

inBrief

**Buying Property with Cryptocurrency in Dubai**

By Shahram Safai, Doneen Ennis and Vaishali Dhanawat | 09 September 2025

Dubai has emerged as a leading global destination for real estate investment and has increasingly positioned itself as a progressive, crypto-friendly jurisdiction. For prospective purchasers seeking to acquire property in Dubai using cryptocurrency, such as Bitcoin or Ethereum, it is essential to understand the regulatory framework, procedural requirements, and key considerations involved in such transactions.

Use of Cryptocurrency in Real Estate Transactions: Legal and Practical Considerations**Legality and Transaction Structure:**

Purchasing real estate in Dubai using cryptocurrency is legally permissible. However, transactions are not settled directly in virtual currencies. In accordance with applicable regulations, the cryptocurrency must first be converted into United Arab Emirates Dirhams (AED) through a licensed virtual asset service provider (VASP).

Transaction Process Overview:

1. **Engage a Crypto-Compatible Real Estate Entity:** Several real estate developers and brokerage firms in Dubai have entered into arrangements with regulated crypto platforms to facilitate property transactions funded via cryptocurrency. These entities assist buyers in navigating the process, including currency conversion and compliance procedures.
2. **Utilise a VARA-Licensed Exchange or Broker:** In line with the UAE's regulatory framework, the cryptocurrency must be converted into AED through a Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (VARA)-licensed exchange or intermediary. This step includes full adherence to Know Your Customer (KYC) and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) obligations.
3. **Settlement in AED:** Upon conversion, the purchase price is paid in AED.
4. **Completion of Legal Formalities:** As with any real estate acquisition, standard due diligence and documentation are required. This includes verification of the title deed, execution of the sale and purchase agreement, and official registration of the transaction with the DLD.

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Shahram is a partner at Afridi & Angell. His practice consists of advising on tax, corporate law and real estate. He heads the firm's tax and real estate teams and has been highly sought after by boards and shareholders for strategic legal advice. Shahram is qualified as a solicitor in England and Wales and is a member of the California State Bar. He is also a registered professional engineer. Shahram is a past Chairman of the Canadian Business Council of Dubai and the Northern Emirates.



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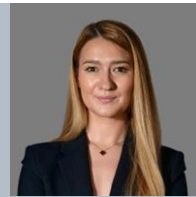
Key Considerations

1. **Market Volatility:** Cryptocurrency markets are inherently volatile. Accordingly, the timing of conversion from virtual assets to AED may significantly impact the final value available for the transaction. Prospective buyers should monitor market conditions closely.
2. **Regulatory Compliance:** It is essential to engage only with entities that are licensed and regulated within the UAE. Transactions conducted through unregulated or informal channels may expose the buyer to legal and financial risks.
3. **Transaction Costs:** Buyers should account for potential conversion fees, platform charges, and associated administrative costs when transferring funds from cryptocurrency to AED.

Conclusion

The use of cryptocurrency to fund real estate acquisitions in Dubai is gaining traction, particularly among international investors seeking efficient and borderless methods of payment. While this avenue offers flexibility and innovation, transactions must be conducted in full compliance with UAE regulatory requirements.

Engaging experienced professionals, specifically, legal advisors with expertise in UAE real estate laws, financial laws and crypto-enabled transactions is strongly advised to ensure lawful and secure execution. ■



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Doneen is a real estate associate based in Dubai. Her expertise encompasses a wide range of areas and she excels in skilfully navigating intricate corporate and property landscapes. Her notable experience includes advising on large real estate investment sales and purchases, conducting corporate real estate due diligence reports for a large international hotel group, and preparing high-level due diligence reports for financing matters related to real estate assets. Doneen is also part of the tax team, advising clients in relation to corporate tax matters within the UAE.



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Vaishali's practice focuses on general corporate private equity and mergers and acquisitions. Vaishali has successfully advised and acted on a wide range of domestic and cross-border transactions across key industry sectors such as renewable energy, infrastructure, hospitals, information technology and e-commerce. Vaishali has also advised clients on the regulatory framework in India involving the exchange control and securities laws.

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