

Velmie

Mobile Banking Outlook 2021

Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

INTRODUCTION

The MENA region is fast becoming an exciting new frontier for the FinTech industry, with growth benefiting from a confluence of contributing factors, including favourable demographics, economic potential, digital appetite and mobile penetration.

In this White Paper we investigate the current state of the MENA region regarding FinTech and mobile banking industry. You will also find the key factors, challenges and drivers which are likely to have a significant impact on the market, followed by the industry forecast.

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1 | THE STATE OF FINTECH IN MENA

1.1. Overview

There is a great potential for the FinTech industry in the MENA region according to a variety of factors from relatively low competition and expansion to favourable regulations and rapid internet and technology penetration.

- Mohammed Aziz

Founder of Dapi

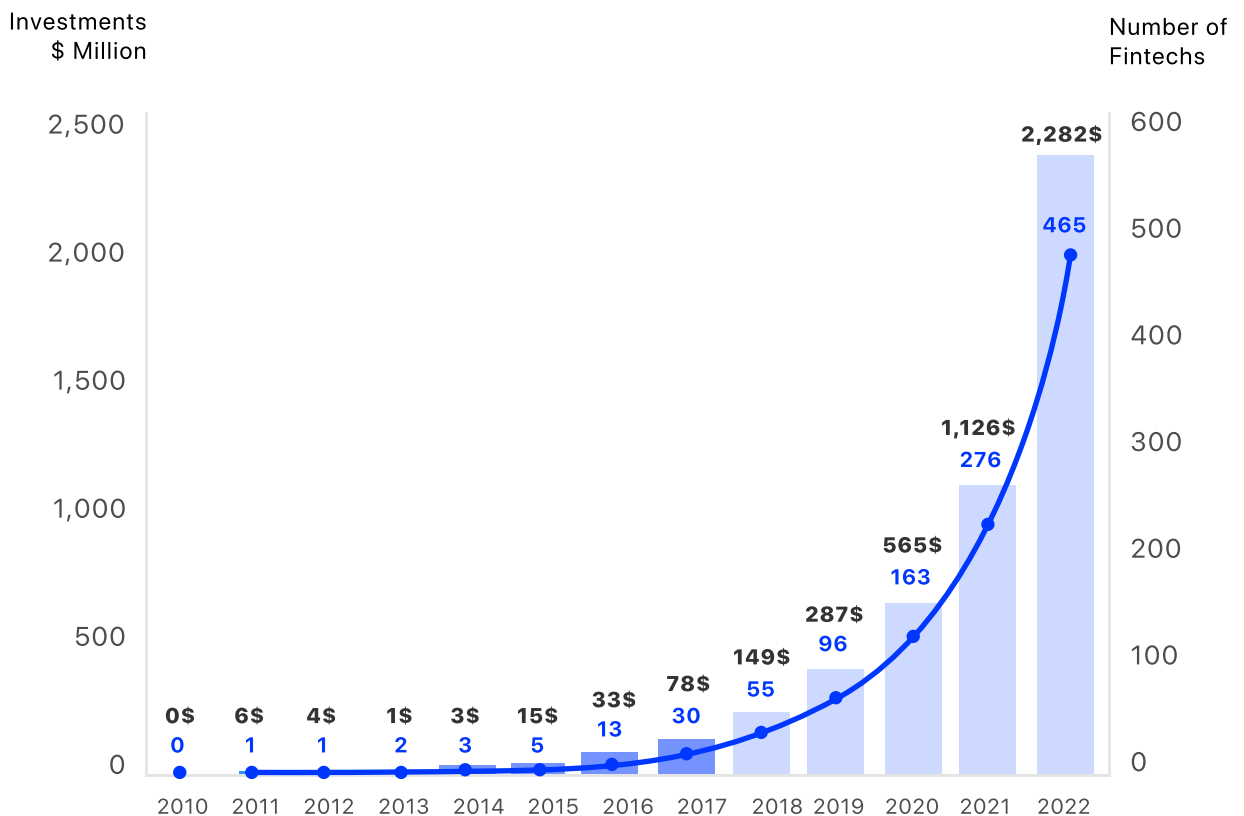
"Fintech is only beginning to develop here and the market is pretty much untapped."

In comparison with the global FinTech market development, the growth in the MENA region is coming off a globally low base. The Middle East has attracted only **about 1% of global FinTech financing in 2018**, with the US and China dominating the market.

According to the Milken Institute, the FinTech sector across the Middle East is growing at a **compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 30%**.

1 | THE STATE OF FINTECH IN MENA

It is projected that by 2022, some 465 FinTech companies in the Middle East will raise over \$2 billion in venture capital funding, compared to the 30 FinTechs that raised nearly \$80 million in 2017.



Venture Capital Investment into Middle East FinTech Companies

Apart from the steady growth of financial services digitalization volumes, the year of 2020 has been experiencing a fundamental customer behaviour shift because of the increased preference for remote and contactless experience due to the COVID-19 and lockdown.

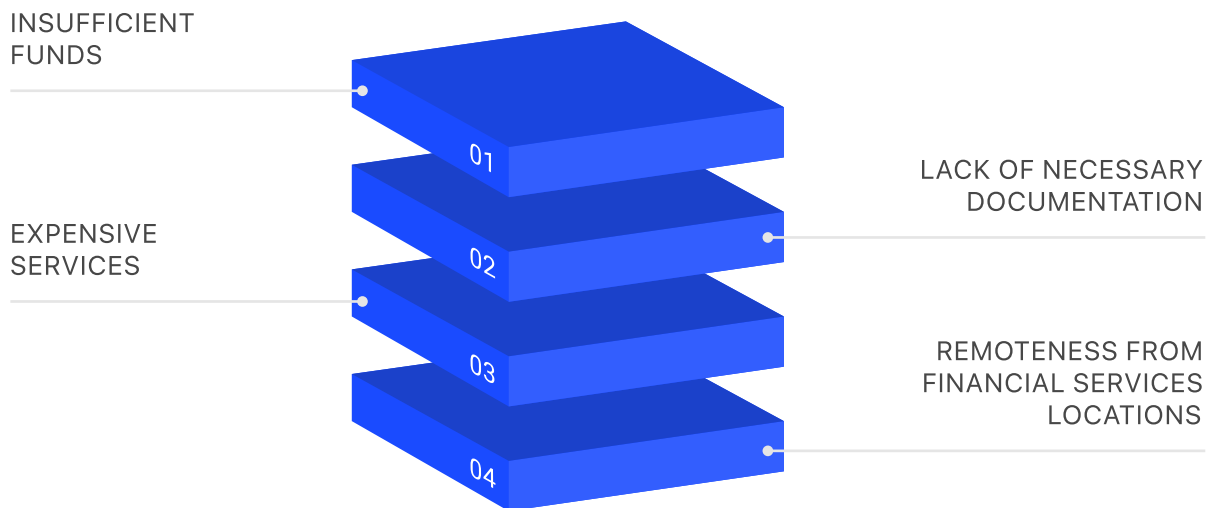
1 | THE STATE OF FINTECH IN MENA

For example, Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank (ADIB) has seen significant interest for its digital services during 2020. Around 94% of ADIB's banking transactions are conducted digitally and 65% of customer updates are made through the bank's digital channels today.

The growth in the FinTech industry has been propelled by the many **regulatory initiatives** across the region aimed at providing the more flexible regulatory environment required to allow innovation to flourish.

Demand for mobile FinTech solutions across MENA is primarily driven by the low financial inclusion rates across the region. More than 180m, which is about 43%, adults are without access to bank accounts in the Arab world.

The barriers to have access to financial services include:

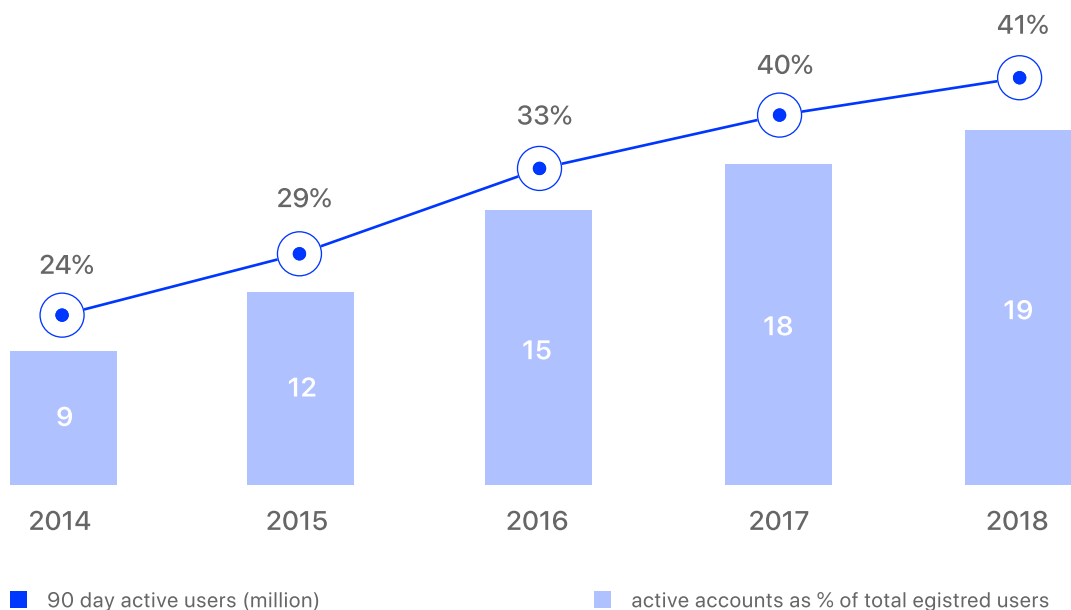


1 | THE STATE OF FINTECH IN MENA

There are several segments of the market that tend to be largely excluded from Middle Eastern banking access. Firstly, most women don't have access to financial services due to the cultural considerations. A significant part of small, medium and micro-sized enterprises accounting for 63% is also isolated from finance because banks find it more profitable to do business with the large companies.

Also critical to the growth has been the level of internet penetration in MENA, which has paved the way for customers to be in a position to adopt the wide range of mobile payment options and other financial services. The Middle East region has the fourth-highest internet penetration rate worldwide, 70.8% in 2020, and Africa behind other regions with 47.1%. However, both regions have the highest growth rates within 2 decades in the developing world: roughly 5.5% in the Middle East and almost 14% in Africa.

Growth in active accounts over the last five years highlights progress in mobile money adoption in MENA



1 | THE STATE OF FINTECH IN MENA

The high internet and mobile penetration are feeding through to the growth in active accounts and [percentage of total registered users](#), which has increased [from 24% in 2014 through to 41% in 2018](#).

What makes FinTech such a powerful solution to these countries is that mobile and internet access allows them to extend the services digitally rather than incurring significant expenses in building up a physical presence in distant locations.

Fintechs also offer customized solutions to different problems that confront individuals and small, medium and micro-sized businesses. [They cater to unique consumption habits, as well as other savings structures in the region, such as sukuks and Rotating Savings and Credit Associations \(ROSCAs\)](#). Fintech offerings also enable innovative credit reporting and scoring, fast-tracking the approval process.

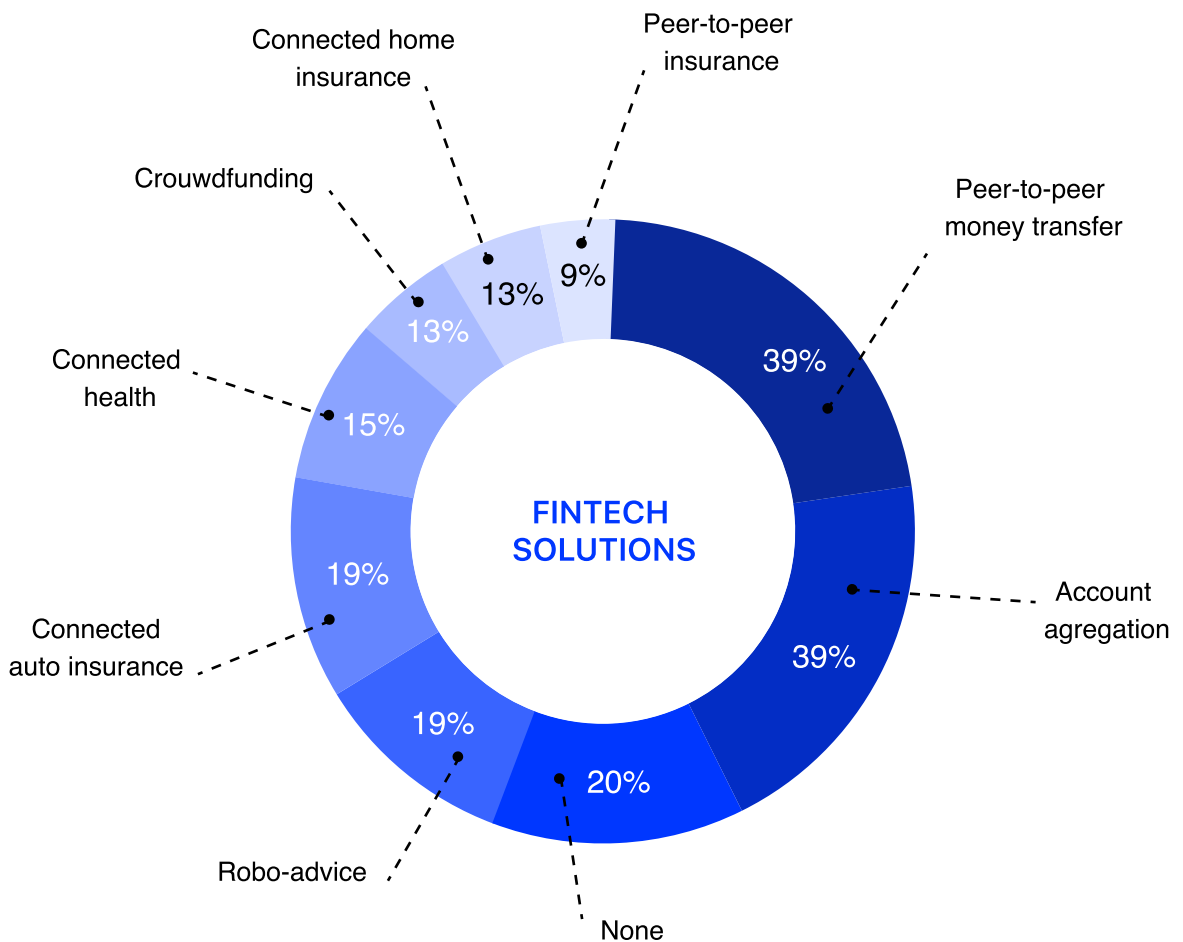
The technology driving the myriad of FinTech propositions also reduces operational costs and extends the target audience remotely through channels that include social media and agents acting as in-person financial services access points.

Customers are interested in having a global view of all their accounts and a simplified process to complete transfers.

1 | THE STATE OF FINTECH IN MENA

The most popular FinTech solutions in the Middle East, according to Deloitte's research, are P2P transfers and account aggregation platforms.

Which FinTech solutions have you used?



To sum up, MENA countries have already put robust foundations in place for the future growth of the FinTech industry and thus are well positioned to take advantage of the future growth potential offered by this huge, multi-faceted and largely unbanked region.

1 | THE STATE OF FINTECH IN MENA

1.2. Top FinTech Vendors in the MENA region

- **Velmie**

Velmie has extensive experience in working with Middle Eastern and African digital financial service providers. As such, it is a technology provider with valuable regional-specific knowledge of the most demanded services and the integration capabilities that are most in demand in a white-label mobile wallet platform catering for the MENA market.

Velmie has an extensive portfolio of FinTech solutions, including digital banks, peer-to-peer lending capabilities, microfinance solutions, and blockchain solutions. It also has a dedicated team that supports platform adaptations, customizations, and integrations.

The features of its mobile wallet platform, built on micro-services architecture, include secure two-factor authorization, interactive identity verification, branded payment cards, real-time money transfers and currency conversion, multiple currency support, real-time QR code payments and more. It is an ideal financial software provider in terms of quality and price-quality ratio.

- **OpenWay**

Openway is a global leader in banking software solutions with 20+ years of expertise and a good reputation. The company has served more than 130 banks worldwide, from ambitious startups to industry giants. With its local offices and teams in South Africa and UAE, Openway is able to deliver high quality banking and payment products tailored to specific regional demands

1 | THE STATE OF FINTECH IN MENA

The main product WAY4 is an innovative e-payment processing framework for banks, payment processors, telcos and petrol companies. Openway portfolio includes digital wallets, card issuing, merchant acquiring, fleet solutions and payment hubs. However, it lacks cryptocurrency software offers.

Openway is a trustworthy partner with immense market expertise and end-to-end solutions. It would be an excellent fit for leaders in banking, financial and related industries, whereas challenger banks and fresh startups would find it less appealing due to costly services.

- **Wallet Factory**

Wallet Factory has 15 years of expertise in the financial and payments industry. It offers payment, banking, loyalty and microfinance solutions. It is seen as a Swiss Knife of the mobile wallet industry for its ability to deliver fully customised solutions. It also has impressive industry partnerships and success stories around the world.

The company delivers industry-tailored fintech solutions for its customers in banking and financial industry, telecom, fuel retail, ecommerce and postal operations. It has several basic-functionality products which could be further upgraded and personalized upon customers' desires: mobile wallets, electronic money systems, mobile QR POS terminals, customer loyalty management and mobile gifts.

Wallet Factory would be a great partner for forward-looking companies looking for innovative FinTech solutions for the emerging and mass markets.

1 | THE STATE OF FINTECH IN MENA

1.3. Top Fintech Players in the MENA region

PAYMENTS



LENDING

FINANCIAL PRODUCTS COMPARISON SITE



FINTECH

TRANSFERS



CROWDFUNDING

INSURANCE



WEALTH MANAGEMENT

RETAIL FINANCIAL SERVICES



DIGITAL BANK

FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE

BLOCKCHAIN



2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

2.1. Fintech Market Drivers

1 Young digitally savvy population

The biggest driver of FinTech in the territory is likely to be the **young, rapidly increasing, and digitally savvy population**. Says [McKinsey](#), currently about 60 % of the overall MENA population is under 30, while 30% falls within the 15–29 age bracket. The young people are expected to fuel the rapid expansion of the digital sector in the coming years.

2 Digital adoption and consumption

The second factor expected to drive growth in the FinTech sector is the region's rapidly increasing access to technology and its propensity for **digital adoption and consumption**.

83%



of population is
online daily

94%



own a smartphone
device

2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

Mobile phone penetration is expected to rise in the years ahead. The UAE's penetration is expected to top 220%, Saudi Arabia's close to 200%, and Oman's about 140%. At the lower end are Algeria, Egypt, and Morocco. This diversity "signals a deep underlying heterogeneity across the region's digital economy — another key driver of the untapped growth potential."

- Ian Pollari

Global CoLeader of Fintech at KPMG

"We're going to see incumbents around the world seriously reconsider their technology stacks and how future proof they are. This is going to include looking at their core banking and origination systems in the context of their overall strategy so that they can readily compete with digital banks and emerging partnerships involving big techs and other scale providers."

In sum, MENA's financial services industry has seen and is well-positioned to see even more significant growth and FinTech disruption. These changes will be propelled by the region's shift away from oil-based economies toward more service-oriented industries with a strong digital presence, the demographic shift to a younger, tech-savvy population, and the exponential evolution of technology and channels.

2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

2.2. Challenges



Economic Situation

The **macroeconomic context** is likely to prove challenging over the next few years as the MENA economies, like all other countries globally, attempt to **win back the lost** ground incurred during the first phase of the **COVID-19 pandemic**. The common consensus is that it will take at least **a couple of years** to get back to pre-COVID levels.



Adoption Constraints

The MENA region's economy is likely to **underperform other emerging market regions**. Fitch Solutions forecasts MENA aggregate real GDP growth at 3.5% in 2021, after a 5.1% contraction in 2020. In several MENA countries little policy flexibility and social/political instability weigh on prospects for a post-COVID-19 recovery.

Despite the high demand for the financial technologies and innovations in the region, the products nowadays face certain difficulties in adoption.

Among the reasons why users may still be reluctant to utilize FinTech solutions there are:



Security of personal information



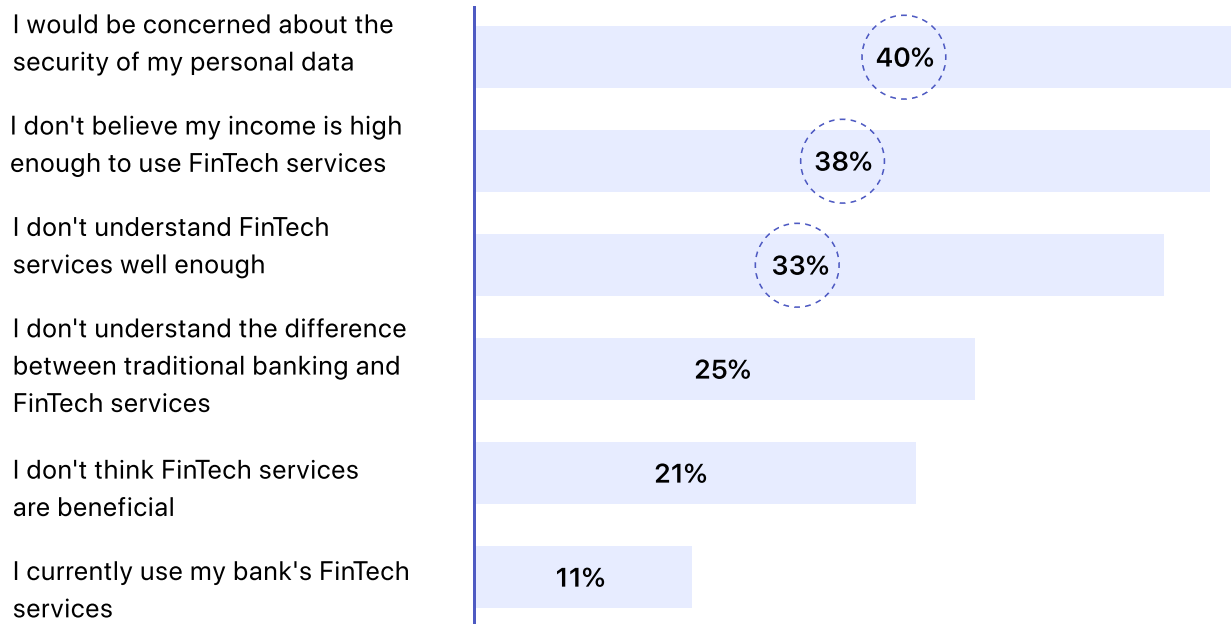
Perception of FinTech products as costly



Lack of digital banking services understanding.

2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

Why are you unwilling to start using FinTech solutions?



Thus, FinTech providers will have to overcome these concerns, which could threaten to become a critical barrier to adoption. One way to solve the problem would be for FinTechs to set up an escrow account where payment is held until the buyer receives the goods.



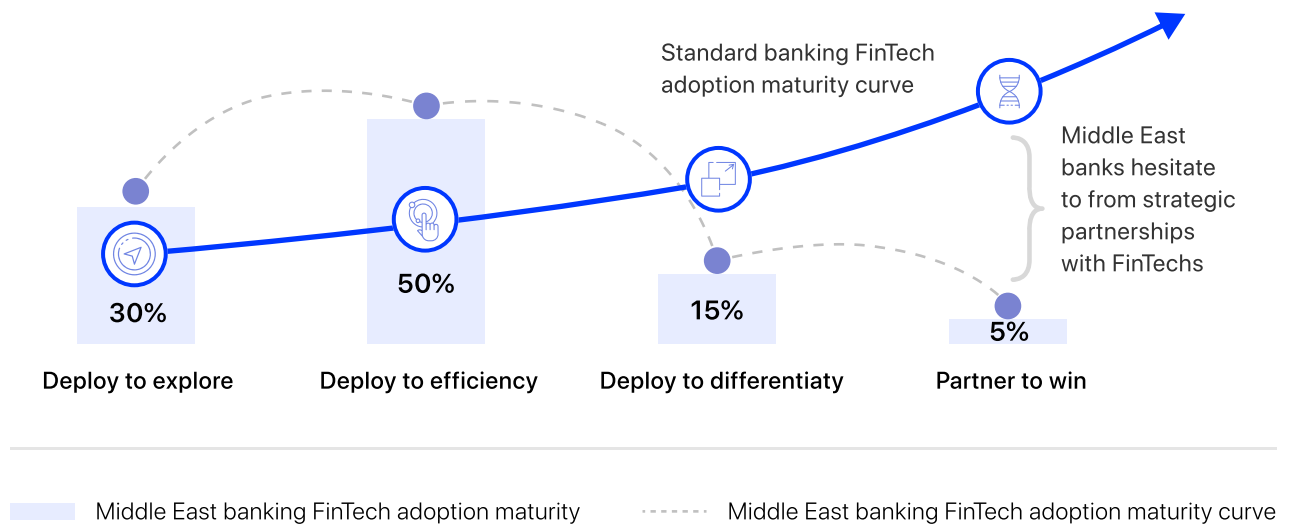
Bank-FinTech Partnership

The evolution of the FinTech industry in MENA is proving to be somewhat different from the standard banking FinTech adoption curve. Whereas further along the maturity spectrum, countries usually see banks forming strategic partnerships with FinTech innovators.

2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

That is not the case in the Middle East, where take-up by the formal banking sector is not happening as quickly as expected, which prevents the regional market from further abundant growth nowadays.

Indicative allocation of Middle East banks deploying FinTech along the maturity curve...



Therefore, it is mission critical for both banks and FinTech players to find ways to collaborate efficiently. Once the consensus is reached, the region will be able to unlock far more potential within financial technologies and their widespread adoption.

2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

2.3. Key Contributing Factors

There are 6 key factors that define a thriving FinTech ecosystem as the following:



While the MENA region may be lagging in some respects, namely access to local human capital and funding, it is doing well in other critical areas, like regulatory innovation, infrastructure, and digital demand.

1

Regulations

Regulators across the region have taken **significant strides in accommodating the FinTech industry's need for light-touch regulation so that they can have the much-needed** space to innovate. For some countries, further work needs to be done. But in all, most authorities have begun to put the regulatory building blocks in place, namely sandboxes, accelerators, and free zones, where FinTechs can develop ground-breaking propositions without being hamstrung by demanding regulatory requirements.

2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

Where FinTechs complain of regulatory confusion about who they expected to comply with, for instance the UAE mainland or the free zone, investment, and scaling opportunities are undermined. However, regulators are looking at clearing up this complexity and confusion and investigating the potential for collaboration.

2

Funding

Capital is becoming **more and more available to fund startups** in the region. But funding is **still in short supply** for the more mature FinTechs ready to build capacity and thus require more significant financial investments.

3

Human Capital

When it comes to talent, FinTechs are generally finding that they need to import the skills required because of a **lack of local talent** with the required skill sets. However, as the important role FinTech is likely to play in the region's development becomes more and more evident, governments are looking at what they can do to develop and expand the necessary expertise within the region.

2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

4

Innovations And Technology

Innovation adoption and available technologies in the regional market are also of great importance for prosperous industry development. Attracted by the vast potential in the MENA region numerous technology providers started localization of their solutions to fit the market needs: functionality extension, adjustments for islamic finance and other. There are global vendors such as Openway, Velmie, Wallet Factory and others already offering platform solutions crafted for the Middle East and Africa regions.

5

Infrastructure

The infrastructure FinTech companies require to flourish is being put in place across the region and is already in place in the UAE. According to the 2019 World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report, MENA performed well in the components that contribute to an enabling environment. The region scored particularly well in the infrastructure and macroeconomic stability measures. It also gained 4.8% in ICT adoption from the previous year.

6

Demand

Meanwhile, Findexable, which publishes a Global Fintech Index 2020, expects FinTech to be the **MENA gamechanger**. It describes the region as the one with the greatest need because fewer than half of all citizens have a bank account. MENA still trails the rest of the world with the smallest number of hubs in total and only six making it into the top 100 globally.

2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

- Findexable

“But with Africa the home of mobile payments, the lack of banking legacy makes Africa and the Middle East the regions where the FinTech’s future is likely to arrive fastest.”

Deloitte sees **two levers requiring urgent attention** if the Middle East Fintech ecosystem is going to reach its potential. These are regulatory harmonization and developing trusting relationships between banks and FinTechs, and integrating FinTech solutions into banking strategies.

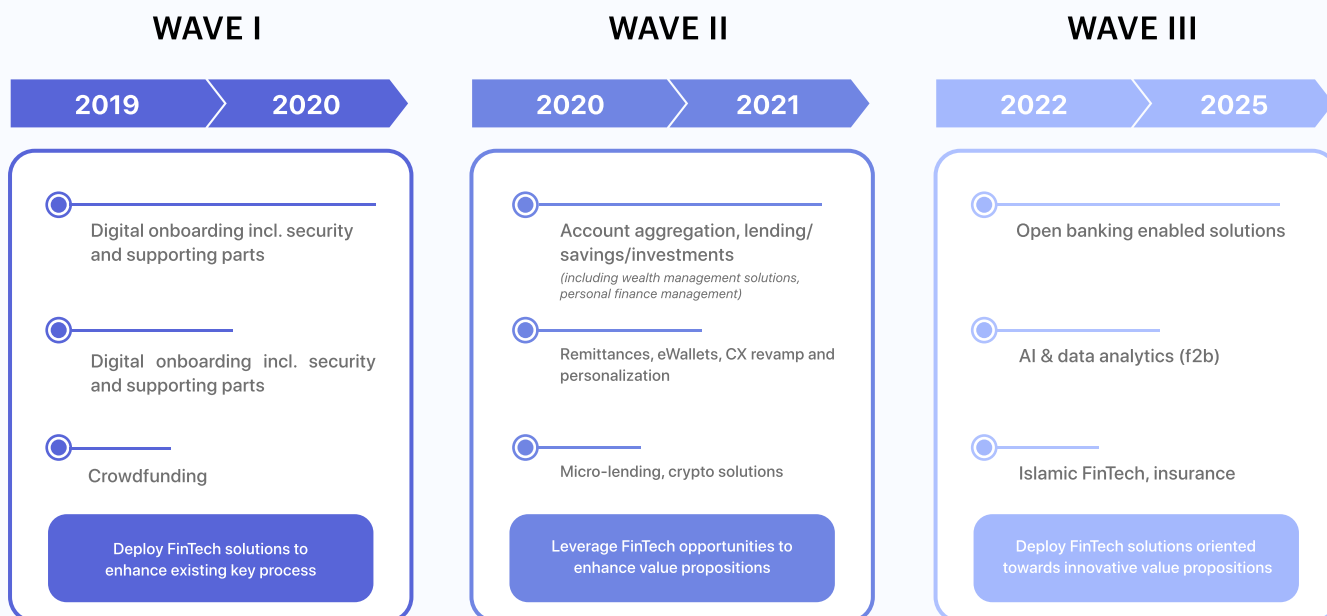
2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

2.4. Forecasts

Forecasts of what can be expected from the **MENA region include that the FinTech market will reach a value of \$2.5 billion** across the broader region by 2022 to the **expectation** that the number of FinTech companies in the MENA region **will reach 1,845 by 2022**, 230% up on the 559 FinTechs in the region in 2015.

This compares with 2019, when, according to KPMG, in its [Pulse of Fintech](#) publication, global investment in FinTech companies hit \$135.7 billion with 2,693 deals, which gives a sense of the scope of the entire global market.

In its June 2020 Middle East FinTech Study, Deloitte Digital envisages the evolution of MENA's FinTech industry to happen in waves, with the first Wave already bedded down and the second Wave already well underway.



2 | MENA FINTECH OUTLOOK

In the near future, demand for account aggregation, lending, and savings/investments is likely to lead the way, followed by remittances, eWallets, CX revamp, and personalization. Further, it is expected that open banking-enabled solutions will take the lead position in FinTech evolution, followed by AI and data analytics and Islamic FinTech and insurance.

All in all, the odds are stacked in favor of the growth of FinTech in MENA, as the region meets the essential requirements for fostering innovation and providing FinTech startups with a market that offers unbounded potential.

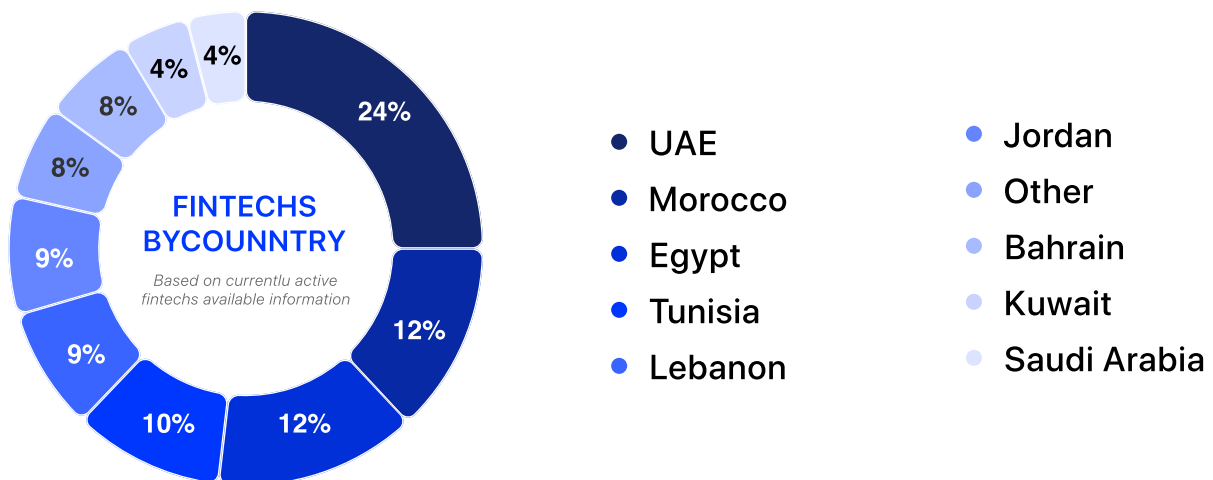
3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

3.1. Overview

MENA is one of the world's most heterogeneous regions, spanning three continents and 21 countries, with a population of close to 600 million. It is a culturally, politically and economically diverse region that also encompasses the six Arab states that are members of the Gulf Coordination Council. This diversity is reflected in the vastly different stages of advancement of the FinTech industries across the region.

The **GCC countries** appear **the readiest for FinTech adoption** in the Middle East and Africa, "thanks to the preference of clients for digital banking, the ready availability of financial capital, and a push by regulators."

The **slower progress** of the **North and Sub-Saharan African Countries** is attributed to the quality of their infrastructure, lack of capital, limited adoption, with a few exceptions, and weaker regulators. Those exceptions are no doubt South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya, where there has been significant innovation and the creation of ground-breaking mobile payment solutions like MPesa.



3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

The number of FinTechs per country across the Arab world also differs considerably. The UAE is the leader in FinTech innovation, comprising some 24% of the FinTechs in the region. Both Morocco and Egypt follow, with 12% and Tunisia with 10% of FinTechs.

In terms of the areas likely to most benefit from FinTech across the entire region, S&P Global pinpoints **remittances, banking penetration, the security of transactions, and compliance**.

The **disparities within the region** are also noticeable in terms of venture and **human capital availability** to fund the growth of FinTechs, with more capital available in GCC compared with a scarcity in African countries.

Internet penetration in GCC is streets ahead of North and sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. Finally, a far more significant proportion of the population has made or received **digital payments** in the GCC countries versus the MEA countries.

The entire MENA region is home to some of the world's most unbanked populations, particularly in Africa, but with the Arab states not far behind. Ultimately this will see the FinTech playing fields within the region begin to level out during the decade ahead, as long as the regulators keep the field open for them.

Regulations across the region are also at various stages of development as authorities grapple with how to balance the need to protect customers while allowing innovation to thrive and ultimately benefit customers by offering them lower fees and access to financial facilities they would otherwise not be able to use.

3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

In Clifford Chance's [Fintech in the Middle East – Developments across MENA](#), it noted that there had been **a rapid change in the regulatory environment**. The central banks of Egypt, Bahrain, UAE and Jordan have adopted specific initiatives to regulate digital payment services. Lebanon, the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), Bahrain and Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM) have introduced **crowdfunding regulations**. Meanwhile, the UAE securities regulator **allowed the licensing of ICOs**. When it comes to Africa, the **African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AFCFTA)**, which entered into force on 30 May 2019, is supposed to accelerate FinTech innovation on the continent. These are just some of the developments that have taken place over the last few years.

3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

3.2. Islamic Finance

Islamic finance is growing fast both within the GCC and on the African continent.

1.9 bln
Muslims globally

Potential market for innovative
Islamic finance services

The two major financial services hubs in the UAE, Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM) are becoming bases for FinTech providers.

- DIFC

According to Arif Amiri, CEO of the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) Authority, the financial services hub experienced a 21% growth year-on-year in the volume of Islamic assets managed within the centre. Maybank Islamic Berhad, the fifth-largest Sharia-compliant bank in the world, set up in DIFC in 2019. Says Arif: "Islamic Fintech start-ups are also choosing DIFC as their home to access the region and will help nurture innovation in the sector."

3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

- ADGM

In the ADGM, recent partnerships have been established, including with the Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, to support Shariah-compliant FinTech initiatives.

- Mohammed Dawood, Head of Islamic Finance,

Global Banking & Markets, HSBC Middle East

"We've witnessed very strong growth in the international Sukuk market this year, with Middle East issuers continuing to drive issuance volume. With the ample liquidity 2020 has already broken records in terms of issuance volume, with more than \$30bn of global Sukuk supply so far this year. The key growth markets for Islamic finance will be focused around countries in the GCC – namely UAE, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait – and Malaysia."

- AFRICA

Activity on the African continent is also picking up in the Islamic finance sphere. Moody's expects Islamic banking assets to increase 10% over the next five years, with banks like Absa Bank of South Africa and Ecobank Chad, setting up Islamic departments.

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UAE

The UAE is, without doubt, the furthest along on their FinTech journey and **the most globally competitive country in MENA.**

- Arif Amiri,

the chief executive of
Dubai International Financial Centre

"By giving FinTechs in the UAE a holistic, dynamic ecosystem with an independent regulatory and English Common Law judicial system and global financial exchange, start-ups can be better equipped to promote their innovative solutions and expansion plans to investors."

The UAE is the **25th most competitive country in the world**, gaining two positions from the previous year. It gained ground primarily because of significant improvements in ICT adoption and skills - arguably the most important drivers of growth opportunities in FinTech. The WEF notes that these pillars complement "the long-standing UAE competitive

3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

advantages, namely a stable macroeconomic environment, sound product market and infrastructure."

The one dampener on the horizon is the economic outlook, which has been adversely affected by the pandemic. Fitch Ratings' assessment of what lies ahead is a recovery that is likely to be reasonably sluggish but, it adds, there is some scope for optimism. The UAE economy is not expected to return to the pre-pandemic levels in 2021 and forecasts growth of 4% in 2021 after a sharp 6.1% contraction this year. Fitch attributes the somewhat sluggish recovery to relatively tight fiscal policy and a lacklustre global economic recovery, which it expects to weigh on domestic and external demand.

From a FinTech perspective the UAE is considered a wager by FINDEXABLE, which publishes the Global Fintech Index. Moreover, UAE is seventh on the list of the top 10 wagers. Findexable explains what they mean by a wager: "They might not be at the top of the tables. Yet. But this group of countries are giving the old-guard of financial centres a very good run for their money - by showing what it takes to wage a FinTech battle. And how to focus regulatory, innovation and ecosystem efforts to best effect to build FinTech success at scale."



Saudi Arabia also improved in the WEF Global Competitive Report, gaining three positions and coming in at 36th place globally in the competitive rankings. Saudi Arabia is seen to be making strides to diversify its economy: the non-oil sector is expanding, and further public and private investments outside the mineral sector are being deployed.

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The country's determination to transform its economy is most visible in terms of **ICT adoption**, where it gained 9.4 points to reach the 38th position globally. The reasons for this increase were the rapid deployment of broadband technology (subscriptions to broadband internet have increased from 90 to 111 per 100 people) and healthy 18.4% growth in internet users. **Innovation capability** also gradually improved.

Regarding its economic outlook, Fitch expects fiscal consolidation imperatives to limit its growth recovery from its second-quarter 2020 low. The country is expected to grow by a relatively low 2.7% in 2021 compared to the rest of the region after contracting 4.3% this year.

Drags on investment and consumption are expected to be fiscal measures, such as Capex cuts and VAT hikes, which will constrain non-oil activity. Oil output will remain capped by OPEC+ supply restrictions, declining markedly this year, and rising moderately in 2021.

BAHRAIN

Bahrain's economy is also expected to be **held back by fiscal constraints**, with the economy forecast to grow only 2.7% in 2021, up from a 4.2% contraction in 2020. Fitch points out that Bahrain's fiscal positions are by far the weakest in the GCC and that lower oil will accelerate Bahrain's budgetary reforms. However, the government of Bahrain does have a long-term economic plan, named the Economic Vision 2030, to shift to a private-sector led economy rather than an oversized public sector.

3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

Bahrain is the GCC's longest established financial center, according to the Milken Institute, with nearly 400 licensed financial institutions. It says that unlike the UAE, Bahrain has taken a **country-wide approach to FinTech development** and promotion, with the Central Bank of Bahrain overseeing the financial services sector and its Governor, Rasheed Mohammed Al Maraj, adopting an innovative mindset in promoting Bahrain as a FinTech hub in the region.

QATAR

Qatar is expected to **muddle through the next couple of years**, growing by 3.1% in 2021 from a 2.2% decline in 2020. Non-oil activity will benefit from firms' expansion plans in the run-up to the 2022 FIFA World Cup, which should prompt a temporary boost in tourist arrivals.

On the FinTech front, KPMG says the expected introduction of key FinTech regulations will "further facilitate the build-up" of the digital banking ecosystem. It is referring to the Qatar Central Bank's establishment of the FinTech section, Fintech Regulatory Sandbox and the launch of the Qatar FinTech Hub (QFTH).

- KPMG

"The FinTech scene in Qatar is expected to grow rapidly and start disrupting the banking sector."

3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

EGYPT

In Egypt, Fitch sees growth rebounding but cautions that vulnerabilities persist. It says latest estimates imply that Egypt's growth came in at 3.5% in FY2019/20 is projected to grow at 3.4% in FY2020/21.

PMI and Google mobility data point to widespread disruption to local activity in Q2, says Fitch, though it sees conditions now easing. "Weak prospects for tourism and investment and remittance inflows will continue to dampen Egypt's growth performance."

Egypt is arguably the **most advanced FinTech market in North Africa**. Its national e-commerce policy was introduced in 2018 to double the footprint of businesses selling products and services online in the country by 2020. Although there is no actual data on 2020, Egypt's e-commerce sector has been growing at 30% annually since 2017, which is higher than the international average (20,7% in 2019), not to mention online shopping explosion due to the COVID-19.

MOROCCO

The Moroccan economy has been hard hit by the coronavirus, contracting 14.9% on an annual basis in the second quarter of 2020 from 0.1% in the first quarter. In the third quarter, the government had to extend a state of emergency into mid-October because of another spike in infections.

3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

The country's macroeconomic situation was further **dampened** when S&P Global Ratings downgraded the outlook of its BBB-rating to negative from stable on 2 October on heightened debt concerns.

- Dare Okoudjou

CEO of MFS Africa

“Morocco is set to remain a key FinTech hub in Africa, thanks to its geographical position, economic and cultural influence, and active contribution to the continent's growth.”

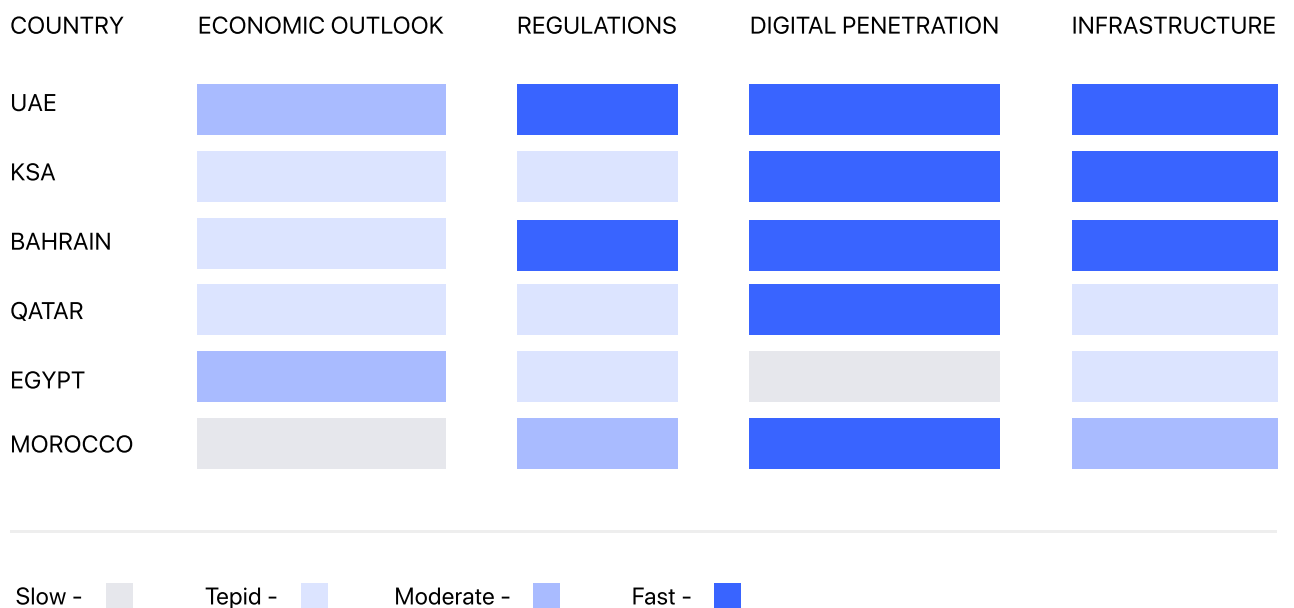
Central bank governor Abdellatif Jouahri is in support of the application of FinTech, including blockchain technology, because he believes it will help Morocco to achieve its goal to provide its society and businesses of different levels with access to formal financial products and services, thus, promoting economic and social inclusion.

3 | REGIONAL TRENDS

3.3. Summary

Pulling it all together, it is evident that digital penetration is high and continuing to grow across the GCC countries. Infrastructure is also more sophisticated in the GCC countries, with Bahrain lags somewhat. All countries face less than ideal economic outlooks, with Morocco expected to have the slowest growth in the group and UAE and Egypt the fastest, but still moderate, growth.

Mena fintech heatmap



4 | CONTACTS



Velmie is a FinTech software company delivering localized mobile banking and payment solutions. Our mission is to contribute to the financial inclusion of emerging markets like MENA.

Being a white label mobile banking platform provider with deep market knowledge and hands-on experience in financial technology development, Velmie powers financial institutions and mobile wallet companies with superior user experience and regulations compliant mobile banking solutions.

If you wish to discuss your project or initiative, please contact us.

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5. Chambers: <https://chambers.com/>
6. EY: <https://www.ey.com/>
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8. Gulf Business: <https://gulfbusiness.com/>
9. HexGN: <https://hexgn.com/>
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