

In Partnership with

# arabnet OMP

# **FOREWORD**



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Digital and mobile technologies have disrupted traditional ways of doing business across industries, and are transforming every touch point between companies and their clients. The banking sector is no exception - with the rapidly increasing adoption of digital banking globally, and a recent boom in mobile payments and wallets. The MENA region lags behind more developed markets in digital banking adoption. Nevertheless, this is changing as younger, tech-savvy customers expect digital to be a primary channel - from ordering a private car to buying the latest fashion, and certainly banking. Banks across the region are investing in their digital assets, introducing smart branches, social media banking, and even going all the way to launching fully virtual banks. There is however a dearth of publicly available data on Arab consumer attitudes and behaviors when it comes to online banking.

With this report, OMD and ArabNet, in collaboration with On Device Research, aim to shed some light on the subject, and provide insights to decision-makers in the banking sector as they navigate this transformation. The research is based on a survey of 2,500 individuals across 5 countries, and examines differences across markets and income levels, as well as differences between digital adopters and non-adopters. The report is by no means comprehensive, and we hope to present more data and tackle more banking questions in the future.

OMD and ArabNet are thrilled to present this report which aims to provide the digital industry with much needed data and transparency. We hope that this report gives you insights that will help shape your outlook and/or business strategy. We also look forward to hearing your feedback, as we strive to improve our reports and make them more beneficial to you.

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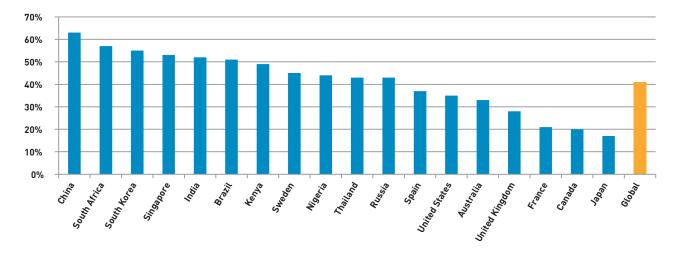


# INTRODUCTION

### **BACKGROUND INFO: BANKING STATS IN MENA**

#### **MOBILE BANKING**

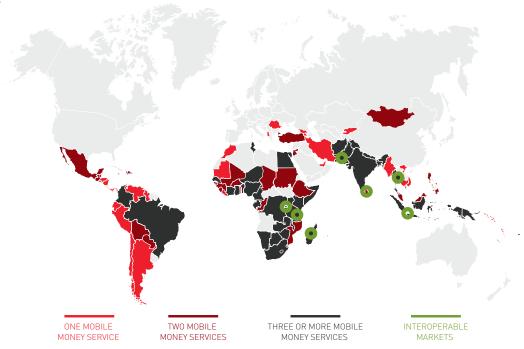
Globally, mobile is already the largest banking channel by transaction volume for the majority of banks. The growth of global mobile banking is in a tremendously rapid phase, with adoption rates at their highest in emerging markets, according to the "Mobile Banking 2015" report by KPMG. Global mobile banking users totaled for 0.8 billion in 2015, and are predicted to reach 1.8 billion by 2019. Meanwhile, Gemalto estimates that mobile banking users in the Middle East and Africa will exceed 80M+ by 2017.



Source: KPMG - Mobile Banking 2015 Report

#### **MOBILE MONEY SERVICES**

According to the GSMA Mobile Economy 2016 Report, mobile money services are now available to 1.9 billion people globally. Mobile payments have particularly flourished in emerging markets, including Africa, South Asia and South America. However, this is not the case in the MENA region, where the penetration of mobile payment services has been very limited.

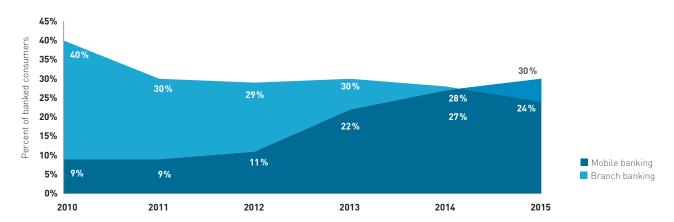


Source: GSMA -The Mobile Economy 2016 Report



#### MOBILE BANKING EXCEEDS BRANCH BANKING IN THE US

In 2015, mobile banking outpaced branch banking for the first time ever in the US, according to JAVELIN. This crossover illustrates the growth of digital channel engagement while physical channel usage seems to be shrinking. This growth in mobile banking has been driven in part by rapid smartphone and tablet adoption globally. The MENA region is no exception: according to We Are Social's comprehensive new Digital in 2016 report, 86% of Saudi Arabia's population is using a smartphone this year, which is a 13% increase since 2014; in UAE the corresponding figure is 91%, 17% increase in 2 years.



Source: JAVELIN - 2015 Mobile Banking, Smartphone, and Tablet Forecast

### THE STUDY: OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

ArabNet, in collaboration with OnDevice Research, has launched this study to determine the impact of digital platforms on the banking sector. The study investigates the factors influencing digital banking adoption, usage of digital banking services, branch visitation habits and behaviors, preferred payment methods, and finally the adoption of alternative methods of payment. Ultimately, this report provides data necessary for the development of a cutting-edge banking sector in the MENA region.

The findings are based on a study conducted in the KSA, UAE, Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan during the month of January 2016. The survey methodology used was mobile research where a total of 2500 questionnaires were completed. The target population includes anyone with a bank account. Since this is a mobile-based research study, the respondents are all owners of a phone and with internet connectivity, and around 90% are smartphone / tablet users. The sample distribution is 500 bank account holders per country. Top three urban regions within each country were selected while employing the natural population distribution of each region to set country quotas. Initially a 50-50 gender quota was set, but random sampling during field work revealed a gender split of 70% males and 30% females for the bank account holder population. No quotas were applied to the remaining demographic variables, which include age, nationality, and income. That said, a minimum quota of 15% per segment was enforced to allow for subsample analysis.

It is important to point out a few quidelines on the data and analysis. First, the data was mainly analyzed based on three criteria: country of residence, monthly personal income, and respondents being adopters vs. non-adopters of digital banking. Second, questionnaire phrasing in mobile research is required to be concise and short; this can place constraints on elaborating and explaining specific survey questions and answers. Third, it may be common for consumers in the MENA region not to clearly differentiate between credit and debit cards. Fourth, since the majority of respondents are smartphone users, the sample is skewed to a more "sophisticated" audience. Finally, analysis is based on 95% significance testing and the estimated margin of error is 4-5%.



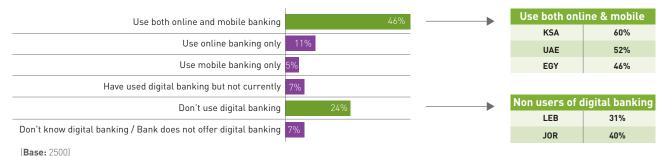
# DIGITAL BANKING OVERVIEW

### DIGITAL BANKING: MOTIVATORS, **USAGE, AND BARRIERS**

#### FIGURE 1. DIGITAL BANKING ADOPTION RATES IN THE REGION

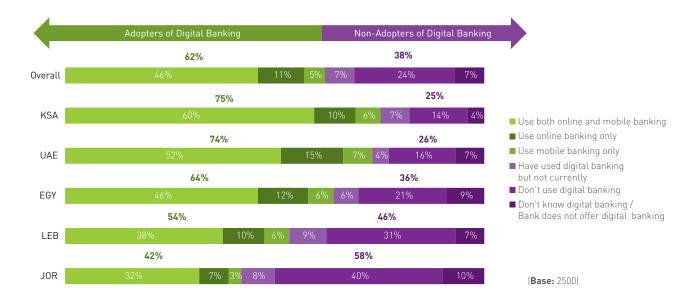
Survey results clearly highlight high adoption rates of digital banking. The largest portion of respondents use both online and mobile banking, indicating that once a user adopts digital banking, they will most likely use multiple channels. This means that banks need to have a seamless experience across their digital touch points. Users from KSA, UAE, and Egypt show the highest rates of adoption at 60%, 52%, 46% respectively.

On the other hand, respondents in Lebanon (31%) and Jordan (40%) are the least likely to use digital banking among the surveyed countries. It is interesting to note that 7% aren't aware of whether their bank offers digital banking services, and these customers may be easily converted to online channels through effective communication campaigns.



#### FIGURE 2. ADOPTERS AND NON-ADOPTERS RATES PER COUNTRY

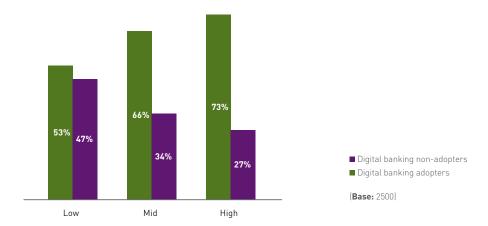
In this graph, respondents have been separated into adopters (who use online banking, mobile banking or both) and non-adopters (don't use, previously used, and don't know). The highest percentage of adopters is in KSA and UAE, where roughly 3 out of 4 respondents are digital banking adopters. Lebanon and Jordan lag behind, where about half of respondents are digital banking adopters. It is interesting to note that, with the exception of Jordan, adopters represent the majority of surveyed users across markets.





#### FIGURE 3. DIGITAL BANKING ADOPTION BY INCOME

This graph illustrates the relationship between digital banking adoption and personal monthly income. By analyzing digital banking adoption rates across income levels, it is evident that lower income target segments are heavily skewed to being non-adopters. While mid-to-high income segments display a clear tendency to being adopters of digital banking. For banks, this means that their most valuable customers are also those most likely to use digital banking channels.



# DIGITAL BANKING VIS-À-VIS ADOPTERS

#### FIGURE 4. PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF DIGITAL BANKING

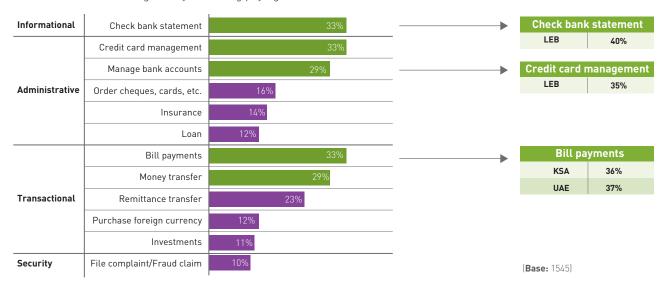
Four main noticeable digital banking adoption motivators are revealed across countries: 24/7 access (38%), reduced banking time (29%), easier access to transactions (29%), easier follow up on transactions (29%). The main themes among the top four contenders are saving time and effort (ease of transacting). It is interesting to note that cost savings are not a key driver for digital banking adoption.

	24/7 access	38%	24/7 access		access
Real-time	Real time transactions			UAE	44%
	Real time transactions	22%		LEB	42%
-	Reduced banking time	29%		_	
Time saving	Reduced transaction time	23%		Reduced ba	
	Easier access to transactions	29%		LEB	38%
Ease	Easier follow-up on transactions	29%			
Ease	Hassle-free transactions	22%	Easier follow-up on transactions		
	Relevancy of features	22%		LEB	38%
Cost saving	Low or no extra bank charges	17%			
	Pays bills cheaper	17%			
Management	Money manager	21%			
Security	Peace of mind due to safety	23%		( <b>Base:</b> 1415)	



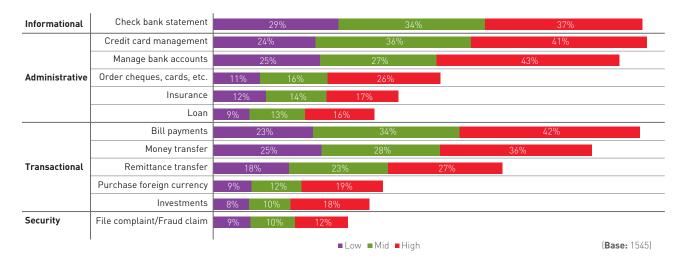
#### FIGURE 5. MOBILE AND ONLINE BANKING USAGE

Adopters mainly use digital banking platforms for bill payments (33%), credit card related transactions (33%), checking bank statements (33%), money transfers (29%), and managing accounts (29%). These key services reflect that digital banking activities are centered around the administrative, informational, and transactional aspects of usage. They also reflect that most digital banking adopters are using these channels for basic banking activities - checking and managing balances and transferring money (including paying bills).



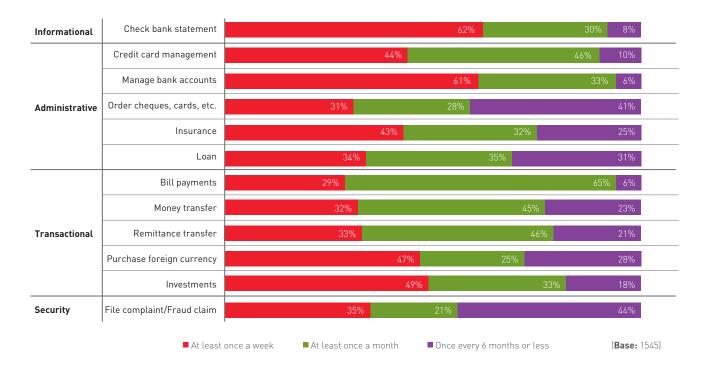
#### FIGURE 6. DIGITAL BANKING SERVICES USAGE BY INCOME

When comparing digital banking services used across income levels, it becomes evident that higher income respondents use a broader range of services and use them more often than lower income respondents. The most basic services tend to be used relatively equally across income categories – like checking bank statements and to a lesser extent transferring money. More sophisticated activities - like purchasing foreign currency or managing investments - tend to skew towards the high-income group. This makes sense intuitively as higher earners would be more likely to have investments or deal with foreign currency than lower earners.



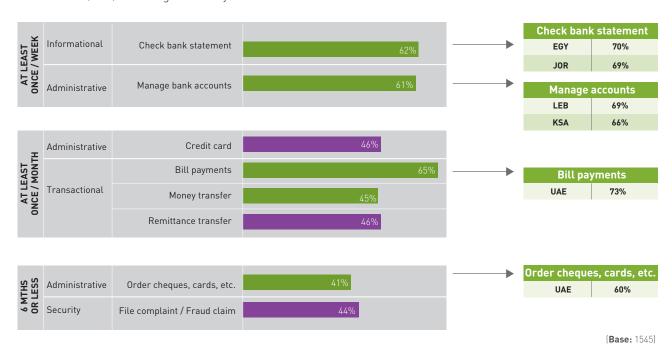


#### FIGURE 7. USAGE FREQUENCY OF DIGITAL BANKING SERVICES



#### FIGURE 8. USAGE FREQUENCY OF DIGITAL BANKING SERVICES - SPECIFICS

Deep diving into the usage frequency of digital banking services, administrative and informational type services - such as checking bank statements (62%) and managing bank accounts (61%) - are most used at least once a week. Transactional banking services are used more on a monthly basis – and this is consistent with the fact that most users are paid once a month and hence transfer money once a month. Meanwhile, the least used digital banking service is filing complaints / fraud claims (44%) occurring once every six months or less.

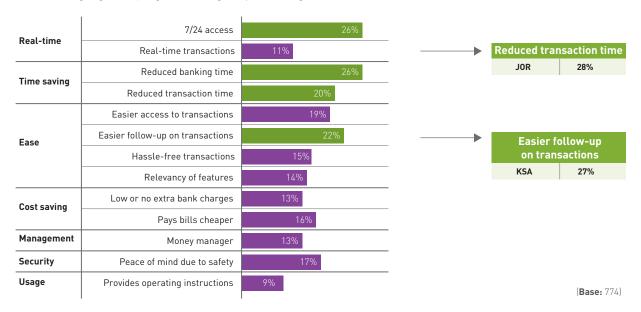




### DIGITAL BANKING VIS-À-VIS NON-ADOPTERS

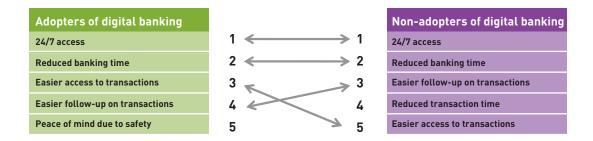
#### FIGURE 9. DIGITAL BANKING ADOPTION FACTORS

The key factors encouraging the conversion of non-adopters to digital banking revolve around the themes of real-time transactions and time saving processes. 24/7 access (26%), reduction of banking time (26%), and easier follow up on transactions (22%) are the top motivators to adopting digital banking. These perceived benefits are very consistent with the benefits highlighted by digital banking adopters in Figure 4.



#### FIGURE 10. RANKING OF DIGITAL BANKING ADOPTION FACTORS

In hopes of better understanding the differences and similarities between adopters and non-adopters of digital banking, the top five benefits for adopters were ranked against the top five motivators for non-adopters. The findings are very straightforward: both adopters and non-adopters share four out of five digital adoption factors, and the top two are exactly the same for both groups - 24/7 access and reduced banking time. This indicates that the perceived value of digital banking is the same for both adopters and non-adopters - and the most important benefits are ease and time-saving.





#### FIGURE 11. DIGITAL BANKING BARRIERS

Given that adopters and non-adopters seem to agree very closely on the benefits of digital banking, what is holding non-adopters back? What are the prime barriers to adoption? The leading barrier issue seems to be related to trust. The requirement for direct interaction with one's bank (40%) and security concerns (27%) are the principal barriers to adoption. Non-adopters of digital banking in Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan share these sentiments the most across countries.

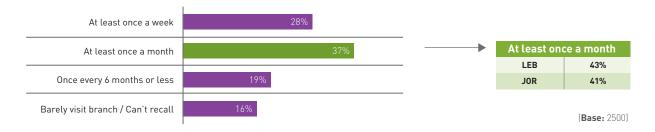
	l .	I			
Trust	Prefer dealing with bank	40%		Prefer dealir	ng with bank
ITUSt	Worry about security	27%		JOR	48%
	App not compatible with mobile	6%	-	LEB	47%
			-		
App issues	Poor user experience	9%		Worry abou	ut security
	Lack of instructions	8%	-	UAE	33%
	B: :: 11 1: 1 1 1 1 1	100/	•	EGY	32%
Irrelevant services	Digital banking does not add value	12%	_		
	Not enough relevant features	10%			
Not timely	Transactions not in real time	6%	•		
Costly	High data consumption	8%			
-	High bank charges	7%	-		
External obstacles	Mobile coverage issues	12%	-		
		I			

# **BRANCH BANKING OVERVIEW**

# **BRANCH BANKING: MOTIVATORS. USAGE, AND BARRIERS**

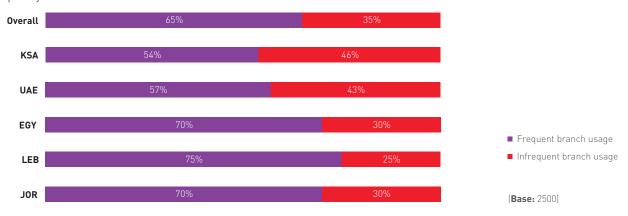
### FIGURE 12. BRANCH VISIT FREQUENCY

After assessing digital banking services, the survey moves on to investigate consumer attitudes and behaviors with regards to bank branches. Starting with frequency of branch usage, respondents demonstrate a high tendency to visit their branch at least once a month (37%) followed by visits of at least once a week (28%). It is interesting to note that around 16% of all respondents (~400 users) barely visit their branch or cannot recall the last time they visited.



#### FIGURE 13. BRANCH VISIT FREQUENCY BY COUNTRY

Combining weekly and monthly vistors into the category of "frequent users" and visitors who visit their branch every 6 months or less or barely at all into the category of "infrequent users" presents new insights. Branch visit frequency is high overall, where Egypt (70%), Lebanon (75%), and Jordan (69%) display the highest proportion of frequent visitors. Customers in KSA and UAE visit their branches considerably less than customers in the other countries, with just under half of respondents being "Infrequent users." These two countries are also the markets with the highest level of digital banking adoption, and this shows that countries with higher adoption rates of digital banking display lower branch visit frequency.

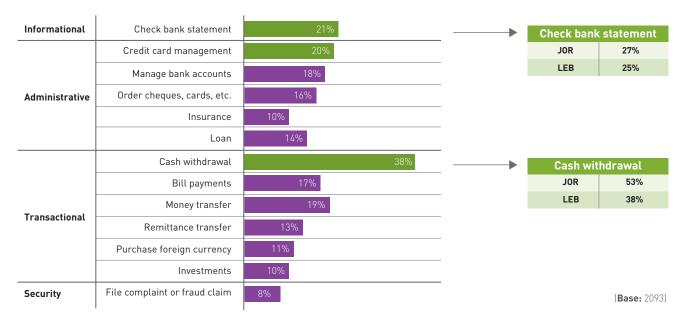




#### FIGURE 14. BEHAVIOR WHEN VISITING BRANCH

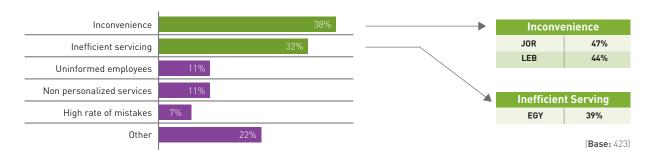
Examining the services used at the branch, the most common reason (by far) to visit the branch is cash withdrawal, which is a service that cannot be done digitally. A reasonable explanation for this is that many of the visitors to the branch are actually going to use the ATM.

Beyond cash withdrawals, the type of transactions conducted through branch banking and digital banking overlap - with a focus on bank statements and credit card management. It seems that digital banking adopters have migrated their branch behavior onto digital platforms. This begs the question of how important the branch will be and what role it will play as adoption rates of digital banking continue to increase.



#### **FIGURE 15. BRANCH VISIT DETERRENTS**

The top influencers for adopting digital banking were revealed to be real-time transactions and time-saving processes. Now by examining the below graph, the two chief deterrents to visiting one's branch are inconvenience (disruption of one's schedule - 38%) and inefficient servicing (long waiting times - 32%). This is a clear indication that respondents seek ease, comfort, and quick turnaround time when it comes to either digital or traditional branch banking. It is also clear that the reasons that deter branch usage are the same reasons that encourage digital adoption, with both forces pushing in the same direction towards increased adoption.





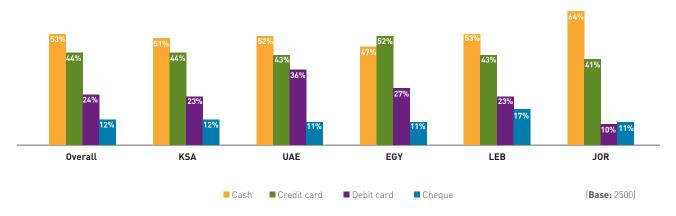
# **METHODS OF PAYMENT**

### TRADITIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE **PAYMENT METHODS**

## 

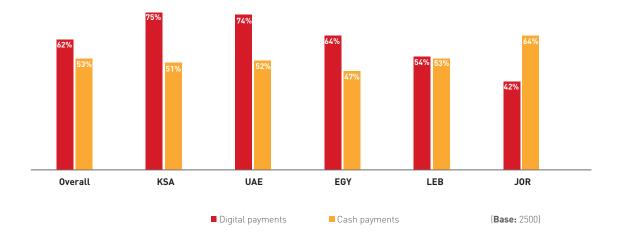
#### FIGURE 16. PAYMENT METHODS BY COUNTRY

This graph shows that cash is still king in MENA, where it is the top payment method across markets with the exception of Egypt, which seems to be an outlier.



#### FIGURE 17. PAYMENT METHODS VS ADOPTION RATE

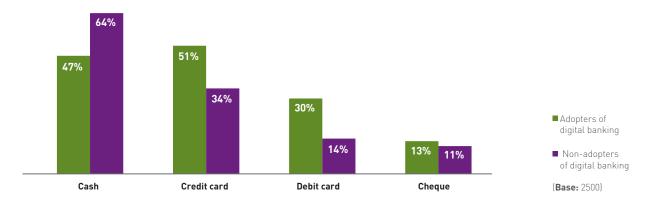
This graph highlights that users in countries with higher rates of digital banking adoption tend to use cash less than users in markets with lower rates of digital banking adoption. As noted in the methodology section, these results may be skewed by the fact that some respondents may not be clearly differentiating between credit and debit cards.





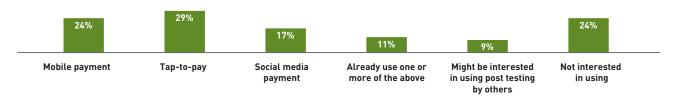
#### FIGURE 18. ADOPTERS AND NON-ADOPTERS - PAYMENT METHODS

When comparing methods of payment between digital banking adopters and non-adopters, it is evident that adopters are less likely to use cash and more likely to use cards and cheques for payment.



#### FIGURE 19. INTEREST IN ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT METHODS

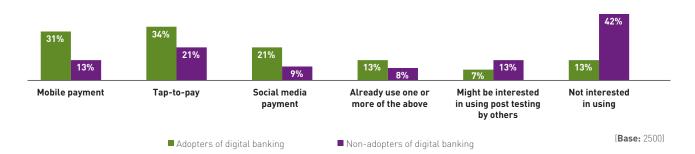
When it comes to alternative methods of payment, tap-to-pay attracts the most interest across countries at 29%, followed closely by mobile payments at 25%. Lack of interest in using alternative methods of payment is high (24%), especially in Lebanon and Jordan. The largest interest in usage of alternative methods of payment is observed in KSA, UAE, and Egypt.



(Base: 2500)

# FIGURE 20. ADOPTERS AND NON-ADOPTERS - INTEREST IN ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT METHODS

Interest in alternative methods of payment is significantly higher among adopters of digital banking, where approximately one third of adopters are interested in tap-to-pay and mobile payments. Non-adopters are much more cautious and less interested in alternative payment methods, with more than half saying they are completely disinterested or only interested after testing by others.





# CONCLUSIONS

This research report examined the attitudes and behaviors of Arab consumers with regards to digital banking, payment methods, and branch banking. The study uncovered insights about the main drivers and hurdles for digital banking adoption, opportunities and challenges for the branch, and the appetite for alternative payments methods.

Key research outcomes include:

#### DIGITAL BANKING ADOPTION IN THE REGION

- 62% of overall bank account holders in the region are adopters of digital banking (online banking, mobile banking, or both). Digital adoption is highest in KSA (75%) and UAE (74%), and lowest in Jordan (42%), Lebanon (54%), and Egypt (64%).
- The higher the income, the more likely it is that bank account holders will be adopters of digital banking.
- Key adoption motivators are 24/7 access, reduced banking time, easier access to transactions, and easier follow up
- The digital banking services and transactions most used by digital banking adopters are bank statement checking, credit card and bank account management, and to a lesser degree, money transfer and bill payment.
- Higher income respondents use a broader range of services do so often than lower income digital adopters. The most basic services are used relatively equally across income categories, but more sophisticated activities tend to skew towards the high income group.

#### BENEFITS AND HURDLES FOR DIGITAL BANKING ADOPTION

- The key perceived benefits of digital banking are the same for both adopters and non- adopters. The most important benefits are ease and time saving, while cost saving does not seem to be a significant influencing factor.
- For non-adopters, the main deterrents could be clustered around the theme of trust: a preference for a direct relationship with the bank and concerns over security issues.
- These findings indicate that non-adopters may be readily converted into adopters by addressing their concerns regarding trust.

#### **BRANCH BANKING**

- The bank branch still plays an important role in MENA: 37% of respondents visit their branch at least once a month and 28% visit at least once a week.
- However, there is a small but significant segment roughly 16% who barely visit the branch, or cannot recall their last time.
- Egypt (70%), Lebanon (75%), and Jordan (69%) display the highest proportion of frequent branch visitors, while users in KSA and UAE visit their branches considerably less. This is consistent with the fact that KSA and UAE demonstrate the highest rates of digital adoption.
- The most common reason to visit the branch is cash withdrawal.

#### **PAYMENT METHODS**

- Cash generally remains the preferred method of payment in the MENA region, followed closely by credit / debit cards.
- Beyond cash and cards, the highest interest in alternative payments is for tap-to-pay and mobile payment technologies.
- Countries with the lowest adoption of online banking exhibit the highest preference for cash and vice versa.
- Similarly, digital banking adopters express a significantly higher interest in alternative methods of payment (tap-topay, mobile payments).
- More broadly, digital banking adopters display a higher use of and openness to new banking / payment technologies, whereas non-adopters of digital banking prefer traditional channels and will wait to see others test new technologies first.



# **APPENDIX**

# **SURVEY QUESTIONS**

1.	Do yo	u currently have a bank account?
		Yes, I currently have a bank account
		No, I currently do not have a bank account
2.		of the bank you use most often and indicate whether you use online bile banking.
		I use both online and mobile banking I only use online banking
		I only use mobile banking I previously subscribed to mobile and/or online banking but I currently do not I use neither mobile nor online banking
		I have never heard of mobile or online banking / Neither mobile nor online banking are not offered by my bank
3.		ou satisfied with your current online or mobile banking experience with the you most often use?
		Yes, I am mostly satisfied with my experience
		No, I am mostly not satisfied with my experience
4.		se the answers that best describe how you feel towards online or e banking (check all options that apply).
		High or additional banking charges
		Worry about security issues
		Lack of operating instructions
		Bank transactions are not in real time
		Prefer dealing directly with bank
		Mobile app is not compatible with my mobile phone
		Mobile coverage issues / weak 3G or 4G network
		High mobile data consumption (3G or 4G)
		Online/mobile banking difficulties - not user friendly, malfunctioning, slow, etc.
		Not enough features catering to my needs
		Do not feel that online/mobile banking adds any value to my banking experience
5.		ng at the answers below, what would encourage you to use online or
		e banking? (check all options that apply).
		Low or no extra bank charges
		Peace of mind due to online/mobile safety
		Transactions are in real time
		Transactions are hassle-free Transactions require less time
		rransactions require tess time

The report insights are based on the below questionnaire offered to the sample selected by OnDevice Research, within the respective markets of Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, KSA and UAE. In addition to the questionnaire answers, the data include income and gender information. The sample criteria used are mentioned in the methodology section of the report.



Easier access to bank transactions

		Easier to follow up on bank transactions Reduction of time spent at bank Availability of relevant features – bill payments, commerce purchases, investments, insurance, etc. Pays bills cheaper 24/7 access Provides money management / expense tracker Operating instructions – usage training
6.		se the answers that best describe how you feel towards online or mobile banking. k all options that apply).  Low or no extra bank charges Peace of mind due to online/mobile safety Transactions are in real time Transactions are hassle-free Transactions require less time Easier access to bank transactions Easier to follow up on bank transactions Reduction of time spent at bank Availability of relevant features – bill payments, commerce purchases, investments, insurance, etc. Pays bills cheaper 24/7 access Provides money management / expense tracker
7.		e choose the banking services and transactions you use with your mobile or banking (check all options that apply).  Bank statement - check Bank accounts - manage Investments - check or issue mutual funds, bonds, etc. Insurance - check, pay, or issue vehicle insurance, travel insurance, etc. Bill payments - phone bills, utility bills, traffic fines, etc. Money transfer - international or local transfer Money transfer - remittance transfer Loan - check or apply for loan, overdraft, etc. Credit card - payment, view statement, redemption of reward points, etc. Order - cheque book, credit card, debit card, etc. Purchase foreign currency File a complaint or a fraud claim
8.		the previous statements you chose; please indicate how often you use mobile/online services?  At least once a week At least once a month Once every 6 months or less
9.	Pleas	The indicate how often you visit the branch of your most often used bank.  At least once a week  At least once a month  Once every 6 months or less  I barely visit my branch / I can't recall



10.	What are your preferences when it comes to these branch visits?  ☐ Yes, I prefer to visit my branch ☐ No, I prefer not to visit my branch
11.	Why do you prefer to visit the branch of your most often used bank? (check all options that apply).  Servicing - personalized Servicing - speedy Servicing - assistance, advice, and reassurance Convenience - my personal banker visits me at home/office Other
12.	Why do you prefer to not visit the branch of your most often used bank? (check all options that apply).  Inconvenience – disruption of my schedule Servicing - inefficient / long waiting times Servicing - employees uninformed on products/services Servicing - non personalized Servicing - high rate of mistakes Other
13.	Please indicate which transaction(s) you normally conduct when visiting the branch of your most often used bank (check all options that apply).    Check bank statement
14.	Which are your most often used payment methods? (check all options that apply).  Cash Credit card Debit card Cheque
15.	Which of the below payment methods would you be interested in using? (check all options that apply).  ☐ Text mobile payment – using mobile credit to buy an item ☐ Tap-to-pay – pay for an item by tapping your mobile phone or bank card onto a store's device ☐ Social media payment – proceed with your payments through a social media platform (WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Twitter Inbox, etc.) ☐ I already use one or more of the above payment methods ☐ I might be interested in using the above after being tested by others ☐ I am not interested in using any of the above



16.	Of the previous payment methods, which are the ones you currently use? (check all options that apply).		
	Text mobile payment – using mobile credit to buy an item		
	Tap-to-pay – pay for an item by tapping your mobile phone or bank card onto a store's device		
	Social media payment – proceed with your payments through a social media platform (WhatsApp,		
	Facebook Messenger, Twitter Inbox, etc.)		



### ARABNET BACKGROUND



#### CONNECTING

ArabNet is the hub for digital professionals and entrepreneurs in the MENA, creating online and offline platforms for them to connect and learn. At the forefront are ArabNet's conferences in the Levant, KSA and the GCC with Beirut, Riyadh and Dubai events attracting global, regional and local leaders and entrepreneurs to a collaborative and innovative environment.

#### **INFORMING**

Getting key insights and staying informed is crucial in today's rapid business world; Ergo, ArabNet publishes The Quarterly magazine highlighting the latest trends and news, exclusive interviews and reviews of up-and-coming digital startups, products and services in addition to its online news portal **news.arabnet.me** 

#### **LEADING**

ArabNet also offers unique intel on the startup, investment and digital ecosphere through exclusive reports reflecting on the latest market numbers and facts. This has been achievable thanks to an extensive relationship with key players in the MENA region, as well as one of the most comprehensive data registry for digital startups in the MENA to date: the ArabNet digital startup database http://arabnet.me

### ON DEVICE RESEARCH BACKGROUND

On Device Research is a global mobile sample and research provider co-founded by Alistair Hill and Tim Cleminson in 2009.

A failed traditional research project in China was the Eureka! moment that showed them the potential of mobile – its ability to reach anyone, anywhere.

http://ondeviceresearch.com

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