



With hundreds of Arabic newspapers across the world, both state-backed and independent, it's harder than ever to choose between outlets. That's why we've compiled this list of the most influential Arabic language newspapers. Our methodology combines quantitative measures of a paper's reach and impact, with qualitative factors to provide an overall influence score. It considers both the overall footprint of the publication, as well as measures of the publication's influence. Searchers online are more likely to find these papers in a search due to number of pages on its site, as well as the number of links referencing the papers' sites.

This list will also detail the papers' political affiliation and ownership. Please note that the list is not an endorsement of one certain paper or political stance. Rather, we wanted to provide a transparent index of each paper's particular persuasion. Knowing these facts is essential for understanding the tone of any sort of media.

If you have any feedback on the ranking or process, please contact us [here](#).

2018 Analysis of Rankings

After compiling the data, we noticed some interesting and surprising trends. As expected, we found three of the Middle East's most famous Arabic newspapers represented in the Top 10 (Al-Ahram, An-Nahar, and Al-Quds Al-Arabi). This is no doubt due to the first two's historic



presence in the Arabic media landscape, and the latter's influential interviews and stories during the early 2000's (see #10 on the list). The presence of many Gulf media outlets was also expected, reflecting the budgets those nations allocate to increasing their influence in the region.

One surprising result was the presence of Al-Yaum, a Dammam-based independent paper, which beat out several other more prominent Saudi newspapers. One explanation for its high ranking could be the paper's location. Dammam is home to the largest port in the Persian Gulf, and is one of the fastest growing regions in the Middle East thanks to the oil industry. Additionally, the paper focuses on regional issues, thereby gaining attention from all of the surrounding countries. Thus, Dammam's strategic location and importance could explain how influential the paper has become.

The other surprising result from the Gulf region was Qatar's Al-Araby Al-Jadeed. We found it notable not only for its age, but also its content. The paper started in 2014, and in a short four-years' time has climbed the ranks to its current location at #9 on our list. The paper also has a noted bias against the Muslim Brotherhood, a political entity traditionally favored in Qatar to the chagrin of its neighbors. The rapid rise of this new point of view can be explained by Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the current Amir of Qatar. Sheikh Tamim supported the launch of this outlet under the leadership of his political ally and friend, Azmi Bishara.

Another surprise was the presence of two Jordanian newspapers on the list (Al Ghad and Al-Ra'i), with the former taking first place. We found this unusual, as Jordan is usually not considered a politically influential country. One explanation for this could be the nation's relative stability in the region.

Another reason could be attributed to the amount of funding available to the papers. Al Ghad's founder, Mohammed Alayyan, is a young entrepreneur who made his fortune in creating independent media in Jordan. Thus, his focus on developing multimedia news outlets has yielded excellent results. In Al-Ra'i's case, being state-owned media, it has the necessary budget to host and grow an influential website.

An interesting factor that we also noticed was the absence of some more famous and influential Arabic papers, such as Al-Masry Al-Youm, Ashourouk, Al-Hayat, and Asharq al-Awsat. Instead, we found other sites, such as Youm7 and Al-Quds Al-Arabi occupying high positions on the list. This is interesting, as these other papers retain high readership in print. For many living



in the MENA regions without access to the internet, a printed newspaper is their primary source of information. However, for the purposes of our list, physical print circulation would not have a significant impact on overall internet presence and influence.

One reason for this could be the content and character of these newer sites. Youm7 features a tabloidy, oppositional style of journalism that appealed to the masses of young internet users in the wake of the Arab Spring and subsequent revolutions. Al-Quds Al-Arabi is also noted for having more pointed opinions critical of international actors than most other Pan-Arab publications. It seems that these more critically minded forms of media have greater appeal and sway over readers.

Another trend we noticed was the availability of English-language articles published by these sites. Many of the top ten either print stories in English on their sites or have a closely related sister publication in English. This would seem to suggest that foreign languages also help to boost the newspapers' influence on the internet.

One last glaring pattern revealed by the list was the lack of Maghreb newspapers on the list. It seems that the Middle East dominates the news production cycle. This trend can be explained in the context of post-colonialism. Most of the Arab countries of North Africa were formally colonized by France, and French remains the intellectual and administrative language in these countries. As such, many of the newspapers found in North Africa were primarily or only written in French. Thus, this would limit these papers' impact on other parts of the Arab world.

In conclusion, in terms of influence on the internet, the deciding factors seem to be funding (whether private or public), tone, and availability in English. For more details on these results and other Arabic papers, please also be sure to check out our ever-expanding Arabic newspaper database. This database includes over 100 other Arabic newspapers and their websites.



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The List: The Most Influential Arab Papers of 2018

1. Al Ghad (الغد)

Overall Influence Score: 84

Country: Jordan

Language: Arabic and English

Inception: 2004

Ownership: Al Faridah Specialized Printing

Political Orientation: Independent

Website: <http://www.alghad.com/>

Al Ghad has emerged as one of the leading newspapers in the Middle East. The paper's commitment to the ethics of "multiplicity, neutrality, and tolerance" have earned it both strong popularity and opposition. In November 2011, militants attacked Al Ghad's offices and employees. This incident, however, did not stop the paper from publishing.

According to its website, Al Ghad online has reached readers in over 120 countries. It was also the 10th most visited Arabic news site in 2010. It won the Best Design, Best Front Page, and Best Electronic Portal awards at the 7th Asia Media Awards. According to IPSOS-STAT and IREX studies, the paper also boasts the largest fixed subscriber base, readership and overall reader satisfaction rates.

2. Youm7 (اليوم السابع)

Overall Influence Score: 80

Country: Egypt



Language: Arabic

Inception: 2008

Ownership: Egyptian Journalism, Publishing and Advertisement

Political Orientation: Reformist/Liberal

Website: <https://www.youm7.com/>

Youm7 is one of the most popular media sites in Egypt, especially among Egypt's young, college-educated population. According to its own site, it is the most visited Egyptian newspaper site in the country. Independent internet research Alexa Internet cites Youm7 as the sixth most visited site in Egypt. Forbes Middle East has also named it "the most effective news website in the Middle East" twice.

The paper has held positions critical of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Freedom and Justice Party. This stance has garnered outrage and calls for boycott in the midst of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. As such, the paper is not officially affiliated to any party or ideology. In its own words, Youm7's main priorities are "producing absolutely credible news and information, in-depth analysis, and transparent data.

3. Al-Bayan (البيان)

Overall Influence Score: 74

Country: UAE

Language: Arabic

Inception: 1980

Ownership: Dubai Media Incorporated

Political Orientation: Loyalist

Website: <https://www.albayan.ae/>



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Al-Bayan is the Arabic newspaper distributed by Dubai Media Incorporated, the official media company of the Emirati government. As such, it carries an obvious pro-government bias in its reporting. Their stories are also critical of events occurring in other parts of the Arab world.

It has remained one of the most popular Emirati newspapers among traditional readers. Younger readers, however, tend to prefer its sister publication, Emarat Al Youm (الإمارات اليوم). This paper is published in English under the title Emirates Today.

4. Al-Ahram (الأهرام)

Overall Influence Score: 72

Country: Egypt

Language: Arabic

Inception: 1875

Ownership: Al-Ahram Publishing House

Political Orientation: Pro-government

Website: <http://www.ahram.org.eg/>

The home newspaper of such famed writers as Naguib Mahfouz, Edward Said, and Taha Hussein, Al-Ahram is an Egyptian media institution. It is also Egypt's second oldest newspaper. Forbes Middle East named it the most popular news portal in 2011, as well as the 20th most visited MENA site in 2010. With a peak daily circulation of 1.2 million copies in 2000, the newspaper holds significant influence both in print and online.

Founded as an independent newspaper, President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the paper. It is now owned by the Egyptian government via the Al-Ahram Publishing House. Thus, the paper tends to support the prevailing Egyptian regime. Despite this fact, the paper is respected throughout the Arab World as a professional and informed news resource.

5. Al Ra'i (الرأي)



Overall Influence Score: 66

Country: Jordan

Language: Arabic

Inception: 1971

Ownership: Jordan Press Foundation

Political Orientation: Pro-government

Website: <http://alrai.com/>

With a circulation of almost 100,000 copies a day, Al Rai is one of the most widespread newspapers in the country. The newspaper covers local and regional issues, cultural pieces, and political topics. It also has an English-version sister paper, The Jordan Times.

Al Rai was founded by the Jordan Press Foundation, a government-owned company. As such, it is one of the official state newspapers of Jordan. It publishes the views of the Jordanian government on different topics. In addition, all the paper's chief editors are appointed by the government.

6. An-Nahar (النهار)

Overall Influence Score: 65

Country: Lebanon

Language: Arabic

Inception: 1933

Ownership: Private

Political Orientation: Pluralist/Center-left

Website: <https://www.annahar.com/>

An-Nahar is one of the five most popular newspapers in Beirut according to marketing researcher Ipsos Stat. The influential Tueni family founded and led the paper over the course of



its history. An-Nahar has also employed some of the most famous Lebanese authors and political personalities, such as Elias Khoury, Samir Kassir, and Walid Jumblatt.

Many regard the paper as a platform for the wide range of political voices from around Lebanon. In light of this diversity, however, An-Nahar has a definite liberal, anti-Syrian bias, as expressed in the March 14 Coalition. This has led to the paper's occupation by Syrian forces and banning at various times during its existence. Despite its independent ownership, Saudi media magnate Prince Al-Walid bin Talal also owns a large share in the newspaper.

7. Al Yaum (اليوم)

Overall Influence Score: 64

Country: Saudi Arabia

Language: Arabic

Inception: 1965

Ownership: Dar Al Yaum for Press, Printing and Publishing

Political Orientation: Pro-government/Liberal

Website: <http://www.alyaum.com/>

Al Yaum is a daily newspaper based in Dammam. It is the leading newspaper in the Eastern Province according to the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA). It also received that group's Best in Print Award for Asian media. The paper focuses on issues affecting the Persian Gulf region.

The paper is independently owned and published. Although its content is pro-government, some staff members have been fired, imprisoned, and censured for coverage deemed critical of the Saudi royal family.

8. Al Ittihad (الاتحاد)

Overall Influence Score: 64



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Country: UAE

Language: Arabic

Inception: 1969

Ownership: Al Ittihad Press and Publishing Corporation

Political Orientation: Pro-government

Website: <http://www.alittihad.ae/>

Although the second most popular print daily in the UAE, Al Ittihad's significant presence outside its home country and online boosted its position on our list. Forbes named it the 24th most visited site in the MENA region in 2010. As of 2013, it has a daily circulation of almost 110,000 copies.

While the paper is independently owned and distributed, Al Ittihad's content is pro-government. The Emirates Centre for Human Rights notes that the UAE has stringent media repression and censorship statutes. This explains the pro-government sway of many Emirati media outlets, including Al Ittihad.

9. Al-Araby Al-Jadeed (العربي الجديد)

Overall Influence Score: 62

Country: Qatar

Language: Arabic

Inception: 2014

Ownership: Fadaat Media Ltd.

Political Orientation: Pan-Arab/Anti-Muslim Brotherhood

Website: <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/portal>

Al-Araby Al-Jadeed first started as a media website. It then expanded into print and televised media shortly after its founding. It is privately owned paper founded by exiled Palestinian politician Azmi Bishara. Bishara and Fadaa Media operate out of Qatar and are reportedly close



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to the current . The paper's three main offices are located in Beirut, Doha, and London (its headquarters).

The paper itself focuses on the major issues of the Arab diaspora. Although the paper describes itself as non-partisan, many view it as a political foil to the media outlet Al-Jazeera. This is due to the fact that Al-Jazeera (and Qatar in general) is well known for its Muslim Brotherhood sympathies, a position that has drawn criticism and scorn for both the station and nation. Bishara, on the other hand, has come out publicly against the MB on multiple occasions. Due to its Pan-Arab focus, the paper's stories have been cited by other prominent media outlets.

10. Al-Quds Al-Arabi (القدس العربي)

Overall Influence Score: 60

Country: Britain

Language: Arabic

Inception: 1989

Ownership: Al-Quds Al-Arabi Publishing and Advertising (Overseas) Ltd

Political Orientation: Pan-Arab/populist

Website: <http://www.alquds.co.uk/>

Al-Quds Al-Arabi is another popular expat newspaper based in London. Founded by exiled Palestinians, the paper carries a more pronounced populist slant in its coverage of Pan-Arab affairs. As such, the paper has published content that is critical of Western and Israeli policies.

The paper is proud of its independent ownership. Its first editor, Abdel Bari Atwan, gained notoriety for interviewing Osama bin Laden. Al-Quds Al-Arabi was the first paper to publish his fatwas, although the paper rejects Al-Qaeda and its tactics. Many criticize the paper for taking hard anti-imperialist (often anti-Israel) positions in comparison to other sites.



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11. Al-Sharq (الشرق)

Overall Influence Score: 60

Country: Qatar

Language: Arabic

Political Orientation: Independent/pro-government

Website: <https://www.al-sharq.com/>

12. Ad-Dustour (الدستور)

Overall Influence Score: 58

Country: Jordan

Language: Arabic

Political Orientation: Partially state-owned

Website: <http://www.addustour.com/>

13. Al-Masry Al-Youm (المصري اليوم)

Overall Influence Score: 58

Country: Egypt

Language: Arabic

Political Orientation: Independent/liberal/reformists

Website: <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/>

14. Al-Watan (الوطن)

Overall Influence Score: 57

Country: Qatar



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Language: Arabic

Political Orientation: Independent/half owned by Hamad bin Jassim Al Thani

Website: <http://www.al-watan.com/>

15. Al-Wafd (الوفد)

Overall Influence Score: 57

Country: Egypt

Language: Arabic

Political Orientation: Official paper of the Wafd Party

Website: <https://alwafd.news/>

16. Al Riyadh (الرياض)

Overall Influence Score: 54

Country: Saudi Arabia

Language: Arabic

Political Orientation: Independent/pro-government

Website: <http://www.alriyadh.com/>

17. Al Rai al Aam (الرأي العام)

Overall Influence Score: 53

Country: Kuwait

Language: Arabic

Political Orientation: Independent/pro-government

Website: <http://www.alraimedia.com/Home>

18. Echorouk El Yawmi (الشروق اليومي)

Overall Influence Score: 53



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Country: Algeria

Language: Arabic

Political Orientation: Independent/critical of government/critical of Islamists

Website: <https://www.echoroukonline.com/>

19. Ashaq Al-Awsat (الشرق الأوسط)

Overall Influence Score: 52

Country: Britain

Language: Arabic and English

Political Orientation: Privately-owned by Saudi royal family/pro-Saudi government

Website: <https://aawsat.com/>

20. Al-Anba (الانباء)

Overall Influence Score: 52

Country: Kuwait

Language: Arabic

Political Orientation: Independent/pro-government

Website: <http://www.alanba.com.kw/>