سندك
Sanadak
وحدة تسوية المنازعات المصرفية والتأمينية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة
OMBUDSMAN UNIT FOR THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Annual Report 2025





H.H. SHEIKH MOHAMED BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



H.H. SHEIKH MOHAMMED BIN RASHID AL MAKTOUM

VICE PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER OF THE UAE

AND RULER OF DUBAI



H.H. SHEIKH MANSOUR BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN

VICE PRESIDENT, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COURT

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The Sanadak's Board of Directors



H.E. FATMA ALJABRI
CHAIRPERSON



Mrs. Faiza Al Awadhi
Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director



H.E. Ibrahim Al-Sayed Al-Hashemi
Member



H.E. Khalid AlMansoori
Member



Mr. Jamal Ibrahim Al-Mutawa
Member



Mr. Saeed Hussein Al-khoori
Member



Mr. Adel Al Marzouqi
Member

About Sanadak

"Sanadak", the Ombudsman Unit of the United Arab Emirates, was established following the issuance of Resolution No. (745) by the Central Bank of the UAE on 15 February 2023, in accordance with the powers granted to the Central Bank under Article (121) of Federal Decree-Law No. (14) of 2018 concerning the Central Bank and the Regulation of Financial Institutions and Activities, as amended. It commenced its official operations in 2024 as an independent unit with a separate legal personality, making it the first of its kind in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Sanadak provides independent, fair and effective mechanisms for resolving complaints submitted by consumers against licensed financial institutions and insurance companies of all sizes. This ensures that complaints are addressed promptly, strengthens financial consumers' confidence in engaging with these institutions, and promotes transparency. Article (148) of Federal Decree-Law No. (6) of 2025 concerning the Central Bank, the Regulation of Financial Institutions and Activities, and Insurance Business stipulates that Sanadak is mandated to receive, examine and resolve complaints lodged against licensed financial institutions, in line with the highest standards of transparency and fairness in financial services.

Vision

To establish an advanced banking and insurance dispute resolution system that builds trust and adopts effective mechanisms for handling complaints and resolving disputes fairly.

Mission

To provide accessible professional support and resolve banking and insurance disputes with integrity, transparency and efficiency.

Values

- Integrity
- Accessibility
- Effectiveness
- Consumer Empowerment



H.E. FATMA ABDULLA AL JABRI

Chairperson's Message

In the United Arab Emirates, the strength of the financial sector is measured by its resilience, robust regulatory framework, efficiency and contribution to the national economy, as well as its ability to foster trust and transparency among its various stakeholders.

Global experience has demonstrated that trust is the cornerstone of an effective financial system.

Against this backdrop, Sanadak was established as the first independent unit of its kind, in line with the UAE's strategic direction to strengthen financial consumer confidence in the sector and reinforce mutual trust between consumers and licensed financial institutions. Sanadak offers a pioneering model for resolving banking and insurance disputes through independent, fair and efficient mechanisms governing the relationship between individuals, businesses, small and medium-sized enterprises, and providers of banking and insurance services and products. This role supports the UAE's efforts to achieve its national strategies and objectives by reducing the need to resort to judicial authorities, simplifying and accelerating dispute-resolution procedures, and advancing the objectives of the Zero Government Bureaucracy Programme.

In this report, we highlight the notable results achieved by our team, which demonstrate the importance of developing the Unit and enhancing the availability of its services. These achievements also reflect Sanadak's role in establishing an accessible new channel for receiving and referring complaints submitted by individuals, businesses, and small and medium-sized enterprises.

In closing, I extend my sincere appreciation to the members of the Board of Directors and commend Sanadak's team for their dedication, professionalism and commitment to continuously enhancing performance and supporting the UAE's financial system in accordance with international best practices. I am confident that, through our collective efforts, we will continue to reinforce the impact of our work, strengthen public confidence and keep pace with the UAE's ambition to build one of the world's most stable, advanced and prosperous economies, while safeguarding the interests of financial consumers and the integrity of the sector.



Mrs. FAIZA AL AWADHI

Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Sanadak

Sanadak's 2025 Achievements at a Glance

The year 2025 marked a defining strategic milestone in Sanadak's journey. The Unit progressed from establishing its operational and regulatory foundations to a new phase focused on strengthening its impact, enhancing institutional performance and improving the efficiency of complaint handling and banking and insurance dispute resolution. This progress has reinforced Sanadak's position as the region's first independent model dedicated to resolving financial disputes and protecting financial consumers.

During the year, Sanadak handled 33,742 complaints with high efficiency. This achievement reflects financial consumers' confidence in the streamlined procedures Sanadak introduced, which enable them to pursue their rights through a process founded on timeliness, fairness, and transparency.

One of our most significant achievements was reducing the complaint-handling period from 30 days to 15 days, resulting in a marked improvement in consumer experience.

Digital channels accounted for 99.3% of all complaints received, including those submitted through Sanadak's mobile application and website. This significant result demonstrates our commitment to digital transformation and supports the objectives of the UAE Digital Government Strategy.

In 2025, Sanadak also organised more than 50 events and awareness initiatives to help financial consumers better understand their rights and responsibilities, as well as the various financial products and services available to them. Sanadak remains committed to advancing financial inclusion by incorporating appropriate provisions for handling complaints submitted by vulnerable groups and People of Determination into its complaint-resolution procedures. We also played a pivotal role in developing the National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2026-2030, led by the Central Bank of the UAE, while continuing our efforts to enhance financial awareness across all segments of society.

Sanadak carefully reviews the complaints, reports and supporting documents submitted by all parties before issuing decisions on the disputes brought before it. Alongside this role, we work to raise financial consumer awareness and empower consumers to make informed decisions regarding their financial dealings.

In closing, I extend my sincere appreciation to the Chairperson and members of the Board of Directors for their continued support and considered guidance, which have played an instrumental role in advancing Sanadak's journey and enabling the Unit to achieve its objectives. I also thank our partners across the banking and insurance sectors for their cooperation, commitment and contribution to strengthening the efficiency of the banking and insurance dispute-resolution system.

Finally, I extend my gratitude to all financial consumers for their trust in Sanadak and their engagement with our services. Their cooperation and feedback are invaluable to our ongoing efforts to drive continuous improvement, enhance service quality and strengthen the effectiveness of the UAE's financial consumer protection framework.

33,742
complaints handled

30 ▷ 15
days
Reduction in complaint-handling time

99.3%
of complaints received through digital channels

50+
awareness events and initiatives

500+
participants from the banking and insurance sectors attended Sanadak's events

15
specialised media engagements

9
regulatory events

5
international participations

10
financial consumer awarenes initiatives

5
employees trained as certified trainers in financial literacy programmes

150+
beneficiaries of financial literacy programmes

7
activities organised in collaboration with government entities

8
internal initiatives to enhance the working environment

Sanadak's Achievements in 2025

The year 2025 was marked by significant strategic and substantive achievements. Sanadak's key accomplishments during the year included:

33,742 Complaints Handled

Sanadak handled 33,742 complaints with a high degree of efficiency, reflecting financial consumers' confidence in its streamlined procedures and its ability to access appropriate redress promptly, fairly and transparently.

99.3% Submitted through Digital Channels

Digital channels, including Sanadak's mobile application and website, accounted for 99.3% of all complaints received. This reflects Sanadak's commitment to digital transformation and to advancing the objectives of the UAE Digital Government Strategy.

From 30 to 15 Days

The complaint-handling period was reduced from 30 days to 15 days, significantly improving the consumer experience.

More than 50 Awareness Events, Initiatives and Programmes

In 2025, Sanadak organised more than 50 awareness events, initiatives, and programmes to enhance financial consumers' awareness, increase public understanding of the Unit's mandate and role in consumer protection, and promote financial inclusion.

These efforts included collaboration with the Central Bank of the UAE, developing strategic partnerships with the banking and insurance sectors, and engaging directly with community members. Sanadak also participated actively in events at the local, regional and international levels, reflecting its commitment to supporting the financial ecosystem.

More than 500 Sector Participants across 15 Specialised Events

Sanadak organised more than 15 specialised events attended by over 500 professionals from the banking and insurance sectors. These events aimed to enhance the efficiency of complaint-handling and dispute-resolution mechanisms, strengthen coordination and facilitate the exchange of best practices among stakeholders across the financial ecosystem.

The events featured discussions on improving the financial consumer experience, streamlining procedures, strengthening confidence in the financial system, promoting compliance with the requirements of the Complaints Management System (CMS), and empowering consumers fairly and transparently.

Nine Regulatory Events

In collaboration with the Central Bank of the UAE, Sanadak organised more than nine events focused on developing policies and improving their implementation across licensed financial institutions.

Key events included the "Zero Bureaucracy: The Consumer Journey at Sanadak" session, the UAE National Financial Literacy Programme, the second edition of the Central Bank of the UAE Youth Council Forum, and the UAE National Forum for Financial Inclusion Policies and Financial Literacy.

Five International Participations

Sanadak participated in five international events to exchange best practices and expertise in resolving banking and insurance disputes.

These included a Sanadak delegation's visit to New Zealand to attend the International Network of Financial Services Ombudsman Schemes (INFO Network) Members Conference, as well as a visit to the Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman in Ireland to learn about international best practices in handling financial complaints.

Sanadak's Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director was also named among 200 influential women leaders worldwide during an international event held in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

10 Financial Consumer Awareness Initiatives

Sanadak implemented ten awareness events and initiatives targeting different segments of society to promote financial literacy and increase awareness of financial responsibilities and challenges.

These activities included hosting students from GEMS World Academy for an introductory visit to the Unit; organising three events under the Coffee Corner initiative to engage with the public and media representatives and introduce them to Sanadak's services; launching the Customer Council – Customer Journey; and implementing the Customer Pulse at Sanadak initiative in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office to measure consumer feedback and analyse their experiences with the services provided.

The Unit also organised awareness sessions in collaboration with the General Pension and Social Security Authority, Al Etihad Credit Bureau and the Abu Dhabi Social Support Authority.

5 Employees Qualified to Train Instructors and Deliver Financial Literacy Programmes

Several Sanadak employees participated in a train-the-trainer programme under the National Financial Literacy Programme. Five employees were subsequently qualified to train instructors and deliver specialised financial literacy programmes..

More than 150 Beneficiaries of Financial Literacy Programmes

Sanadak's qualified employees delivered a specialised financial literacy training programme that benefited more than 150 individuals across the UAE.

7 Activities in Collaboration with Government Entities

Sanadak participated in seven activities organised in collaboration with government entities. These included three participations in the Ithraa Recruitment Exhibition and the Tawdheef x Alhem initiative, aimed at introducing the Unit, attracting qualified Emirati talent to available employment opportunities and supporting national talent acquisition.

Sanadak also participated in the Young Financial Advisers Programme in collaboration with the Federal Youth Authority, to equip young people with financial knowledge and introduce them to Sanadak's fair dispute-resolution mechanisms.

In addition, Sanadak visited the Dubai Judicial Institute to explore opportunities for cooperation in training and exchanging expertise in dispute resolution. Its engagements also included participation in the UAE Government's annual meetings.

8 Internal Initiatives to Enhance the Working Environment

Sanadak organised eight internal events and initiatives to foster innovation and institutional excellence, enhance the working environment and improve operational processes.

These included introductory workshops on Federal Decree-Law No. (6) of 2025 concerning the Central Bank, the Regulation of Financial Institutions and Activities, and Insurance Business, to familiarise employees with the key legislative developments. Sanadak also organised a human resources workshop to enhance employees' understanding of institutional policies and procedures.

The Unit also marked several national occasions, including Emirati Women's Day, in recognition of Emirati women's role in the UAE's national development journey, as well as UAE Flag Day and Eid Al Etihad, to strengthen national pride and belonging.



Sanadak Strategy 2025-2027

The Sanadak Strategy 2025-2027 provides an advanced, integrated framework that reinforces the Unit's role as an independent entity contributing to the financial consumer protection system by resolving banking and insurance disputes. It also ensures that Sanadak's services are easily accessible to all beneficiaries within the financial system, including individuals, businesses, small and medium-sized enterprises, and licensed financial institutions.

The Strategy embodies an ambitious vision to develop an advanced dispute-resolution system that supports the UAE's national strategies and priorities, aligns with international best practices and strengthens consumer confidence in the financial system.

It is built around core pillars supported by an integrated risk-management and digital-transformation framework, along with key performance indicators to measure the impact of strategic initiatives throughout 2025-2027.

Strategic Pillars

1

Dispute Resolution and Strengthening Confidence

This pillar focuses on implementing the regulatory frameworks governing the resolution of banking and insurance disputes, thereby enhancing transparency and strengthening confidence between financial consumers and licensed financial institutions.

2

Financial Sector Engagement

Collaboration with the banking and insurance sectors is a fundamental pillar of an effective dispute-resolution system. Sanadak works to develop communication and collaboration channels with licensed financial institutions and regulatory authorities to strengthen financial consumer protection.

3

Promoting Financial Literacy

This pillar focuses on promoting financial literacy and empowering consumers by developing and implementing targeted awareness initiatives that enhance understanding of financial rights and responsibilities.

4

Digital Transformation and Innovation

Sanadak seeks to harness artificial intelligence and digital solutions to improve operational efficiency and the consumer experience.

5

Alignment with the UAE's Strategy

Sanadak is committed to ensuring that all its projects and initiatives align with the UAE's strategic priorities.

6

Institutional Excellence and Capacity Building

This pillar focuses on building institutional capabilities and improving human resource efficiency.

Sanadak within the UAE's Regulatory and Legislative Framework

Sanadak was established as part of the UAE Central Bank's financial consumer protection framework. Its establishment supports efforts to strengthen financial consumer protection and promote transparency across the banking and insurance sectors.
In performing its mandate, Sanadak adheres to the legislative and regulatory frameworks issued by the Central Bank of the UAE, which seek to provide an independent, effective and fair mechanism for resolving disputes within the sector. These include:

- Laws and regulations issued by the Central Bank of the UAE
- Relevant federal legislation
- Approved regulations and policies
- Complaints Management System (CMS) Standards
- Unified insurance policies

Strategic Alignment with the UAE's National Priorities

The Sanadak Strategy 2025-2027 aligns with the UAE's strategic priorities, strengthening integration between the Unit's role, its regulatory responsibilities, and the UAE's objective of building a sustainable financial system.

The Strategy aligns with the "We the UAE 2031" Vision, which sets out a new national vision and action plan guiding the UAE's development journey over the coming decade. It focuses on social, economic, investment, and development priorities through which the UAE seeks to strengthen its position as a global partner and an attractive, influential economic hub.

The Strategy is also aligned with the "UAE Centennial 2071", which provides a clear roadmap for long-term government action aimed at enhancing the UAE's reputation, competitiveness and soft power. It also reflects the government service priorities issued by the Prime Minister's Office, which focus on enhancing the consumer experience and improving the quality of government services.

Furthermore, the Strategy supports the UAE Strategy for Artificial Intelligence 2031. This integrated approach reflects the importance of collaboration in advancing national priorities and demonstrates Sanadak's commitment to adopting modern digital technologies to enhance operational efficiency and improve service quality.

Sanadak's Partner Ecosystem and Its Role in Achieving the Unit's Objectives

Sanadak relies on an integrated network of strategic partners that forms an essential part of the UAE's financial consumer protection ecosystem and contributes to its effectiveness. This network comprises:

1. Financial consumers, including individuals, businesses, and small and medium-sized enterprises
2. Licensed financial institutions, including banks and insurance companies
3. The Central Bank of the UAE
4. Relevant government entities
5. Academic institutions and community organisations

This integrated model reflects the importance of institutional collaboration in developing policies and procedures that improve complaint-handling efficiency, promote financial inclusion, and increase awareness of financial rights and responsibilities.





Sanadak's Service

Sanadak provides the following services through its official channels:

1	Submit a complaint about a Licensed Financial Institution.
2	Ask a question about a banking complaint or Sanadak's Process.
3	Escalate a banking complaint to the Appeals Committee.
4	Submit a complaint about an Insurance Company
5	Ask a question about an insurance complaint or Sanadak's process.
6	Escalate a complaint to the Insurance Dispute Resolution Committee.

Official Channels

Website:
www.sanadak.gov.ae

Customer Happiness Centre:
Dedicated services for senior citizens and People of Determination

Mobile Application:
Sanadak App

Contact Centre:
800 726 2325
(800 SANADAK)

Eligible Complaints

Sanadak may accept complaints concerning the conduct of a licensed financial institution or insurance company, including:

- The provision of a service or product, or an offer to provide a service or product, by a licensed financial institution or insurance company.
- The failure of a licensed financial institution or insurance company to provide specific services or products requested by a financial consumer for reasons involving discrimination based on family status, social or economic status, gender, or membership of a minority group.
- Allegations that a financial consumer has incurred financial loss or harm as a result of deceptive, misleading, fraudulent or unfair conduct by a licensed financial institution, an insurance company or any party acting on its behalf.

Complaint Eligibility Criteria

Complaints submitted to Sanadak are subject to a set of eligibility criteria, including the following:

- The consumer must have submitted a formal complaint to the licensed financial institution before approaching Sanadak.
- Fifteen calendar days must have elapsed from the date on which the complaint was submitted to the licensed financial institution, or the consumer must have received its response before the end of that period.
- The complaint must fall within Sanadak's mandate.
- The complaint must not duplicate or correspond to a complaint previously considered.
- The complaint must not be under consideration by the judicial authorities.
- The complaint must not relate to the licensed financial institution's internal policies, such as risk management or anti-money laundering.
- The complaint must not have already been settled between the consumer and the licensed financial institution.

Note: The institution will reject a complaint if it fails to meet any of the above criteria.

Complaint-Handling Process

L1: Complaint Management

Complaint-handling timeframe: 15 days

1

Complaint Submission
The consumer submits a complaint, supported by the required official documents.

2

Eligibility Assessment
Sanadak receives and assesses the complaint to verify eligibility and confirm that it concerns a bank, insurance company, or licensed financial institution, in accordance with approved procedures and standards.

3

Review and Coordination
Sanadak coordinates with the relevant parties, verifies the necessary information and documents, and conducts an objective analytical review to reach a fair resolution.

4

Complaint Resolution
A Sanadak Complaint Resolution Officer handles the complaint. Once a decision has been issued, both the consumer and the licensed financial institution are notified of the complaint's outcome.

If the consumer is dissatisfied with the decision, they may request that the complaint be escalated or submit an appeal to the Committees Department within 30 days of the date on which the decision was issued or communicated. Appeals submitted after this period will not be accepted.

L2: Committees Department

Timeframe for issuing a decision: 20 days from the date on which all required documents are completed

1

Review of the Dispute
The Committee reviews disputes referred to it once the parties have submitted all documents, information, and evidence. This enables the Committee to examine the subject of the appeal and issue its decision in accordance with the approved procedures.

2

Amicable Settlement or Adjudication
Before adjudicating the dispute, the competent Committee offers the parties an opportunity to reach an amicable settlement. If the parties reach a settlement, the Committee issues a decision confirming its terms. If the parties cannot reach a settlement, the Committee proceeds to adjudicate the dispute in accordance with the approved procedures.

3

Final Decision
The Committee issues its final decision in accordance with its governing procedures and regulatory provisions. Its decisions are final and enforceable within the limits and subject to the conditions stipulated in Article 148 of Federal Decree-Law No. (6) of 2025.

Human Resources and Emiratisation

All leadership positions at Sanadak are held by qualified Emirati professionals, with the Unit achieving an Emiratisation rate of 100%. This reflects Sanadak's commitment to building and developing a specialised and capable workforce equipped to fulfil its sector-wide duties, responsibilities and mandate, while providing growth opportunities that support the professional and career development of all employees.

In line with the Youth Empowerment Policy in Federal Government Entities, Sanadak participated in several recruitment fairs to attract promising young talent, develop national capabilities and help shape the workforce of the future. The Unit also launched four training programmes designed to attract students and graduates and equip them with practical experience in the institutional and financial sectors.

Sanadak's Positive Impact: Notable Consumer Cases

Banking Sector

Bank Account Hacking

A financial consumer, B.M., submitted a complaint against a bank operating in the UAE after their bank account was hacked and several deductions were made without the consumer receiving any notifications on their registered mobile number.

Sanadak reviewed the complaint, examined the circumstances of the case and contacted the financial consumer. The investigation found that the deductions were processed through a digital payment service. However, the financial institution could not provide evidence that the consumer had linked their mobile phone to the service or authorised its use.

Based on the investigation findings and applicable legal and regulatory provisions governing fraud prevention and financial consumer protection, which require financial institutions to demonstrate that electronic transactions are valid and duly authorised, Sanadak determined that the transactions were unauthorised and required the financial institution to refund the full amount deducted.

Under anti-money laundering and financial consumer protection requirements, which place the burden on the institution to prove the validity of such electronic transactions, Sanadak ensured the financial institution reimbursed all amounts deducted through the unauthorised transactions.

Promotional Offers on Financial Products and Services

A financial consumer, B.M., submitted a complaint to Sanadak after not receiving the reward to which they were entitled under a promotional offer launched by a licensed financial institution, despite having fulfilled all the offer's terms and conditions.

After reviewing the complaint and verifying all relevant documents and information, Sanadak's team confirmed that the consumer had satisfied all the offer's requirements and was eligible to receive the advertised reward after transferring their bank account. Based on financial consumer protection principles and the regulatory obligations requiring financial institutions to honour the terms of promotional offers and advertisements and respect consumer rights, Sanadak contacted the financial institution. Its intervention resulted in the institution depositing the reward due into the consumer's account.

Sanadak emphasises the importance of financial institutions maintaining transparency and clearly communicating all terms governing promotional offers. It also advises financial consumers to ensure that offers are announced through the official channels of licensed financial institutions and to refrain from sharing personal or banking information until they have verified the identity of the entity offering the financial product or service.

Exceeding the Maximum Permitted Deduction from Income

A financial consumer, J.M., submitted a complaint to Sanadak stating that the total monthly deductions from their income exceeded the maximum permitted limit. This resulted from deductions for a residential mortgage in addition to other financial obligations, adversely affecting the consumer's ability to meet essential financial needs.

After reviewing the complaint and verifying the relevant information and documents, Sanadak's team established that the total deductions from the consumer's income exceeded the maximum limit prescribed under the applicable regulatory framework. Based on the instructions and regulatory requirements issued by the Central Bank of the UAE concerning financial consumer protection and the regulation of deductions, Sanadak contacted the bank concerned and required it to take the necessary action to restructure the deductions.

This ensured compliance with the approved statutory percentage and addressed the existing arrangement in a manner that reduced the financial burden on the consumer, in accordance with the legislation, regulations and rules in force in the UAE.

Insurance Companies

Effective Intervention and Enhanced Consumer Confidence

A financial consumer, J.R., submitted a complaint to Sanadak concerning delays in reaching a settlement with an insurance company regarding an insurance claim arising from a traffic accident that caused significant damage to the consumer's vehicle. Given the value of the claim, the consumer requested that the dispute be referred to the second stage, involving the competent committees, for consideration.
Before escalating the complaint, Sanadak's team explained the provisions of the Unified Motor Insurance Policy to the financial consumer and clarified their rights and obligations. The team also contacted the insurance company and reviewed all aspects of the claim.
Sanadak's intervention through the first-stage complaint-management process helped reconcile the parties' positions and achieve an amicable settlement before the dispute was referred to the second stage. As a result, the insurance company agreed to compensate the financial consumer for the cost of repairing the vehicle.
This outcome saved all parties time and effort, enhanced the efficiency of the complaint-resolution process and strengthened confidence in the financial consumer protection framework and insurance dispute-resolution mechanisms.

Compliance with Policy Terms and Conditions

A financial consumer, K.S., submitted a complaint to Sanadak after an insurance company refused to settle a claim arising from a theft that occurred while the consumer was travelling with their family, even though the incident was covered under the insurance policy.

After reviewing the complaint, the insurance policy and the relevant supporting documents, Sanadak's team confirmed that the claim met the policy's coverage requirements and that the financial consumer was entitled to compensation under its provisions. Based on the applicable contractual and regulatory obligations, Sanadak contacted the insurance company and requested that it reconsider the claim. This intervention resulted in the claim being approved and the compensation due being paid to the financial consumer within five working days.

This case demonstrates Sanadak's role in ensuring the proper application of insurance policy terms and provisions and strengthening insurance companies' commitment to protecting policyholders' rights. It also helps uphold fairness and transparency and reinforces consumer confidence in the financial consumer protection framework.

Rejection of an Insurance Claim

A financial consumer, S.A., submitted a complaint to Sanadak after an insurance company refused to settle a claim for damage sustained by the consumer's vehicle while driving through heavy rainwater, even though the incident was covered under a comprehensive motor insurance policy.

After reviewing the complaint, the insurance policy and the relevant supporting documents, Sanadak's team confirmed that the claim met the coverage requirements stipulated in the policy. Based on the Unified Motor Insurance Policy and applicable regulations and implementing instructions, Sanadak contacted the insurance company and asked it to reconsider the claim. As a result, the company approved the claim and paid the compensation due to the financial consumer in accordance with the policy's provisions.

This case demonstrates Sanadak's role in ensuring the proper application of insurance policy terms and provisions and strengthening insurance companies' commitment to protecting policyholders' rights. It also helps uphold fairness and transparency and reinforces consumer confidence in the financial consumer protection framework.

Complaint Statistics

Data on complaints received by Sanadak during 2025 indicate an increase in both the number and variety of complaints, alongside a notable improvement in complaint-handling efficiency and resolution times. This reinforces Sanadak's role in protecting financial consumers and upholding fairness.

These data provide valuable indicators for analysing complaints, measuring the performance of licensed financial institutions and assessing their compliance with regulatory requirements. They also help evaluate the efficiency of dispute-resolution procedures, support informed decision-making and strengthen regulatory and supervisory efforts.

Complaint Submission Channels in 2025

75%

Website

24.3%

Mobile Application

0.7%

In-person Visits to the Customer Happiness Centre

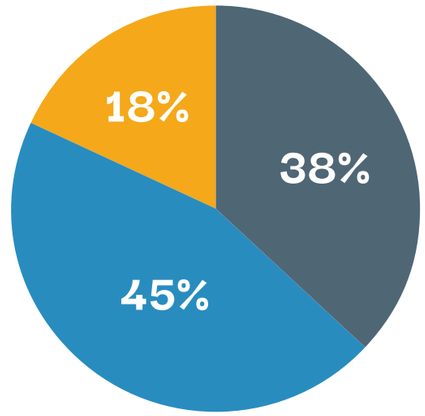
Total Number of Complaints

33,742 complaints.

Sanadak handled a total of 33,742 complaints involving licensed financial institutions during 2025.

Complaint Statistics

2025	INDICATOR
33,742	Total complaints
12,483	Complaints resolved in favour of consumers
15,312	Complaints resolved in favour of licensed financial institutions
5,947	Cases not settled*



* Complaints that remained open as of 31 December or for which consumers had not completed the required procedures.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Corporate Governance

Sanadak is committed to activating an integrated corporate governance framework that prioritizes transparency, integrity, accountability, and fairness across all its operations and activities. Governance represents one of the fundamental pillars supporting Sanadak's ability to achieve its strategic objectives and strengthen trust in the banking and insurance dispute resolution system.

In this context, Sanadak adopts a comprehensive corporate governance framework based on a well-defined organizational structure that clearly specifies authorities, responsibilities, and reporting lines. The framework is complemented by an effective system for risk management and internal control, ensuring the integrity of operational processes remains intact as also the efficiency of decision-making.

The Board of Directors of Sanadak holds periodic meetings, with no fewer than four meetings annually, to review corporate performance and monitor the progress of strategic plans. Such efforts ensure alignment between the unit's activities and wider objectives, as well as with national strategies of the United Arab Emirates.

Sanadak's governance framework also outlines the implementation of internal control policies and procedures, the conduct of internal and external audits in a systematic manner, adherence to disclosure and periodic reporting requirements, and the implementation of continuous governance and professional conduct training and awareness programs.

Sanadak also prioritizes enhancing corporate communication with stakeholders through dedicated mechanisms that include their feedback and suggestions. This contributes to the continuous development of policies and procedures that improve the quality of services provided.

Governance Practices Implemented by Sanadak

Approved Organizational Structure	An organizational structure has been adopted that clearly defines authorities, responsibilities, and reporting lines.
Board of Directors Meetings	The Board of Directors holds periodic meetings to review performance and monitor the implementation of plans.
Risk Management Framework	The unit implements a risk management system that includes identifying and assessing risks and developing mitigation plans.
Internal Control Policies	Policies and procedures for internal control have been adopted, and internal and external audit activities are conducted on a regular basis.
Compliance with Disclosure Requirements	Sanadak is committed to issuing periodic financial and administrative reports in accordance with approved disclosure requirements.
Code of Professional Conduct	Sanadak's employees are all bound by a strict code of professional conduct.
Training and Awareness Programs	Sanadak implements periodic training and awareness programs across governance and professional conduct areas.
Stakeholder Communication Mechanisms	Formal mechanisms are in place to engage with stakeholders and receive their feedback.

Board Committees

Toward strengthening corporate governance and ensuring effective oversight of the various organizational aspects, Sanadak's Board of Directors established three main committees in 2024. These committees support the Board of Directors and enhance the efficiency of decision-making.

These committees include:

Compliance and Risk Committee

The Compliance and Risk Committee oversees compliance and risk management functions within Sanadak, including the review of risk management policies and the assessment of effectiveness of relevant controls and procedures. It helps to ensure adherence to applicable legislation, regulations, and systems. The committee consists of three members, including the Chair of the Committee and a secretary.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing internal and external audit functions, reviewing financial reports, and evaluating the effectiveness of internal control systems that help enhance transparency and accountability in corporate operations. The committee comprises three members, including the Chair of the Committee and a secretary.

Human Capital Committee

The Human Capital Committee oversees human resources policies and the development of corporate capabilities, including attracting talent, developing competencies, and enhancing the work environment. The committee consists of three members, including the Chair of the Committee, as well as a secretary.

ALL COMMITTEES OPERATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH APPROVED TERMS OF REFERENCE THAT DEFINE THEIR MANDATES, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES, AND REGULATE THEIR MEETINGS AND DECISIONS. THEIR WORK CONTRIBUTES TO SUPPORTING THE FUNCTIONING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ENSURING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE ENTITY'S OBJECTIVES IN COMPLIANCE, RISK MANAGEMENT, AUDIT, AND HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT.

Governance Principles

Sanadak adopts a set of core principles that form the reference framework guiding its policies and procedures across governance, fairness, transparency, and accountability. These principles include:

Transparency

Sanadak provides essential and accurate information to all stakeholders to ensure regular disclosure of financial and administrative data, in a manner that guarantees clarity of procedures and the rationale behind decisions.

Accountability

Sanadak clearly defines authorities and responsibilities organization-wide and subjects all operations and decisions to effective internal and external oversight.

Fairness and Equal Opportunity

Sanadak upholds clear policies that promote fairness and prevent discrimination across all engagements with employees and stakeholders, ensuring equal treatment and access to opportunities throughout its operations, transactions, and corporate processes.

Compliance with Laws and Regulations

Sanadak resolves to full compliance with all applicable local and international laws and regulations, and to a periodic review of policies and procedures to ensure continuous compliance.

Integrity and Professional Conduct

Sanadak promotes a culture of integrity and ethical conduct in the work environment through the implementation of a professional code of conduct binding on all employees, ensuring adherence to highest professional standards.

Stakeholder Engagement

Sanadak involves stakeholders in decision-making processes where appropriate, and prioritizes receiving, reviewing, and addressing feedback and suggestions in accordance with approved frameworks.

THESE PRINCIPLES REFLECT SANADAK'S COMMITMENT TO THE FOUNDATIONS THAT ENABLE IT TO ACHIEVE ITS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND STRENGTHEN TRUST AMONG ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS.

Key Pillars of Governance

Sanadak's governance framework is built on a set of key pillars that support the achievement of the unit's strategic objectives. These include:

Transparency and Disclosure

Commitment to providing essential and accurate information to all stakeholders while ensuring regular financial disclosure and administrative data in accordance with approved policies.

Accountability and Responsibility

Clear definition of authorities and responsibilities across all levels of the organization, with all operations and decisions subject to effective oversight mechanisms.

Fairness and Equal Opportunity

Application of policies that ensure fairness, non-discrimination, and equal opportunity across all institutional procedures.

Compliance with Laws and Regulations

Full compliance with applicable local and international laws and regulations, alongside the periodic review of policies and procedures to ensure continuous conformity.

Risk Management and Internal Control

Implementation of effective risk management frameworks and adoption of internal control systems that ensure operational integrity and safeguard Sanadak's assets.

Segregation of Duties and Distribution of Responsibilities

Separation of the executive and supervisory functions and appropriate allocation of responsibilities in a manner that achieves corporate balance and prevents conflicts of interest.

Stakeholder Engagement and Strengthening Corporate Dialogue

Involving stakeholders in decision-making processes where appropriate and activating communication channels to receive feedback and suggestions.

Laws and Regulations

Sanadak operates within a framework of laws, regulations, and local legislative requirements that ensure compliance and effective governance. The most prominent of these laws and regulations include:

Laws and Regulations Issued by the Central Bank of the UAE

Sanadak is committed to complying with all regulations and instructions issued by the Central Bank of the UAE in its capacity as the regulatory and supervisory authority.

Relevant Federal Laws

Sanadak is subject to applicable federal laws in force in the UAE, including the Commercial Companies Law, Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism Law, the Personal Data Protection Law, and any/all other relevant legislation.

Approved Internal Regulations and Policies

The entity adopts internal regulations and policies that comprehensively cover administrative, financial, and operational issues, including governance policies, risk management, compliance, internal audit, and human resources management.

Relevant International Standards

Sanadak is committed to adopting the best international practices and standards in corporate governance, risk management, compliance, and audit, thereby enhancing efficiency and overall corporate performance.

THESE LAWS AND REGULATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO ENSURING THAT SANADAK'S OPERATIONS ALIGN WITH THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY, AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE.

Governance and Risk Management

Sanadak adopts an integrated framework for corporate governance and risk management, toward ensuring adherence to the highest standards of transparency and accountability.

Governance and effective risk management constitute a fundamental pillar in ensuring compliance with the highest standards of transparency and accountability. In accordance, Sanadak prioritizes the adoption of an integrated governance framework aligned with the best international practices, while strengthening its risk management systems to ensure a high level of effectiveness. This supports operational sustainability and the achievement of strategic objectives in line with the highest standards of integrity and compliance.

This framework includes:

- A comprehensive risk management system covering operational and regulatory aspects.
- Effective internal control mechanisms.
- Clear procedures to ensure regulatory compliance.

Regulatory Reporting and Enhancing Transparency

Sanadak resolves to submitting a set of periodic regulatory reports to the Central Bank of the UAE, reflecting its commitment to transparency and regulatory compliance.

These reports include:

· A report on complaint statistics and trends.
· Quality assurance and compliance review reports.
· Reports on disclosure of material matters.
· Additional reports on other financial dispute resolution matters

These reports analyze complaint trends, the performance of licensed financial institutions and insurance companies, and dispute-resolution outcomes. The findings support the development of regulatory policies and improve the efficiency of banking and insurance dispute resolution in the UAE.

The Central Bank of the UAE undertakes supervisory and oversight responsibilities over Sanadak across several key matters related to the entity's governance, including:

· Appointment of the Chairperson and the Board of Directors
· Appointment of the CEO and Managing Director
· Approval of the annual report, annual budget, and financial accounts
· Approval of the entity's three-year strategic plan

WITHIN THIS FRAMEWORK, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SANADAK HOLDS FOUR ANNUAL MEETINGS TO MONITOR INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW STRATEGIC POLICIES.

Responsibilities of the Chairperson of the Board

In addition, key responsibilities of the Chairperson of the Board, pursuant to the Law, include:

· Maintaining official communication between the Board of Directors of Sanadak and the Board of Directors of the Central Bank, as well as with the Governor of the Central Bank.
· Submitting nominations to the Central Bank for individuals to be appointed or reappointed as members of the Board of Directors upon the expiry of their terms or in the event of a vacancy.

Oversight of the Performance of Board Committees

The Chairperson of the Board oversees the work of the Board's specialized committees, ensuring the integration of their roles and their effectiveness in supporting the Board's functions.

Representation of the Board before External Parties

The Chairperson of the Board represents Sanadak before official and regulatory authorities, as well as stakeholders, and participates in events and meetings related to the functioning of the Board.

Evaluation of the Performance of the Board and Executive Management

The Chairperson supervises the processes for evaluating the performance of the Board and its members, in addition to assessing the performance of executive management, and submits the necessary recommendations to improve corporate progress.

Ensuring Effective Corporate Communication

The Chairperson oversees the strengthening of communication channels and ensures two-way information exchange between the Board and executive management to enable strategic decision-making.

THESE RESPONSIBILITIES REFLECT A COMMITMENT TO BEST CORPORATE PRACTICES AND TO ENHANCING THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN ACHIEVING SANADAK'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.

Responsibilities of the CEO and Managing Director

The CEO and Managing Director is tasked with executive responsibilities and duties under the supervision of Sanadak's Board of Directors, toward ensuring the achievement of the unit's strategic objectives and enhancing corporate performance efficiency. Key responsibilities and duties include:

Implementation of Approved Policies and Strategies

Overseeing the implementation of policies and strategic plans approved by the Board of Directors and ensuring alignment of all operational activities with Sanadak's strategic directions and objectives.

Comprehensive Management of Operations

Direct supervision of all Sanadak's operational and administrative activities, ensuring the efficient and effective utilization of available resources to achieve targeted outcomes.

Preparation and Submission of Periodic Reports

Preparing periodic reports related to financial, operational, and administrative performance, and submitting them to the Board of Directors in accordance with approved timelines, together with required analyses and recommendations.

Risk Management and Regulatory Compliance

Implementing risk management frameworks, ensuring full compliance with internal policies, applicable legislation, and relevant regulations, and taking corrective action, when necessary.

Oversight of Human Resources and Capability Development

Overseeing human resources management, including attracting and developing competencies, while promoting a motivational work environment that supports continuous performance and corporate innovation.

Representing Sanadak before External Parties

Representing Sanadak in its engagements with official and regulatory authorities, partners, and stakeholders, and participating in meetings and events relevant to the unit's operations.

Proposing Initiatives and Development Policies

Proposing initiatives and policies aimed at enhancing corporate performance and improving operational efficiency and submitting them to the Board of Directors for consideration and approval.

Ensuring Effectiveness of Internal Control Systems

Ensuring the existence of effective internal control systems that safeguard operational integrity and protect Sanadak's assets, monitoring the outcomes of internal and external audits, and taking the necessary corrective action.

Sanadak Funding

Sanadak adopts a funding model that does not place an undue burden on the financial sector, while ensuring the sustainability of its operations and continuity of its services. To do so, Sanadak collects the following fees:

Annual Fees

Sanadak collects a fee from licensed financial institutions, which does not exceed the annual amount required to finance the operations of the Ombudsman unit.

Case Fees

Sanadak levies a fee from licensed financial institutions for each complaint closed by Sanadak during the financial year, regardless of the date on which the complaint is referred.

Additional Fees

Sanadak may require licensed financial institutions to pay an additional fee to cover the direct costs associated with its procedures, if the annual fees and case fees are insufficient to realizing Sanadak's objectives.

Appeal Fees

Fees imposed by Sanadak following the submission of an appeal or complaint to the Appeals Committee the Insurance Dispute Resolution Committee of the Ombudsman unit, which may be refunded at the unit's discretion, depending on the outcome of the appeal.

Risk and Audit Statement

General Overview

Sanadak adopts an integrated approach to risk management, strengthening its ability to anticipate potential risks and achieve its operational and strategic objectives. In line with ongoing developments, the Board of Directors of Sanadak and its executive management directly oversee this approach to ensure effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness to changes.

Principal Risks

Risk classification is considered a detailed process through which the principal risks, both financial and non-financial, facing Sanadak are identified, and subsequently categorized into sub-risks. This forms a fundamental tool in managing risks within the entity. The institutional risk management policy defines the overall framework for this approach, including organizational culture, roles, responsibilities, and the tools used to manage such risks.

Sanadak regularly reviews principal risks and updates them, making the necessary adjustments to policies, procedures, and operational risk management frameworks. This reflects changes in risk levels, strategic objectives, and sector trends, ensuring alignment with developments and changing needs. Sanadak is also committed to organizing training and awareness programs for its employees to enhance their understanding of risks and mitigation mechanisms, while further strengthening its risk management framework to ensure a high level of flexibility in addressing emerging risks and challenges.

Non-Financial Risks

Operational Risks

Sanadak adopts a proactive approach to managing operational risks by strengthening risk awareness at all levels and ensuring effective response capabilities. Its operational risk management policy aims to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency while embedding a culture of awareness based on risk identification, analysis and mitigation.

Sanadak has established a comprehensive framework of policies and procedures to identify, assess, and manage operational risks. This includes assessing and monitoring operational risks, analyzing their causes and developing mitigation plans. Sanadak employs a variety of tools and methods including self-assessment of risks and controls, testing controls, key risk indicators, and scenario analysis to unify concepts and ensure a clear, organization-wide understanding of operational risks. Operational risks are monitored at the institutional level, well aligned with Sanadak's risk tolerance level. This approach leverages a centralized platform for governance, risk management, and compliance, encompassing all types of non-financial risks, and offering a comprehensive view to support informed decision-making.

Information Security

Sanadak works closely with several key partners from among sector leaders to strengthen cybersecurity frameworks in the UAE, enabling it to effectively address increasing cyber threats. This contributes to providing a secure digital environment through the implementation of advanced technological solutions.

Sanadak is also committed to continuously enhancing its capabilities to keep pace with evolving sector requirements, while ensuring the highest levels of data and information security.

Three Lines of Defense Model – An Effective Internal Control Framework

Sanadak adopts an integrated internal control framework based on the internationally recognized Three Lines of Defense model, which clarifies roles and responsibilities in risk management and oversight. These include:

First Line: Operational management assumes primary responsibility for risk management through the implementation of policies and procedures necessary to ensure the effectiveness of daily operations, including identifying risks and reporting them.

Second Line: Risk management and compliance functions play a supervisory and supporting role by providing guidance and oversight to the first line, developing risk management frameworks, monitoring the effectiveness of controls, and reporting on risks.

Third Line: Internal audit provides independent assurance to the Board of Directors and executive management regarding the effectiveness of governance, risk management, and internal control processes, including evaluating the performance of the first and second lines.

THIS MODEL CONTRIBUTES TO ESTABLISHING AN INTEGRATED AND ROBUST RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK THROUGH THE CLEAR DEFINITION OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AT ALL LEVELS.

Internal Audit

The internal audit function at Sanadak maintains independence, objectivity, and professionalism as it evaluates the effectiveness of governance, risk management, and internal control processes, in line with international standards.

Independence

The Internal Audit function at Sanadak operates under a charter approved by the Audit Committee reporting to the Board of Directors, which ensures that it holds the necessary authority and independence. The function is organizationally linked to the Audit Committee and administratively to the CEO and Managing Director of Sanadak. The Audit Committee held five meetings during 2025 to review the outcomes of internal and external audits, contributing to strengthening internal control systems and ensuring the integrity and reliability of reporting.

Resilience

Sanadak adopts a resilient approach to ensure flexibility in addressing emerging risks and evolving strategic priorities. This includes strengthening operational efficiency through flexible planning methodologies, ensuring structured audits, and maintaining continuous engagement with stakeholders to provide proactive risk assessments as well as a timely risk response. Six comprehensive reviews have been conducted so far, leading to improvements in internal control systems and more informed strategic decision-making.

Maintaining Audit Standards

The Internal Audit function is supported by a Quality Assurance and Improvement Program (QAIP) at Sanadak, based on which internal reviews are conducted to ensure compliance with international internal audit standards, reinforcing the credibility of the internal audit function and enhancing stakeholder confidence.

Operational Resilience

In 2025, Sanadak continued to strengthen its capabilities in institutional resilience by shifting from a response-focused approach to a more comprehensive model based on prevention and preparedness. This contributed to embedding a culture of resilience across its various functions. Employees received training to respond effectively to disruptions through awareness programs, and practical exercises were implemented to simulate crisis scenarios.

Resilience and Continuous Development

Sanadak's management also ensured the readiness of its teams to respond to a wide range of scenarios and challenges. This enabled the unit to maintain operational continuity and adapt to evolving circumstances, reinforcing its ongoing commitment to resilience and supporting key stakeholders, while ensuring the continuity of core functions.

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Sanadak
وحدة تسوية المنازعات المصرفية والتأمينية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة
OMBUDSMAN UNIT FOR THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Sanadak Information

Sanadak Headquarters

Abu Dhabi – Emirates Institute of Finance Building, Ground Floor, Sultan Bin Zayed the First Street

Official Communication Channels for Sanadak

Sanadak Mobile Application

Website: www.sanadak.gov.ae

Email: info@sanadak.gov.ae

Consumer Happiness Center: Abu Dhabi – Emirates Institute of Finance Building, Ground Floor, Sultan Bin Zayed the First Street

Contact Center – Hotline: 800 SANADAK (8007262325)

Sanadak's official social media platforms

SanadakUAE | Sanadak | SanadakUAE | Sanadak | SanadakUAE

Official Working Hours of the Consumer Happiness Center

Monday to Thursday: 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM

Friday: 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM