venture with Alshaya Group to build a 480,000 square foot mixed use scheme in Dubai Hills. Blackstone is opening a new office in the DIFC. HSBC, marking 80 years in the country, has restated the UAE as a priority market for its wealth business. The DIFC passed 10,000 active registered companies in the first half of 2026, reaching 10,018 after 2,318 new registrations, organic growth of 30% in 12 months. For an investor deciding whether now is the right time to commit capital, the report argues that institutional due diligence has already happened. The gap between that confidence and overseas hesitation is where entry timing works in your favour, though a single-source report on institutional sentiment should be read alongside the transaction data, not instead of it.

- Brookfield, which manages over 1 trillion dollars globally, has formed a joint venture with Alshaya Group for a 480,000 square foot mixed use scheme in Dubai Hills.
- Blackstone is opening a new DIFC office and HSBC, 80 years in the UAE this year, has restated the country as a priority wealth market.
- The DIFC passed 10,000 active registered companies for the first time in the first half of 2026, reaching 10,018, with wealth and asset management firms up 35% to 592 and family related entities up 36% to 1,408.
- The UAE was the world's leading destination for millionaire migration in 2025, drawing an estimated 9,800 high net worth individuals, most to Dubai, and scores 85.3 on Henley and Partners' 2026 wealth mobility competitiveness index.

- Dubai's 2026 budget is the largest in its history, part of a 302.7 billion dirham three year programme, while Mubadala and Aldar have announced a more than 60 billion dirham expansion of Abu Dhabi's Al Maryah Island financial district.
- June 2026 DLD data shows AED 32.7bn in transaction value across 13,766 sales, with off plan accounting for 72.3% of transactions by count, evidence that the institutional signal and the retail transaction data are currently moving in the same direction.

THE EVENT

02 What happened, and why it matters

WHAT HAPPENED

In a report published on 4 August 2026, Alex Johnson, founder and CEO of Alexander Johnson Group, set out what he is hearing from clients, landowners, bankers and operators in the months following a period of heightened regional tension. His central claim is that institutional capital is still committing to the UAE at scale. Brookfield has formed a joint venture with Alshaya Group to build a 480,000 square foot mixed use scheme in Dubai Hills. Blackstone is planning its return to Dubai with a new DIFC office. HSBC, in the country for 80 years this year, has restated the UAE as a priority market for its wealth business, and other global asset managers are pressing ahead with plans for offices in Abu Dhabi. On the data side, the DIFC passed 10,000 active registered companies for the first time in the first half of 2026, reaching 10,018 after 2,318 new registrations, organic growth of 30% in 12 months. Wealth and asset management firms in the DIFC rose 35% to 592, and family related entities rose 36% to 1,408. The DIFC now ranks seventh globally in the Global Financial Centres Index. The report also cites the UAE as the world's leading destination for millionaire migration in 2025, drawing an estimated 9,800 high net worth individuals, most to Dubai, and notes Henley and Partners' 2026 wealth mobility competitiveness score of 85.3 for the UAE. On governance, the report points to Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed taking a more visible role in major deals and diplomacy, the January announcement that ADQ now sits under L'imad Holding, a new sovereign investment vehicle he oversees, and a more than 60 billion dirham expansion of Abu Dhabi's Al Maryah Island financial district by Mubadala and Aldar. It also notes Dubai's 2026 budget is the largest in the emirate's history, part of a 302.7 billion dirham three year spending programme.

WHY IT MATTERS

For a capital preservation minded investor, the identity of the buyer matters as much as the price. Brookfield, Blackstone and HSBC do not commit balance sheet capital or open new regional offices on a whim, their due diligence processes are long and unforgiving. When that kind of capital moves into a market at the same time as headline concerns about regional stability are circulating, it tells you something the news cycle does not: that the institutions with the deepest research capability in the world have already run the risk assessment you are trying to run yourself, and have concluded the long term case still holds. The DIFC numbers reinforce the same point from a different angle. A 30% rise in company registrations and a 36% rise in family related entities are not the kind of figures you get from short term speculation, they reflect multi year commitments by wealth structures that plan in decades, not quarters.

WHO IT AFFECTS

This is most relevant to you if you are a high net worth or family office investor weighing whether the UAE still deserves a place in a long horizon portfolio, particularly if recent regional headlines have made you pause. It also matters if you already hold Dubai real estate and are trying to judge whether the structural demand underneath your asset is still intact, or if you are comparing Dubai against other jurisdictions for residence and wealth structuring purposes.

INVESTOR READ

03 Implications, risks and opportunities

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The report frames the current wave of institutional commitment as a continuation, not a new phenomenon. It describes the proposition that has drawn capital to the UAE as one that has held for two decades: that Dubai is a place where wealth can be preserved and compounded over time, underpinned by political stability, sound regulation and a government track record of delivering on stated plans.

IMPLICATIONS

The practical read for you is that the institutional signal and the transaction data are currently telling the same story. June 2026 DLD figures show AED 32.7bn in transaction value across 13,766 sales, with off plan property accounting for 72.3% of transactions by count. That is not a market in retreat. If you have been holding back because of macro headlines, the report's argument, and the DIFC registration data behind it, suggests the gap between your hesitation and institutional confidence may itself be where the opportunity sits. That said, one report from one advisory firm citing largely qualitative commitments is not a substitute for your own due diligence on any specific asset, developer or structure.

RISKS

Be straight with you on the limits of this. The report is a single source, written by the founder of a real estate advisory firm with a commercial interest in a positive UAE narrative, and it draws on one set of statistics without independent verification in this brief. Corporate registrations, office openings and joint ventures are forward looking commitments, not completed transactions, and institutional capital can also slow or reverse if regional conditions change. Henley and Partners' own data, cited in the report, shows a rise in enquiries from UAE based individuals about alternative residence options, and while the report frames this as diversification rather than an exodus, that is an interpretation, not a fact. Borrowing costs also remain a live consideration, with the 3 month EIBOR at 4.0% in August 2026 against a CBUAE base rate of 3.6%, which matters if any part of your entry into this market is leveraged.

OPPORTUNITIES

If the institutional read holds, the window where retail sentiment lags institutional confidence is exactly where disciplined, long horizon buyers have historically done well in Dubai. The off plan share of 72.3% of June 2026 transactions, combined with an average price of AED 1,680 per square foot, points to a market still accessible at entry level pricing relative to the scale of capital now committing to it. For investors focused on multi decade wealth preservation rather than short term flips, the DIFC's growth in wealth management and family office entities is also worth watching as a proxy for how the world's most disciplined capital is choosing to structure around Dubai, not just invest in it.

WHAT TO WATCH

Watch whether Blackstone's DIFC office opening and the Brookfield Alshaya Dubai Hills scheme move from announcement to construction and staffing over the coming months, and whether DIFC registration growth holds through the second half of 2026. Also worth tracking is how the 302.7 billion dirham three year Dubai budget programme is allocated, and whether the Al Maryah Island expansion by Mubadala and Aldar attracts further institutional co investment.

THE BOTTOM LINE

04 What this means for Dubai investors

THE MEANING

For you as an overseas investor, this is a data point in favour of staying the course rather than a reason to change strategy. The institutions naming Dubai and Abu Dhabi as priority markets are not making short term bets, they are building multi decade positions, which is the same time horizon capital preservation focused investors should be thinking in. It does not remove the need for your own due diligence on any specific development or developer, but it does push back on the idea that serious capital is quietly heading for the exit.

> “ *Here's the thing about this kind of report. I read a lot of them, and most are written to sell a narrative. This one is too, Alex Johnson runs a real estate advisory, so of course he's bullish. But strip that out and look at who he's actually naming. Brookfield, Blackstone, HSBC, these aren't firms that move on vibes. They move on models built by people whose entire job is finding the risk you missed. When I'm on calls with clients in London who are nervous about the region, this is the point I keep coming back to. Two things are true at once. The headlines are real, the tension was real. And the institutions with the biggest research budgets on the planet looked at all of that and still chose to open offices here. That's not blind optimism, that's a conclusion. What I'd say to you if you're sitting on the fence is this, don't take one report as gospel, go and look at the DIFC numbers yourself, look at the June transaction data. If the story holds up under your own scrutiny, then the gap between what you're feeling and what the smart money is doing is worth thinking about carefully.*
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SOURCES AND VERIFICATION

Luxury Lifestyle Magazine, 'Why serious capital is still moving into the UAE: A view from the ground in Dubai', by Alex Johnson, founder and CEO of Alexander Johnson Group, published 4 August 2026. Dubai Land Department, June 2026 transaction data. Central Bank of the UAE, June and August 2026 rate data.

Begin the conversation.

Every allocation starts with a candid, numbers-first discussion shaped around your mandate, risk profile and timeline.

Bradley James

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR & SENIOR INVESTMENT ADVISOR

Bradley James is an Associate Director and Senior Investment Advisor based in Dubai, specialising in Dubai real estate, off-plan investment, strategic wealth allocation, portfolio diversification, and relocation and residency planning. He advises private investors and family offices on entering the Dubai market with the same rigour he applies to his own capital.

SPECIALISMS

- Dubai Real Estate
- Off-Plan Investment
- Strategic Wealth Allocation
- Portfolio Diversification
- Relocation & Residency Planning

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SCAN TO MESSAGE