



**UN-ESCWA**

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**Workshop on the Delivery of E-Services in Civil Society, Beirut**

# E-Services Landscape in the ESCWA Region

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# Outline

- ICTs and E-Services
- ICT infrastructure in the region
- E-Government
- E-Business and E-Commerce
  - E-Banking
  - E-Commerce Volume and Spending
  - Leading products and services
  - Enabling e-commerce
  - E-commerce obstacles
  - E-payment solutions & services
  - B2C e-commerce portals
- Recommendations



# ICTs and E-Services

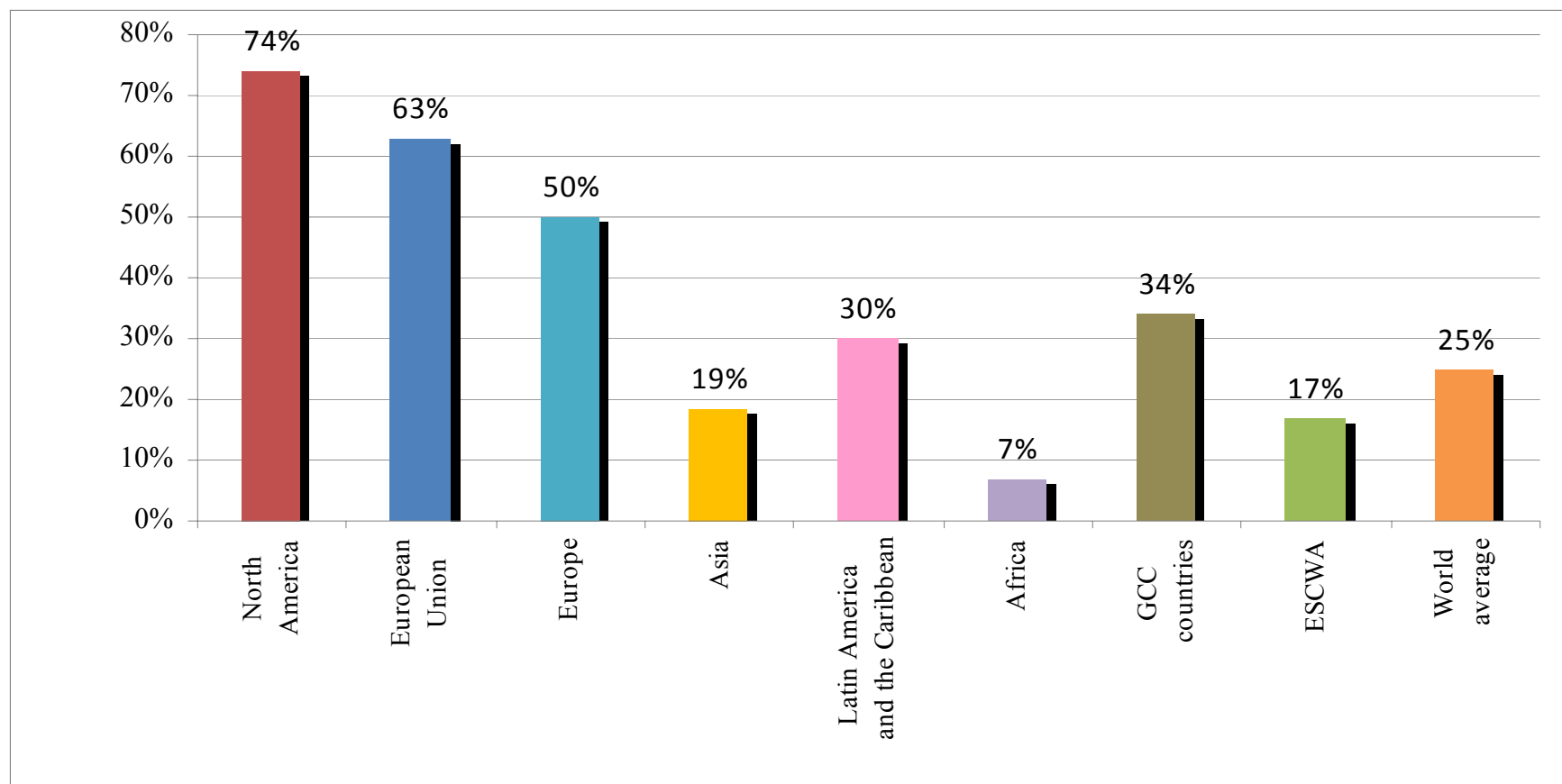


- WSIS (2003, 2005);
- Called on Government, international organizations, public and private sectors, and NGO to work together in order to build the Information Society;
- ICT applications can support sustainable development, in the fields of public administration, business, education and training, health, employment, environment, agriculture and science;
- E-government, E-business, E-learning, E-health, E-employment, E-agriculture, E-science.



# ICT infrastructure in the region

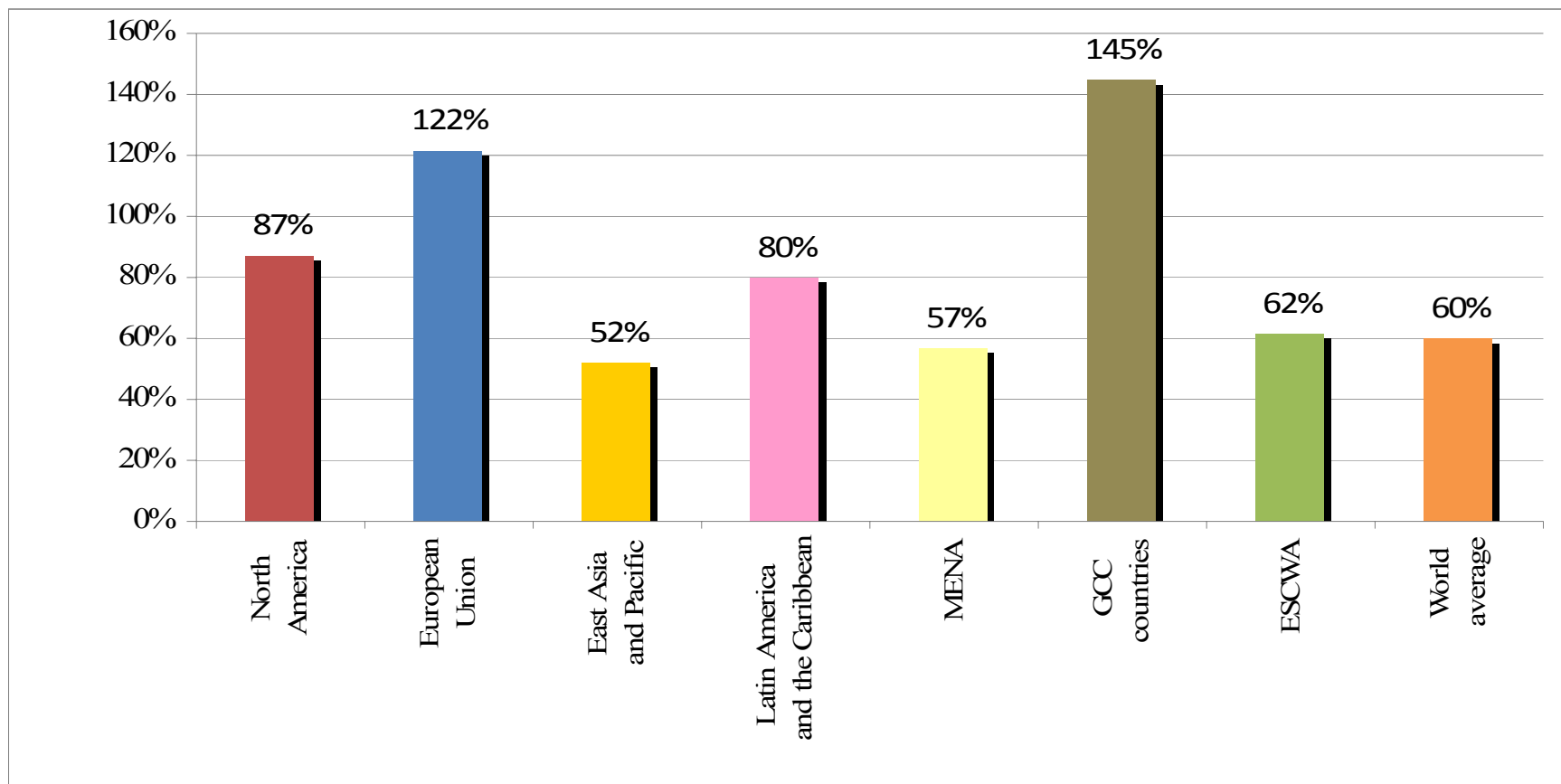
Internet penetration rates - mid 2009





# ICT infrastructure in the region

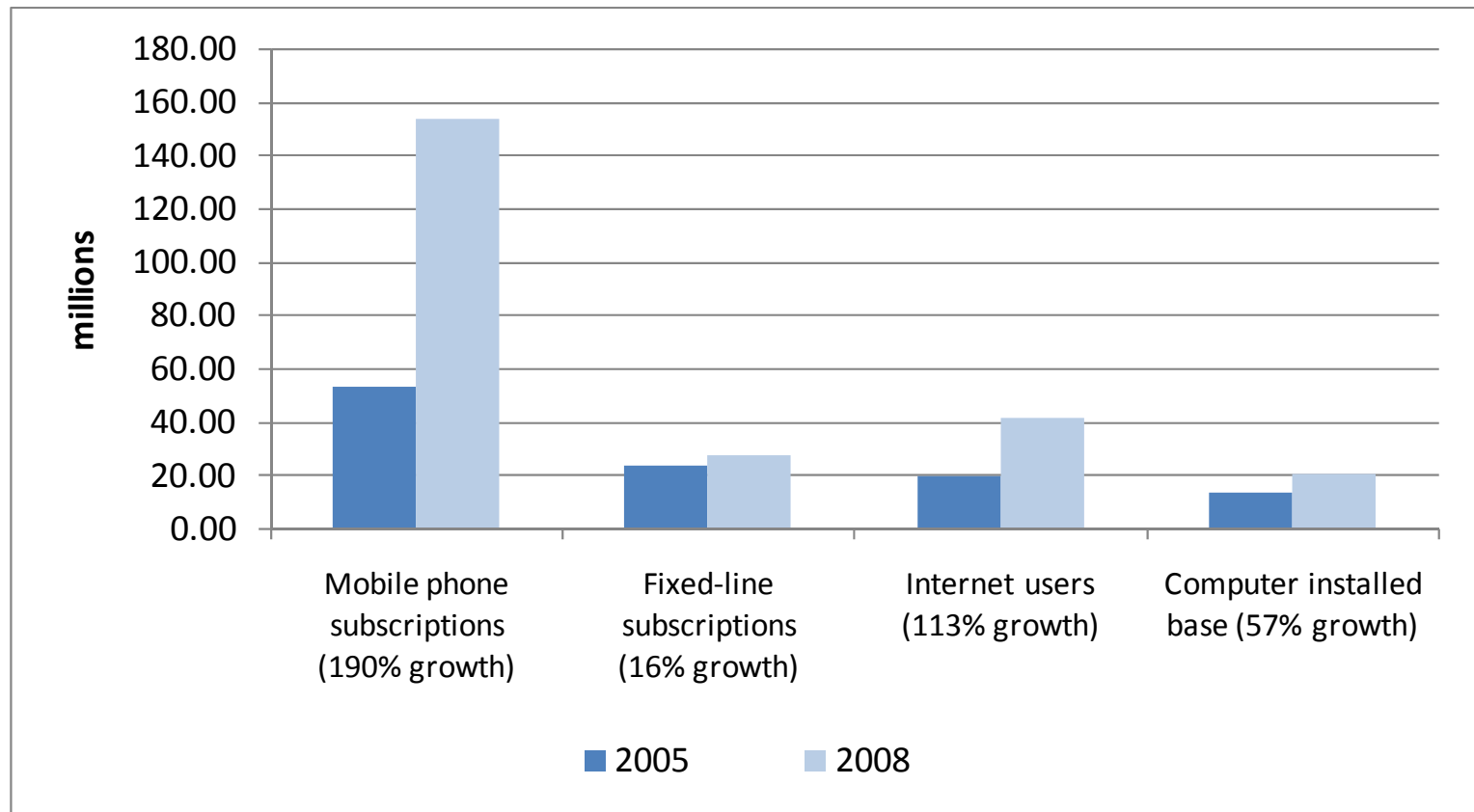
## Mobile penetration rates - 2008





# ICT infrastructure in the region

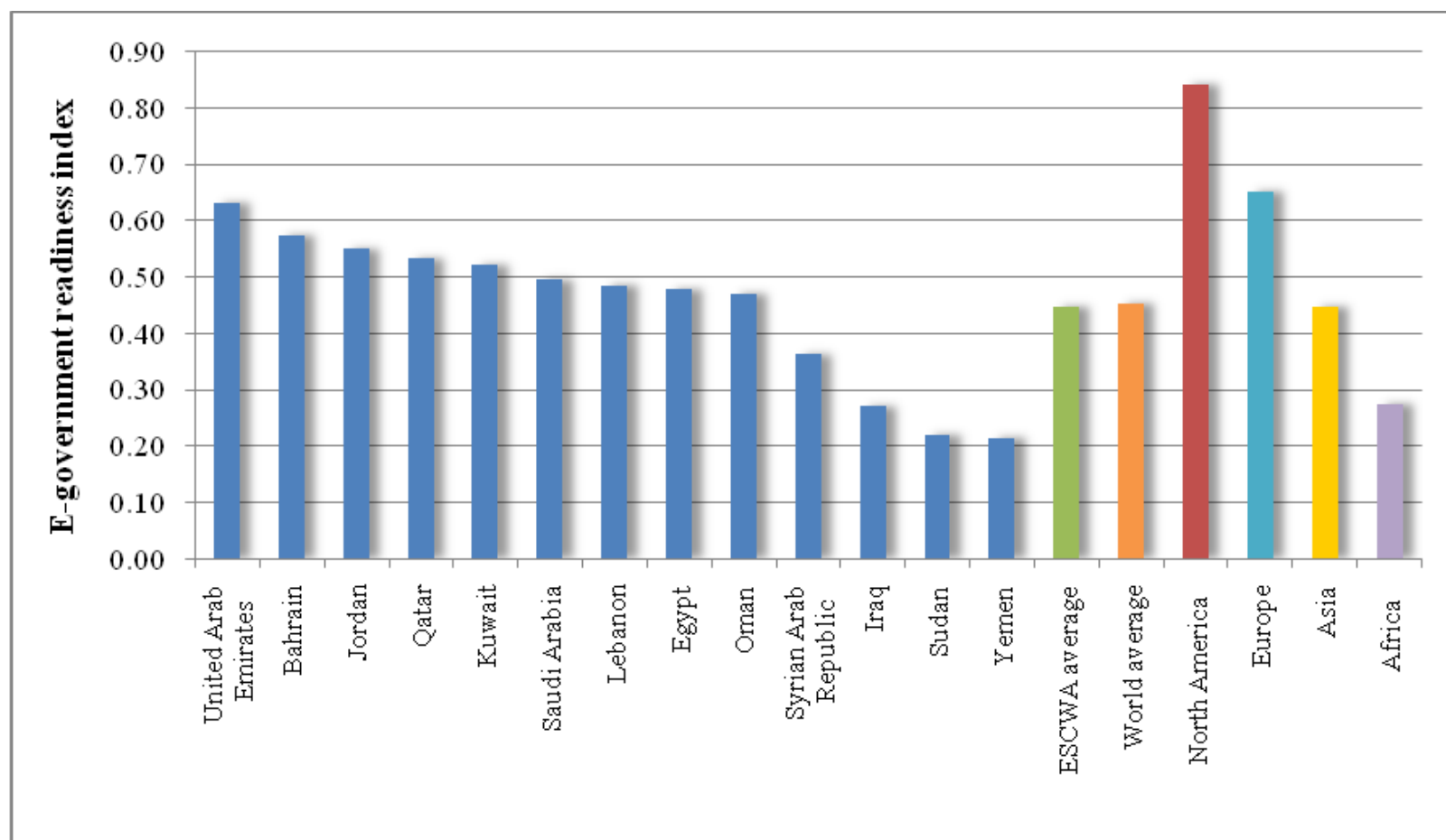
Growth of the ESCWA region in ICTs, 2005-2008





# E-Government

Readiness index scores of EMCs and other regions, 2008







# E-Business and E-Commerce

- The Internet is a viable platform for conducting business and commerce as more robust and advanced ICT applications are developed;
- In most countries, Internet use is limited to communication (e-mail, web browsing, other applications);
- In few countries, Internet use includes
  - online shopping, online transaction processing
  - e-payments, electronic funds transfer
  - e-banking and other electronic financial services, Internet marketing, and many other advanced e-business applications.





# E-Banking

- E-banking services continue to increase in number and quality within the ESCWA region;
- E-banking services (financial settlements and online banking) is vastly available in most EMCs with the exception of Iraq, Yemen and the Sudan;
- GCC countries lead the way in terms of quality and diversity of e-banking services:
  - account statements
  - bill and credit card payments
  - money transfer services among different accounts.



## Volume of B2B and B2C E-Commerce

- E-commerce is the process of procurement (business) and purchase (consumer) of goods and services through electronic systems, primarily the Internet;
- In GCC countries, total volume in 2008 exceeded \$100 billion, with an expected annual growth of 20%;
- Countries with higher GNI (GCC), were seen to have adopted e-commerce faster than others;
- Half of the Internet users in selected EMCs are also e-commerce users, spending \$5.29 billion per year.



# E-Commerce and Internet Users

## E-commerce to Internet users ratio, 2007 -2008

Rank	Country or territory	Population	Internet users	Internet penetration rate ( <i>percentage</i> )	E-commerce users	E-commerce to Internet users ratio ( <i>percentage</i> )
1	UAE	4,488,000	1,582,000	35.3	1,160,044	73.3
2	Saudi Arabia	23,981,000	6,400,000	26.7	3,540,811	55.3
3	Oman	2,812,900	319,851	11.4	158,000	49.4
4	Kuwait	3,400,000	1,110,000	32.7	360,984	32.5
5	Jordan	5,817,500	954,667	16.4	198,775	20.8
6	Lebanon	3,857,000	780,000	20.2	61,269	7.9
	Total/average	44,356,400	11,146,518	25.1	5,479,883	49.2



# Spending on e-commerce

## Annual spending by each e-commerce user, 2007-2008

Rank	Country or territory	Population	E-commerce users	E-commerce penetration rate (percentage)	Total amount spent in the past year (millions of \$)	Annual spending by each e-commerce user (\$)
1	Oman	2,812,900	158,000	5.6	236	1,494
2	Lebanon	3,857,000	61,269	1.6	76	1,247
3	UAE	4,488,000	1,160,044	25.9	1,158	998
4	Kuwait	3,400,000	360,984	10.6	356	987
5	Saudi Arabia	23,981,000	3,540,811	14.8	3,281	927
6	Jordan	5,817,500	198,775	3.4	181	912
	Total/average	44,356,400	5,479,883	12.4	5,290	965



# Leading products and services

- Ticketing and reservations;
- Bill payment;
- Stock market trading;
- Books, flowers;
- Electronic equipment;
- Food products and food delivery services.



# Enabling e-commerce

- Building confidence in the electronic environment facilitates e-commerce;
  - e-commerce laws
  - e-signature laws
- Some EMCs have issued e-transaction laws instead of e-commerce laws;
- Laws for e-signature and e-transaction have been drafted but not yet enacted in Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar and the Sudan.



# Availability of related laws

Country or territory	E-commerce law	E-signature law
<b>Bahrain</b>	✓	✓
<b>Egypt</b>	✓	✓
<b>Iraq</b>	✗	✗
<b>Jordan</b>	✓	✓
<b>Kuwait</b>	✗	✗
<b>Lebanon</b>	✗	✗
<b>Oman</b>	✓*	✓
<b>Palestine</b>	✗	✗
<b>Qatar</b>	✗	✗
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	✓*	✓
<b>The Sudan</b>	✓*	✓
<b>Syrian Arab Republic</b>	✗	✓
<b>United Arab Emirates</b>	✓	✓
<b>Yemen</b>	✗	✗





# E-commerce obstacles

- Inadequate ICT infrastructure;
- Legal challenges;
- Social and cultural resistance to ICTs;
- Low levels of ICT literacy;
- Partial and incomprehensive laws in terms of
  - Consumer protection
  - Dispute resolution
  - Protection of IPRs



# E-commerce obstacles - consumer

- Trust in e-services;
- Online security;
- Privacy;
- Caution about using credit cards for settling online payments, especially with domestic e-commerce sites.



# E-payment solutions & services

## Government supported services

- SADAD in KSA
- mPay in the UAE



## Private sector services (prepaid Internet solution)

- OneCard ([www.onecard.net](http://www.onecard.net))
- cashU ([www.cashu.com](http://www.cashu.com))





# B2C e-commerce portals



- Souq.com:
  - auction platform as well a fixed-price retail buying and selling;
  - offers numerous safe and secure payment options;
  - operates in Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and UAE;
  - member of the Maktoob group of companies.
- Taufeer.com :
  - online shopping portal based in Saudi Arabia;
  - avails products from worldwide sellers;
  - Amazon.com joined the e-channel retailers programme (2008).





# B2C e-commerce portals

- [Aldoukan.com](http://Aldoukan.com):



- An e-marketplace selling a variety of Lebanese products;
- Worldwide delivery through DHL;
- Ability to become a partner and list your products.

- [elmazad.com](http://elmazad.com) :



- Buy and sell products through online listings;
- Operates in Lebanon and UAE;
- Transactions are not conducted through the portal.



# Recommendations

- Improving affordable access of rural and marginalized areas, through access points;
- Partnership and collaboration amongst stakeholders for sharing experience and best practices;
- Formulating and implementing national plans for building trust and enhancing security in e-services (related laws);
- Provisioning of various and secure online payment methods to meet different needs;
- Increasing public ICT literacy skills through capacity building and training programmes;
- Raising awareness on the benefits of e-services particularly e-commerce.



# Thank you

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