

"The Rise of Start-ups in MENA: A Comparison of Attractiveness and Success Across Countries"

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has experienced significant growth in the start-up ecosystem in recent years, with many successful start-ups emerging in different countries. In this article, we will compare MENA countries in terms of the attractiveness and success of start-ups and provide more examples of successful start-ups in the region.

Comparing MENA Countries:

According to the 2020 Global Entrepreneurship Index, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) ranked first among MENA countries in terms of the attractiveness of the start-up ecosystem. The UAE was followed by Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, respectively. The ranking was based on several factors, including access to funding, cultural support for entrepreneurship, and policy and institutional support for start-ups.

In terms of start-up success, a report by Magnitt, a start-up data platform, revealed that the UAE had the highest number of deals and the largest amount of investment in start-ups in 2020. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan were also among the top countries in terms of investment in start-ups. These countries also had a significant number of successful start-ups, including:

1. Careem:

Careem is a ride-hailing company based in Dubai and founded in 2012. The company has been successful in the MENA region and has expanded its services to over 100 cities in 14 countries. Careem has been able to grow rapidly by offering localized services that meet the specific needs of customers in the region. In 2019, the company was acquired by Uber for \$3.1 billion, making it one of the most successful start-ups in the region.

2. Anghami:

Anghami is a music streaming platform founded in Beirut in 2012. The company has been successful in the MENA region and has over 70 million users. Anghami has been able to grow rapidly by offering localized services that meet the specific needs of customers in the region. The company has also partnered with local music labels and artists to offer a wide range of Arabic and international music.

3. Vezeeta:

Vezeeta is a healthcare booking platform founded in Cairo in 2012. The company has been successful in the MENA region and has over 2.5 million users. Vezeeta has been able to grow rapidly by offering localized services that meet the specific needs of customers in the region. The company has also partnered with local healthcare providers to offer a wide range of healthcare services.

4. Mawdoo3:

Mawdoo3 is a Jordanian start-up that provides Arabic-language content on various topics, including health, education, and travel. The company was founded in 2012 and has become one of the most popular Arabic-language websites. In 2020, the company raised \$20 million in funding, making it one of the most successful start-ups in the region.

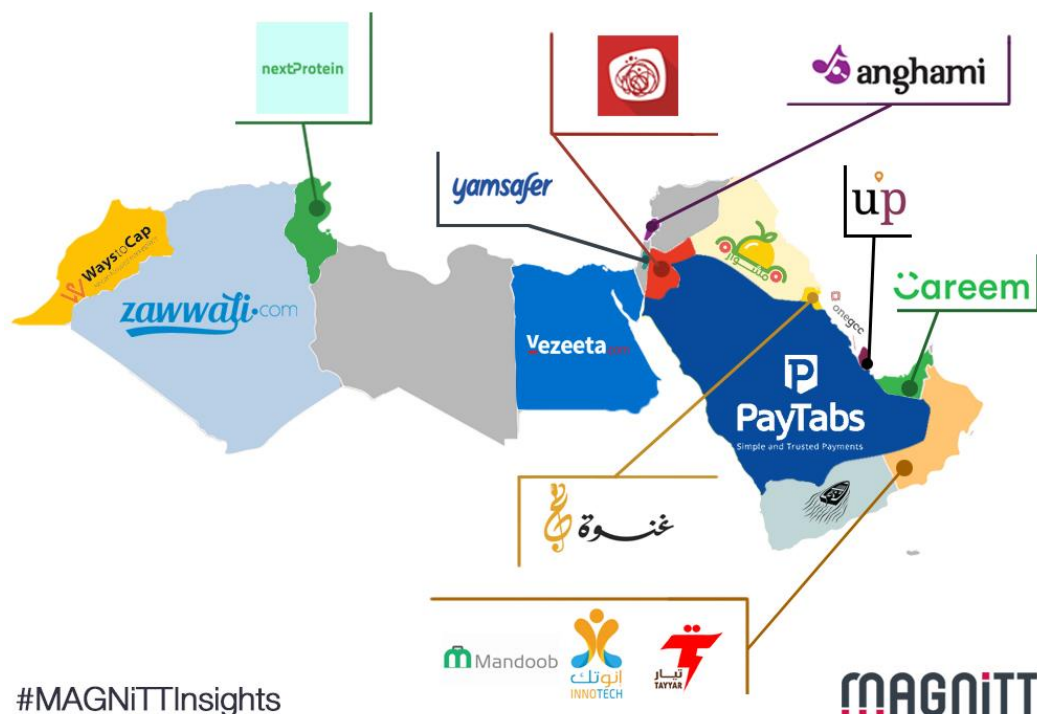
5. Swvl:

Swvl is an Egyptian start-up that provides bus transportation services in Cairo, Alexandria, and Nairobi. The company was founded in 2017 and has grown rapidly, expanding its services to Pakistan and the UAE. In 2020, the company raised \$25 million in funding, making it one of the most successful start-ups in the region.

6. Kitopi:

Kitopi is a Dubai-based start-up that provides cloud kitchen services to restaurants. The company was founded in 2018 and has grown rapidly, expanding its services to several countries in the region. In 2020, the company raised \$60 million in funding, making it one of the most successful start-ups in the region.

Top Funded Startups Across 10 MENA Countries



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Challenges Facing Start-ups in MENA Countries:

Despite the success of many start-ups in the region, there are still challenges facing the start-up ecosystem in MENA countries. One of the most significant challenges is access to funding, particularly for early-stage start-ups. The lack of supportive regulatory environments and the absence of strong legal frameworks can also be significant obstacles to the growth and success of start-ups in the region.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, MENA countries have made significant strides in developing the start-up ecosystem in the region. The UAE, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia are considered the most attractive countries for start-ups, with several successful start-ups emerging from these countries. However, challenges such as access to funding and supportive regulatory environments must be addressed to enable start-ups to continue to grow and succeed in the region.