

Middle East and North Africa

Middle East & North Africa: regional data from the WDI database

	Population	GNI per capita		Life expectancy at birth	Primary completion rate	Access to improved water source	Carbon dioxide emissions	Total debt service	Internet users
	millions	Atlas ^a	PPP ^b	years	% of relevant age	%	per capita metric tones	% of exports	per 100 people
		2007	2007							2007
Middle East & North Africa	313	2,820	7,402	70	90	89	3.7	5.8	17.1
East Asia & Pacific	1,912	2,182	4,969	72	98	87	3.6	4.0	14.6
Europe & Central Asia	446	6,052	11,262	70	98	95	7.0	18.7	21.4
Latin America & Caribbean	561	5,801	9,678	73	100	91	2.5	16.0	26.9
South Asia	1,522	880	2,532	64	80	87	1.1	12.9	6.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	800	951	1,869	51	60	58	0.8	5.0	4.4
Selected economies:									
Algeria	34	3,620	7,640	72	95	85	4.2	..	10.3
Egypt, Arab Rep.	75	1,580	5,370	71	98	98	2.4	4.4	14.0
Iran, Islamic Rep.	71	3,540	10,840	71	105	..	6.5	..	32.4
Iraq	..	..	d	..	75	..	3.0	..	0.9
Jordan	6	2,840	5,150	73	99	98	3.8	5.7	19.7
Lebanon	4	5,800	10,040	72	82	100	4.2	18.7	38.3
Libya	6	9,010	14,710	74	..	..	9.5	..	4.3
Morocco	31	2,290	4,050	71	83	83	1.6	11.4	21.4
Oman	3	12,860	21,650	76	88	..	12.5	..	13.1
Syrian Arab Republic	20	1,780	4,430	74	114	89	3.6	..	17.4
Tunisia	10	3,210	7,140	74	120	94	2.2	11.3	16.8
West Bank and Gaza	4	1,290	..	73	83	89	..	..	9.6
Yemen, Rep.	22	870	2,200	63	60	66	1.0	2.7	1.4

Note: Figures in italics are for years or periods other than those specified.

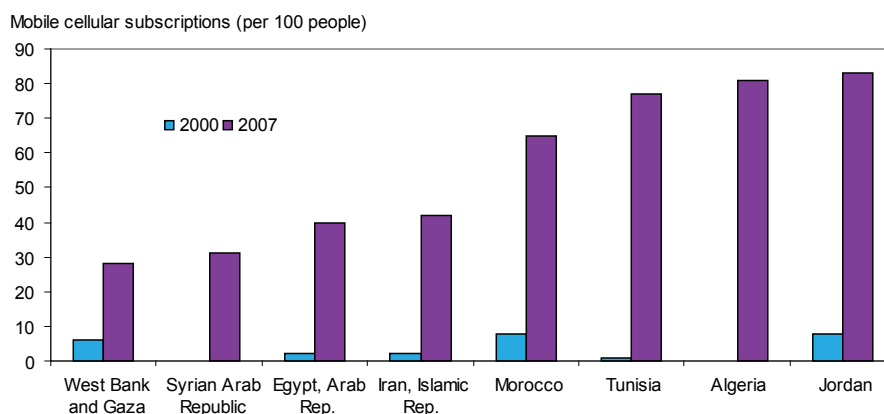
a. Atlas method; see WDI Statistical methods. b. Data are for the most recent year available. c. Provisional data. d. Estimated to be lower middle income (\$936-\$3,705).

Source: 2009 World Development Indicators database, World Bank. April 20, 2009.

Cellular network signals available: more subscribers needed

The share of mobile phone subscriptions in developing economies increased from about 30 percent of the world total to almost 70 percent in 2007. At the end of 2007 there were about 3.3 billion mobile phone subscriptions in the world. In the Middle East and North Africa, the population covered by a mobile cellular network is an impressive 93 percent, but only about 55 percent have a mobile cellular telephone subscription. At the country level, mobile cellular subscriptions range from about 28 per 100 people in West Bank and Gaza to about 83 per 100 people in Jordan—where subscriptions per 100 people increased by 10 times between 2000 and 2007.

Mobile cellular subscriptions per 100 people increased 10-fold in Jordan between 2000 and 2007



People

Fewer women working—At less than 50 percent, the **Middle East and North Africa** has the lowest employment to population ratio among all regions. The participation rate of women is particularly low. As a consequence, the region shows the largest gender gap in its employment rates. The employment to population ratio for men was 67 percent but only 22 percent for women in 2007. Many women are self-employed or family workers, who have fewer protections than workers in the formal labor market.

Environment

Higher domestic energy use—Energy production in the **Middle East and North Africa** continues to increase, but not as fast as local demand. Energy output was 47 percent higher in 2006 than in 1990, while the use of energy in the region, subsidized in several countries, more than doubled. The growth of energy use (4.3 percent a year) was the highest of any region. In 1990, energy use constituted 34 percent of the region's production; by 2006, 47 percent of their production was used for domestic consumption, leaving less for export and the needed foreign currencies.

Economy

Relatively low integration to the international capital markets—**Middle East and North Africa** makes relatively little use of international capital markets. In 2007 gross financing from international capital markets was \$16 billion (1.7 percent of GDP), lowest amount among all developing regions. Foreign direct investment net inflows increased by a mere 5 percent in 2007, equivalent to 3.7 percent of the region's GDP. Net portfolio equity flows were negative 2 billions dollars, indicating a withdrawal of foreign capital from the region. Net bond issuance declined by 88 percent in 2007, and repayments on earlier loans exceeded the amount newly borrowed from commercial banks and other private creditors.

States and markets

Improving the business environment—In 2007 and 2008, the **Middle East and North Africa** continued to make important business reforms, with two-thirds of its economies reforming. The region, once known for prohibitive entry barriers, was marked by bold reforms in 3 countries—Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Yemen, Rep.—which eliminated the minimum capital requirement for starting a business. And Jordan reduced its requirements by 96 percent in 2008. Yemen also launched a one-stop shop to make it easier to start a business, and Egypt's property registry reform led to increased title registration and a 39 percent increase in revenues from property registration. For the region overall, property registration takes about 37 days from start to finish, considerably lower than other regions: East Asia and the Pacific (113 days); Europe and Central Asia (59 days); Latin America and the Caribbean (66 days); South Asia (106 days); and Sub-Saharan Africa (97 days).

Global links

Low external debt levels—**Middle East and North Africa** had the lowest level of external debt in 2007 (public and publicly guaranteed as well as private nonguaranteed debt) in nominal terms. The ratio of external debt to GNI declined by 15 percentage points between 2000 and 2007, reaching 19 percent. Most of the external debt of the Middle East and North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa regions was public and publicly guaranteed debt from official creditors. The shares of debt from private creditors and short-term debt have increased for all other regions.