



# LIBRARY LINK

## MIDDLE EAST & CENTRAL ASIA

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### SOVEREIGN RATING REPORTS

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#### Middle East & Central Asia Region

- Fitch: "[Belt And Road Investment To Remain A Source Of Support And Stress For Central Asia](#)" (Nov 25)
- Moody's: "Carbon Transition – Gulf Cooperation Council: Green hydrogen could reduce carbon transition risk but the GCC region will remain highly exposed for many years" (Oct 13)
- S&P: "Some Central Asian And Caucasus Currencies Are Unexpected Emerging Market Outperformers" (Nov 7)

#### Middle East, Afghanistan, and Pakistan

- Moody's: "Government of Jordan – B1 positive: Update following outlook change to positive" (Nov 17)
- Fitch: "[Fitch Rtg: Israel-Lebanon Maritime Deal May Support Credit Profiles in the Long Term](#)" (Oct 14)
- Moody's: "Lebanon, Government of: Resolution of long-standing maritime border dispute opens way for offshore hydrocarbon exploration" (Oct 14)
- Fitch: "[Fitch Downgrades Pakistan to 'CCC+'](#)" (Oct 21)
- Moody's: "Government of Pakistan – Caa1 negative: Update following downgrade to Caa1, outlook unchanged" (Oct 7)

#### North Africa

- Fitch: "[Egypt Rating Report](#)" (Nov 23)

- Moody's: "Government of Egypt: Second Party Opinion – Sustainable Financing Framework Assigned SQS2 Sustainability Quality Score" (Nov 9)
- S&P: "Research Update: Egypt 'B/B' Ratings Affirmed; Outlook Stable" (Oct 21)
- Fitch: "[Fitch Affirms Morocco at 'BB+'; Outlook Stable](#)" (Nov 4)
- Moody's: "Government of Morocco - Ba1 stable: Update following GDP rebasing and debt perimeter change" (Oct 10)
- S&P: "Morocco Full Analysis" (Oct 3)
- Fitch: "[Fitch Ratings: Tunisia's Wage Agreement Raises Likelihood of IMF Deal](#)" (Sept 15)
- Moody's: "Government of Tunisia: FAQ on fiscal and external pressures, prospects for an IMF programme, and social risks" (Oct 7)

## Gulf Cooperation Council

- Moody's: "Government of Bahrain – B2 stable: Regular Update" (Nov 8)
- S&P: "Research Update: Bahrain Outlook Revised To Positive From Stable On Improving Fiscal Trajectory; 'B+/B' Ratings Affirmed" (Nov 25)
- Moody's: "Government of Oman – Ba3 positive: Update following outlook change to positive" (Oct 7)
- S&P: "Research Update: Oman Upgraded To 'BB' From 'BB-' On Stronger External And Fiscal Performance; Outlook Stable" (Nov 25)
- Moody's: "Government of Qatar – Aa3 positive: Annual credit analysis" (Nov 18)
- S&P: "Research Update: Qatar Upgraded To 'AA' On Declining Debt Burden; Outlook Stable" (Nov 4)
- Moody's: "Government of Saudi Arabia : Planned spending increases will reduce windfall savings from oil, but could accelerate economic diversification" (Oct 7)
- S&P: "Research Update: Saudi Arabia 'A-/A-2' Ratings Affirmed; Outlook Remains Positive On Strong Fiscal And Economic Growth Dynamics" (Sept 16)
- Fitch: "[Fitch Affirms the United Arab Emirates at 'AA-'; Outlook Stable](#)" (Oct 27)
- Moody's: "Government of United Arab Emirates – Aa2 stable: Regular update" (Oct 20)

## Caucasus and Central Asia

- Fitch: "[Armenia Rating Report](#)" (Sept 15)
- Moody's: "Government of Armenia - Ba3 negative: Annual credit analysis" (Oct 4)
- S&P: "Research Update: Armenia 'B+/B' Ratings Affirmed; Outlook Stable" (Oct 7)
- Fitch: "[Azerbaijan Rating Report](#)" (Nov 3)
- Moody's: "Kazakhstan, Government of: President Tokayev's re-election provides political stability and policy continuity, a credit positive" (Nov 25)
- Moody's: "Government of Kyrgyz Republic – B3 negative: Update following confirmation of rating, outlook changed to negative" (Oct 19)
- Moody's: "Government of Tajikistan – B3 negative: Update following confirmation of rating, outlook change to negative" (Oct 31)
- Fitch: "[Uzbekistan Rating Report](#)" (Sept 27)

## WORKING PAPERS

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### [The Russian Invasion of Ukraine and Its Impact on Small Firms in Central and West Asia \(Asia Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Monitor 2022: Volume II, Asian Development Bank\)](#)

It draws on the results of business surveys in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic

lic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan carried out six months after the start of the invasion. It assesses the invasion's macroeconomic impact, outlines its effect on global supply chains, and explores MSME responses. Highlighting how countries are converting risks into opportunities, it notes that strengthening domestic commodity markets and increasing digitalization and available capital could help make MSMEs more resilient.

### **[A Low-Carbon Future for the Middle East and Central Asia: What are the Options? \(Departmental Paper No 2022/018, International Monetary Fund\)](#)**

Nearly all countries in the Middle East and Central Asia have pledged to contain greenhouse gas emissions as part of the Paris Agreement. The purpose of this paper is to identify the menu of fiscal policy options which would allow the region to fulfil its missions reduction commitment. Specifically, the paper examines and estimates the tradeoff between two broad categories of fiscal policies: public investments in renewable sources of energy and measures that raise the effective price of fossil fuels. Such a dichotomy captures the key medium-term macroeconomic and long-term intergenerational trade-offs that are arguably the most pertinent for the countries in the Middle East and Central Asia where governments are likely to play a leading role in the low-carbon transition.

### **[Gulf Cooperation Council: Economic Prospects and Policy Challenges for the GCC Countries \(Policy Paper No. 2055/052, International Monetary Fund\)](#)**

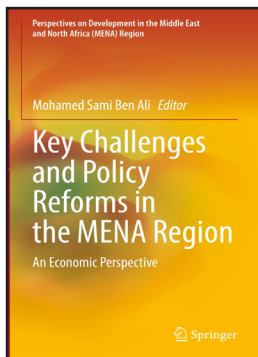
GCC policymakers have managed to quickly mitigate the economic impact of the twin COVID-19 and oil price shock. Commodity prices have surged, and the outlook is more positive for GCC countries, with new challenges linked to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and tighter global financial conditions expected to have a limited impact on GCC economies. While GCC countries have overall benefited from higher, albeit volatile hydrocarbon prices, numerous risks still cloud the outlook—notably a slowdown in the global economy. In this context, the reform momentum established during the low oil price years should be maintained—irrespective of the level of hydrocarbon prices.

### **[A New State of Mind: Greater Transparency and Accountability in the Middle East and North Africa \(MENA Economic Update October 2022, World Bank\)](#)**

The MENA region is facing important vulnerabilities, which the current crises—first the pandemic, then the war in Ukraine—have exacerbated. Prices of food and energy are higher, hurting the most vulnerable, and rising interest rates from the global tightening of monetary policy are making debt service more burdensome. Part I explores some of the resulting vulnerabilities for MENA. MENA countries are facing diverging paths for future growth. Part II of this report argues that poor governance, and, in particular, the lack of government transparency and accountability, is at the root of the region's development failings—including low growth, exclusion of the most disadvantaged and women, and overuse of such precious natural resources as land and water.

### **[Energy Crisis: Protecting Economies and Enhancing Energy Security in Europe and Central Asia \(Policy Note, October 2022, World Bank\)](#)**

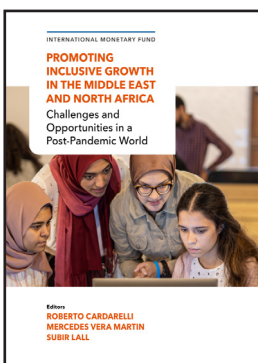
This companion piece to the Fall 2022 ECA Economic Update provides an overview of the policy options available to countries to respond to the energy price shock and examines how this crisis could harness the clean energy transition to enhance collective energy security. The options to support energy markets, vulnerable households, and firms will vary, depending on specific country contexts, including exposure to gas and electricity supply risks and the fiscal space available to mitigate their impact. Well-coordinated and calibrated fiscal and monetary policies are needed to manage the impact of the price shock. Countries will also need to consider the implications of any policy choice on the transition to a greener economy and development trajectories.



## [Key Challenges and Policy Reforms in the MENA Region: An Economic Perspective](#)

**Mohamed Sami Ben Ali**

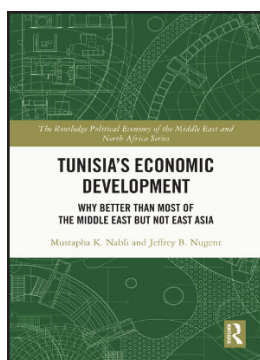
Addresses economic challenges and policy reforms in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Despite important resources and strategic advantages, the region suffers from a number of economic, social, and political problems that impedes normal economic take-off. The volume contains theoretical and empirical studies covering individual countries and panel studies addressing these economic challenges.



## [Promoting Inclusive Growth in the Middle East and North Africa: Challenges and Opportunities in a Post-Pandemic World](#)

**International Monetary Fund**

This book's objective is to reassess the inclusive growth agenda in the MENA region in light of the rapidly changing pandemic-influenced world. It argues that countries need to embrace global trade and technological advances and evolving demographics at home as an opportunity to successfully implement policies that foster higher and more inclusive growth. It underscores that a return to the old social contract is neither desirable nor feasible. The book presents a comprehensive view of policies suited to the regional context that would boost job-rich and inclusive growth within a resilient macroeconomic policy framework. Its goal is to provide guidance to policymakers in the region to frame how best to promote inclusive growth, including in their engagement with all stakeholders.



## [Tunisia's Economic Development: Why Better than Most of the Middle East but Not East Asia](#)

**Mustapha K. Nabli and Jeffrey B. Nugent**

Identifies the differences in growth and development, and the various factors lying behind them, across both Middle East and North African (MENA) and East Asian countries over the 1960–2020 period.



## [Unlocking Sustainable Private Sector Growth in the Middle East and North Africa: Evidence from the Enterprise Survey](#)

**World Bank**

Economic growth in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has been weak since the global financial crisis of 2007–09 and the Arab Spring of the early 2010s. Achieving higher and sustainable growth is particularly important in view of other economic challenges facing the region: public debt in MENA countries has increased considerably over the last decade, accompanied by declining investment. This report seeks to understand what lies beneath that relatively slow growth, with a particular focus on the reasons for stagnating productivity and inadequate accumulation of human capital and physical capital in the region's private sector.

## ARTICLES

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### **[Economic Globalization Convergence in High and Low Globalized Developing Economies: Implications for the Post Covid-19 Era](#) (*Economic Analysis and Policy*, Available, online 28 October 2022)**

This paper explores the degree of economic globalization convergence in the high (European and Central Asia) and low (South Asia) globalized developing economies from 1984 to 2019. The sigma convergence and unit root test results indicate the presence of economic globalization convergence, which means countries are capable enough to catch up and follow the same transitional path in both regions. We utilize the two-step Lagrange Multiplier and the three-step Residual Augmented Least Squares unit root tests as robust checking convergence results. The results indicate the presence of economic globalization convergence across all countries and developing regions.

### **[Statecraft in the Steppes: Central Asia's Relations with China](#) (*Journal of Contemporary China*, online 20 Oct 2022)**

Central Asia and China enjoy a mutually beneficial, albeit hugely asymmetrical, relationship. Nevertheless, leaders in Central Asia have occasionally and selectively resisted a broadening and deepening of their relations with China. Framed by a 'hedging' foreign policy approach, this article suggests that the practice of hedging arises not just from structural and exogenous conditions but is also facilitated by domestic considerations peculiar to each Central Asian state. The claim here is not that leaders in Central Asia are effective or proficient hedgers; rather, that some are attempting to use hedging as part of their statecraft.

### **[Gender Inequality in Financial Inclusion: An Exploratory Analysis of the Middle East and North Africa](#) (*Journal of Economic Issues* 56 (3): 770-781)**

Gender in financial inclusion is an evolving field of research. This study uses the World Bank's Global Findex database, along with probit models, to investigate the presence of gender inequality on financial inclusion and its causes. In the Middle East and North Africa samples, we present new evidence of lower women's financial inclusion. The findings of this study support policymaker in defining policies to promote financial inclusion in the Middle East and North Africa. Increasing the level of financial inclusion enhances the level of official savings in countries, which in turn promotes development.

### **[An Analysis of Fuel Smuggling in the Middle East as a Single Multinational Market](#) (*Journal of Industry, Competition and Trade* 20: 643-656)**

Fuel smuggling is a thriving business in the Middle East region where some oil-producing governments subsidize petroleum and fuel products. This multi hundred-million-dollar industry benefits black marketers and terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant, who use smuggling fuel and oil to finance their operations. This article uses a mixed oligopoly framework to study the interactions between governments which influence this market. It finds out that the different approaches to pricing motivate fuel smuggling. While paying subsidies to consumers might reduce the volume of fuel smuggling and an increase in the law enforcement effectiveness will reduce the number of fuel smugglers, neither approach will stop fuel smuggling completely.

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