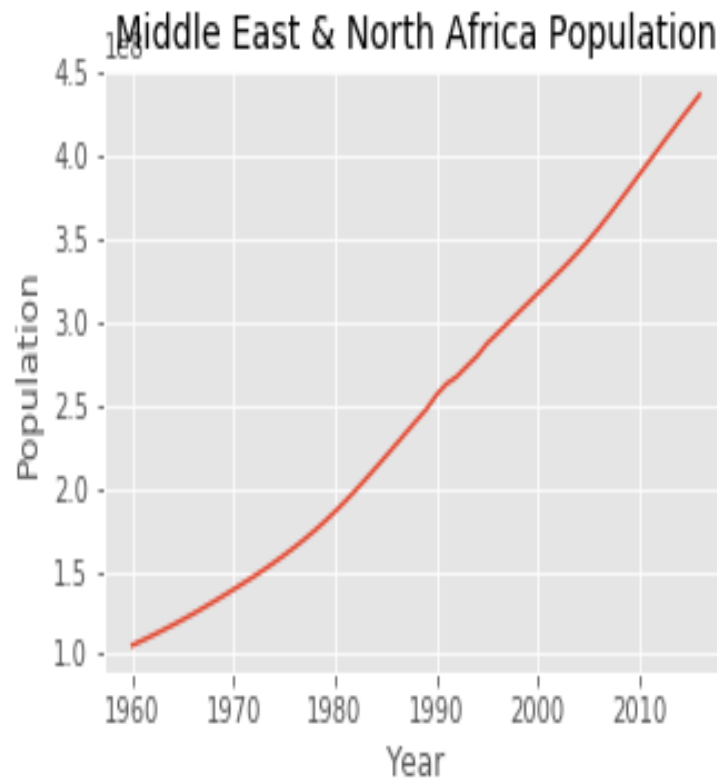


# Middle East & North Africa



MENA is an English-language acronym referring to the Middle East and North Africa region. The term covers an extensive region stretching from Morocco to Iran, including all Mashriq and Maghreb countries. This toponym is roughly synonymous with the term the Greater Middle East. The population of the MENA region at its least extent is estimated to be around 381 million people. This constitutes about 6% of the total world population. The MENA acronym is often used in academia, military planning, disaster relief, media planning as a broadcast region, and business writing.

== Controversy == Due to the geographic ambiguity and Eurocentric nature of the term "Middle East", some people prefer use of the terms Arab World, WANA (West Asia and North Africa) or the less common NAWA (North Africa-West Asia). Both the Arab World and MENA region remain the most common terms and are used by most organizations, academia, and political entities flexibly, including those in the region itself. The World Bank, UNDP and even the UNSC all use both terms.

== List of countries == MENA has no standardized definition; different organizations define the region as consisting of different territories. The following is a list of commonly included countries and territories.

\*Non-sovereign territories. Other countries sometimes counted as part of MENA:

== Economy == The MENA region has vast reserves of petroleum and natural gas that make it a vital source of global economic stability. According to the Oil and Gas Journal (January 1, 2009), the MENA region has 60% of the world's oil reserves (810.98 billion barrels (128.936 km<sup>3</sup>)) and 45% of the world's natural gas reserves (2,868,886 billion cubic feet (81,237.8 km<sup>3</sup>)). As of 2011, 8 of the 12 OPEC nations are within the MENA region.

== Religion == Islam is by far the dominant religion in nearly all of the MENA territories; 91.2% of the population is Muslim. The Middle East-North Africa region comprises 20 countries and territories with an estimated Muslim population of 315 million or about 23% of the world's Muslim population. The term "MENA" is often defined in part in relation to majority Muslim countries that based on the countries located in the region, although several nations in the region are not majority Muslim-dominated.

== Other terms ==

=== MENAP === From April 2013, the International Monetary Fund started using a new analytical region called MENAP (Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, and

Pakistan), which adds Afghanistan and Pakistan to MENA countries. Now MENAP is prominent economic grouping in IMF reports. === MENAT === The term MENAT has been used to include Turkey in the list of MENA countries. == Instability in the region == Due to rich resources, mainly oil and gas, combined with its location between three continents, (Asia, Africa and Europe), the MENA region has been in conflict since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire; notably due to the creation of Israel, a Jewish state among Arab and Muslim countries; Israeli–Palestinian conflict; the Iran–Iraq War; Iran–Saudi Arabia proxy conflict; and the rise of terrorism. Conflict in the region had come to its highest peak so far in the 21st century, with incidents such as the U.S. intervention of Iraq in 2003 and subsequent Iraq War and the rise of ISIS; the Arab Spring, which spread war to throughout the region such as the Syrian Civil War, Libyan Civil War and Yemeni Civil War. == See also == Sahel List of business region acronyms Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) Middle East economic integration Greater Middle East Near East Arab world Arab Spring Arab Winter == References ==