

Mapping the Arabic Blogosphere

This is a social network map of the Arabic blogosphere created through analysis of blogger linking patterns, automated text analysis, and human coding of blog content. Each dot represents a blog, and the size of each dot is determined by the number of other blogs that link to it. The position of each dot is a function of shared links with its neighbors. The color of each dot is determined by links to all online content; blogs that are the same color link to similar online resources, such as news sites, Web pages, and other blogs. A descriptive label is generated by researchers after all of the data obtained from linking patterns, text analysis, and human coding is layered together.

This map was created as part of the Internet & Democracy Project's study *Mapping the Arabic Blogosphere: Politics, Culture and Dissent*.

Egypt is by far the largest cluster and includes several distinct subclusters. One is characterized by **Secular Reformist** bloggers, and another by members of the **Muslim Brotherhood**. This latter group is technically illegal in Egypt but their online presence appears to be tolerated.

Islam-focus is a loosely connected set of bloggers from various Arab countries. These bloggers are focused mainly on Islam, mixing personal, theological, and political topics.

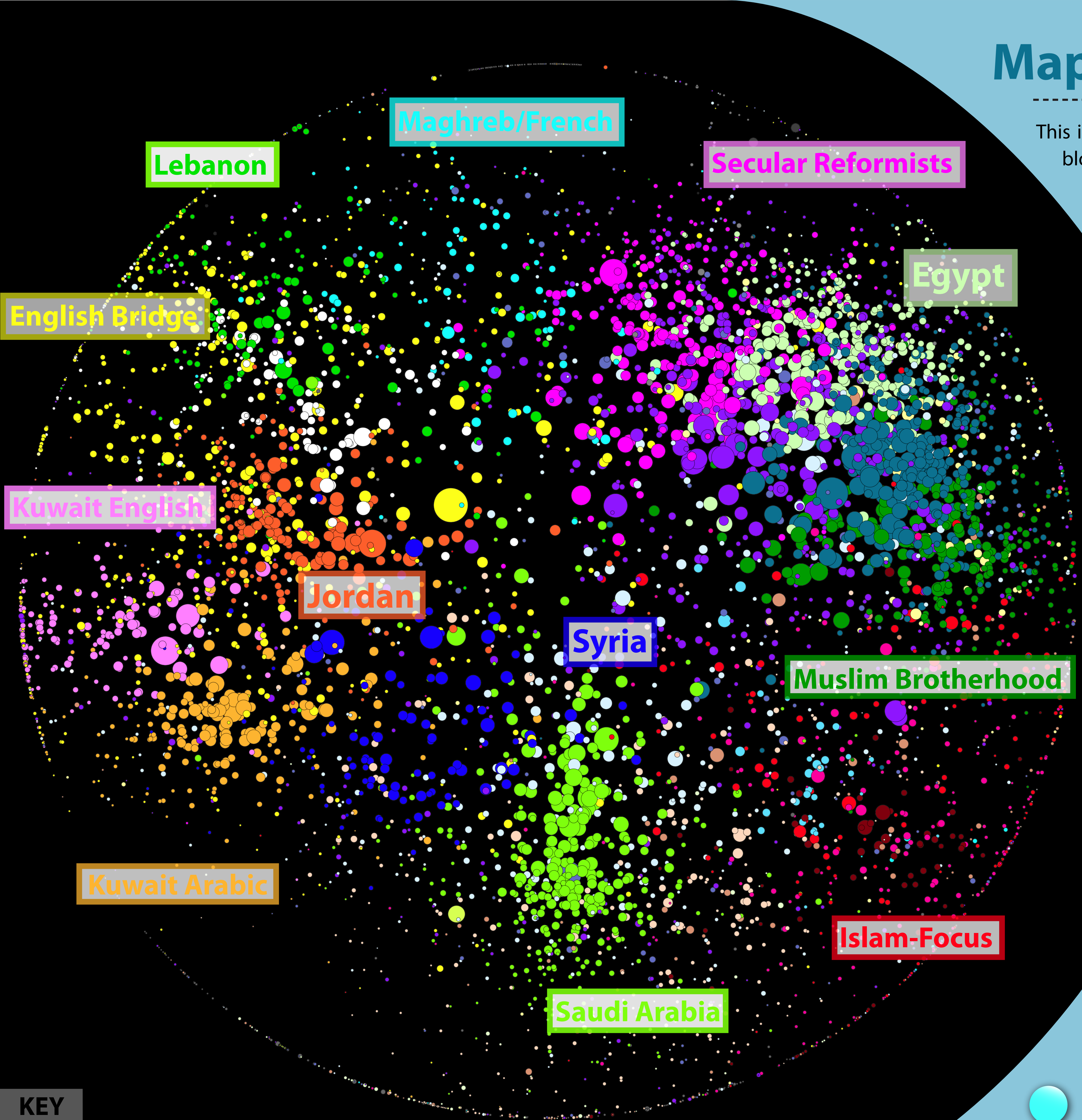
Saudi Arabia comprises the second largest cluster of bloggers. This group focuses more on personal diaries and less on politics than other groups.

Syria features frequent, though often mild, criticism of domestic leaders. It includes Arabic language bloggers with closer links to those in Saudi Arabia, as well as English language bloggers closer to those in the Levantine/English Bridge region.

Levantine/English Bridge is a group of bloggers located mainly in eastern Mediterranean countries. They are sometimes referred to collectively as the Levant, including **Lebanon**, Palestine, **Jordan** and **Syria**, as well as most bloggers from Iraq. These bloggers frequently use English in addition to, or instead of, Arabic and are connected to the US and international blogosphere by "bridge bloggers" from other Arab countries.

Kuwait is divided into sub-clusters of **English** and **Arabic** bloggers. Both groups focus heavily on domestic news and politics. Anglophone bloggers are more likely to advocate reform and discuss economic and women's rights issues.

Maghreb/French Bridge is comprised of a cross-national set of bloggers located mainly in Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria. Many of these bloggers write in a mixture of Arabic and French. Other bloggers from the Maghreb eschew French and are found among the religion-focused bloggers.



KEY


DOT
Blog


DOT SIZE
Prominence based on number of links


DOT COLOR
Attentive cluster, bloggers who cite similar resources


DOT POSITION/PROXIMITY
Based on direct links with others in the map