

ARABIC

Spoken in most of the Asian Middle East, in Northern Africa to the Atlantic, and in Central Asia, the Mediterranean and beyond the Sahara.

POSTS: **Algiers**
 Amman
 Baghdad
 Beirut
 Cairo
 Jeddah
 Kuwait
 Rabat
 Tunis

The Arabic language is spoken in at least 22 countries of Asia and Africa, with five major dialects – three in Asia and two in Africa. However, there is a standard modern form of Arabic that is understood and used by most speakers. This is the written language, the language used by the media and the language of religion and the Koran. The dialects are essentially spoken languages and are derived from literary Arabic. They differ from one another depending on the influence exercised by the languages or civilizations with which they have come into contact or been mixed. The Moroccan dialect will not necessarily be understood by a Lebanese, nor the Iraqi by a Libyan, nor the Saudi by an Algerian. On the other hand, the Egyptian and Lebanese dialects are more widely understood because of the cultural influence of these countries.

Arabic has a phonetic system that is quite different from English or French. Many phonemes have no equivalent in any European language. In addition, Arabic is read and written from right to left. It has at least two different orthographical forms for the same character depending on its position in the word. Often there is no phonetic or even conceptual similarity between the Arabic vocabulary and our European vocabulary.