

MENA'S SPORTING REVOLUTION

A DECADE OF GROWTH AND GLOBAL IMPACT

Over the past decade, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has experienced a significant transformation in its sports landscape, driven by substantial investments, strategic initiatives, and increasing youth engagement. This evolution has positioned MENA as a rising hub in the global sports arena.

FOOTBALL

Football remains the most popular sport in MENA

MENA is the 2nd fastest-growing region for world football

Top markets include:



SAUDI ARABIA



UAE



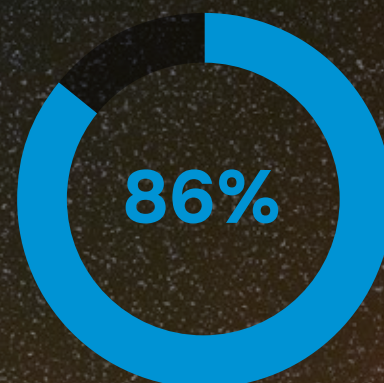
EGYPT



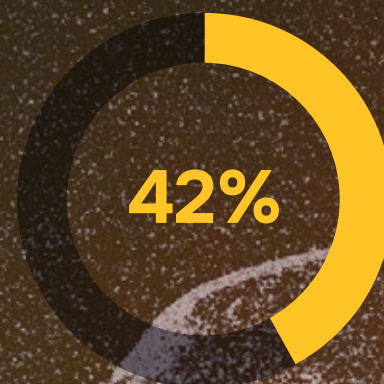
LEBANON



MOROCCO



86% of adults in MENA have an interest in football



42% of MENA population have an interest in European Leagues

Interest among 16 to 24 year-olds has risen

27%
2021

36%
2024

beIN SPORTS

RECORDED 5.4B

cumulative viewership
in MENA

Footballco

REACHES 192M

fans monthly in MENA

includes over 50% of Saudi Arabia's adult population

ESPORTS

Esports has seen rapid growth in MENA.

Fueled by the region's young, tech-savvy population. Saudi Arabia's National Gaming and Esports Strategy aims to position the country as a global esports hub by 2030, with the 2024 Esports World Cup marking a key milestone.

The rise of local leagues and increased content availability have fueled this surge, particularly in:



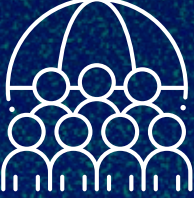
SAUDI ARABIA



UAE



EGYPT



GLOBAL AUDIENCE

2024

2025 expected

611M

641.1M

EWWC

Esports World Cup 2024 (Riyadh) featured

23

Tournaments

22

Games

\$62.5M

Prize pool

MENA League (R6)

1.7k

Peak Viewers

27.6k

Hours Watched

Community Cup (MENA)

3.3k

Peak Viewers

14.3k

Hours Watched

MENA VIEWERSHIP GREW BY 8.7% in 2024

	MENA-3 (Egypt, KSA, UAE)	Entire MENA esports revenue
2024	\$2.1B	\$15.25B
2029	\$2.9B	\$22.28B

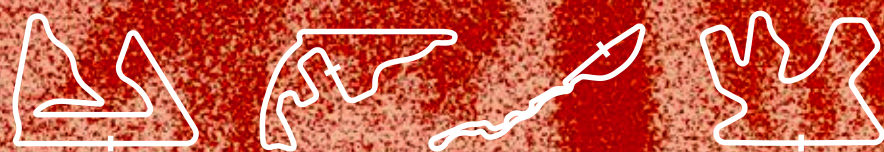
Sources: beIN sports, The Guardian, PWC, PFL MMA, World Economic Forum, OutOore.

MENA region has become a prominent destination for motorsport events.

This includes multiple Formula 1 races hosted by Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE. This growth, especially in Saudi Arabia, has been fueled by investments and the global appeal of events like the Dakar Rally.

4 F1 RACES

were hosted in MENA in 2024



including Abu Dhabi and Jeddah

Formula 1
Fanbase Growth

GLOBAL FANBASE

in 2024
GREW BY 12%

34% increase in F1 fans in MENA in 2023

ALMOST DOUBLE THE GLOBAL AVERAGE



11%

increase in female F1 fans



6%

growth of F1 fans



41%

of adults interested in F1

COMBAT SPORTS

Combat sports, particularly UFC and boxing, have gained significant traction in MENA, with the UAE hosting numerous UFC events and Saudi Arabia organising high-profile boxing matches.

These events have attracted global attention and increased popularity within the region.

300%
INCREASE

in the MENA MMA fanbase
between 2019 and 2023

21M
ACTIVE AUDIENCE

in MENA (2023), projected
to reach 28.4 million by 2025

30%

of Saudis
regularly
watch MMA

39%

of UAE adults
express interest
in MMA

UFC

40+ EVENTS

held in the region since 2010



MENA League
launched in 2024 with
events in Saudi Arabia



25M

Reported Views



500,000+

Live viewers in 2023

Rise of Sports in MENA:

KEY DRIVERS

Strategic Government Initiatives

Governments in MENA have integrated sports into national development agendas to promote unity, national pride, and economic diversification.

Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 aims to diversify the economy, leading to increased investments in sports.

UAE and Qatar have launched initiatives to enhance their sports sectors and foster regional social development.

Hosting Major International Events

MENA has successfully hosted numerous high-profile international events such as the **2022 FIFA World Cup** and **multiple Formula 1 Grand Prix races**. These events have helped boost local interest in sports and elevated the region's global profile.

Future events, such as the upcoming **2034 FIFA World Cup in Saudi Arabia** will continue increasing regional sports popularity.

Economic Investments & Infrastructure Development

Over \$65 billion has been invested in sports infrastructure across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, positioning MENA as a central player in the global sports industry

Youth Engagement & Demographics

With a youthful population under 25, **MENA's young demographic is driving growth** in sports consumption and participation.

MENA is rapidly emerging as a global sports hub, driven by strategic investments and a young, tech-savvy population. With football dominating and esports, motorsports, and combat sports on the rise, the region is attracting worldwide attention.