

Middle East & North Africa

AI infrastructure economics

Q3 2026 AVERAGE
1 Jul – 30 Sep 2026

This factsheet takes a holistic look at AI infrastructure in MENA in Q3 2026. Live AI data centre capacity (section 1) and projects due to go live (section 2) give an overview of AI supply in the region. Compute pricing (section 3) gives insight into demand for AI compute, for training and inference.

Our analysis puts this data into context. Section 4 estimates the returns operators and investors could expect from a new GPU in the region at Q3 prices. For CTOs, CFOs and AI developers, section 5 compares the cost of deployment options and which suits each workload.

1 Live AI data centre footprint

POWERED BY SIGNWL CAPACITY ATLAS™

Estimated data centre capacity that was live at the end of the quarter in each market, for all workloads and for AI, with the number of live facilities. Powered by Signwl Capacity Atlas™: project-level pipeline, with each project's status checked against construction evidence.

The UAE and Israel lead MENA's live AI capacity, with 33% and 32% of the region. Israel has paused new data centre grid applications of 8 MW or more because of pressure on the electricity grid (announced 20 Jul 2026 and expected to run to early December). Most of the AI capacity under construction from projects due by 30 Sep is in the UAE, led by Stargate UAE phase 1 (section 2); none of it is confirmed live yet. If it comes online, the region's AI capacity would rise about 3.5 times, with the UAE holding 66% and Israel 15%. Saudi Arabia has a larger pipeline on paper, but most of it is contracted rather than under construction: HUMAIN's 100 MW Riyadh building was put out to tender in September for delivery in 2028.

Country	Live facilities	Live IT, MW	Live AI IT, MW	AI share of live IT	AI watts per person	Share of MENA AI	Live + under construction AI IT, MW	Share of MENA AI, live + under construction
UAE	49	375–405	24–48	9%	2.2–4.3	33%	240–263	66%
Israel	39	180–230	20–49	17%	2.0–4.9	32%	42–71	15%
Saudi Arabia	47	135–245	21–30	13%	0.6–0.9	23%	53–63	15%
Qatar	12	44–46	2–4	7%	0.5–1.2	2%	2–4	1%
Bahrain	6	6–17	0–1	4%	0.2–0.9	1%	0–1	<1%
Oman	12	14–28	1–4	12%	0.1–0.8	2%	1–4	1%
Egypt	30	29–73	1–3	4%	0.0	2%	1–3	1%
Other MENA [†]	69	43–125	2–6	5%	0.0	4%	2–6	1%
MENA	264	826–1,169	70–146	11%	0.2–0.4	100%	340–416	100%

Sources and methodology. Signwl Capacity Atlas™ combines Signwl's data centre register, operator and regulator disclosures, market reports, AI server import data and satellite imagery to estimate live and under-construction IT and AI capacity.

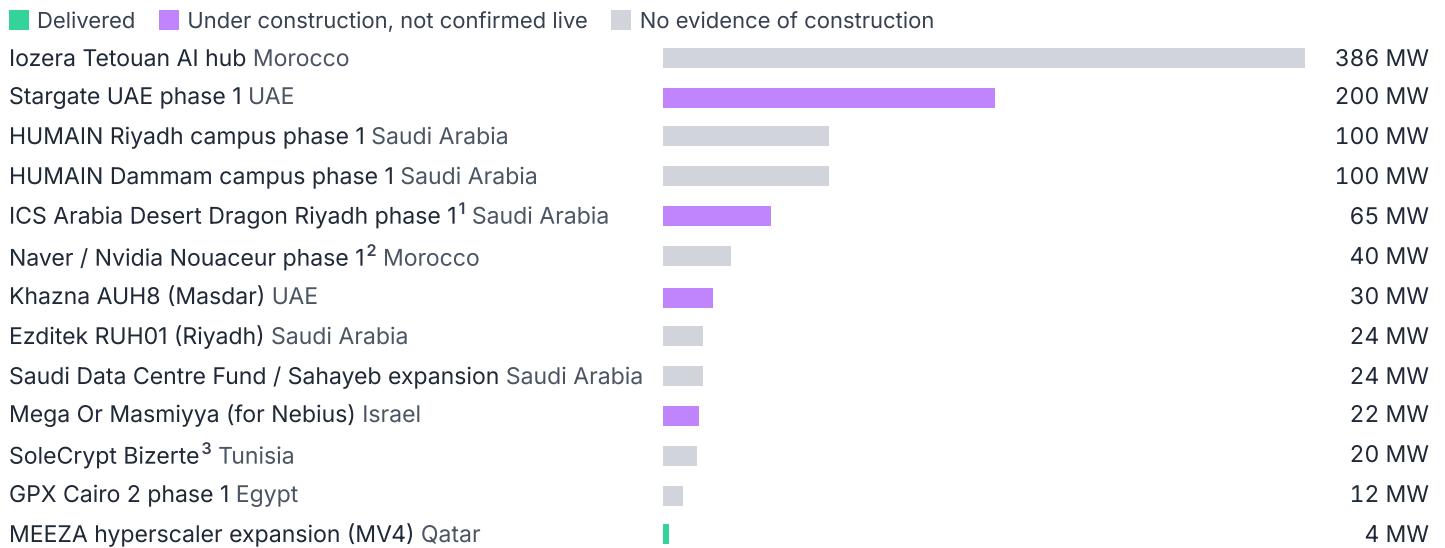
[†]Morocco, Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia and Algeria.

2 Status of projects due to go live by 30 Sep 2026

POWERED BY SIGNWL CAPACITY ATLAS™

Publicly announced data centre projects that were due to be live by the end of the quarter, and whether each has been confirmed live. Powered by Signwl Capacity Atlas™: project-level pipeline, with each project's status checked against construction evidence.

Announced capacity is running well ahead of confirmed delivery: of 1,027 MW publicly announced for completion by 30 Sep 2026, 4 MW is confirmed live, 317 MW is under construction and 706 MW shows no evidence of construction. 547 MW of the total is in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar; a further 456 MW is due in Q4 on announced dates. Satellite images show new buildings at Stargate UAE phase 1 but no heat signature yet: construction is visible, operation is not.



1. Now expected Q2 2027 (Desert Dragon, Sep 2026); phase 1 re-scoped to 16 MW at Al-Kharj plus 3 MW downtown within a 187 MW programme.

2. Now expected 2027 (Moroccan government memorandum, Apr 2026); phase 1 re-scoped to 16 MW at Nouaceur.

3. Now expected 2027 (SoleCrypt, Feb 2026).

Sources and methodology. Signwl Capacity Atlas™ tracks publicly announced projects with a stated MW and a due date, and checks their status against operator, contractor and regulator evidence and satellite imagery. Under construction means physical works are visible but the capacity is not confirmed live. Projects are shown at their originally announced capacity and date; any project not confirmed live by the quarter-end is behind its announced schedule, and announced revised dates are footnoted.

3 Compute pricing: on-demand and spot

POWERED BY SIGNWL GPU PRICE INDEX™

Hourly GPU rental prices from the major cloud providers in MENA, on demand and on spot (Q3 2026 averages of daily prices). Spot is spare capacity sold at a discount, so its gap to on-demand signals demand. No discount points to a tight market, a narrowing one to tightening, and a widening one to growing spare capacity. Powered by Signwl GPU Price Index™: daily on-demand, reserved and spot prices for 20+ GPUs across 40+ metros.

Demand is highest for the most sophisticated training GPUs, GB200 and H200, which have no spot discount at all, the tightest market in the region. A100 80GB and A10G also show high demand, driven by the Tel Aviv market, where A100 80GB spot prices rose sharply to an average of \$4.21 per GPU-hour in September, above on-demand, and A10G spot held at \$0.68, 28% below on-demand. Between 1 Jul and 30 Sep, spot discounts narrowed for L40S, L4, A10G and T4 by 4–6 points, and A100 80GB from 76% to 22%, a sign of rising demand. Demand is low for MI300X, V100 and A10, where spot sold at more than 70% below on-demand on average in Q3.

Training GPUs

GPU	On-demand \$/GPU-hr	Spot \$/GPU-hr	Spot discount, Q3 average	Daily spot discount, Q3	1 Jul → 30 Sep	MENA demand
GB200	24.12	as on-demand [†]	none		0% → 0%	High
H200	14.40	as on-demand [†]	none		0% → 0%	High
H100	8.93	2.86	68%		70% → 68%	Medium
MI300X	4.71	1.38	71%		71% → 71%	Low
A100 80GB	3.62	2.01	45%		76% → 22%	High
V100	2.42	0.71	71%		71% → 71%	Low

Inference GPUs

GPU	On-demand \$/GPU-hr	Spot \$/GPU-hr	Spot discount, Q3 average	Daily spot discount, Q3	1 Jul → 30 Sep	MENA demand
L40S	2.01	0.81	60%		63% → 59%	Medium
A10	1.40	0.31	78%		77% → 78%	Low
A10G	0.95	0.53	44%		49% → 43%	High
L4	0.71	0.17	60%		63% → 59%	Medium
T4	0.29	0.14	52%		58% → 51%	Medium

Sources and methodology. Signwl GPU Price Index™: Q3 2026 averages of daily list prices from the major cloud providers in MENA. Spot discount compares spot with on-demand in the same market. MENA demand from the Q3 average spot discount: the smaller the discount, the less spare capacity providers have to sell. High: under 50%; Medium: 50–70%; Low: over 70%.

†Spot listed at the on-demand price.

4 GPU economics in MENA

POWERED BY SIGNWL RETURNS MODEL™ · SIGNWL COMPONENT TRACKER™

What one GPU in a new MENA build earns over three years when rented out at reserved list prices, after power, facility and maintenance costs. Powered by Signwl Returns Model™: GPU and data centre returns on your own assumptions; Signwl Component Tracker™: RAM, CPU and storage costs bundled into GPU pricing.

The most lucrative GPU investment in the region is the H100, which pays back after 9.2 months, closely followed by the GB200, which pays back after 10 months. At reserved list prices and 80% utilisation, H100, GB200 and H200 repay their cost within 3 years (293%, 245%, 116%). Only GB200 and H100 still make money at half of list price. A100 80GB returns 9% over 3 years, and Signwl analysis suggests MI300X, L40S and L4 do not pay back within a 3-year horizon.

GPU	All-in cost \$ per GPU	Rent, 3-yr \$/GPU-hr	Annual price decline	Other costs \$ a year	Payback months	Year -1 return	3-year ROI
GB200	54,200	10.50	25%	11,185	10	91%	245%
H200	52,500	6.73	21%	9,388	17	51%	116%
H100	31,250	6.81	18%	6,838	9.2	113%	293%
MI300X	48,787	3.35	15%	8,508	39	16%	-8%
A100 80GB	28,783	2.27	14%	5,408	33	22%	9%
L40S	13,945	0.90	25%	2,819	48	0%	-25%
L4	7,590	0.36	21%	1,273	73	-4%	-51%

Sources and methodology. Signwl Returns Model™ estimates the return on one new GPU in MENA, bought for cash and rented at Q3 2026 reserved list prices, using Signwl price and depreciation data with published hardware, power and facility costs. Hardware is priced at US dollar list prices, the market the region buys from.

5 AI deployment cost comparison

POWERED BY SIGNWL COMPUTE OUTLOOK™

The monthly cost of running two typical AI workloads on models that keep processing inside MENA: an API, or an open model on rented MENA GPUs. Only APIs and GPU instances available in the region are included. Powered by Signwl Compute Outlook™.

For high-volume simple tasks at 1bn tokens a month, GPT-5.6 Luna costs \$330, \$405 less than running an open model on frontier GB200 GPUs, and Amazon Nova Lite costs \$78, \$138 less than running it on the cheapest suitable GPU, MI300X.

For complex reasoning and agents at 1bn tokens a month, GPT-5.5 costs \$11k, \$8.8k more than running an open model on frontier GB200 GPUs, and Amazon Nova Pro costs \$1.3k, \$617 more than running it on the cheapest suitable GPU, MI300X.

Monthly cost at 1bn tokens a month (bars scaled within each workload; all options processed in MENA)

■ Ready-made service (in-region API)
■ Open model, self-hosted on rented MENA GPUs

Best available			Lowest cost		
High-volume simple tasks			High-volume simple tasks		
GPT-5.6 Luna		\$330	Amazon Nova Lite		\$78
\$0.33 per 1M tokens			\$0.08 per 1M tokens		
gpt-oss-120b on 1x GB200		\$735	gpt-oss-120b on 1x MI300X		\$216
\$0.73 per 1M tokens			\$0.22 per 1M tokens		
Complex reasoning and agents			Complex reasoning and agents		
GPT-5.5		\$11k	Amazon Nova Pro		\$1.3k
\$11.00 per 1M tokens			\$1.28 per 1M tokens		
Leading open model on 8x GB200		\$2.2k	Leading open model on 8x MI300X		\$663
\$2.25 per 1M tokens			\$0.66 per 1M tokens		

Sources and methodology. Signwl Compute Outlook™ compares in-region API list prices with self-hosting open models on rented MENA GPUs, using published benchmark throughput and quality scores. Only models processed in a MENA cloud region are included. Self-hosted cost scales with the GPU-hours used. Excludes start-up time and engineering and operations costs, and assumes GPUs are available when needed.

To discuss this factsheet or Signwl data, contact us at signwl.com/contact

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