

Dubai: Strong corporate results reaffirm positive GDP expectations

17 February – Economics

- Strong 2025 earnings across Dubai corporates signal a robust non-oil economy, supporting our estimate of 4.5% growth with similar momentum expected in 2026.
- Population growth, tourism and construction are driving demand, benefiting utilities, district cooling, toll roads and consumer retail.
- Investment in infrastructure and clean energy is reinforcing long-term growth, with transport activity and consumer spending remaining resilient.

A number of positive 2025 earnings results announced for Dubai-based GREs and corporates over the past week point to a robust performance in the local non-oil private sector, a trend we have also observed in both the monthly PMI surveys, and the quarterly GDP results. Consumer-facing companies have performed particularly well, exposed to the rapidly expanding population and the resilient growth seen in the tourism sector, which saw visitors up 5% last year. The annual results have reaffirmed our estimate of 4.5% growth in Dubai in 2025, and we expect this momentum to be maintained in 2026, forecasting a similar pace of growth this year.

Dubai GDP growth Q1-Q3 2025 % y/y



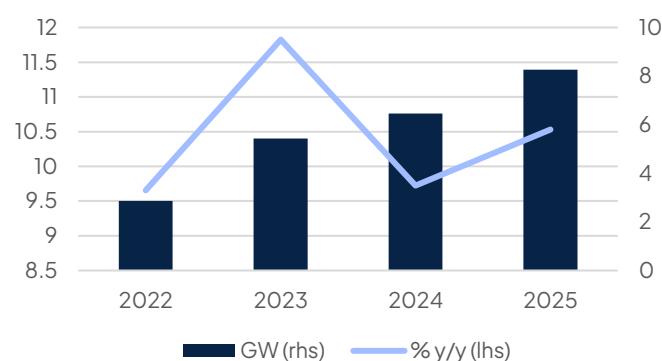
Source: Haver Analytics, Emirates NBD Research

DEWA

The Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) announced its 2025 results on 10 February, with highlights including a 6.0% rise in annual revenue (to AED 32.84bn) and a 25.7% rise in profit to AED 9.09bn. The rise in revenue was 'primarily driven by rising demand for electricity, water, and cooling services.' This came on the back of a 4.5% rise in customer accounts to 1.33mn, up 56,897 compared to 2024. Population growth is one of the factors that has been driving Dubai's economic expansion in

recent years and while base effects mean that the pace will likely slow, the official target of 5.8mn inhabitants by 2040, as laid out in the Dubai 2040 Urban Plan, points towards a continued expansion.

Strong growth in peak power demand



Source: DEWA, Emirates NBD Research

Project spending, including into the power sector, has been another significant growth driver in Dubai, and DEWA reported a 4.7% rise in installed generation capacity last year. The green energy transition is moving forward, with a 52.4% rise in clean power generation last year, accounting for 16.2% of total power generated. The UAE is targeting full clean capacity by 2050, and Dubai will support this aim through its Dubai Clean Energy Strategy, meaning that DEWA will continue to support growth through the coming decades.

Empower

Full-year 2025 results from Emirates Central Systems Corporation, or Empower, also point towards sustained population growth in Dubai last year, as it reported 4.9% revenue growth to AED 3.42bn, with net profit up 10.5% to AED 1bn. The company served 1,747 buildings by the end of 2025, up 7% from 2024, and there was a 26% rise in



registration for services, helping take the customer base to 156,000. With new projects continuing to come online, and the construction sector a significant growth driver in Dubai in 2025 (construction was up 8.5% y/y over Q1-Q3 last year), there is sustained demand for Empower's services heading into 2026. The company's press release cited new agreements to provide district cooling to projects including The Island, Palm Gateway, and Uptown Dubai.

Salik

Dubai road toll operator Salik reported a 35.1% rise in revenues last year, jumping to AED 3.09bn, up from AED 2.29bn in 2024. Net profits were up by 33.4% to AED 1.55bn, from AED 1.16bn the previous year. The company noted a number of factors behind the boost in profit, including two new toll gates, the introduction of variable pricing, and 'improved economic activity resulting an increase in vehicle registrations as well as increased growth in traffic.' Full-year 2025 figures are not yet available, with only preliminary earnings released so far, but there were around 4.7mn registered active vehicles in Q3 2025, up 9.3% from 4.3mn in Q3 2024.

Spinneys

Dubai-headquartered supermarket chain Spinneys, which has stores throughout the UAE alongside a presence in the wider region, also had a positive 2025. Revenue was up 13.1% to AED 3.6bn, while there was a 14.5% rise in profit to AED 332mn. When launching its initial listing in 2024, Spinneys cited strong population projections for the UAE, and especially for growth in the affluent population, and it appears to be successfully capitalising on this. Wholesale & retail trade in Dubai rose 4.6% y/y at the close of Q3 according to GDP data. As the largest component of Dubai GDP, at around 25% it has driven headline growth, and was responsible for nearly a quarter of the headline expansion figure over Q1-Q3 last year.



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