

Chapter 2

The state of democracy in Africa and the Middle East

This chapter focuses on the state of democracy in two intertwined regions. The first section offers an overview of democratic trends in Africa, while the second aims to provide an understanding of the current democratic landscape in the least democratic region of the world, the Middle East. The chapter offers a long-term perspective on democracy in each region, followed by overviews of their respective current democratic landscapes, using the Global State of Democracy (GSoD) conceptual framework as an organizing structure. The analysis highlights current gains and opportunities for democracy as well as democratic challenges. Finally, the chapter includes a number of policy considerations for Africa and the Middle East.

It should be noted that the GSoD Indices classify the Middle East and Iran as a single region, referred to in this report as the Middle East. However, for the purposes of the analysis in this chapter, the Middle East is regarded as part of a wider region—that of Africa and the Middle East. Furthermore, while the GSoD Indices classify the subregion of North Africa as part of Africa, the Middle East and North Africa are closely interconnected from a historical, religious, cultural, political, linguistic and ethnic perspective. Examples from North African countries are therefore mentioned in both the Africa and the Middle East sections.

AFRICA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Africa is the region that has made most progress in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) since 2015, if measured by the number of indicators that have seen more countries advancing than declining. However, significant challenges remain if Africa is to achieve SDG 16; levels of democratic development measured by this goal remain low compared to the world average.

Of the 18 GSoD indicators used to measure progress on SDG 16, 8 have seen more countries in Africa with gains than declines since 2015. This is the case for SDG 16.1 on reducing violence, SDG 16.5 on reducing corruption and SDG 16.10 on access to information and fundamental freedoms. However, SDG 16.3 on rule of law has seen more countries declining than advancing. SDG 16.6 on accountable

institutions has also seen declines outnumbering advances for independent judiciaries and civil society participation, but not for parliaments. SDG 16.7 has had mixed results, with gains in Elected Government, Effective Parliament and Social Group Equality, but declines in Clean Elections and stagnation on Electoral Participation and Local Democracy.



Gender Equality

Significant challenges remain in terms of achieving gender equality and SDG 5.5 on political representation of women. The GSoD measure of (political) Gender Equality for Africa has seen stagnation since 2015, with no countries declining or advancing. Africa has the second-lowest levels of political Gender Equality in the world, after the Middle East.

KEY FINDINGS



Positive developments

- **The expansion of democracy in Africa since 1975 is second only to Latin America and the Caribbean.** Africa has experienced a remarkable democratic expansion in the last few decades, particularly since the early 1990s when many countries in the region introduced multiparty elections.
- In 1975, 41 countries were non-democracies while only 3 countries were classified as democracies. By 2018, the share of democracies had increased fivefold to 20 countries, making democracy the most common regime type in the region (41 per cent).
- **Representative Government has been strengthened in Africa.** Of the 20 countries categorized as democracies, the large majority have mid-range levels of Representative Government. However, only one country (Mauritius) has a high level of Representative Government.
- Between 1975 and 2018, the gains recorded on Representative Government were followed by advances on **Checks on Government** and **Fundamental Rights**.
- **Democratic aspirations in Africa remain strong.** Popular mobilizations demanding democratic change in countries with long-standing autocratic leaders have been seen recently in Ethiopia (2014–2018) and The Gambia (2016), resulting in incipient democratic reforms in the former and a democratic transition in the latter after 22 years of non-democratic rule. The large pro-democracy protests that rocked Algeria and Sudan in 2019 also testify to the growing demands for democracy in enduring hybrid and non-democratic regimes in the region.
- **Civil Liberties are one of the best-performing aspects of democracy in Africa.** In 2018, 33 per cent of countries had high levels of Civil Liberties. The high performance is concentrated in the subregion of West Africa, followed by Southern Africa. Of the countries that score highly on this measure, 87 per cent (14) are democracies, while only 12 per cent (2) are hybrid regimes. No single non-democratic regime has high levels of Civil Liberties.
- **Elections have become the norm rather than the exception throughout Africa.** Only four countries in the region (Eritrea, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan) hold no form of elections, scoring zero on Clean Elections and Inclusive Suffrage and, as a result, on Representative Government. Although Libya and South Sudan held elections in 2014 and 2010 respectively, regular elections are not held in these two countries because of protracted civil war. In countries in West Africa such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, democratic elections and stronger governments have replaced long-standing civil wars.

- **Of the new third-wave democracies, Tunisia has seen most democratic advances and now scores among the top 25 per cent in the world on seven of its democratic subattributes.** The Gambia is another new third-wave democracy that has seen significant democratic advances since its transition in 2017.



Challenges to democracy

- While democracies hold the largest share of regime type in the region, a total of 11 African countries are still categorized as non-democracies, representing 22 per cent of countries in the region.
- Africa also has the largest share of hybrid regimes in the world, with more than one-third of countries (18) in this category. The latest country to regress into hybridity is Tanzania, in 2018.
- **Despite gains in the past decades, the conduct of elections in a number of African countries remains flawed.** While the region has witnessed a rise in the number of transitions from ruling to opposition parties, many countries have failed to enact key reforms that would enhance the integrity of electoral processes. Disputed elections are a common feature of electoral processes in the region, sometimes leading to the outbreak of election-related violence.
- **Another set of challenges to democratic consolidation seen in many parts of Africa today relates to conflict and civil war.** In several countries, earlier gains have been reversed due to violence, a return to military rule, or failure to transform the political process.
- **An array of challenges inhibits the implementation of regional and country-level initiatives in Africa on gender equality.** To varying degrees, women in Africa lack equal access to political power and socio-economic status, and their inclusion remains a major hurdle for most countries.
- **Despite the expansion of democracy in the region, several countries have experienced significant declines in recent years.** Such declines are discernible in countries such as Egypt which, following the Arab Uprisings, experienced further democratic declines and deepening autocratization.
- **Judicial Independence is one of the weakest aspects of democracy in Africa.** Levels of Judicial Independence are low in almost half of the countries in the region.
- **Africa is the region with the highest levels of corruption as well as the highest share of democracies with high levels of corruption.** High levels of corruption are highly correlated with low levels of human development. This, therefore, has detrimental effects for sustainable development in the region.

2.1. The state of democracy in Africa

2.1.1. Introduction

Between 1975 and 2018, Africa made significant democratic advances which, while encompassing most aspects of democracy, were spread somewhat unevenly across the continent. These advances gathered momentum in the early 1990s following the end of the Cold War, which triggered a wave of multiparty elections in the region. As in Asia and the Pacific, Africa's democratic advances continue today, while other regions are now seeing stagnation or even decline. However, the African democratic landscape presents a speckled picture, with 11 non-democracies, the largest share of hybrid regimes in the world (18), and 20 democracies, of which several are experiencing states of democratic fragility. Africa's most democratic subregion is West Africa, followed by Southern Africa, North Africa and East Africa. Central Africa is the only African subregion with no democracies.

In addition to the uneven spread of regime types across its subregions, Africa's current democratic landscape offers a diverse set of opportunities and challenges. According to the Global State of Democracy (GSoD) Indices, which now contain data up to and including 2018, improvements and opportunities for further potential gains can be seen in the conduct of elections (7 countries recorded gains on Clean Elections), administration and civil service (9 recorded gains on Absence of Corruption, and 8 on Predictable Enforcement), judicial access and accountability (11 recorded gains on Access to Justice), and parliamentary oversight (6 recorded gains on Effective Parliament).

However, such gains are countered and, to a degree, neutralized by declines, most of which are recorded on a wide range of civil liberties (nine recorded declines on Civil Liberties), Media Integrity (five recorded declines on Media Integrity), the conduct of elections (nine recorded declines on Clean Elections), and judicial access and accountability (eight recorded declines on Access to Justice). The fact that some of the main gains and declines impact on the same GSoD aspects indicates that while these aspects may be doing well in some countries of Africa, other countries are grappling with challenges in the same areas.

The GSoD findings also indicate that the democratization landscape in Africa is currently characterized by the prospects of a broadening civic space and strengthened fundamental human rights in some countries. At the same time, serious challenges remain in some contexts, related to shrinking civic space, democratic backsliding (including

weakening of checks on government), infringements on constitutional norms and practices, and reversals in fundamental freedoms or civil liberties.

This section offers an overview of the long-term democratic trends in Africa, and an overview of the current democratic landscape, using the GSoD conceptual framework as an organizing structure. The analysis covers issues linked to Representative Government, Fundamental Rights, Checks on Government, Impartial Administration and Participatory Engagement, highlighting the current opportunities for democracy in the region, as well as the democratic challenges it faces. The analysis is based on the GSoD Indices as the principal data source, complemented by other sources. The section concludes with an overview of policy considerations relevant to democratic trends and challenges in Africa.

2.1.2. Taking the long-term perspective: democratic developments in Africa since 1975

The democratic expansion that has occurred in Africa since 1975 is second only to the Latin American and the Caribbean region in terms of its range and scope. Between 1975 and 2018, the overall landscape in Africa points to a remarkable democratic expansion, with a gradual upward trend that has seen the region move away from autocracy and towards democracy. This expansion saw a particularly sharp take-off from the early 1990s onwards, following the broad introduction of multiparty elections across the region.

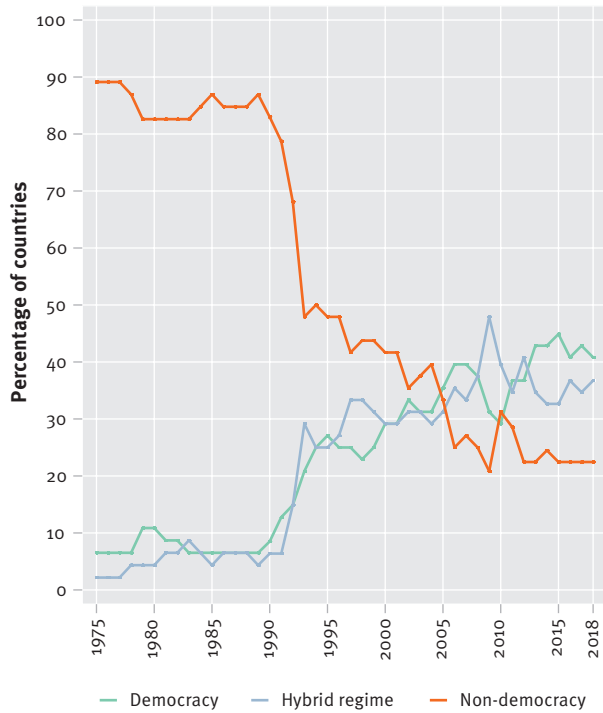
To put the scope of Africa's democratic expansion into perspective, in 1975 a total of 41 African countries were non-democracies, while only three countries were classified as democracies. By 1990, the share of non-democracies was still high, at 85 per cent (39 countries), and the number of democracies had only increased by one (Namibia, which became independent from South Africa in the same year), while a new type of hybrid regime had emerged, with three countries in that category.

In contrast, in 2018 a total of just 11 African countries (23 per cent of countries in the region) were still in the category of non-democracies (see Figure 2.1). The share of democracies has increased fivefold, to 20 countries, meaning that democracies now constitute the largest share of regime type in the region (41 per cent). At the same time, the number of hybrid regimes has increased to 18 countries (37 per cent of countries in the region).

Africa's most democratic subregion is West Africa, followed by Southern Africa, North Africa and East Africa. Central Africa is the only African subregion with no democracies (see Figure 2.2).

FIGURE 2.1

Regime types in Africa over time



Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsoi-indices>>.

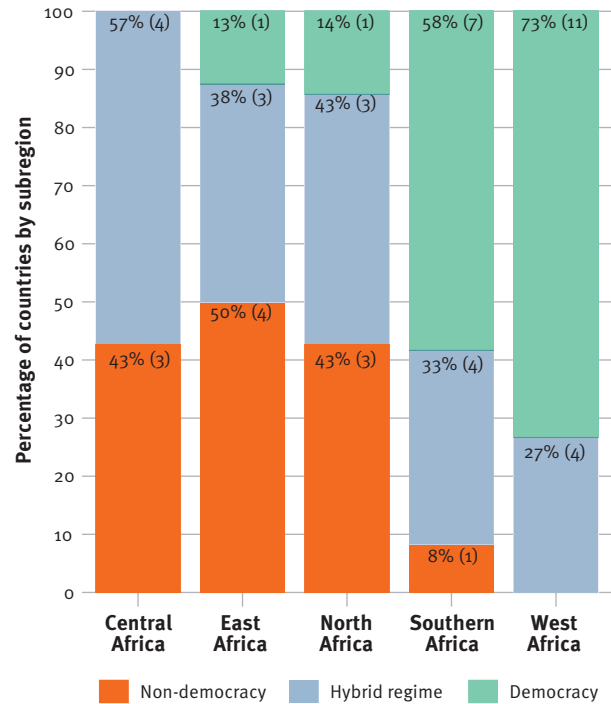
Of the new third-wave democracies in Africa, **Tunisia** is the country that has seen most democratic advances; it now scores among the top 25 per cent in the world on seven of its democratic subattributes. **The Gambia** has also made great strides towards democratic advancement since its transition in 2017.

Between 1975 and 2018, several gains can be discerned across democratic attributes, particularly between the late 1990s and early 2000s. During these four decades, and particularly during the 1990s, Representative Government improved the most, followed by Checks on Government and Fundamental Rights (see Figure 2.3).

Since 2013, two countries—Burundi and Libya—have experienced statistically significant declines in **Representative Government**, while only Burundi has experienced similar declines in **Checks on Government**. Meanwhile, **Fundamental Rights** saw no declines and most countries have seen positive developments. Since 1975, there have been slow advances in **Impartial Administration**. Only 31 per cent of countries have seen

FIGURE 2.2

Regime types in Africa by subregion, 2018



Notes: Using percentages to compare between subregions is important, as subregions may have a varying number of countries. The absolute number, however, is also included in brackets in each column.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsoi-indices>>.

a positive change on this measure, whereas 12 per cent of countries have seen a negative change.

2.1.3. The current democracy landscape in Africa

The analysis in this section covers issues linked to Representative Government, Fundamental Rights, Checks on Government, Impartial Administration and Participatory Engagement, highlighting the current opportunities for democracy in the region, as well as the democratic challenges it faces.

Representative Government

The GSoD Indices use the Representative Government attribute to evaluate countries’ performance on the conduct of elections, the extent to which political parties are able to operate freely, and the extent to which access to government is decided by elections. This attribute is an aggregation of four subattributes: Clean Elections, Inclusive Suffrage, Free Political Parties and Elected Government.

Summary: Representative Government in Africa, 2018

Regional average: Mid-range (0.45)	
High (>0.7)	Mauritius
Mid-range (0.4–0.7)	Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe
Low (<0.4)	Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Libya, Mauritania, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda

Progress across the region on Representative Government has been uneven

The GSoD Indices data for 2018 shows that Representative Government has been strengthened in the African region as a whole. According to data, 20 countries are now categorized as democracies, of which all but one (Mauritius) has mid-range levels of Representative Government. However, the depth and scope of democracy varies considerably, depending on an individual country's performance. For example, three countries—The Gambia,

TABLE 2.1

Data on Representative Government, 2013 and 2018

Country	Representative Government score	
	2013	2018
Mauritius	0.79	0.81
The Gambia	0.38	0.56
Guinea-Bissau	0	0.58
Madagascar	0.40	0.47
Nigeria	0.49	0.63

■ High ■ Mid-range ■ Low

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

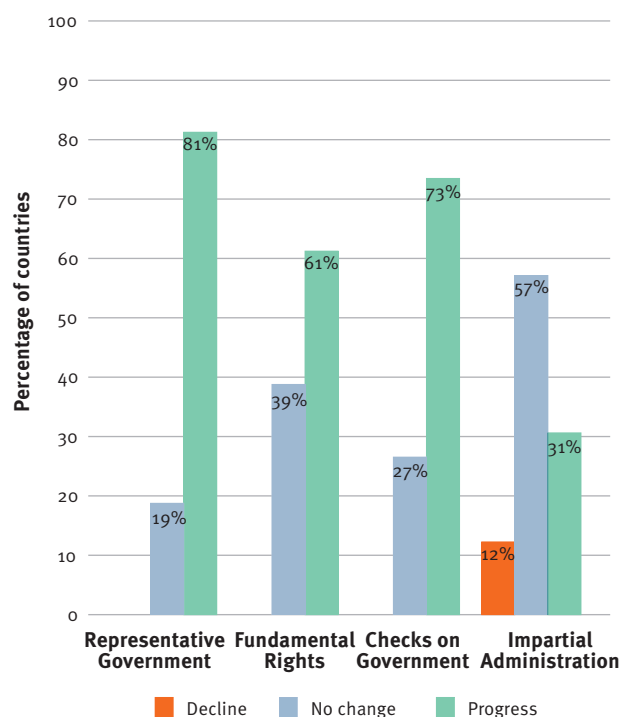
Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria—which score mid-range on this attribute—have all experienced statistically significant gains in the last five years (see Table 2.1).

The data at the subregional level is complex:

- In **Southern Africa**, apart from Madagascar, only Botswana and Namibia have seen some improvement, although this is not statistically significant. At the same time, when compared to the rest of Africa, Southern Africa has experienced some of the highest levels of electoral participation since 2005 (Schulz-Herzenberg 2014).
- In **North Africa**, Tunisia leads the subregion in terms of democratic reforms. Developments in the country since the 2011 revolution provided a key opportunity for democratic gains. The 2014 Constitution, negotiated among key players, provides for freedom of

FIGURE 2.3

Democratic development in Africa between 1975 and 2018

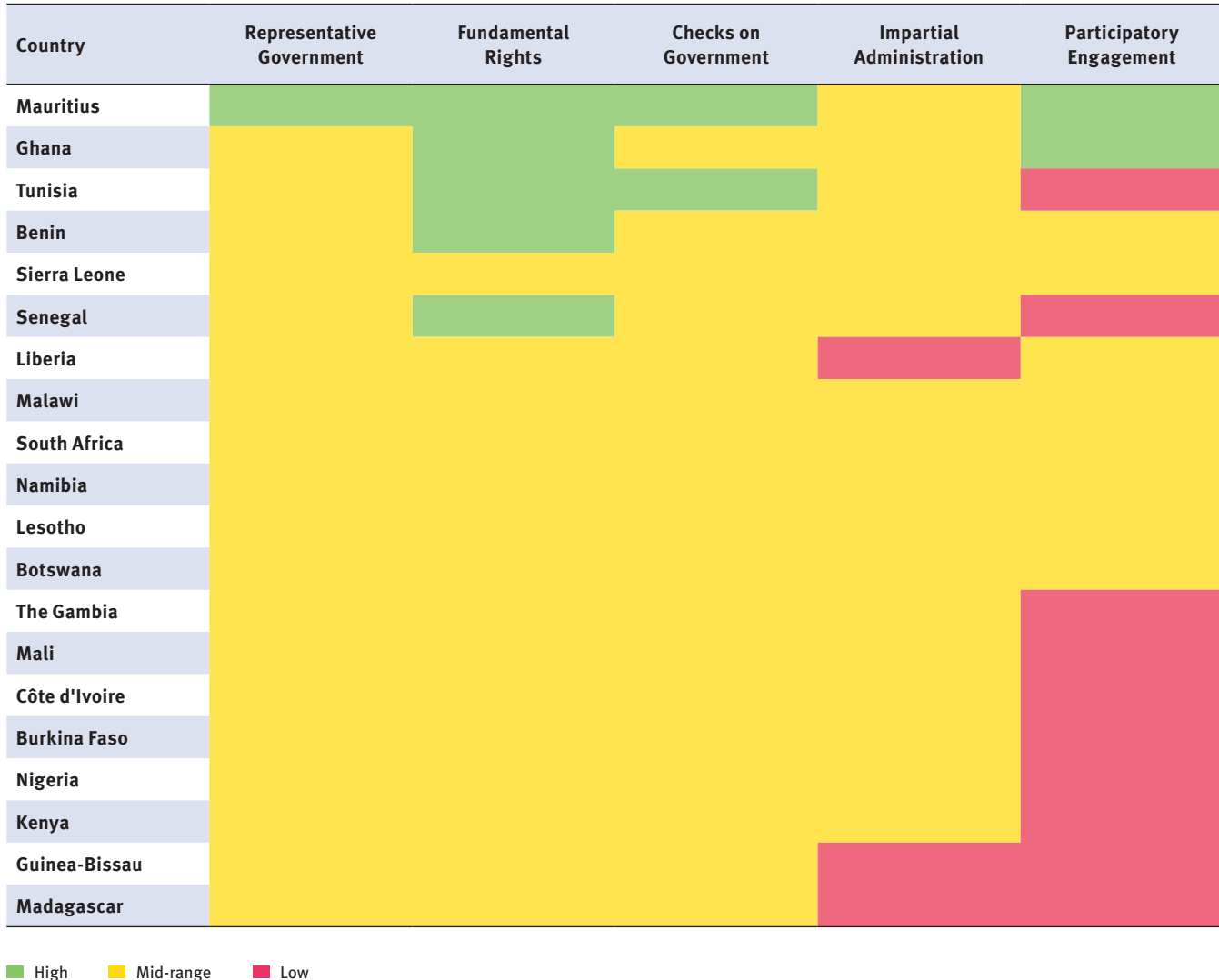


Notes: This bar graph shows the percentage of countries which have experienced positive, negative or no change between 1975 and 2018 according to each of the four democratic attributes that are aggregated. In order to measure change on each attribute, it was necessary to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the country's score on an attribute in 1975 in comparison to 2018.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

TABLE 2.2

Heat map of democratic performance patterns in Africa, 2018



Notes: This heat map shows the performance of the 20 democracies in Africa by attribute in 2018. Green indicates a high-performance level, while yellow denotes mid-range performance, and red shows low-range performance.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

expression, popular participation in decision-making and civic engagement in politics (see Box 2.1).

- In **West Africa**, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria have made significant advances on Representative Government, as well as Clean Elections and Free Political Parties. Most constitutions in this subregion were written by military or authoritarian regimes which held sway for an extended period. With the return to civil rule, countries such as Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire have embarked on constitutional amendment reviews, which are helping

to entrench democracy by checking executive excesses (International IDEA and Hanns Seidel Stiftung 2016).

- In **Central Africa**, only two countries—Central African Republic (CAR) and Gabon—score mid-range on Representative Government, while the rest score low. Gabon has made attempts to organize a political dialogue although it was not attended by the main opposition party (Akum 2019). The CAR government signed a peace accord with armed groups in February 2019. However, it is still early to say whether such a deal will hold (International Crisis Group 2019).

- In **East Africa**, Kenya and Tanzania are the only two countries that score in the mid-range on Representative Government, while all other countries score low. Kenya and Tanzania are examples of countries where presidents have adhered to constitutional requirements on terms of office. Kenya continues at present to maintain quite solid participatory institutions and adherence to the rule of law (Mbaku 2018). However, Tanzania regressed into a hybrid regime in 2018, due to a deteriorating political environment and significant democratic declines.

Africa’s democracies vary quite widely in terms of their democratic performance patterns and the quality of their democracy. For example, the only democracy to score highly on Representative Government is Mauritius. There are nine additional variations on democracy in the region. At one extreme, two countries (Ghana and Tunisia)

perform highly on two attributes. At the other, two fragile democracies (Guinea-Bissau and Madagascar) have no high scores and record low performance on two attributes, respectively (see Table 2.2).

Democratic progress has been incremental across the region

Elections have become the norm rather than the exception throughout Africa. Only four countries in the region (Eritrea, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan) currently hold no form of elections. Each of these countries therefore scores 0 on both Clean Elections and Inclusive Suffrage and, as a result, on Representative Government. Although Libya and South Sudan held elections in 2014 and 2010, respectively, regular elections are not held in these two countries because of protracted civil wars. Eight countries in the region (Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mauritius, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia) score highly

BOX 2.1

Tunisia: the story of a fledgling democracy

Following the overthrow of the regime of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in 2011 (Chrisafis and Black 2011), Tunisia experienced major advances across most aspects of the GSoD Indices. In the last 10 years it has recorded significant advances in 11 GSoD subattributes: Clean Elections, Free Political Parties, Access to Justice, Civil Liberties, Social Rights and Equality, Effective Parliament, Judicial Independence, Media Integrity, Absence of Corruption, Predictable Enforcement and Civil Society Participation (see Figure 2.4 and Figure 2.5).

Due to the gains achieved during this period, Tunisia is currently the only country in North Africa to have made a successful transition from non-democracy to democracy

and is presently among the best performing democracies in Africa, with seven GSoD subattributes in the top 25 per cent in the world (see Table 2.3 for a summary of Tunisia’s GSoD scores in 2018). The new Tunisian Constitution (2014) introduced sweeping reforms. To date, successful presidential, parliamentary and municipal elections have been organized, building on the trend set when the country’s first democratic elections took place in 2011.

However, a number of important challenges remain. The first relates to the large number of institutional and structural reforms that have not yet been carried out. For example, the constitutional court provided for by the 2014 Constitution has

TABLE 2.3

The state of democracy in Tunisia, 2018

GSoD attribute score				
Representative Government	Fundamental Rights	Checks on Government	Impartial Administration	Participatory Engagement
0.62 =	0.76 =	0.80 =	0.61 =	Low

■ High ■ Mid-range ■ Low

Notes: = denotes no statistically significant increase or decrease in the last 5-year period.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

not yet been established (Democracy Reporting International 2017). The legislative framework for the court, which is intended to play the role of ultimate arbiter in the country's democratic system, has been adopted but parliament is yet to reach an agreement on its composition.

The second is the framework for decentralization. In April 2018, the Tunisian Parliament adopted a decentralization law that reformed the general framework within which municipalities are supposed to function. The new law sets out a list of powers that municipalities are supposed to exercise directly (most of which relate to environmental issues such as garbage disposal), and a list of powers that municipalities are supposed to share with the central government (Kherigi 2018). However, municipalities cannot exercise any of the shared powers until a second law, which has not yet made any legislative progress, is adopted. Therefore, Tunisia's score on the Local Democracy subattribute remains low (0.17).

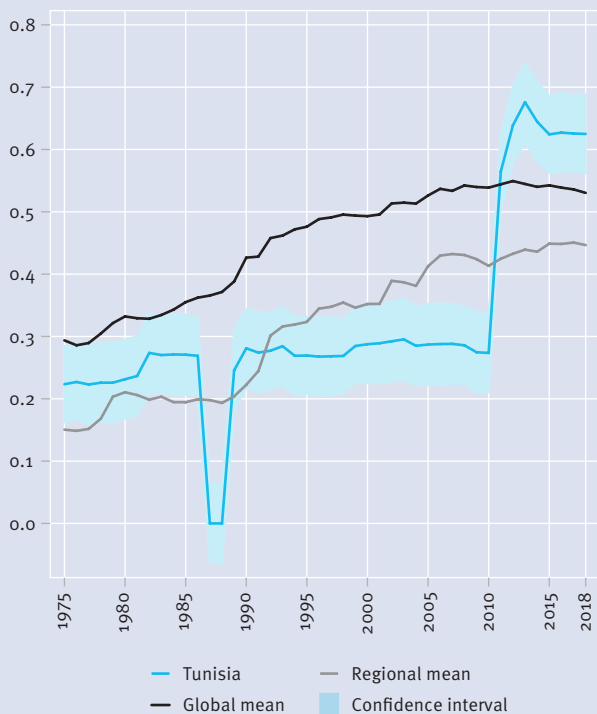
The third challenge relates to economic reform. Since 2011, Tunisia's economy has stagnated. Unemployment remains stubbornly high, there has been a sharp increase in fiscal

deficit and government debt, and opportunities for growth remain limited (OECD 2018). Tunisia's national authorities are under significant pressure to liberalize various segments of the economy, but little action has been taken to date (AfDB Group 2019). This will remain a major source of concern in the coming period, and it will certainly prove to be a testing ground for the resilience of the country's fledgling democracy.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly given the context, Tunisia's national debate on policy reform remains unsatisfactory, partly because political parties remain highly fractured and embryonic. Parties continue to break apart and lose members at an alarming rate, often preventing serious discussion about major issues, including those raised above. Arguably the most important example of this phenomenon is the end of the alliance between the country's secular party, Nidaa Tounes, and the Islamist Ennahda party (Grewal and Hamid 2018). While Tunisia scored 0.70 on Free Political Parties in 2013, there has since been a decline, albeit an insignificant one, to 0.65 in 2018.

FIGURE 2.4

Representative Government in Tunisia, 1975–2018

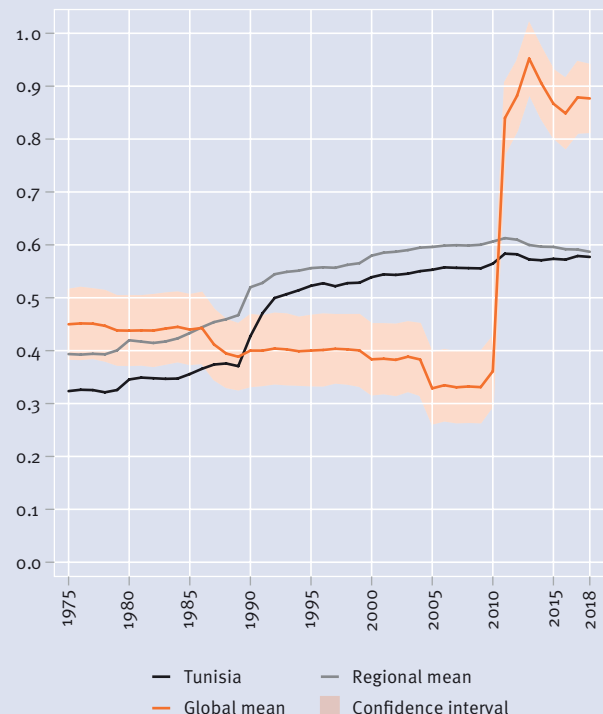


Notes: The y-axis indicates the score (0–1), while the x-axis indicates the years. The shaded areas around the line display the 68 per cent confidence bound of the estimate.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

FIGURE 2.5

Civil Society Participation in Tunisia, 1975–2018



Notes: This graph allows for both temporal (over time) and spatial (between country and region) comparison. The y-axis indicates the subattribute's score, measured from 0 to 1 while the x-axis indicates the years.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

on Clean Elections, while 25 score in the mid-range and 16 countries have a low performance (see Figure 2.6).

In several countries in West Africa, democratic elections and stronger governments have replaced long-standing civil wars (Annan 2014). Although the legacy of authoritarian rule and armed conflicts has continued to derail democratization, a number of countries have tried to surmount these legacies.

For example, the 2017 elections in Liberia—in which the candidate of the opposition Congress for Democratic Change, George Weah, defeated the candidate of the ruling Unity Party, Joseph Boakai, in a run-off—marked the third general-election cycle since the end of the civil war in 2003 (MacDougall and Cooper 2017). Similarly, in Sierra Leone the candidate from the opposition Sierra Leone People’s Party, Julius Maada Bio, defeated Samura Kamara of the ruling All People’s Congress candidate in the March 2018 elections (The Carter Center 2018). Côte d’Ivoire exhibits remarkable progress in managing its post-conflict institutional challenges, but still struggles with undisciplined security services that have attempted violent mutinies (Tsolakis 2018).

Between 2013 and 2018, virtually all countries in the West African subregion, including those previously under long-term authoritarian or military rule, conducted polls. Another positive characteristic of this subregion is the increase in the rate at which opposition candidates were able to emerge victorious at the polls to take over power from the incumbent through a peaceful transition (see Figure 2.7).

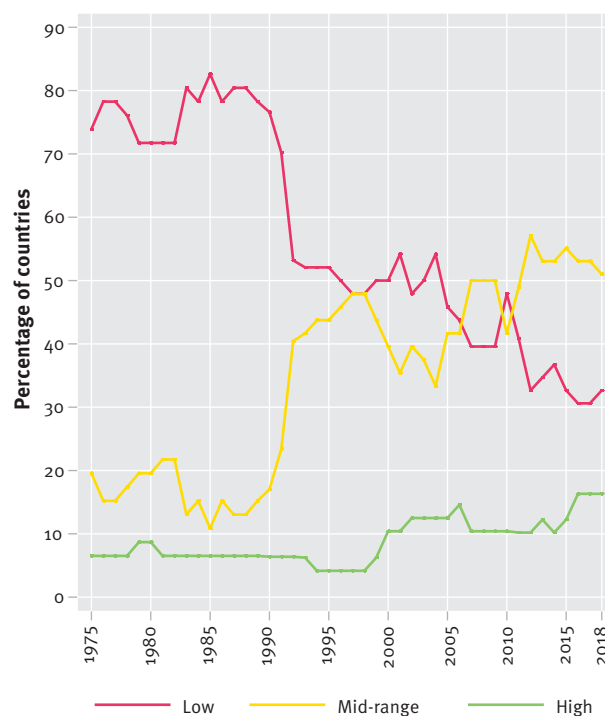
Despite gains, the conduct of elections remains flawed in several countries across the African region. Some countries have failed to enact sufficiently robust legal and institutional reforms to level the playing field between ruling parties and opposition parties. Electoral bodies are often constrained by a lack of adequate human and financial resources, while others lack independence from the executive branch. This has led to a context of mistrust between electoral stakeholders, which is exacerbated by low levels of judicial independence and the perception that disputes will not be resolved impartially (Söderberg Kovacs and Bjarnesen 2018).

The persistence of election-related violence in many contexts is a symptom of these challenges. Elections are used to legitimize undemocratic regimes in a number of countries, including Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, The Gambia, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe (although The Gambia experienced democratization reforms following the 2017 elections). Each of these countries has a record of conducting regular elections which are largely flawed and uncompetitive. In other contexts, if an opposition exists it has little chance of dislodging the incumbent party from power (for more see: Temin 2017; Wodrig and Grauvogel 2016; Galvin 2018; Moore 2017).

In some East African countries, including Burundi, electoral institutions are not independent of the executive. This undermines their ability to conduct free, open and democratic elections (Makulilo et al. 2015). Challenges range from the registration of voters, compilation of the voter registry, procurement of voting materials, the actual conduct of elections, and eventual counting and final announcements of results. In each of these stages there is a level of opaqueness that should be addressed if the region is to enhance the credibility of its elections.

FIGURE 2.6

Clean Elections in Africa, 1975–2018



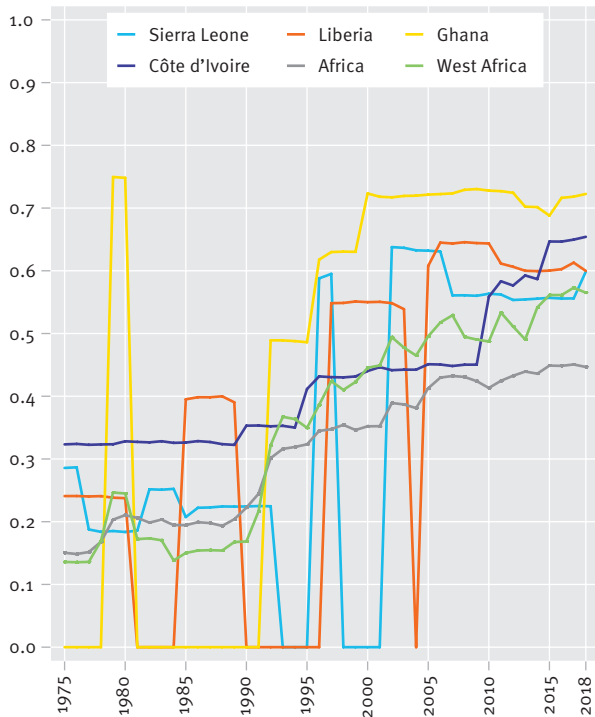
Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>.



Nine countries in Africa (Burundi, Cameroon, Egypt, Kenya, Libya, Niger, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe) have seen their Clean Elections score drop significantly in the last five years.

FIGURE 2.7

Representative Government in West Africa, 1975–2018



Notes: The y-axis measures the score (0–1), while the x-axis indicates the year. Scores of 0 indicate that no regular elections were held due to coups, conflicts or other interruptions.
Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

For example, Kenya’s 2013 and 2017 presidential elections were both contested at the Supreme Court. The 2017 presidential election was annulled based on a number of flaws in the electoral process, and the repeat election, while affirmed by the Supreme Court, was also replete with flaws inconsistent with an open, credible and democratic election. There were claims that insufficient time was allocated for the preparation of the election, and provocations of violence in several election centres (Mbaku 2018).

Similarly, in Uganda’s 2016 elections the main opposition candidate, Kizza Besigye, was detained for weeks and eventually charged with treason. In that case, social media was shut down ahead of the general elections (Mattes and Bratton 2016). There were also questions with regards to the credibility of the re-run elections in Zanzibar in March 2016, which were boycotted by the opposition following the annulment of the 2015 poll prior to the announcement of final results. In South Sudan, meanwhile, no election has been held since the assumption of office by President Salva Kiir after the 2011 independence referendum. An

election initially scheduled for July 2014, and subsequently postponed until October 2018, could not be held due to conflict and instability.

Central Africa offers several examples whereby electoral outcomes, especially for the presidency, have translated into little real change in terms of power alternation. According to the GSoD Indices, most countries where there has been a re-election of heads of state score low on Representative Government. With two exceptions, all heads of state in this subregion have recently been re-elected.

In Cameroon, President Paul Biya has ruled for 37 years and was re-elected in 2018. Idriss Deéby Itno of Chad came to power in 1990 through a coup d’état and won the presidential elections of 2016. In the same year, Sassou Nguessou, President of the Republic of Congo since 1979 (with an intermission between 1992 and 1997), was re-elected. In Equatorial Guinea, President Teodoro Obiang had ruled the country for nearly 40 years when he won the 2016 elections (Al Jazeera 2016). Finally, in Gabon, Ali Bongo Odimba, the 60-year-old son of the late President Omar Bongo, who came to power after his father’s death in 2009, was re-elected after the disputed elections in 2016.

The two exceptions occurred in CAR and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The December 2018 presidential elections in DRC saw the election of an opposition candidate, Felix Tsisekedi, although the transition did not occur without controversies (see Berwouts 2019). A change of power also occurred in CAR, which as a result of peace processes has had two presidents in the last five years, one of them being a woman: Catherine Samba-Panza (Murray and Mangan 2017).

One of the most common challenges to democratic consolidation is the manipulation that takes place around elections and the electoral system. Many African leaders have consolidated their power base by preaching the language of democratic reforms, whereas in fact such language only serves to hide their authoritarian tendencies to keep their hold on power. In some instances, leaders themselves have chosen the voters by deciding who should vote (Mkandawire 2008).

Additionally, in order to stay in power some regimes continue to manipulate the constitution in favour of the incumbents. For example, constitutional changes to adjust term limitations (e.g. in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda) have weakened the process of democratic reforms or reinforced ongoing autocratization processes (e.g. in Egypt). In Uganda, where term limits were scrapped in 2005, the

Constitution was altered in 2017 to remove the age limit for presidential candidates (Biryabarema 2017).

In Rwanda, the 2015 constitutional referendum enabled the incumbent President Paul Kagame to run for a third seven-year term in 2017 before introducing a limit of two five-year terms. Since the amendments were not retroactive, this effectively makes Kagame eligible to serve until 2034 (McVeigh 2015). In Burundi, the 2018 constitutional referendum focused on extending the presidential term from five to seven years. The current President, Pierre Nkurunziza, has stated that he will not be contesting the next election, although he would be eligible to serve a further two terms. The last country to remove presidential term limits was Egypt, in 2019.

In some countries, there is a lack of political will to democratize and elite rule remains entrenched. Central Africa is illustrative of this trend, being home to the longest-serving leaders in Africa, including Biya in Cameroon, Déby in Chad and Sassou Nguessou in Republic of the Congo. These countries have continued to hold regular elections, but there has not been any change in leadership, and their parliaments have very weak checks on the executive (Akum and Donnefeld 2017).


Burundi and Uganda illustrate similar patterns. In Uganda, democratic advances have essentially ground to a halt because of President Yoweri Museveni's determination to remain in power after more than three decades. Recently, Uganda even passed legislation that removed presidential age limits (Africa Center for Strategic Studies 2018). Burundi has been in crisis since 2015 when President Nkurunziza announced his intention to run for a third term. In May 2018, the country faced more inter-ethnic tensions during the campaign for a referendum to allow Nkurunziza to rule for another 14 years when his term expires in 2020. While the referendum was approved despite strong opposition, Nkurunziza declared afterwards that he would step down in 2020 (Mikhael 2019). As a culture of impunity has re-emerged in Burundi, there are mounting concerns about the resumption of a large-scale civil war (Temin 2017; Wodrig and Grauvogel 2016). This explains why, according to the GSoD Indices, Burundi scores low on all five attributes and falls firmly under the category of a non-democracy.

Similarly, Cameroon has struggled to overcome the legacy of a highly centralized state under President Biya. Political parties exist under repressive conditions and the resurgence of a secessionist movement in anglophone regions since 2016 has underscored serious gaps in representative governance (Galvin 2018).

Togo remains a hybrid regime which is partly attributable to the slow pace of governance reforms aimed at opening up the political space and loosening the one-sided grip of the ruling party on the key levers of power, including the security forces. Term limits and the electoral system have been at the heart of the street protests that have engulfed Togo since 2017 but so far this has not resulted in greater political openings (Ahlijah 2018).

While the country held legislative elections in December 2018, they were boycotted by the opposition (Kohnert 2019). The increased majority for the ruling party in the legislature will facilitate the passage of a constitutional amendment that will permit the incumbent to run for a further two terms in 2020. This is likely to exacerbate tensions ahead of the 2020 presidential election (Al Jazeera 2019b).

Table 2.4 offers a snapshot of scores on the Representative Government attribute and its subattributes in Central African countries.



Fundamental Rights

The Fundamental Rights attribute aggregates scores from three subattributes: Access to Justice, Civil Liberties, and Social Rights and Equality. Overall it measures the fair and equal access to justice, the extent to which civil liberties such as freedom of expression or movement are respected, and the extent to which countries are offering their citizens basic welfare and political equality.

Summary: Fundamental Rights in Africa, 2018

Regional average: Mid-range (0.52)	
High (>0.7)	Benin, Ghana, Mauritius, Senegal and Tunisia
Mid-range (0.4–0.7)	Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe
Low (<0.4)	Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan

TABLE 2.4

Representative Government in Central African countries, 2018

Country	Representative Government subattributes			
	Clean Elections	Inclusive Suffrage	Free Political Parties	Elected Government
Cameroon	0.29	0.81	0.47	0.65
CAR	0.48	0.87	0.49	0.65
Chad	0.22	0.82	0.47	0.51
DRC	0.38	0.82	0.45	0.65
Equatorial Guinea	0.16	0.80	0.32	0.37
Gabon	0.38	0.84	0.49	0.65
Republic of Congo	0.31	0.83	0.43	0.51

■ High ■ Mid-range ■ Low

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

Conflicts and liberation struggles have led to the militarization of social and political life

Another set of challenges to democratic consolidation, seen in many parts of Africa today, relate to conflicts and civil wars. There are several states where earlier gains have been reversed because of violence, a return to military rule, or a failure to transform the political process. Most North African countries caught up in the Arab Uprisings in 2011 fall under this category (Abderrahim and Aggad 2018). Egypt relapsed into militarism while Libya has been engulfed in a civil war since the fall of Gaddafi in 2011. Algeria, Morocco and Sudan (all hybrid regimes) successfully weathered the uprisings and, through some measured reforms, have managed to reorganize their authoritarian systems.

In Algeria, leading opposition parties boycotted the May 2018 legislative elections, resulting in a low voter turnout. After 20 years in power, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika resigned in April 2019 following pressure from the army and massive street protests demanding democratic reforms in the country (Nossiter 2019). In April 2019, Sudan’s leader Omar Al-Bashir was ousted by the military following weeks of mass protest and is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on charges of crimes against humanity and genocide (Reinl 2019; Reuters 2019). The protests were initially met with brutal repression and a strengthening of the military’s hold on power, although

negotiations on a power-sharing deal between the military and the civilian opposition—under pressure from the African Union (AU)—have led to the installation of a transition government that will govern the country for a 39-month period until elections are organized. As of July 2019, the political landscape in Egypt is dominated President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, in power since July 2013 and sworn into office in June 2014 (Goldberg 2018). In an April 2019 referendum a majority of voters approved constitutional amendments that could see the President stay in power until 2030 (Al Jazeera 2019a).

Central Africa and West Africa both continue to grapple with the consequences of conflict, which has in turn perpetuated a so-called militarization of social and political life. The frequency of coups d’état and coup attempts, civil unrests accompanied with political assassinations, and the emergence of religious fundamentalism and insurgency feed a practice of militarization that keeps democratic progress at bay. DRC, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Niger are among the countries facing such challenges (Barka and Ncube 2012). It must be noted, however, that according to the Cline Center for Advanced Social Research’s Coup D’état Project (2013), the number of coups and attempted coups has decreased significantly compared to previous decades. This claim is corroborated by more recent studies too (Besaw and Frank 2018).

In a number of countries in Africa, the AU has been instrumental in preventing or resolving conflicts. The AU has overseen the Abuja Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks, deployed peacekeeping missions including the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), mediated in crises in Côte d'Ivoire and Libya (Oguonu and Ezeibe 2014) and pressed for a peaceful transition in The Gambia in 2016. By mid-2019 the AU was preoccupied with preempting further upheavals in Sudan and pressured for a power-sharing deal and a transition to democracy, as well as in launching the African Continental Free Trade Area (Abebe 2019). Furthermore, the AU has been vocal against unconstitutional changes of government, as initially pronounced in the Lomé Declaration, formalized in the AU Constitutive Act, and then further elaborated in the 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), which seeks to promote systems of government that are representative based on the holding of regular, transparent, free and fair elections (see International IDEA 2016: 18–26).

Five countries in Southern Africa—Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe—have made some democratic progress, to different degrees, through protracted liberation struggles. The liberating parties have remained dominant political parties since the attainment of independence. Decades later, the shift to democratic consolidation is still a challenge as a result of the enduring legacies of those liberation struggles.

The influence of war veterans in politics varies significantly between countries. In the extreme case of Zimbabwe, key bureaucratic posts charged with managing democratic processes remain largely staffed or controlled by veterans and ruling-party officials (Latek 2018). The cadre deployment policy of South Africa's African National Congress (ANC), and the appointment by the Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) of former freedom fighters to high-ranking positions, are relevant examples of stalling democracy through the institution of liberation-war fighters.

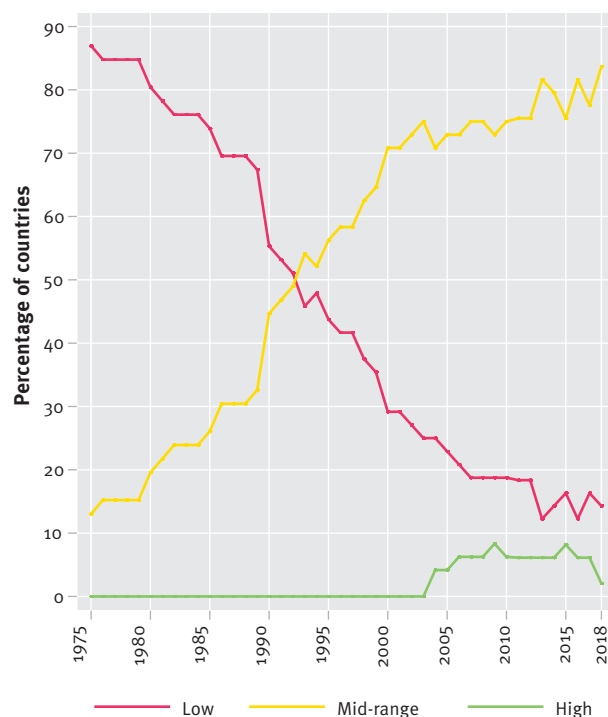
As Table 2.5 shows, despite instances where countries with conflict legacy have transitioned to hybrid regimes or democracies, this has not necessarily led to improvements in the relevant democracy attributes. As some of the cases discussed in this section also demonstrate, liberation movements have generally failed to evolve into vibrant political parties that foster inclusion and a good governance culture. This trend has been observed in Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe, and to a lesser degree in Angola and South Africa.

Advances have been made in gender equality in Africa but challenges remain

Africa's average levels of political Gender Equality are in the mid-range (0.53), slightly below the world average (0.58). While the overwhelming majority of countries in the region (41 countries or 84 per cent) score mid-range, 15 countries score among the bottom 25 per cent in the world on Gender Equality (see Figure 2.8). The largest share of those are non-democracies (eight), and five are hybrid regimes, but two (Kenya and Nigeria) are democracies. Two countries score in the top 25 per cent in the world on Gender Equality: of these, one is a democracy (Senegal) and one is a non-democracy: Rwanda. With a score of 0.73, Rwanda has one of the highest levels of Gender Equality in the world.

Important advances have been made recently in terms of gender equality in Africa. The year 2016 in particular was an important milestone for gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa, as it marked the 30th anniversary of the coming into force of the African Charter on Human

FIGURE 2.8
Share of countries by performance level in Gender Equality in Africa, 1975–2018



Notes: The year 2004 was the first in which a country scored 'high' on Gender Equality in Africa.
Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsoi-indices>>.

TABLE 2.5

Countries with conflict legacy, 1991 versus 2018

Country	Year	Regime type	Attribute				
			Representative Government	Fundamental Rights	Checks on Government	Impartial Administration	Participatory Engagement
Angola	1991	Non-democracy	0	0.31	0.24	0.35	
	2018	Hybrid	0.42	0.51	0.44	0.42	
Mozambique	1991	Non-democracy	N/A	0.52	0.40	0.44	
	2018	Hybrid	0.47	0.59	0.56	0.43	
Namibia	1991	Democracy	0.55	0.66	0.66	0.60	
	2018	Democracy	0.59	0.69	0.63	0.63	
South Africa	1991	Non-democracy	0.15	0.38	0.50	0.47	
	2018	Democracy	0.68	0.66	0.699	0.50	
Zimbabwe	1991	Hybrid	0.41	0.51	0.42	0.53	
	2018	Hybrid	0.42	0.46	0.50	0.25	

■ High ■ Mid-range ■ Low

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

and People’s Rights in 1986, which was further built on by the Maputo Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights 2003).

The year 2016 also marked the beginning of the second phase of the AU’s African Women’s Decade 2010–2020 (AU n.d.), an implementation framework which aims to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women. Additionally, in 2015 the African Development Bank (AfDB Group) launched a Gender Equality Index (AfDB Group 2015), which is the most comprehensive assessment of the state of gender equality on the continent. It examines the role of women as producers, as economic agents, in human development and as leaders in public life.

Nevertheless, an array of challenges continues to inhibit the implementation of regional and country-level initiatives on gender equality. To varying degrees,

women in the African region lack equal access to power and socio-economic status, while their inclusion in decision-making remains a major hurdle for most countries. Women and youth in general, as well as the less wealthy, tend to be systematically disadvantaged from access to political power. Even in cases where democracy is advancing, social competition has often produced inequalities that advantage some groups over others, leaving women to fare poorly (Lührmann et al. 2018).

Civil Liberties shows promising potential

The subattribute of Civil Liberties is one of the best-performing aspects of democracy in Africa, with one-third of countries (16) scoring at high levels. The high performance is concentrated in the subregions of West Africa and Southern Africa (see Figure 2.9). One notable example is The Gambia, which scored 0.37 in 2013 but increased to 0.73 in 2018 (see Box 2.2). Of the countries

BOX 2.2

The Gambia: breaking with the past?

The Gambia presents an interesting case, having experienced declines across all democratic attributes following the 1994 military coup which toppled Sir Dawda Jawara, the country’s first prime minister (and later president). The 22-year-long rule of President Yahyah Jammeh was synonymous with human rights violations, corruption, press censorship and civil society curtailment.

However, The Gambia has now returned to the path of democratic progress (see Figure 2.10 and Table 2.6). The December 2016 election of President Adama Barrow marked the first alternation in power in the country, which has begun dotting its democratic landscape with numerous democratic gains and opportunities. Many political prisoners have been released, exiled Gambians are returning en masse, the press is operating more freely, and civil society is beginning to thrive. There also is an expressed commitment to the development and independence of indigenous judiciary.

Since December 2017 The Gambia has made great strides, setting up a Constitutional Review Commission; a Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission; and a National Human Right Commission. This is the first step in facilitating the process of reconciliation and compensation for the victims of human rights violations (Law Hub Gambia 2017; Jeffang 2018). Furthermore, the once dreaded and anti-people National Intelligence Agency is undergoing reform. Opposition parties are operating freely.

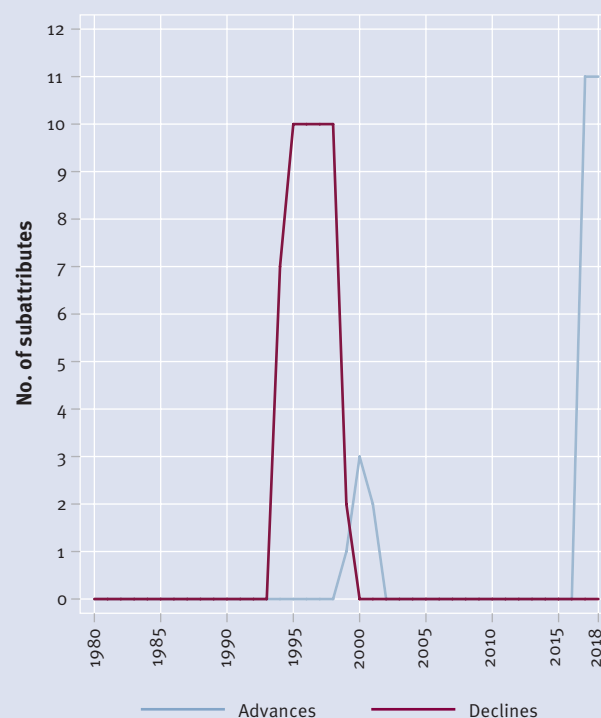
However, despite these gains and opportunities, some of the threats lurking in the country’s democracy landscape include the persistence of draconian laws, repression of peaceful protests by the current administration, weak capacity of parliamentarians, failure to address constitutional term limits, and ethnic politics (Hartmann 2017).

The Gambia is the country with the most gains in democratic performance since 2013. It has seen increases in 11 of its GSoD

Indices subattributes: Clean Elections, Free Political Parties, Elected Government, Access to Justice, Civil Liberties, Effective Parliament, Judicial Independence, Media Integrity, Absence of Corruption, Predictable Enforcement and Civil Society Participation.

FIGURE 2.10

Advances and declines: The Gambia, 1980–2018



Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>.

TABLE 2.6

The state of democracy in The Gambia, 2018

GSoD attribute score				
Representative Government	Fundamental Rights	Checks on Government	Impartial Administration	Participatory Engagement
0.56 +	0.63 +	0.66 +	0.56 +	Low

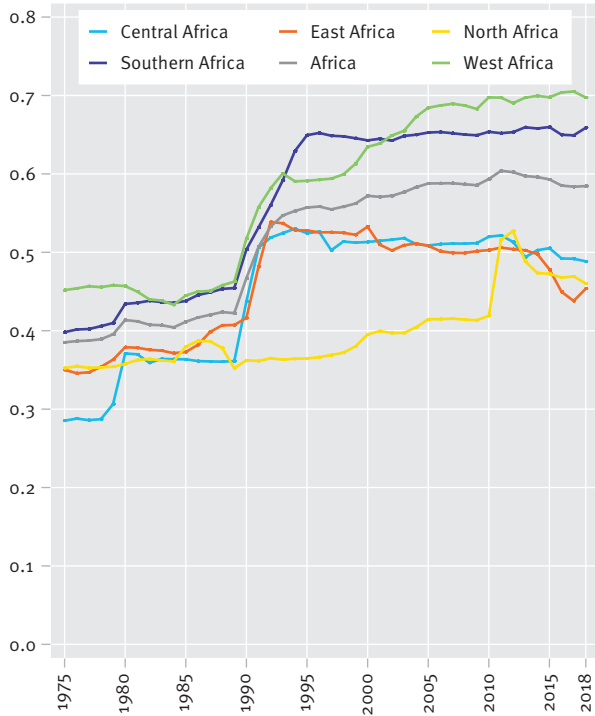
■ High ■ Mid-range ■ Low

Notes: + denotes a statistically significant increase in the last five-year period.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>.

FIGURE 2.9

Civil Liberties in Africa, 1975–2018



Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

that score highly on Civil Liberties, 14 (or 87.5 per cent) are democracies, while only two are hybrid regimes; no non-democratic regime has high levels on this measure.

CAR, Ethiopia and The Gambia have all experienced a statistically significant advance on Civil Liberties. However, nine countries have seen significant declines in Civil Liberties in the past five years. One is a democracy (Kenya), five are hybrid regimes (Cameroon, Guinea, Mauritania, Tanzania and Togo), and three are non-democratic regimes (Burundi, Libya and South Sudan).

The regional performance is particularly high for Freedom of Movement, and for Freedom of Religion. On each of these measures, 26 countries (or more than half of the countries in Africa) score highly. Six countries (Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Namibia, Sierra Leone and South Africa) also score in the top 25 per cent in the world on Freedom of Association and Assembly. However, Africa performs particularly poorly on some aspects of Civil Liberties. Close to half (22) of the countries in the region have low levels of Personal Integrity and Security. Of these countries, 9 are non-democracies, 11 are hybrid regimes and only 2 are democracies.



Nine countries in Africa have seen a significant drop in Civil Liberties since 2013. Of these, Burundi and Cameroon are among the four countries in the world with the most severe declines in civic space. They are followed by Guinea, Kenya, Libya, Mauritania, South Sudan, Tanzania and Togo.



Checks on Government

The Checks on Government attribute aggregates scores from three subattributes: Effective Parliament, Judicial Independence and Media Integrity. It measures the extent to which parliament oversees the executive, as well as whether the courts are independent, and whether media is diverse and critical of the government without being penalized for it.

Summary: Checks on Government in Africa, 2018

Regional average: Mid-range (0.51)	
High (>0.7)	Mauritius and Tunisia
Mid-range (0.4–0.7)	Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe
Low (<0.4)	Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan and Sudan

Democratic backsliding and democratic fragility are on the rise

The expansion of democracy in Africa has brought about qualitative challenges. A number of African countries remain democratically fragile and prone to regressing into hybridity or breaking down into non-democracy. Africa is home to more than three-quarters of the world’s fragile democracies, which are countries that transitioned to democracy after 1975, but then experienced a partial (to hybrid) or full democratic breakdown (to non-democracy) but have since

returned to democracy. Six democracies in the region can be considered fragile, of which one (Guinea-Bissau) is very fragile, in that it has experienced more than one democratic breakdown since its first transition to democracy. Moreover, more than half of Africa's democracies can be considered weak democracies, with a low performance on at least one of their democratic attributes. Of these, two countries (Guinea-Bissau and Madagascar) stand out as very weak, with low performance on both Impartial Administration and Participatory Engagement. Seven countries (The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali and Nigeria) combine weak democratic performance with democratic fragility.

When African countries experience partial (to hybrid regime) or full democratic breakdown, this occurs through both so-called modern democratic backsliding and more traditional coups. The GSoD Indices refer to modern democratic backsliding as the gradual weakening of checks on government accompanied by concomitant declines in civil liberties. This occurred in Madagascar (2009–2012), Mali (2012–2016), CAR (1999–2007) as well as Niger (2005–2010). While Madagascar and Mali backslid into hybridity and have since returned to democracy, CAR and Niger have remained in a state of hybridity. Backsliding also occurs in contexts which do not fit either of those two definitions, but which nevertheless exhibit overall democratic deterioration. This was the case for Tanzania and Zambia, both of which regressed to hybrid regimes in 2018 due to a deteriorating political environment and significant democratic declines.

A number of countries in Africa have recently suffered from deepening autocratization, which refers to hybrid regimes and non-democracies that become more repressive. This has been defined in the GSoD Indices as significant declines in at least three of the democratic subattributes of hybrid regimes or non-democracies during a five-year period. Since 2013, more than half of the countries in the world that have suffered from deepening autocratization are in Africa. Mauritania and Togo are hybrid regimes and the remainder are non-democracies: Burundi, Egypt, Libya and South Sudan (see Table 2.7).

Gains in judicial independence have been coupled with severe weaknesses

Judicial Independence is one of the weakest aspects of African democracy. Levels of Judicial Independence for 2018 were low in 24 countries across Africa. Of these, 3 are democracies, 11 are hybrid regimes, and 10 are non-democratic regimes. Additionally, progress has been slow, with average levels of performance similar to those observed in 1975 (see Figure 2.11).

TABLE 2.7

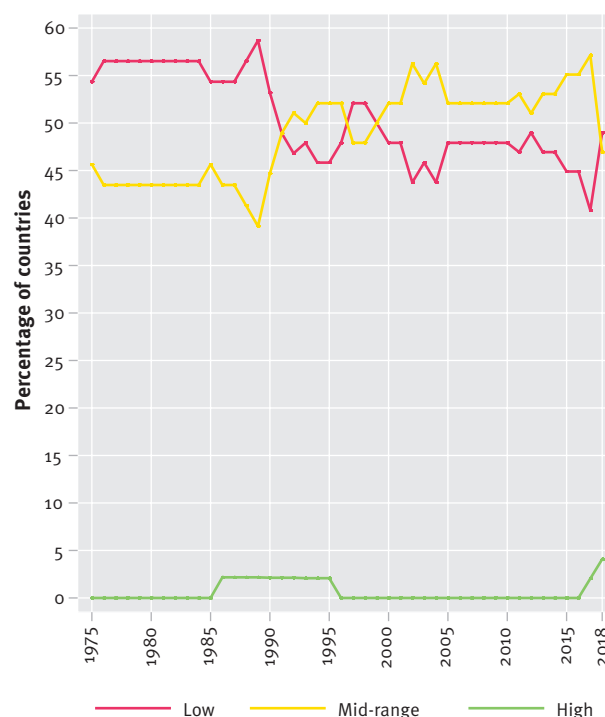
Countries experiencing deepening autocratization, 2013–2018

Country	No. of subattribute declines, 2013–2018	Within hybrid	Within non-democratic
Burundi	7		YES
South Sudan	5		YES
Egypt	3		YES
Mauritania	3		YES
Libya	3		YES
Togo	3	YES	

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

FIGURE 2.11

Judicial Independence in Africa, 1975–2018



Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

However, in some countries the judiciary is gaining more independence and holding leaders to account. While The Gambia is still grappling with its transition to democracy, and Tunisia is in the process of consolidating its democratic institutions, on Judicial Independence they are the only countries in Africa to score highly in 2018. When comparing relative scores for 2018, Benin, The Gambia, Namibia and Tunisia perform among the top 25 per cent of countries in the world on Judicial Independence.

Impartial Administration

Impartial Administration is the aggregation of two subattributes: Absence of Corruption and Predictable Enforcement. It measures the extent to which the state is free from corruption, and whether the enforcement of public authority is predictable.

Summary: Impartial Administration in Africa, 2018

Regional average: Mid-range (0.41)	
High (>0.7)	N/A
Mid-range (0.4–0.7)	Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia
Low (<0.4)	Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo and Zimbabwe

A total of 19 of the 49 countries in Africa (39 per cent) are below the global average on Impartial Administration, and 17 of these are in the bottom 25 per cent globally. On Absence of Corruption, 18 of 49 African countries are in the bottom 25 per cent globally, and 32 were below the world average in 2018. Only three countries in Africa (Botswana, Rwanda and Tanzania) are among the countries in the world with the lowest levels of corruption, while 37 per cent of the countries in the region are in the 25th percentile, with the highest levels of corruption in the world. Among the countries with the highest levels of corruption, almost half are in Africa (International IDEA 2018b).

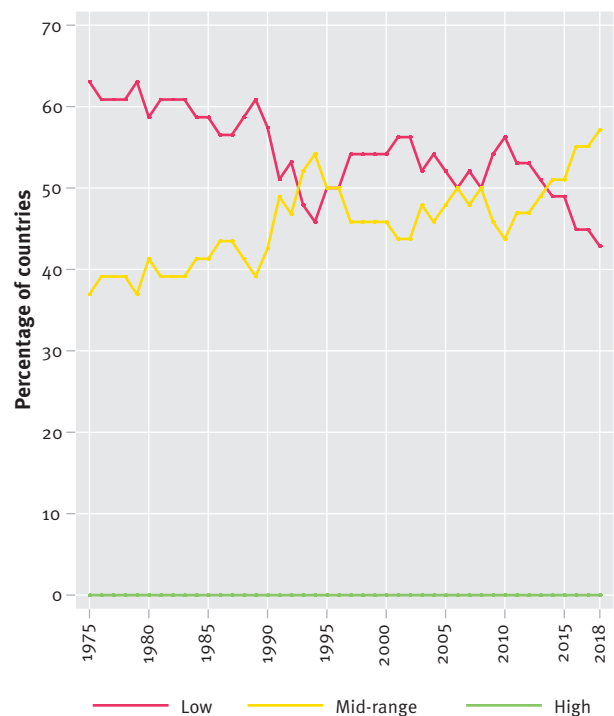
Corruption: a corroding and enduring phenomenon

All of Africa's subregions have continued to show low levels of performance on Impartial Administration and its subattributes, irrespective of advances on Representative Government, Checks on Government and Participatory Engagement. Weak impartiality of public administration and high levels of corruption are among the weakest aspects of African democracy (International IDEA 2018a). This undermines the democratic gains in other aspects and presents serious impediments to the advancement of human development in the region. The average level of Impartial Administration in Africa stands at 0.41.

On the subattribute of Absence of Corruption, the region records the lowest average performance in the world. Moreover, after the Middle East, Africa has the largest share of democracies with high levels of corruption, with 45 per cent of the region's democracies falling into this category. According to GSoD Indices data for 2018, 32 countries

FIGURE 2.12

Impartial Administration in Africa, 1975–2018



Notes: No countries in Africa score highly on this subattribute at any point between 1975 and 2018.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

in Africa have low scores on Absence of Corruption (of which 10 are non-democracies, 13 are hybrid and 9 are democracies). In contrast, no country in the region scores highly on Absence of Corruption—not even the only country that has high levels of Representative Government (Mauritius).

However, despite the low performance, there are some signs of hope. In the last five years, nine countries in Africa (18 per cent) have experienced statistically significant advances in tackling corruption. West Africa saw the greatest number of countries improving, with statistically significant advances in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, The Gambia

and Nigeria. Advances were also recorded in Angola, CAR, Ethiopia and Tanzania. At the same time, in all these cases, levels of corruption were either high and moved to mid-range, or decreased within the mid-range, and none reduced to low levels of corruption.

For the most part, the persistence of corruption across Africa signifies that progress on building democracy has not been matched by similar efforts in improving governance and impartial administration and in reducing corruption (International IDEA 2018b). Zimbabwe offers an example of a country where, despite of changes in government, Impartial Administration levels remain low (see Box 2.3).

BOX 2.3

Zimbabwe: low Impartial Administration despite changes in government

Zimbabwe has traditionally performed poorly on Impartial Administration, and there are no signs of immediate improvement despite the change of government leadership in 2018. Currently, Zimbabwe scores low (0.25) on this dimension, as well as on Absence of Corruption (0.24) and Predictable Enforcement (0.24). There have been no significant changes on these scores in the last five years.

The country’s poor performance across all the attributes is connected to the fact that the country’s governance and administrative systems remain heavily skewed in favour of ZANU-PF members. No substantial progress has been made in tackling rampant corruption despite the creation of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission under Chapter 12 of the 2013 Constitution. Public service posts that are awarded as a reward for party loyalty appear to haunt the country, even after the change of government leadership. Extensive systemic socio-political reforms and inclusive accountability systems and processes are essential to turn this around.

In November 2017 the Zimbabwean military removed President Robert Mugabe from power in a bloodless coup. Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa, another veteran of the liberation struggle, was sworn in as caretaker president until the July 2018 elections. According to Zimbabwe’s electoral authorities, Mnangagwa and ZANU-PF won the elections by a very narrow margin, resulting in his installation as president of the so-called Second Republic of Zimbabwe, while the main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change Alliance, cried foul over the results (Burke 2018).

Zimbabwe is now classified as a hybrid regime, with mid-range levels on the attributes of Representative Government, Fundamental Rights and Checks on Government, and low scores on Impartial Administration and Participatory Engagement (see Figure 2.13 and Table 2.8).

The low ratings on Representative Government relate to the lack of Clean Elections and Free Political Parties. In fact, the

TABLE 2.8

The state of democracy in Zimbabwe, 2018

GSoD attribute score				
Representative Government	Fundamental Rights	Checks on Government	Impartial Administration	Participatory Engagement
0.42 =	0.46 =	0.50 =	0.25 =	Low

■ High ■ Mid-range ■ Low

Notes: = denotes no statistically significant increase or decrease in the last five-year period.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

2018 elections reinforced claims that electoral processes are plagued by mistrust originating from a history of partisan electoral management bodies (EMBs). Further, there are accusations of the abuse of state resources for party campaigns by ZANU-PF and allegations of voter rigging, and intimidation of voters is so institutionalized that its subtlety can easily go unnoticed. After every general election, questions remain around the legitimacy and credibility of election processes and the electoral law.

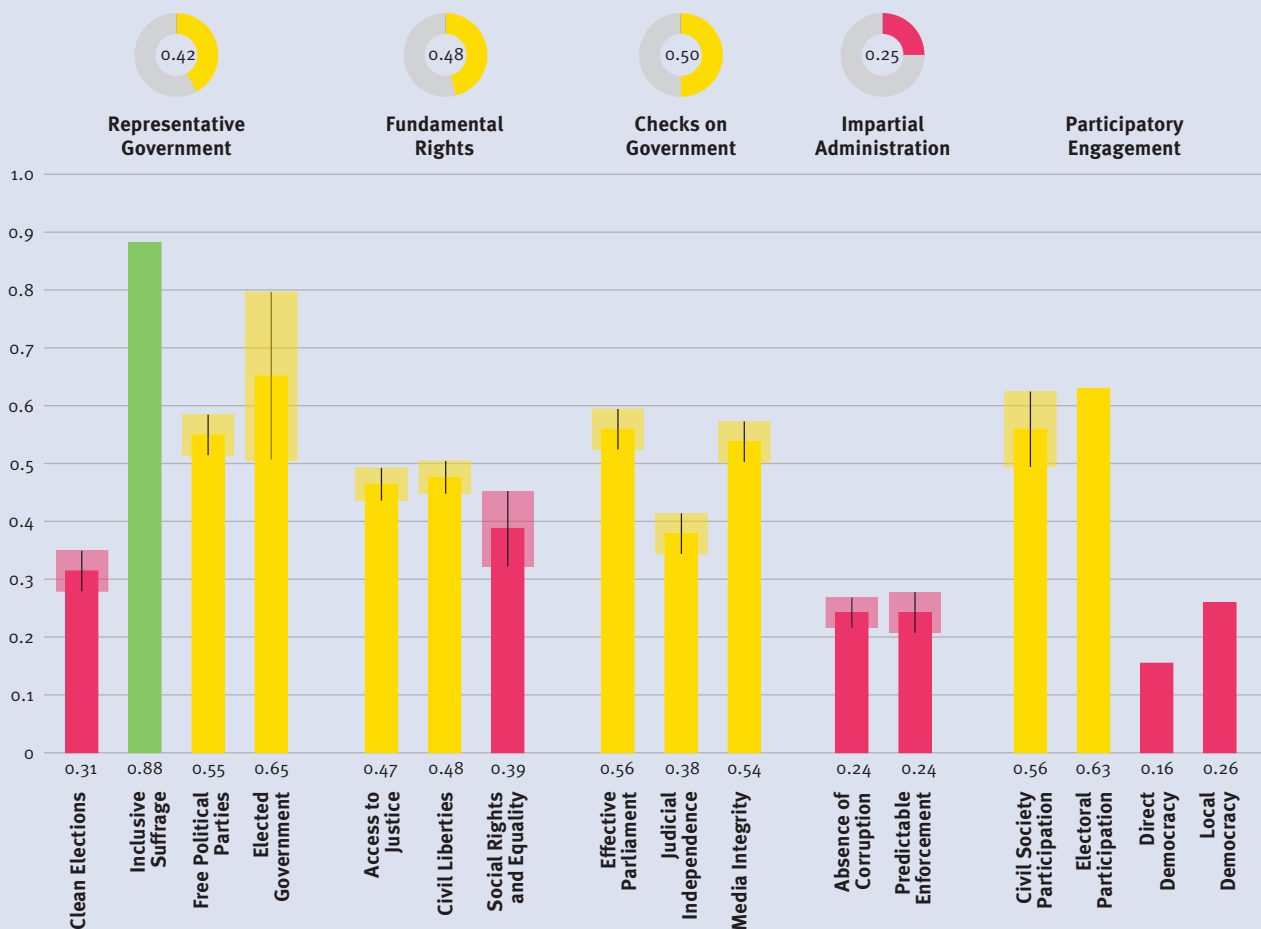
On Fundamental Rights, the country has been experiencing a decline in the economy and the absence of basic public services, which affects Social Rights and Equality. The Bill of Rights in the Constitution has reduced the excesses of the state in violating citizens' human rights. However, current challenges relate to aligning administrative statutes with constitutional provisions to address historical injustices and correct the previous Republic's imbalances and exclusion.

Judicial independence has always been problematic in Zimbabwe. A highly politicized justice system has resulted in citizens losing confidence in the criminal justice system. This confidence is yet to be regained despite new constitutional provisions that create room for the design of more accountable institutions. Scores across all the subattributes are lower than the regional and world averages. A somewhat robust but polarized media has struggled to draw attention to weak governance processes, especially around corruption.

The engagement of the public and civil society in decision-making processes is weak and intermittent. ZANU-PF's sophisticated party-controlled instruments for political involvement are in place all over the country. In this context, the inclination to conform to the ruling party's decisions undermines their functionality and effectiveness, and the work of civil society is considerably curtailed by the repressive actions of the system and the laws that are in place.

FIGURE 2.13

Democratic performance: Zimbabwe, 2018



Notes: Vertical black lines in columns indicate the extent of measurement uncertainty (68 per cent confidence intervals).

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.



Participatory Engagement

Participatory Engagement is the only attribute that does not have a score, as its four subattributes (Civil Society Participation, Electoral Participation, Direct Democracy and Local Democracy) are not aggregated. The subattributes measure citizens' participation in civil society organizations (CSOs) and in elections, and the existence of direct democracy instruments available to citizens, as well as the extent to which local elections are free.

Summary: Participatory Engagement in Africa, 2018

Regional average: Low	
High	Ghana, Liberia, Mauritius and Sierra Leone
Mid-range	Benin, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia
Low	Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia and Zimbabwe

A promising civil society coupled with a shrinking civic space

Despite advances in civil society in some countries, the empirical evidence shows that there have been many setbacks. In East Africa, countries such as Burundi, Kenya and Tanzania have seen a worsening of fundamental human rights and civil liberties. Tanzania, a democracy from 2010 until 2018, has regressed into hybridity in 2018 because of President John Magufuli's continuing assault on political opponents, journalists and ordinary citizens expressing their views on social media. Similarly, in Uganda, in the face of a growing youth resistance to President Museveni, the government has reverted to repression, intimidation, and detention of opposition politicians, civil society and the media. Uganda's failed democratic transition is illustrated in GSoD Indices scores that show no improvements in the promotion and protection of Fundamental Rights and the country continues to be classified as a hybrid regime.

In West Africa, democratic advances are frustrated by a restrictive civic space and a clampdown on the opposition, civil society and media. Some governments in the region are promulgating laws to ban online speech, shutting down the Internet during elections and protests. For instance, on the eve of its presidential run-off elections in August 2018, the Malian government blocked Internet access in the country (Tobor 2018). Such shutdowns point to a wider trend in Africa, with regimes in many other countries (including Ethiopia, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe) subjecting their citizens to similar measures (Ogola 2019).

In Nigeria, the Not-Too-Young-To-Run movement was conceived in 2016 and driven by young people demanding a reduction in the minimum age for contesting elective positions in the country. By 2018, following several ultimatums directed to the president, the movement succeeded in having the law amended to effect the reduction in the age limit. In Senegal, between 2011 and 2012 youth movements such as Y'en A Marre ('Fed Up!' or 'Enough is Enough!') organized demonstrations to resist an attempt by incumbent President Abdoulaye Wade to actualize his third-term presidential ambitions, which contributed to his defeat in the polls in 2012 (Diome 2014). Modelled on Y'en A Marre, the Balai Citoyen Movement was instrumental in the overthrow of President Blaise Compaoré in Burkina Faso in 2014 (Wienkoop and Bertrand 2018).

In Central Africa, Chad has permitted the growth of democratic institutions despite the persistence of a strong executive under President Déby. A weak parliament and the absence of an independent judiciary have reinforced Déby's dominance. Chad has fairly active CSOs, particularly labour and student movements, as well as a free media, which have used the limited space to make demands on the government through popular protests and boycotts.

Ethiopia faced considerable democratic challenges following mass anti-government protests between 2014 and 2018 which centred on demands for enhanced political and economic reforms (Kelecha 2016). In 2016, the Ethiopian government imposed a state of emergency and released several opposition supporters from jail, but these efforts did not stem the protests (Human Rights Watch 2017). Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn resigned in February 2018, paving way for the appointment of a new Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, who has embarked on a set of ambitious and promising democratic reforms, although a full transition to democracy is yet to come.

As a result, in 2018 Ethiopia’s GSoD Indices classification was upgraded from a non-democracy to a hybrid regime. According to the latest reports, Ethiopia’s stability is being rocked by political infighting and resistance against Ahmed. In June 2019, the army chief, the country’s Amhara governor and some of their close friends and colleagues were killed following alleged attempts to organize a coup. In the past year alone, more than 1,000 people have been arrested on terror-related charges for inciting ethnic-based attacks (Associated Press 2019). These events have precipitated calls for caution, amid fears that Ethiopia will suffer further splits and divisions ahead of the elections scheduled for 2020 (Blomfield 2019).

As is the case in several other regions of the world, a number of African countries have also experienced a shrinking civic space in recent years. The GSoD Indices measure civic space through three subattributes: **Civil Liberties**, which measures aspects such as Freedom of Expression, Freedom of Association and Assembly, and Freedom of Religion; **Media Integrity**, which looks at the diversity of media perspectives in society; and **Civil Society Participation**, which measures both the vibrancy of civil society and the extent to which it is consulted on key policy issues. As shown in Table 2.9, the declines in civic

space in the region are occurring in contexts of deepening autocratization (e.g. Burundi, Egypt and Togo), as well as overall democratic erosion (e.g. Tanzania).

Civil Society Participation in Africa demonstrates mixed results since 1975. In general, there have certainly been improvements, with some movement towards a higher engagement of civil society. By 2018, 5 countries (10 per cent) in Africa had low Civil Society Participation scores, while 12 countries (25 per cent) scored highly, and 32 countries (65 per cent) scored in the mid-range.

2.1.4. Conclusion

Between the beginning of the third wave of democratization in 1975 and 2018, Africa made great progress towards democratic consolidation across a number of areas, encompassing the majority of the aspects covered by the GSoD Indices but somewhat unevenly spread across the region.

As is the case in other regions, including Central and Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the democratic advances in Africa gathered pace in the early 1990s following the end of the Cold War, which triggered a wave of multiparty elections in the region. Importantly, Africa—together with Asia and the Pacific—continues to witness democratic advances, while other regions are seeing stagnation or even decline.

According to GSoD Indices, the democratization landscape in Africa is currently characterized by the prospects of a strengthened civil society and fundamental human rights. However, many outstanding challenges remain in relation to the curtailment of civic space, with declines in Civil Liberties and Civil Society Participation and weakening of Checks on Government.

A number of countries face democratic weakness and fragility. In most cases, this is due to the weakness of democratic institutions, but such weakness can also be caused or exacerbated by the risk of recurring conflict, or the potential for relapse into either hybridity or authoritarianism. Furthermore, infringements of constitutional norms and practices, as well as reversals in fundamental freedoms and civil liberties, pose potential threats to the democratic gains and advances in the region.

TABLE 2.9

Declines in civic space and deepening autocratization in Africa

Extent of decline	Examples
Declines on all three aspects of civic space	Burundi (deepening autocratization of a non-democracy)
Declines on two aspects of civic space	Kenya (democracy), South Sudan (deepening autocratization of a non-democracy) and Togo (hybrid regime)
Decline on one aspect of civic space	<p>Civil Liberties: Cameroon, Guinea, Mauritania, Tanzania (hybrid regimes) and Libya (non-democracy)</p> <p>Media Integrity: Benin (democracy) and Egypt (non-democracy)</p> <p>Civil Society Participation: Niger (hybrid regime)</p>

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

TABLE 2.10

The Global State of Democracy Indices snapshot: Policy considerations for Africa

This table offers a snapshot of the state of democracy in Africa, using the GSoD conceptual framework as an organizing structure. It presents policy considerations across the five main attributes of democracy—Representative Government, Fundamental Rights, Checks on Government, Impartial Administration and Participatory Engagement.

	<p>Representative Government</p>	<p>GSoD Indices score: Mid-range (0.45)</p>
	<p>Elected Government: During the past four-and-a-half decades, Africa has made major improvements in terms of Elected Government. In 1975, 41 countries in Africa were classified as non-democracies, while only 3 were classified as democracies and 1 as a hybrid regime. By 2018, 20 countries in Africa were classified as democracies, with 18 hybrid regimes and 11 non-democracies.</p>	<p>Priority countries for reform: Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Morocco, Somalia and South Sudan (countries with low performance in Elected Government)</p> <p>Priority areas for reform: Conducting periodic elections that are free, credible and fair is paramount to consolidating democracy. To achieve this, governments that have not yet done so should sign and ratify continental and subregional instruments such as the ACDEG. African states that have already ratified these instruments should enact reforms to align national laws, regulations and processes with their aspirations.</p> <p>Good-practice countries for regional learning: Benin, Ghana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Zambia (countries with high performance in Elected Government and in top 25%)</p>
	<p>Clean Elections: A total of 8 countries in Africa (16 per cent) have high performance on Clean Elections, while 51 per cent (25) have mid-range and 33 per cent (16) have low levels. From 2013 to 2018, seven countries improved their Clean Elections scores, while nine saw declines. There is wide regional variation in performance, with West Africa and Southern Africa having the highest average scores (which are in line with the world average), while North Africa, Central Africa and East Africa all fall below the global average.</p>	<p>Priority countries for reform: Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, DRC, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Libya, Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe (countries with low performance in Clean Elections)</p> <p>Priority areas for reform: States should build stakeholder trust in the impartiality and neutrality of EMBs to strengthen public confidence in electoral processes. Reforms should aim to make the nomination and appointment process for electoral commissioners more consultative and merit-based to ensure electoral policymakers are known for their independence and integrity. Legal revisions aimed at strengthening operational and financial independence of EMBs should be enacted to reduce opportunities for government interference in electoral processes. States should also support EMBs in investing in institution building and strengthening the capacity of electoral officials at all levels, particularly in countries that use technology in their electoral processes. Reforms should be enacted to ensure electoral dispute-resolution mechanisms are effective and timely to reduce the possibility of election-related violence. Electoral stakeholders should also be held accountable via binding codes of conduct to ensure all actors contribute to transparent and peaceful electoral processes.</p> <p>Good-practice countries for regional learning: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mauritius, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia (countries with high performance in Clean Elections)</p>



Inclusive Suffrage:

While the vast majority of countries in Africa (45 countries, or 92 per cent) have high levels of Inclusive Suffrage, 4 countries (Eritrea, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan) have low levels of Inclusive Suffrage.

Priority countries for reform:

Eritrea, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan

Priority areas for reform:

Countries should strive to ensure that all eligible voters have an opportunity to register to participate in electoral processes. Measures to be adopted include reducing barriers to voter registration and broadening the reach of voter registrations efforts, particularly to include marginalized persons. Countries that use technology for the registration of voters should ensure electoral officials are well trained to avoid the risk of poor data capture. Lawmakers should also examine the feasibility of conducting out-of-country voting to broaden electoral participation.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Mauritius and South Africa (countries with high performance in Inclusive Suffrage and in top 25%)



Free Political Parties:

The majority of countries in Africa (40 countries, or 82 per cent) score in the mid-range on Free Political Parties, while 7 countries have low levels. Only two countries (Botswana and Mauritius) score highly.

Priority countries for reform:

Burundi, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Rwanda and South Sudan (countries with low performance in Free Political Parties)

Priority areas for reform:

Lawmakers should reform legal frameworks to remove barriers to registration for political parties and independent candidates. They should also examine the feasibility of supporting political parties that meet minimum requirements (including gender requirements) through public financing, while also putting in place measures to regulate campaign funding and expenditure to ensure competitive electoral playing fields. Ruling parties should desist from using their incumbency advantage and state resources to campaign. States should also ensure that opposition parties are able to campaign freely and have equal access to state media. Political parties must ensure that candidate selection processes (e.g. party primaries) are credible and transparent, as this is critical to the overall conduct of elections.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Botswana and Mauritius



Fundamental Rights

GSoD Indices score: Mid-range (0.52)



Access to Justice:

Access to Justice improved in 11 African countries (Algeria, CAR, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Tunisia) in the period 2013–2018. However, just seven countries (Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Mauritius, Namibia, Senegal and Tunisia) have high levels of Access to Justice, while 61 per cent of countries are in the mid-range and 24 per cent have low levels.

Priority countries for reform:

Burundi, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Libya, Mauritania, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan (countries with low levels in Access to Justice)

Priority areas for reform:

Priority countries should institute reforms that will enhance increased access to justice for all citizens, including strengthening the legal infrastructure and making legal provisions for the use of paralegals. Deliberate measures should also be taken to foster access to justice for marginalized groups such as women. Civic spaces for civil society engagement on access to justice should be broadened for lobbying, with duty bearers and providing awareness raising to rights holders. Mechanisms should be instituted to strengthen the role of parliaments as guardians of citizens' rights and liberties.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Mauritius, Namibia, Senegal and Tunisia (countries with high levels in Access to Justice)



Civil Liberties:

One-third of African countries have high levels of Civil Liberties, while only 14 per cent have low levels. Most countries (53 per cent) score in the mid-range. A majority of countries in West Africa and Southern Africa score above the global average. From 2013 to 2018, three countries advanced while nine declined.

Priority countries for reform:

Burundi, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Sudan (countries with low performance in Civil Liberties)

Priority areas for reform:

Measures should be taken to reform legislative frameworks to provide for civil liberties. Legislation that constrains fundamental civil liberties should be repealed. Security-sector institutions should be reformed to enhance their civilian relations and uphold civil liberties.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Benin, Ghana and Mauritius (countries with high performance in Civil Liberties and in top 25%)



Gender Equality:

The vast majority of countries in Africa have mid-range levels of political Gender Equality. Only one country (Rwanda) has high levels, while seven (Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan) have low levels. Between 2013 and 2018, no countries in Africa saw statistically significant improvements or declines in Gender Equality.

Priority countries for reform:

Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan

Priority areas for reform:

Align legislative frameworks and policy documents to the aspirations of subregional, regional and international normative frameworks and standards on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Rwanda



Social Group Equality:

A majority of African countries (32, or 65 per cent) score in the mid-range on Social Group Equality, while almost one-third of countries (16, or 33 per cent) have low levels. Only Tunisia has high levels of Social Group Equality.

Priority countries for reform:

Angola, Chad, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Mauritania, Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan (countries with low performance in Social Group Equality and in the bottom 25%)

Priority areas for reform:

Institute legislative and policy measures to enhance representation of disadvantaged groups (e.g. minorities and people living with disabilities) to ensure that they are represented in national legislative and local government assemblies. Measures should also be instituted to advance equitable enjoyment of civil liberties, inclusive and equitable political participation, and representation.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Tunisia



Basic Welfare:

Africa has seen a remarkable improvement in terms of its Basic Welfare performance: since 2013, more countries score in the mid-range (30) than in the low range (19 countries).

Priority countries for reform:

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia and South Sudan (countries with low performance in Basic Welfare and in the bottom 25%)

Priority areas for reform:

Reform legislative frameworks to ensure inclusive and equitable delivery of basic services such as education, health and social security. Priority countries for reform should further ratify and domesticate the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Government and Local Development.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa and Tunisia



Checks on Government

GSoD Indices score: Mid-range (0.51)



Effective Parliament:

The majority of African countries (67 per cent) score in the mid-range on Effective Parliament, while only three countries (6 per cent) score highly. From 2013 to 2018, six countries improved on this measure, while only four declined.

Priority countries for reform:

Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Mauritania, Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Sudan (countries with low performance in Effective Parliament)

Priority areas for reform:

Countries should support parliamentary reform processes geared towards the strengthening of parliament's role as independent policymakers; guardians of citizens' rights, liberties and needs; and overseers of government. The reform process should also aim to enhance pluralism and the representativeness of views in parliaments.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Malawi, Mauritius and Tunisia (countries with high performance in Effective Parliament)



Judicial Independence:

Only two countries in Africa (The Gambia and Tunisia) have high scores on Judicial Independence, while the remainder are split between low and mid-range performance. From 2013 to 2018, five countries advanced while six declined on this dimension.

Priority countries for reform:

Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sudan and Togo (countries with low performance in Judicial Independence and in the bottom 25%)

Priority areas for reform:

There is a need to sustain reform efforts to build more robust, accountable and results-oriented judiciaries. Political interference should be pre-empted by consolidated legal frameworks and financial support for judicial authorities.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

The Gambia and Tunisia



Media Integrity:

Only eight African countries (16 per cent) have high levels of Media Integrity, while seven (14 per cent) have low levels. The remaining 34 countries (69 per cent) are in the mid-range. From 2013 to 2018, three countries advanced while five declined on this dimension.

Priority countries for reform:

Countries with lower levels of Media Integrity (e.g. Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho and Tanzania)

Priority areas for reform:

Reform and align media-related legislation, regulatory frameworks and institutions to international standards on media freedom, independence and pluralism.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Burkina Faso, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia



Impartial Administration

GSoD Indices score: Mid-range (0.41)



Absence of Corruption:

A majority of African countries (65 per cent) have high levels of corruption, with the remaining 35 per cent having mid-range levels. No country in Africa has low levels of corruption. On the positive side, between 2013 and 2018 a total of nine countries improved their Absence of Corruption scores, while three declined.

Priority countries for reform:

Countries struggling with corruption (e.g. CAR, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria and Sierra Leone)

Priority areas for reform:

Countries that have not yet done so should sign and ratify the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combatting Corruption. Countries that have signed the convention should align their national legislation to ensure effective implementation. Countries should develop measures such as asset declarations to ensure public officials remain accountable to the public and discharge their duties transparently. National governments should invest resources in maintaining and building the capacity of effective independent institutions to combat corruption. National governments and anti-corruption agencies should apply resources for investigations into corrupt practices in an impartial manner based on strict criteria to avoid the politicization of their work. Judicial authorities should enforce the laws and apply sanctions in a non-partisan and impartial manner. Efforts to strengthen media and civil society capacities in investigative journalism should also be undertaken to strengthen their watchdog role.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Botswana, Rwanda and Tanzania, (countries with mid-range performance in Absence of Corruption and in top 25%)



Predictable Enforcement:

No country in Africa has high levels of Predictable Enforcement, while 39 per cent have low Predictable Enforcement and 61 per cent score in the mid-range. From 2013 to 2018 there were eight advances and four declines on this measure.

Priority countries for reform:

Countries with low levels of Predictable Enforcement (e.g. CAR, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya and Madagascar)

Priority areas for reform:

National governments should strengthen the capacity and independence of law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary to improve the rule of law and the predictability of law enforcement. National legislation should be updated to avoid the use of public administration and other state resources for political purposes. A particular focus should be placed on studying the possibility of putting in place restrictions on the commissioning of new policies or projects close to electoral events. National governments should also invest in strengthening the capacity of civil-service officials to enhance bureaucratic efficiency and quality.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Benin, Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Senegal and Tunisia (countries with mid-range performance in Predictable Enforcement and in top 25%)



Participatory Engagement

GSoD Indices score: Low



Civil Society Participation:

By 2018, 10 per cent of countries in Africa had low Civil Society Participation scores, while 24 per cent scored highly and 65 per cent scored in the mid-range.

Priority countries for reform:

Burundi, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea and South Sudan (countries with low performance in Civil Society Participation)

Priority areas for reform:

Governments at all levels must ensure that CSOs are allowed to operate without intimidation or restrictions (including on funding). Governments should seek to promote partnerships with civil society at the expense of adversarial relations by including them in policy consultations and public outreach. Efforts must be made to encourage and promote inclusive participation by creating an atmosphere and incentives that encourage active participation of youth, women and people living with disabilities in political processes. Governments should aim to support civil society initiatives through the provision of funding to strengthen civil society's capacity to foster accountability.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Liberia, Mauritius, Niger, Sierra Leone and Tunisia (countries with high performance in Civil Society Participation and in top 25%)



Electoral Participation:

Of the 49 countries in Africa, 9 score among the top 25 per cent in the world on Electoral Participation, while 16 (33 per cent) have low levels and 23 (47 per cent) have mid-range performance.

Priority countries for reform:

Countries with low levels of Electoral Participation (e.g. Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Madagascar and Nigeria)

Priority areas for reform:

Electoral stakeholders should undertake research to study voter turnout patterns in greater detail, including generating data on the demographics of voters. EMBs, political parties and CSOs should engage in broad campaigns targeting potential voters and encouraging them to participate in electoral processes by making voter information easily accessible to all eligible citizens. EMBs should consider increasing the number of polling stations to ensure voters can participate in elections more easily. They should also study the feasibility of early voting and out-of-country voting without compromising the integrity of electoral processes.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone (countries with high performance in Electoral Participation and in top 25%)



Direct Democracy:

West Africa has the highest levels of Direct Democracy in the region, followed very closely by North Africa and East Africa.

Priority countries for reform:

Countries with low levels of Direct Democracy (e.g. Benin, CAR, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and South Africa)

Priority areas for reform:

National legislation should be developed or strengthened to ensure public input into key decisions such as constitutional amendments, especially regarding the issue of term and age limits for elected officials. Stakeholders should also study the feasibility of introducing citizen-led initiatives and the possibility of enabling citizens to recall elected officials.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Mauritius and Tanzania



Local Democracy:

Only 2 African countries (4 per cent) have high levels of Local Democracy, while 33 (69 per cent) have low levels. The remaining countries have mid-range levels.

Priority countries for reform:

Countries with low levels of Local Democracy (e.g. CAR, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar and Tunisia); and hybrid regimes with mid-range levels of Local Democracy (e.g. Algeria, Ethiopia, Mauritania, Rwanda and Zambia)

Priority areas for reform:

National governments that have not yet done so should sign and ratify the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development. Countries that have ratified the Charter should align national legislation to ensure it is fully implemented. National governments and other stakeholders should invest in local government capacity-building programmes to ensure responsive systems are established that can deliver essential services to residents. EMBs and other stakeholders should also conduct outreach campaigns to educate citizens about the roles and responsibilities of local governments to encourage participation in local government elections and other platforms for citizens to engage with local authorities.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Mauritius and Sierra Leone (countries with high levels in Local Democracy).

TABLE 2.11

Regime classification for Africa, 2018

Table 2.11 shows the regime classification for all of the countries in Africa covered by the GSoD Indices, as well as their respective scores on the five GSoD attributes.

Country	GSoD Attribute					
	Representative Government	Fundamental Rights	Checks on Government	Impartial Administration	Participatory Engagement	
Democracies						
Benin	0.66 =	0.75 =	0.60 =	0.61 +		Mid-range
Botswana	0.69 =	0.68 =	0.63 =	0.66 =		Mid-range
Burkina Faso	0.62 =	0.60 =	0.58 =	0.57 =		Low
Côte d'Ivoire	0.56 =	0.53 =	0.54 =	0.58 =		Low
The Gambia	0.56 +	0.63 +	0.66 +	0.56 +		Low
Ghana	0.67 =	0.72 =	0.65 =	0.43 =		High
Guinea-Bissau	0.58 +	0.47 =	0.53 =	0.28 =		Low
Kenya	0.50 =	0.46 =	0.58 =	0.42 =		Low
Lesotho	0.63 =	0.60 =	0.58 =	0.48 =		Mid-range
Liberia	0.61 =	0.64 =	0.60 =	0.396 =		High
Madagascar	0.47 =	0.51 =	0.54 =	0.35 =		Low
Malawi	0.55 =	0.64 =	0.698 =	0.49 =		Mid-range
Mali	0.51 =	0.52 =	0.55 +	0.42 =		Low
Mauritius	0.81 =	0.74 =	0.701 =	0.60 =		High
Namibia	0.59 =	0.69 =	0.63 =	0.63 =		Mid-range
Nigeria	0.63 +	0.62 =	0.65 =	0.43 =		Low
Senegal	0.63 =	0.73 =	0.65 =	0.61 =		Low

Sierra Leone	0.62 =	0.64 =	0.51 =	0.47 =	High
South Africa	0.68 =	0.66 =	0.69 =	0.49 =	Mid-range
Tunisia	0.62 =	0.76 =	0.80 =	0.61 =	Low

Hybrid regimes

Algeria	0.35 =	0.54 =	0.395 =	0.38 =	Low
Angola	0.42 =	0.51 =	0.44 =	0.42 +	Low
Cameroon	0.36 =	0.38 =	0.39 =	0.21 =	Low
CAR	0.45 =	0.44 +	0.57 =	0.34 +	Low
DRC	0.38 =	0.36 =	0.46 =	0.17 =	Low
Ethiopia	0.36 =	0.52 =	0.42 =	0.50 +	Low
Gabon	0.406 =	0.65 =	0.48 =	0.49 =	Low
Guinea	0.49 =	0.44 =	0.41 =	0.33 =	Low
Mauritania	0.37 =	0.402 =	0.42 =	0.398 +	Low
Morocco	0.45 =	0.63 =	0.56 =	0.49 =	Low
Mozambique	0.47 =	0.59 =	0.56 =	0.43 =	Mid-range
Niger	0.55 =	0.67 =	0.59 =	0.50 =	Low
Sudan	0.38 =	0.31 =	0.37 =	0.25 =	Low
Tanzania	0.52 =	0.57 =	0.58 =	0.58 +	Mid-range
Togo	0.42 =	0.49 =	0.47 =	0.32 =	Low
Uganda	0.38 =	0.53 =	0.59 =	0.43 =	Mid-range
Zambia	0.52 =	0.52 =	0.51 =	0.44 =	Mid-range
Zimbabwe	0.42 =	0.46 =	0.50 =	0.25 =	Low

Non-democracies

Burundi	0.25 -	0.30 =	0.25 -	0.12 -	Low
Chad	0.32 =	0.39 =	0.35 =	0.17 =	Low
Egypt	0.28 =	0.43 =	0.397 =	0.27 =	Low
Equatorial Guinea	0.21 =	0.30 =	0.19 =	0.19 =	Low
Eritrea	0 =	0.22 =	0.07 =	0.26 =	Low
Eswatini	0.26 =	0.53 =	0.38 =	0.402 =	Mid-range
Libya	0 -	0.39 =	0.58 =	0.18 -	Low
Republic of Congo	0.33 =	0.42 =	0.38 =	0.36 =	Low
Rwanda	0.35 =	0.57 =	0.35 =	0.63 =	Low
Somalia	0 =	0.34 =	0.49 =	0.20 =	Low
South Sudan	0 =	0.24 =	0.25 =	0.15 =	Low

■ High ■ Mid-range ■ Low

Notes: = denotes no statistically significant increase or decrease in the last five year period; + denotes a statistically significant increase in the last five year period; - denotes a statistically significant decrease in the last five year period.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

2.2. The state of democracy in the Middle East

This section offers an overview of the long-term democratic trends in the Middle East, and an analysis of the current democratic landscape, using the GSoD conceptual framework as an organizing structure. The analysis covers issues linked to Representative Government, Fundamental Rights, Checks on Government, Impartial Administration and Participatory Engagement, highlighting the current gains and opportunities for democracy in the region, as well as the democratic challenges it faces. The analysis is based on the GSoD Indices as the principal data source, complemented by other sources. The section concludes with an overview of policy considerations relevant to democratic trends and challenges in the Middle East.

2.2.1. Introduction

The Arab Uprisings of 2010–2011 raised hopes for democratic progress and seemed to be a turning point in the history of the Middle East and North Africa. However, the majority of the movements that demanded greater democracy in the region have since fizzled out, and the expected transitions have been either aborted or diverted. The sole exception has been Tunisia, the country where the uprisings began, and which has since undergone a transition to democracy.

Mohamed Bouazizi, a street vendor in the central Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid, set himself on fire in December 2010,

and his subsequent death led to a series of street protests throughout the country. Tunisia's President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who had ruled the country for 22 years, threatened to use military action against the protesters but was ousted in January 2011. The protests in Tunisia, sometimes referred to as the Jasmine Revolution, spread to other authoritarian regimes in the region (Chakchouk et al. 2013: 575).

In February 2011, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was also removed from power (Taylor 2017). In February and March 2011, in Bahrain, pro-democracy protests were attacked by security forces. The global condemnation that followed prompted King Hamad to create the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) in July that year, which recommended the prosecution of security forces personnel (Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry 2011). Until 2015, of the 26 recommendations made by the commission, only 2 were fully implemented and 8 saw no progress at all (Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain 2015). Because of protests in Jordan, two successive cabinets resigned (*The Telegraph* 2011a, 2011b). In Kuwait the Prime Minister was replaced in November 2011 and the parliament was dissolved until elections were held in February 2012. In March 2011, Oman's legislative powers were given to advisory councils (Khaleej Times 2011). That same month in Saudi Arabia, the government banned protests and tried to stifle dissent by providing an additional USD 127 billion in social benefits to citizens (BBC News 2013).

THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

The Middle East has made some progress in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) since 2015, although significant challenges remain, and half of the 18 indicators used to measure progress have shown stagnation. The Middle East remains the lowest-scoring region in the world on all indicators linked to SDG 16. A total of six indicators have seen some advances, while four have seen declines.

SDG 16.3 on rule of law and SDG 16.5 on reducing corruption have seen more countries advancing than declining. SDG 16.1 has seen stagnation, and one-half of the indicators linked to SDG 16.6 on effective institutions have also shown stagnation, while the other half have shown small increases. This is also

the case for SDG 16.10 on fundamental freedoms. SDG 16.7 shows a mixed picture, with stagnation on three indicators, a small increase in Effective Parliament and a small decline in Clean Elections.



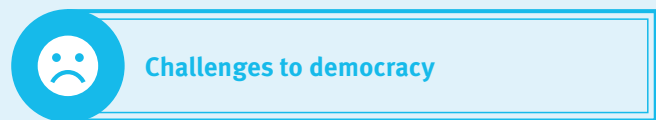
Gender Equality

Significant challenges need to be overcome if gender equality, and SDG 5.5 on political representation of women, are to be achieved in the region. The Middle East remains the lowest-performing region on this target. The GSoD Indices measure of political Gender Equality for the region has been stagnant since 2015, with no countries declining or advancing.

KEY FINDINGS



- **According to the GSoD Indices, the Middle East contained just two democracies in 2018: Iraq, which is considered a very weak democracy; and Lebanon, which is a weak and fragile democracy.**
- **Iraq is the only country in the Middle East where democracy is proving to be resilient.** Although its democratic institutions remain fragile, it has not backslid into hybridity since its transition to democracy in 2010. The country is a very weak democracy, with low levels of Impartial Administration and Participatory Engagement, and has levels of Fundamental Rights among the bottom 25 per cent of countries in the world.
- **Some efforts have been made on Gender Equality in the Middle East.** Much work is still needed, but small steps are observed. Iraq has introduced quotas for women in the legislative branch. Saudi Arabia has established quotas for the appointment of women in the Shura Council (Consultative Council). However, this is perceived as more of an effort to appease Western partners than a reflection of fundamental reform in favour of gender equality.



- **The Arab Uprisings in 2010–2011 raised hopes for democratic progress in the Middle East and seemed to be a turning point in the democratic history of the region.** However, many of the movements that demanded greater democracy for the Middle East and North Africa have since fizzled out. With the exception of Tunisia in North Africa, the expected transitions have been aborted.
- **The Middle East remains the least democratic region in the world.** This is readily apparent from its low number of democracies (2 out of 12 countries in the region). It is also the region with the largest share of non-democracies. More than half of the countries in the Middle East (58 per cent) are non-democracies, while one-quarter are hybrid regimes.
- **Non-democracies in the region have, unfortunately, also proven resilient.** Of the 12 countries in the region, 10 have never experienced democracy. The regime status of six of these countries has never changed, while the remaining four have had periods of hybridity.

Peaceful protests also erupted in Syria in March 2011, where the Syrian Government responded by killing hundreds of demonstrators and imprisoning many others. By July 2011, the Free Syrian Army was formed with the aim of overthrowing the regime of President Bashar Al Assad, thus marking the beginning of the civil war that has now plagued the country for eight years (Al Jazeera 2018).

Because of these developments, in a period of three years the Middle East experienced more changes within its governmental institutions than in the previous few decades. This did not, however, translate into significant democratic progress for the Middle East. The hope for democracy inspired by the wave of protests across the region was quickly dashed, as more repressive regimes and authoritarian governments replaced those that crumbled under the pressure of the Arab Uprisings.

According to the Global State of Democracy (GSoD) Indices data, in 2011 there were two democracies in the Middle East (Iraq and Lebanon), as well as three hybrid regimes (Jordan, Kuwait and Oman) and seven non-democracies: Bahrain, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Yemen. By 2018, six years after the Arab Uprisings, the share remained unchanged. Similarly, in North Africa, the only country that has seen changes since the Uprisings, and which should be taken as an example for the region, is Tunisia.

2.2.2. Taking the long-term perspective: democratic developments in the Middle East since 1975

Since 1975, the Middle East region has seen the slowest democratic progress in the world. In 1975, 11 of the 12 countries in the region were non-democracies. Lebanon, a weak democracy in 1975 and on the verge of a civil war, backslid into a hybrid regime in 1976 and slipped in and out of hybridity up until 2018, when it returned to democratic status. The region has only gained one democracy since 1975: Iraq, which transitioned to democracy for the first time in its history in 2010. This makes the Middle East the region with the smallest share of democracies.

The Middle East also contains six of the most enduring non-democracies in the world, which are countries that have never experienced democracy or even hybridity at any point in their history: Bahrain, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the UAE. Since 1975, incremental improvements have been noted in Jordan, Kuwait, Oman and Yemen, which went from non-democracies to hybrid regimes for the first time in 1991, 2005, 2012 and 1993, respectively. Of these four countries, however, only Kuwait did not slide back into non-democracy.

In summary, currently seven countries (almost 58 per cent) in the region are non-democracies, three countries (25 per cent) are hybrid regimes, and two countries (17 per cent) are classified as democracies (see Figure 2.14).

Between 1975 and 2018, the Middle East showed the slowest progress and consistently poorest performance of all the world regions on the GSoD attributes of Representative Government, Fundamental Rights and Checks on Government. On each of these attributes, the region's performance has consistently been well below the world average.

In 1975, every country in the region had low levels of Representative Government. In 2018, only two countries in the region (Iraq and Lebanon, both democracies) performed mid-range on the same attribute.

One-half of the countries in the region (Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the UAE and Yemen) had low performance on Fundamental Rights in 1975, while five (Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman and Qatar) performed mid-range.¹⁰ In 2018, Saudi Arabia's, Syria's and Yemen's performance remained low, although the latter two countries have been fighting wars in their territories for more than five years, and this affects their performance on all dimensions of the GSoD framework (see Box 2.6 for a discussion of how the conflict in Yemen affects its GSoD scores). Kuwait and Lebanon were the only two countries performing mid-range on Checks on Government in 1975, while the rest performed low on this attribute. By 2018, Iran, Iraq and Jordan had also moved to the mid-range, while seven countries maintained their low performance.

In 1975, Kuwait was the country in the Middle East with most subattributes (five) in the top 25 per cent in the world. By 2018, the UAE was the country with most subattributes (two) in the top 25 per cent.

Saudi Arabia, one of the 18 countries in the world that has never experienced democracy, has the poorest performance in the region on the GSoD attributes. In 1975, the country scored low on four of the five GSoD attributes, and among the bottom 25 per cent in the world on 7 out of 16 subattributes. By 2018, Saudi Arabia's performance worsened even further: it scored in the bottom 25 per cent in the world on almost all its democratic subattributes (15 of 16).

Of the two countries that qualified as democracies in 2018, Iraq has very weak performance, scoring low on two

attributes (Impartial Administration and Participatory Engagement), while Lebanon is considered a weak democracy as it scores low on one attribute (Impartial Administration).

Iraq, a non-democracy in 1975, transitioned to a hybrid regime in 2005, when the first multiparty elections were held. This hybrid stage lasted until 2010, when the country transitioned to democracy with the first fully competitive elections. Although it is considered a very weak democracy, Iraq has so far proved resilient: it has not experienced an undemocratic interruption since its transition in 2010 (see Box 2.4). Lebanon is a very fragile democracy, having experienced two democratic breakdowns—one between 1976 and 2008, and the other between 2014 and 2017—before bouncing back to democratic status in 2018.

In the Middle East, four countries have advanced from a non-democracy to a hybrid regime but have never transitioned out of hybridity. Of these countries, Jordan, Oman and Yemen have had intermittent periods of hybridity and non-democracy, while Kuwait became a hybrid regime in 2005 and has been so ever since (see Table 2.12).

FIGURE 2.14

Regime types in Middle East, 1975–2018



Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

10 There is no GSoD data between 1975 and 2004 on Fundamental Rights for Bahrain.

BOX 2.4

Iraq: a resilient but weak democracy

Iraq has been classified a democracy by the GSoD Indices since 2010. Having made its democratic transition, the country has remained a resilient—albeit weak—democracy ever since. After the invasion of Iraq by the United States and its allies in 2003, the country faced and overcame enormous challenges. Iraq’s democratic achievements, given the context, are unique in history. There have been five peaceful and successful national parliamentary elections since 2005, with three democratic and non-violent changes of power. Iraqi citizens also participated in a constitutional referendum and several local elections during this time (Ollivant and Bull 2018).

However, Iraq’s institutions are weak and far from stable. Since the first elections in 2005 the Iraqi Government has been led by Shiites, who have gradually isolated the Sunni majority. This created a sense of anger and distrust which enabled the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to be considered a viable choice, becoming one of the major obstacles to democratic development in Iraq. By 2014, ISIS had taken over large portions of the country; it took three years

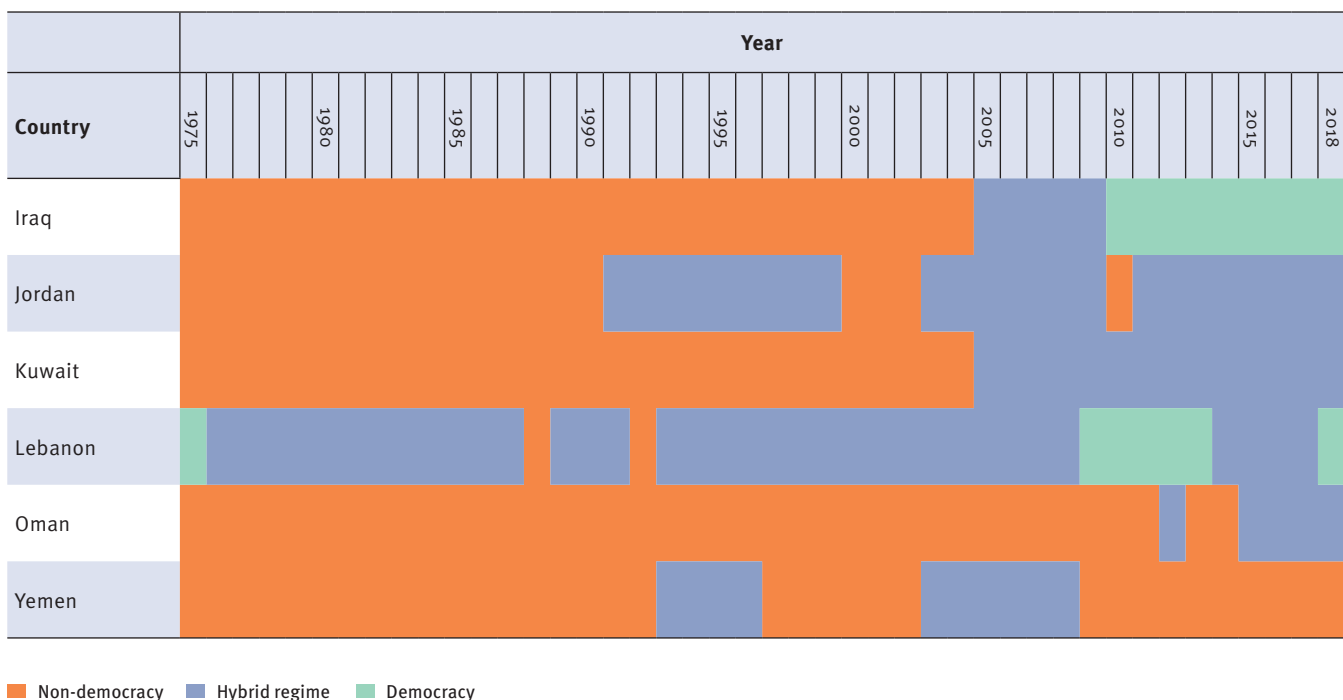
for the government, along with the US-led coalition, to drive out the self-proclaimed Islamic State.

Two years after ISIS decimation in Iraq, the organization is still operating, especially in Iraq’s remote regions, where the government is largely absent, and citizens continue to lack adequate access to services or resources (Magid 2019). This situation needs monitoring by the Iraqi Government as it could lead to the re-emergence of the so-called Caliphate, as the conditions that provided fertile ground for ISIS to expand its reach have not fully been addressed.

In addition, Iraq’s internal and sectarian divisions could also threaten stability and democracy. The country should work towards strengthening its democratic institutions and accountability tools; decrease corruption and increase transparency; and improve access to services for its citizens. Nonetheless, ‘Iraq remains a hopeful wild card precisely because its democratic politics, though ugly, have been resilient’ (Gerecht 2019).

TABLE 2.12

Changes in regime type in the Middle East, 1975–2018



Notes: This timeline displays the changing regime types in the Middle East between 1975 and 2018 in countries that experienced hybridity or democracy at some point during that period.
Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

2.2.3. The current democracy landscape in the Middle East



Representative Government

The GSoD Indices use the Representative Government attribute to evaluate countries' performance on the conduct of elections, the extent to which political parties are able to operate freely, and the extent to which access to government is decided by elections. This attribute is an aggregation of four subattributes: Clean Elections, Inclusive Suffrage, Free Political Parties and Elected Government.

Summary: Representative Government in the Middle East, 2018

Regional average: Low (0.23)	
High (>0.7)	N/A
Mid-range (0.4–0.7)	Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and Lebanon
Low (<0.4)	Bahrain, Iran, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE and Yemen

In 2018, the Middle East had the lowest score in the world on Representative Government, lower than all other regions, and below the world average.

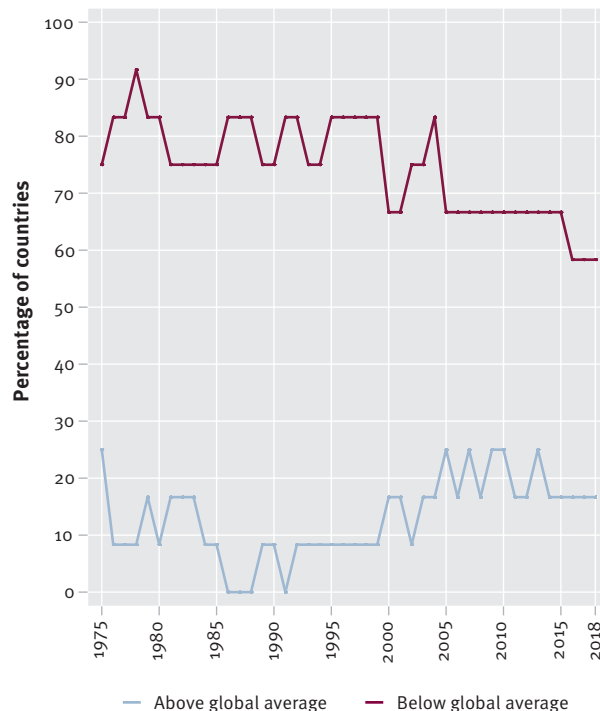
Elections are a mirage when political parties are either limited or banned

The majority of the countries in the Middle East do not hold clean elections and, even when they do occur, they are likely to be sham elections. The few electoral exercises in place have limited sway over the executive power. In 2018 almost 60 per cent of countries scored below the global average on Clean Elections (see Figure 2.15).

To take one example, the UAE—a non-democracy in the form of a federation of absolute monarchies—held parliamentary elections in 2015 for the third time since its independence in the early 1970s. The 2015 elections were the first to include a single-vote system and universal suffrage. The Emirati Government had been working for several years to create awareness on the importance of voting, and to educate people on their role in the election of the Federal National Council. Voter turnout was 35 per cent, an increase in comparison to the 27 per cent turnout in the 2011 elections (United Arab

FIGURE 2.15

Clean Elections in the Middle East, 1975–2018



Notes: Country percentages may not always add up to 100 per cent, as some countries' scores are at the global average, a category which is not represented in this graph.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

Emirates Ministry of State for Federal National Council Affairs 2015). The most important advance in the 2015 election was the single-vote system—in the 2011 elections, voters had been allowed to vote for up to half of the number of seats in their respective Emirates, which had resulted in the election of candidates of the same tribe, skewing the results of the electoral process (Salama 2015). However, despite the introduction of the single-vote system, elections in the UAE are still not regarded as competitive, which contributes to the country being classified as a non-democracy.

Free political parties are rare in the region. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) monarchies—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE—all ban political parties, although what they refer to as 'societies' or 'blocs' function as such. The countries that do allow political parties place severe restrictions on their operation or even existence, making access to political power in the region hardly free or equal. The space

within which political parties can express themselves is also significantly limited by institutional factors, because in most countries in the region monarchs hold broad executive authority.

Islam and politics have historically been interconnected and have never been separate entities in the Middle East and North Africa. Islamist parties are the outcome of reform and modernization, what is known as political Islam (Schwedler 2011; Hirschkind 1997). Islamist political parties have been a constant in the Arab world and Iran, although they have been subjected to fierce repression, especially since 2011, and have drawn criticism from those who argue that politics and Islam should not be mixed (see Tran 2013; Warraq 2018).

An example of an Islamist party is the Freedom and Justice Party in Egypt, which was created in 2011. Although formally independent, it was considered the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, one of the biggest political movements in Egypt. The parliamentary elections in November 2011 and January 2012 saw the Freedom and Justice Party gain 47 per cent of seats in the Egypt's People's Assembly (see Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2015). The party's presidential candidate, Mohamed Morsi, went on to win the May–June 2012 presidential elections. In July 2013 the Egyptian military, headed by General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, overthrew Morsi and suspended the 2012 constitution, while protesters on both sides—pro-Morsi and pro-military—demanded change (Fontevicchia 2013). Morsi was sent to jail (where he died in June 2019) and the Freedom and Justice Party was dissolved by al-Sisi's administration in 2014.

Despite constraints, Islamist movements are likely to continue. The role of Islamist parties—like all other political parties—is crucial and, as some argue, the legitimate involvement of Islamist parties could contribute to broaden prospects for democratization in the region (Cesari 2017). The existence of free political parties, including both Islamist and non-religious parties, are important for democracy to potentially take root in the region.

Non-democracies in the region are persistent

The Middle East is home to six of the most persistent non-democracies in the world: Bahrain, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the UAE. Four countries have advanced from a non-democratic state to become hybrid regimes but have never transitioned out of hybridity. Of these countries, Jordan, Oman and Yemen have had intermittent periods of hybridity and non-democracy,

while Kuwait became a hybrid regime in 2005 and has been so ever since.

During the last five decades, non-democratic regimes have been taking advantage of their resources and geographical positions. They have created networks that have helped them stay in power. The oil-rich GCC monarchies of the Arabic Gulf—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE—have never experienced democracy and rely on their important oil assets and their geopolitical location to sustain their power. They have maintained historical business and foreign policy ties with the USA, but also with Europe.

The USA and Europe have provided the region with security and weapons and have in turn received multi-billion-dollar contracts, and access to oil and key geopolitical points, including the Strait of Hormuz and Bab-al-Mandab. The Middle East countries have also been reliable and dependable political partners. However, with the Arab Uprisings this scenario shifted slightly. The US Government supported the protesters, and a sense of wariness was instilled in the regimes that had been supportive of the USA for decades. New foreign policy options began to be explored. For example, in 2011 US President Barack Obama introduced the so-called Rebalance Strategy, which focused on giving Asia and the Pacific priority over the Gulf monarchies, and created unease in Saudi Arabia (Simon 2015; Mesa Delmonte 2017a). In 2015 the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany (the P5+1) signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) which relieved Iran of sanctions limiting its nuclear ambitions (Storey 2019). This pushed Saudi Arabia to tighten its existing ties with Russia and China, signing economic deals worth billions of dollars and sending a clear message to the USA and Europe that Saudi Arabia should not be taken for granted (Borshchevskaya 2017).

In 2017, the inauguration of Donald Trump as US President brought a new phase of dialogue between the USA and the GCC monarchies. All parties were of the view that Iran and its 'expansionist policies' were a problem for the region and that the JCPOA was detrimental for the region (Mesa Delmonte 2017b). In November 2018, the US Government reinstated its sanctions on Iran. Nonetheless, Saudi Arabia continues to strengthen its ties with Russia (Foy 2018; Mammadov 2019). This illustrates the fact that the political scenario is liable to change, and that even when Saudi Arabia (and the region in general) is moving towards a post-oil economy, the Middle East countries remain important geopolitical players—even when democracy, human rights and civil liberties in the region are severely curtailed.



Fundamental Rights

The Fundamental Rights attribute aggregates scores from three subattributes: Access to Justice, Civil Liberties, and Social Rights and Equality. Overall it measures the fair and equal access to justice, the extent to which civil liberties such as freedom of expression or movement are respected, and the extent to which countries offer their citizens basic welfare and political equality.

Summary: Fundamental Rights in the Middle East, 2018

Regional average: Mid-range (0.42)	
High (>0.7)	N/A
Mid-range (0.4–0.7)	Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar and UAE
Low (<0.4)	Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen

Between 1975 and 2018, one-quarter of the countries in the Middle East saw improvements in their Fundamental Rights scores. However, eight countries scored below the world average in 2018. Between 1980 and 2009, the regional score rose from 0.36 to 0.44 (a 30 per cent increase) but it has plateaued since, and the region stills shows the slowest growth compared to other regions.



Compared to other Fundamental Rights aspects, Social Rights and Equality shows a stronger positive trend over time. Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon and Oman score higher than the region's average score.

Jordan, Kuwait and Oman fall under the category of hybrid regimes, where basic liberties such as freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and association, and freedom of religion are limited. Despite this, together with Iraq and Lebanon (the only democracies in the region), five countries—Iran, Jordan, Oman, Qatar and the UAE—score mid-range on Fundamental Rights. Three countries (Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen) recorded scores low for this attribute in 2018. These three countries score among the bottom 25 per cent in the world on Fundamental

Rights. Yemen was the only country to regress (from 0.41 to 0.27) over the past five years.

Regimes in the region continue to curtail civil liberties and control people

For years the adherence to civil liberties has been one of the weakest points for regimes in the Middle East. Freedoms of expression, religion, movement, association and assembly have been on the decline. Citizens have started to prioritize greater civil freedoms and have asserted their rights, pressuring their governments for more accountability and participatory politics. Although slow transformations with respect to rule of law and gender equality are occurring, there is still much to be achieved in these and other areas—for example, in media freedom.

A number of governments in the region have taken advantage of anti-terrorism and cybercrime laws to criminalize free speech. In Jordan, the 2014 amendments to the Anti-Terrorism Law broadened the definition of terrorism to include provisions which threaten freedom of expression in the country. The amendments removed the requirement that an act of violence should be connected to the action, meaning that any act that ‘shows discord’ or ‘disturbs public order’ would be punishable by law (Human Rights Watch 2014).

Since 2015, governments in Bahrain (see Box 2.5), Jordan, Kuwait and Palestine have introduced anti-cybercrime laws that have been criticized by human rights organizations as restricting freedom of expression online (Social Media Exchange 2018).

Freedom of religion has been significantly curtailed in **Iran** since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. According to Human Rights Watch, religious minorities such as the Bahá'í, Sunni Muslims and Christians face discrimination in both public and private life. For example, as of November 2018, 79 Bahá'ís were held in detention in Iran, and younger members of the minority are forbidden to register at public universities (Human Rights Watch 2019). Furthermore, during the first week of December 2018, 114 Christians were arrested as part of an Iranian Government strategy to ‘warn’ other Christians against evangelization during Christmas (World Watch Monitor 2018; Open Doors 2019).

Saudi Arabia dominated world news during 2018 because of the country's record on human rights violations, its media censorship and silencing of activists, and the globally publicized killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. On 24 June 2018 Saudi Arabia ended its ban on women driving cars; just weeks previously, Saudi authorities had arrested and allegedly tortured at least 13 women (and seven men) who

BOX 2.5

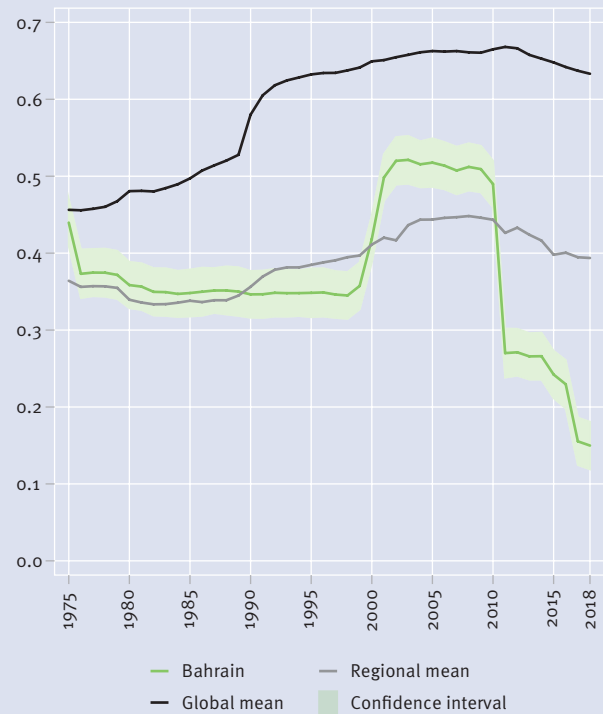
Bahrain: the deepening autocratization of a non-democracy

Bahrain is a non-democracy that has experienced a recent deepening autocratization, with significant declines observed on three of its democratic subattributes: Clean Elections, Civil Liberties (particularly in Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Association and Assembly) and Media Integrity (see Figure 2.16). The Bahraini Government has curtailed the right to free expression and has responded with violence to protest movements. After security forces in Diraz used live ammunition to shoot protesters on 26 January 2017, Freedom House issued a statement condemning Bahrain’s security forces, accusing them of regularly using deadly force against protesters and inviting the government to ‘hold its security forces accountable for its repeated excessive use of force’ (Freedom House 2017).

In July 2018 the Office of the UN High Commission on Human Rights (OHCHR), through its Human Rights Committee, called on Bahrain to end its restrictions on freedom of expression and the repression of activists. In its report, the committee highlighted the fact that Bahrain’s anti-terrorism act was being used extensively ‘outside the scope of terrorist, including against human rights defenders and political activists’ (UN OHCHR 2018: 5). The committee encouraged Bahrain to allow peaceful protest and freedom of expression, citing the case of Nabeel Rajab, one of the leaders of the pro-democracy protests, who was sentenced to five years in prison for criticizing Saudi Arabia’s involvement in the Yemen war, and for accusing Bahraini prison authorities of torture (Frontline Defenders 2019).

FIGURE 2.16

Decline of Civil Liberties in Bahrain, 1975–2018



Notes: The y-axis is the index score, from 0 to 1, where 1 indicates high levels of Civil Liberties. The light-shaded band around the green line demarcates the 68 per cent confidence bounds of the estimate.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

had campaigned for the lifting of the ban (Associated Press 2018). At least nine women remain detained without charges and subjected to violence, with some experts anticipating their sentence could be up to 20 years (Human Rights Watch 2018). Their trial began in March 2019, although no foreign media, diplomats or independent observers were allowed to attend the hearings. Three of the women were later released on bail (Michaelson 2019).

Quotas are a step towards political gender equality
The Middle East is the slowest-performing region in the world on Gender Equality, with an average score of 0.35 in the GSoD Indices, and all countries in the bottom 25 per cent of the world score.

In the last 43 years, only five countries in the region (Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE) have seen significant advances on Gender Equality—all still show low performance on this subcomponent. In 2018, only Lebanon and Jordan performed in the mid-range, and the rest performed at the low level. Iraq (0.40), together with Papua New Guinea (0.26) and Turkey (0.35), is one of the three democracies in the world with a low score on Gender Equality.

No single country in the Middle East has reached the critical minority point of 30 per cent women’s representation in the legislature. In fact, the average for the region is 11 per cent, the lowest in the world. As of February 2019, the countries with the highest percentages of women in councils (i.e. legislatures)

are Iraq (25 per cent), the UAE (23 per cent), Saudi Arabia (20 per cent) and Jordan (15 per cent). Of these, only Iraq's is democratically elected (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019).

Since 2013 Iraq has imposed a quota for women in the country's legislative branch, reserving 25 per cent of the seats in the Shura Council. So far, however, women have not received enough votes to be elected beyond the quota and gender discrimination continues as there are no structures that can assert women's power in parliament (Al Rahim 2019). While Saudi Arabia has reserved 25 per cent of the appointed seats in the Shura Council (Consultative Council) for women, this can be viewed as an effort to appeal to or appease Western partners rather than a representation of the progression of women's rights in the country.

All countries in the region allow women to run for office, even those which do not impose gender quotas. Nonetheless, it is very difficult for women to win seats in councils. For example, the National Assembly in Kuwait is composed of 65 seats, of which 15 are filled *ex officio* (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2017). In the country's 2016 elections, 15 women ran for the 50 open seats but only 1 was successful: Safa Al Hashem, who was re-elected, and has been the only woman in the parliament since 2012 (Cohn 2016). In Jordan, the establishment of a 25 per cent quota at the local level (Dalacoura 2019: 18) translated into an increase in the number of women represented in the regional councils, from 30 seats in 1995 to 241 seats in 2007.

The Arab Uprisings brought minor progress in Yemeni political participation, especially for women. In 2011, the GCC Initiative supported stronger participation of women in parliament. In 2014, the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) stated that 30 per cent of the high offices, elected bodies and the civil service had to be represented by women (Council on Foreign Relations 2019). Efforts by women to achieve this goal were met with disdain by clerics and tribal chiefs, who sought to keep women away from public political life. As of 2017 there were no women in parliament and only 5 per cent of ministerial positions were held by women. However, many female activists in Yemen continue to fight for their voice to be heard, and for a more inclusive interpretation of the Koran and Shari'a, which would empower women and their role in politics. Nevertheless, as of 2018, due to the ongoing conflict in the country, the quota system had not become a reality.

The laws in several countries in the region discriminate against women, including on matters of personal status, criminal law and citizenship. For example, a number of laws

in Yemen, including the Citizenship Law, Personal Status Law, the penal code and the Evidence Law 'systematically discriminate against women' (Manea 2010: 3).

Countries in the region are experiencing serious humanitarian crises

Despite the fact that two of the world's worst humanitarian crises—in Syria and Yemen—are currently unfolding in the region, the Middle East performs in the mid-range on Fundamental Rights. Both Syria and Yemen score in the bottom 25 per cent on all subattributes (Access to Justice, Civil Liberties, and Social Rights and Equality) of Fundamental Rights. Both war-torn countries continue to face democratic challenges, but most importantly a worsening humanitarian crisis.

In Syria, where the civil war commenced in 2011, it is estimated that 12 million people are in need of assistance: 95 per cent of the population lack adequate healthcare, 70 per cent lack regular access to water and half of all children receive no education. Because of the conflict, 30 per cent of Syria's citizens have been forced out of the country to seek asylum, either in neighbouring countries or in Europe (World Vision 2019).

In Yemen, a period of unrest which began in 2012 had, by 2015, developed into an ongoing war between Houthi rebels and the internationally recognized Yemeni Government (backed by a Saudi-led coalition). Half of the population is now at risk of famine, 75 per cent of the population require some form of humanitarian assistance and 1.1 million people have contracted cholera, in the largest-ever epidemic of its kind (UN High Commissioner for Refugees 2019). In 2018 the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, declared Yemen 'the world's worst humanitarian crisis' (UN Office in Geneva 2018).

Palestine is also in need of humanitarian aid. The Israeli–Palestinian conflict has been ongoing for years, although in the last 11 years both the Israeli blockade and internal divisions within Palestine have further aggravated the humanitarian crisis (BBC News 2019). According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), between 2013 and 2018, a total of 3,026 Palestinians were killed and 80,598 were injured, while 160 Israelis were killed and 3,688 were injured (UN OCHA n.d.). The Palestinian protests taking place in Gaza near Israel's perimeter fence have escalated the number of Palestinian casualties and the Gaza Strip is facing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. Access to essential services for its two million inhabitants is insecure, and entire sectors of the economy have been wiped out (UN News 2019a).



Checks on Government

The Checks on Government attribute aggregates scores from three subattributes: Effective Parliament, Judicial Independence and Media Integrity. It measures the extent to which parliament oversees the executive, as well as whether the courts are independent, and whether media is diverse and critical of the government without being penalized for it.

Summary: Checks on Government in the Middle East, 2018

Regional average: Low (0.37)	
High (>0.7)	N/A
Mid-range (0.4–0.7)	Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and Lebanon
Low (<0.4)	Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE and Yemen



Iraq stands out as the country with the highest scores on Checks on Government (0.61) in the region (with Jordan and Lebanon right behind), and on par with the world average (0.62). Iraq outperforms the Middle East on all Checks on Government subattributes.

Checks on Government have remained stagnant in the Middle East, with 9 out of 12 countries showing no overall or net improvements on this measure since 1975. According to the GSoD Indices, 8 (20 per cent) out of 40 countries in the world currently scoring in the bottom 25 per cent on Checks on Government are in the Middle East. Effective Parliament showed the biggest advance in the region, with a 99 per cent improvement between 1975 and 2018. On this measure, eight countries have recorded significant advances in the last 43 years, while none have declined.

Constitutional reforms have not led to increased judicial independence

The overthrow of authoritarian leaders, such as Ben Ali in Tunisia (2011) or Abdullah Saleh in Yemen (2012), meant that people's hopes for democratic change in the region were raised. Ensuing events led to a number of countries in the

region opening dialogues on the importance of constitutional reforms. By 2014, constitutional changes in countries such as Egypt and Tunisia had laid the groundwork for other countries (e.g. Morocco) to follow suit and make changes in their constitutions. This, in turn, provided Middle Eastern countries with the means to develop robust judicial institutions and promote a more transparent and efficient rule of law (Szmolka 2014).

Unfortunately, this opportunity was not seized, and the constitutional reforms undertaken by some countries in the region did not translate into advances in Checks on Government scores. Instead reforms have been used by governments as a pretext to strengthen their legitimacy while holding on to power. For example, members of the constitutional courts in Jordan and Syria are mostly appointed by the executive. In this context, judges' decisions are often made in alignment with the executive's interests, rather than in accordance with the law, for fear of losing their positions or privileges. If rules and procedures are not established to allow constitutional courts to resist political pressure, they will continue to be a façade for the rule of law (International IDEA and Center for Constitutional Transitions 2014).

Struggling for free media can be life-threatening

Media freedoms are an essential building block for strong and robust democracies. In order to hold governments accountable, citizens have found new spaces for expression, including social media networks. Protesters and journalists in the Middle East have used social media tools to raise issues on the public agenda and to expose human rights and other violations. Nevertheless, for journalists, the Middle East continues to be one of the most dangerous regions in which to operate.

Media Integrity, one of the subattributes of Checks on Government, fares poorly in the region, with scores of 0.38 and 0.35 in 2013 and 2018, respectively (see Figure 2.17). Following some gains in the post-2011 period, the media landscape has witnessed a steady erosion, with the exception of countries such as Kuwait and Lebanon, which have a more consolidated tradition of relatively free media (see e.g. Fanack 2018). Compared to the regional GSoD Indices score on Media Integrity, Lebanon has a score of 0.69, and Kuwait scores 0.59, placing them above the world average.

Reporters Without Borders' World Press Freedom Index (2019a), which provides measurements for 180 countries, shows that 5 countries in the Middle East are among the 15 worst countries for journalists in the world: Bahrain (ranked 167th), Yemen (168th), Iran (170th), Saudi Arabia (172nd)

and Syria (174th). Syria actually advanced three positions in the ranking between 2018 and 2019. Although 11 journalists were killed in Syria in 2018, the number of killed has fallen each year, from 69 in 2013 to 36 in 2014, 26 in 2015, 20 in 2016 and 13 in 2017 (Reporters Without Borders 2019b).

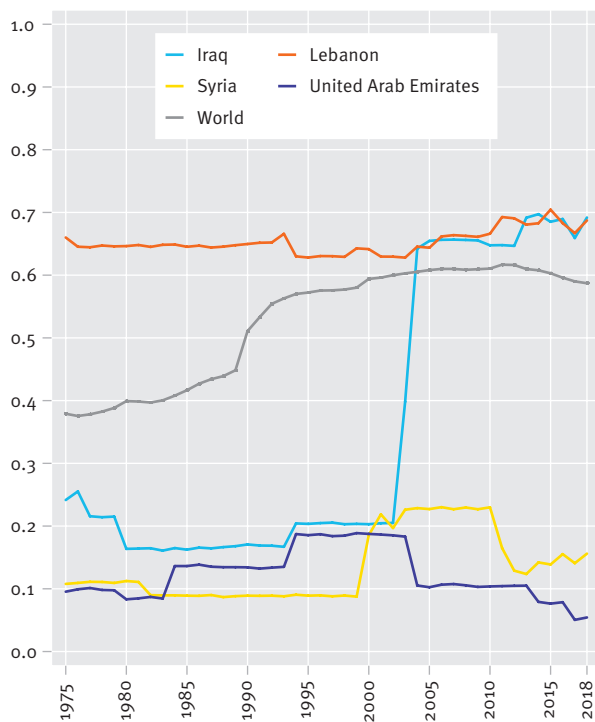
The assassination of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul in October 2018 received widespread international media attention and also had a regional impact. International media outlets demanded that Saudi Arabia—especially Mohammed Bin Salman, the crown prince who is believed to have been implicated in the assassination—be held accountable. However, the reaction of the US administration has been interpreted by some as legitimizing Saudi Arabia’s actions (see e.g. Reuters 2018a). Europe’s stance was, in principle, stronger. Germany re-imposed an arms embargo and, together with France and the United Kingdom, demanded a thorough investigation, as its ties to Saudi Arabia depended on the credibility of such an investigation (Reuters 2018b;

Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2018). However, this initial firmness has evaporated and individually European countries are seeking to maintain a degree of normalcy in their relations with Saudi Arabia, driven to a large extent by business interests. Although the European Union is expected to continue calling on Saudi Arabia to improve its human rights and civil liberties record, firmer measures are not to be expected (Barnes-Dacey 2019). Russia, on the other hand, kept quiet and acknowledged Saudi statements on the issue (Hall 2018).

Nonetheless, the sustained pressure from Western media outlets and activist groups demanding justice for the slain journalist might have played a role in the decision of Saudi Arabia to push for the peace talks on the conflict in Yemen, which were held in December 2018 in Stockholm (UN Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen 2018). As a consequence of the talks, an agreement was reached on a ceasefire in the city of Hodeidah, which would enable humanitarian aid to enter the country. However, the Stockholm Agreements have still not been enacted, with parties delaying the process. The timeframe of the Hodeidah agreement was too short (21 days) to be effectively enacted and the language lacked precision. The UN Special Envoy for Yemen is still working to achieve the decisions reached in the agreement and a multiparty dialogue is taking place. Some advances have been made, not only to reach a peace agreement but to develop a strategy that will ensure a peaceful transition to democracy.

FIGURE 2.17

Media Integrity in selected Middle Eastern countries, 1975–2018



Notes: This figure compares the countries with the highest and lowest scores on Media Integrity in the region for 2018 and displays their performance over time.
Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

Impartial Administration

Impartial Administration is the aggregation of two subattributes: Absence of Corruption and Predictable Enforcement. It measures the extent to which the state is free from corruption, and whether the enforcement of public authority is predictable.

Summary: Impartial Administration in the Middle East, 2018

Regional average: Mid-range (0.42)	
High (>0.7)	UAE
Mid-range (0.4–0.7)	Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar
Low (<0.4)	Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen

Impartial Administration is the only attribute for which the Middle East does not have the lowest scores in the world. On this measure the Middle East, with a score of 0.42, sits midway between Asia and the Pacific (0.45) and Africa (0.39). Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen score lower than the regional average for the Middle East, while the UAE is the only country in the region to score highly on this attribute. In fact, the UAE is the only country in the Middle East among the 40 countries that make up the top 25 per cent in the world on Impartial Administration. Both the UAE and Oman score also higher than the regional and world averages on Absence of Corruption and are considered the least corrupt countries in the Middle East.

The obstinacy of politicians ensures that corruption continues unchecked

The topic of corruption has been at the centre of the debate in the Middle East for decades, as it is one of the central challenges in the region. According to the GSoD Indices, eight countries’ levels of corruption are above the world average. Five countries have high levels of corruption, scoring low for Absence of Corruption, while seven have mid-range levels. While no country has low levels of corruption, the UAE has relatively high mid-range levels, scoring at 0.69 despite being one of the world’s few persistent non-democracies (see Figure 2.18).

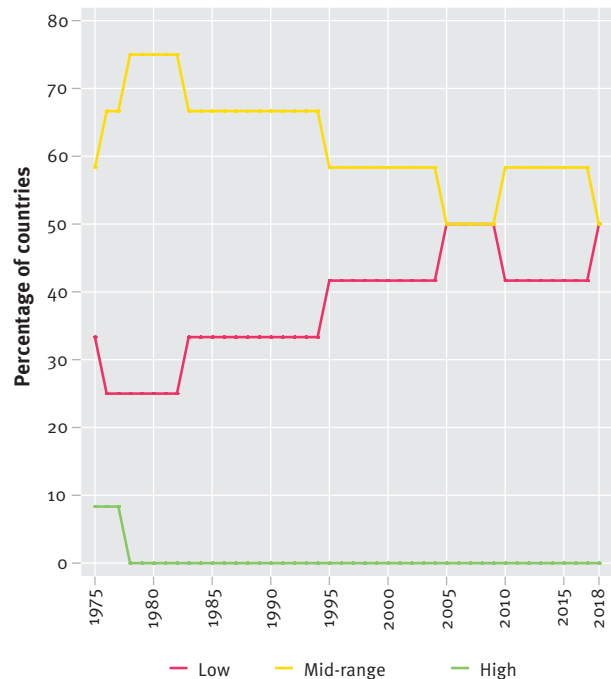
Some countries in the region are trying to take action to address corruption. However, political corruption is so ingrained that efforts by governments to increase transparency have not yielded the expected results, and citizens regard government officials and members of parliament as being most corrupt (Transparency International 2016). Politics and corruption are therefore closely interlinked, and vested interests work to ensure that laws passed to fight corruption remain unenforced (Transparency International 2018).

In Iran, the powerful system of patronage has undermined the Rouhani administration’s anti-corruption efforts. Rich and influential citizens are often spared prosecution and the intelligence services often determine the judgement of politically sensitive cases (GAN Integrity 2017). Judicial institutions designed to control corruption suffer from nepotism, cronyism and influence-peddling (Shahidsaless 2016). Moreover, in a context where civil society is severely restricted and civil liberties repressed, there is little space for citizens and CSOs to expose bribery and corruption.

The Omani Government generally implements the laws of the Omani Penal Code fairly efficiently. Its efforts to curb corruption have seen high-ranking officials prosecuted for crimes of corruption and abuse of office. Contrary to the

FIGURE 2.18

Absence of Corruption in the Middle East, 1975–2018



Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

practice in Iran, gifts or bribes to public officials in Oman are criminalized, making them a rare act when trying to obtain favourable judicial decisions (GAN Integrity 2016). However, nepotism is still widespread in both countries, especially in the higher spheres of political power.

The GSoD Indices data indicate that Lebanon still has high levels of corruption. In addition, according to the Arab Barometer, 94 per cent of Lebanese citizens believe that there is corruption within the government, while only 15 per cent believe that the government is cracking down on corruption (Arab Barometer 2017). However, the government has made recent efforts to fight corruption. In 2017, it passed the Access to Information Law (Article 19 2017) and committed to join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which measures the good governance of oil and gas resources (EITI 2017).

Participatory Engagement

Participatory Engagement is the only attribute that does not have a score, as its four subattributes (Civil Society Participation, Electoral Participation, Direct Democracy and Local Democracy) are

not aggregated. The subattributes measure citizens' participation in CSOs and in elections, and the existence of direct democracy instruments available to citizens, as well as the extent to which local elections are free.

Summary: Participatory Engagement in the Middle East, 2018

Regional average: Low	
High	N/A
Mid-range	Lebanon
Low	Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE and Yemen

While there is no aggregated GSoD Indices score for Participatory Engagement, the regional average on this measure in the Middle East is low. Only one country, Lebanon, performs in the mid-range in terms of its Participatory Engagement, while the remaining 11 countries in the region perform at low levels. A similar trend can be seen for the countries in North Africa.

Civic space in the Middle East has seen advances followed by setbacks

Since 2013, the Middle East has seen a shrinking of civic space, as measured by the indicators of Civil Liberties (particularly Freedom of Expression and Association and Assembly), Media Integrity and Civil Society Participation. In particular, Bahrain, Egypt, Libya and Yemen have seen significant declines on one or more of these measures during this time.

In the 1990s, the Middle East saw an increase in the number of active CSOs, mainly as service providers in health and education and other social assistance, but also

as advocacy organizations (e.g. on women's and human rights). The Arab Uprisings further reinvigorated civil society in the Middle East and North Africa. However, in the past decade, this civic space has contracted.

While in other regions the shrinking of civic space often occurs in contexts of democratic backsliding, in the Middle East and North Africa, it has taken place in countries that have experienced deepening autocratization (e.g. Bahrain and Yemen in the Middle East and Egypt and Libya in North Africa). Half of the countries in the Middle East have experienced some declines on Civil Society Participation since 2013.

The most significant decline has occurred in Yemen, which had actually seen some advances between 2011 and 2012 due to attempts by the Saleh administration to regain the stability lost during the civilian protests resulting from the Arab Uprisings. However, these advances came to a halt with the advent of the conflict in Yemen. Since the war erupted in 2015, the steadily decreasing number of CSOs in the country have faced severe restrictions (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law 2018). Yemen's profound decline on this democratic dimension started in 2013; by 2018 it had recorded its lowest-ever score (0.20) on this measure. Together with Syria, Yemen is now among the seven countries in the world with the lowest levels of Civil Society Participation (see Figure 2.19; Box 2.6).

In the last decade, the region has increasingly become more violent, resulting in the relocation or closure of a number of CSOs. In addition, various laws have been passed that restrict CSO operations. According to Abdelaziz (2017), these laws have been especially harsh on CSOs focusing on human rights and democracy issues. Bahrain and Jordan provide telling examples. In Jordan, the Council of Ministers decided in 2017 that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) would be subject to the requirements of the 2007 Anti-Money

BOX 2.6

Yemen on the brink

In 1990 North and South Yemen unified, creating the Republic of Yemen, with President Ali Abdullah Saleh as head of state. At the time of unification, and in contrast to the absolutist monarchies in the region, Yemen was the only country in the Arabian Peninsula to hold periodic elections. Despite this fact,

Yemen was not considered a democracy, as the elections were a façade for Saleh's regime to maintain its legitimacy.

In 2011, the ripple effects of the Arab Uprisings also spread to Yemen, which was already on the brink of a revolution. The

ensuing unrest in Yemen echoed the purported cause of the uprisings but was also the consequence of more than 30 years of abuse of power by the governing class. By this time, Yemen's GSoD Indices score for Representative Government was not significantly higher than in 1990, indicating that for more than 20 years the representation of Yemenis by the political class had stagnated.

In 2012, after 33 years in power, President Ali Abdullah Saleh resigned, precipitating an internal war. By September 2014 the Houthis had taken Sana'a, and Yemen's internationally recognized President, Abdarrabuh Mansur Hadi, had absconded to Saudi Arabia. Soon after, the so-called Saudi Alliance (a coalition led by Saudi Arabia that includes Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Sudan and the UAE) commenced attacks on the Houthis and the war escalated. These events saw Yemen's score on Representative Government decline from 0.25 in 2015 to zero in 2016—where it remained in 2018.

The Arab Uprisings brought minor progress in Yemeni political participation: CSOs, focusing on youth and women's empowerment, flourished in the immediate aftermath. This led to a spike in Yemen's Civil Society Participation subattribute in 2012, reaching 0.60 (Yemen's highest score for this subattribute since 1975). However, the escalation of the conflict and the beginning of the war in 2015 meant that this score plunged to 0.20 in 2018, one of the lowest scores that Yemen has seen.

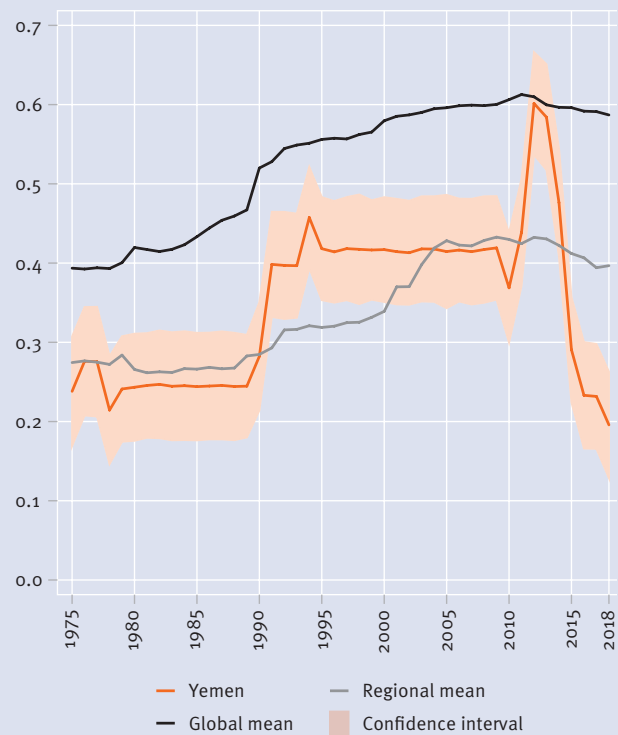
It is difficult to explain the GSoD Indices scores for Yemen (see Table 2.13) without considering the almost complete breakdown of institutional mechanisms that have resulted from the armed conflict in the country. When juxtaposed against a prism of war, it becomes clear why most aspects of the GSoD Indices have declined in a statistically significant manner since 2015 in Yemen. On subattributes such as Clean Elections, Inclusive Suffrage, Electoral Participation and Local Democracy, Yemen now scores zero, because such mechanisms are simply non-existent in such conditions of war.

This has subsequently resulted in Yemen falling into the non-democracy category. The situation in the country remains

critical: 14.3 million people are classified as being in acute need, of which two million are children under the age of five. More than 20 million people in Yemen suffer from food insecurity and 10 million suffer extreme levels of hunger (UN OCHA 2019). In early 2019, the UN stated that Yemen continues to be the world's greatest humanitarian crisis (UN News 2019b).

FIGURE 2.19

Civil Society Participation in Yemen, 1975–2018



Notes: The light-shaded bands around the orange line demarcate the 68 per cent confidence bounds of the estimates.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>.

TABLE 2.13

The state of democracy in Yemen, 2018

GSoD attribute score				
Representative Government	Fundamental Rights	Checks on Government	Impartial Administration	Participatory Engagement
0.0 –	0.27 –	0.29 –	0.21 =	Low

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>.

Notes: = denotes no statistically significant increase or decrease in the last five-year period; – denotes a statistically significant decrease in the last five-year period.

Laundering Law and Counter-Terrorism Financing Law. NGOs that fail to comply with these requirements now face suspension, monetary fines, or even detention. In Bahrain, the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Interior vet funding for CSOs from international sources (Abdelaziz 2017).

2.2.4. Conclusion

The Middle East is the region in the world that suffers from the greatest democratic weakness. The democratic hopes brought about by the Arab Uprisings have dwindled and the region's democratic performance has since worsened. Moreover, a number of countries in the Middle East (including Bahrain and Yemen) and North Africa (including Egypt and Libya) have suffered from deepening autocratization, with significant declines on at least three of their democratic subattributes since 2013.




The Middle East is also home to the largest share of enduring non-democracies in the world and its hybrid regimes have never made the step to full democracy, seemingly stuck in an enduring state of hybridity. The conflicts in Syria and Yemen continue to have humanitarian ripple effects on the rest of the region.

The region's share of democracies is the lowest in the world, and the two democracies that do exist—Iraq and Lebanon—are weak and democratically fragile. The violent protests in Iraq in 2019 provide testimony to the many challenges the country is yet to overcome on its road to democratic consolidation. Efforts need to focus on supporting the strengthening of these two countries' democracy, and on the lessons from Tunisia's experience. Significant efforts are also required in order to enhance gender equality and speed up progress on SDG 5.5 in the region.

TABLE 2.14

The Global State of Democracy Indices snapshot: Policy considerations for the Middle East

This table offers a snapshot of the state of democracy in the Middle East, using the GSoD conceptual framework as an organizing structure. It presents policy considerations across the five main attributes of democracy—Representative Government, Fundamental Rights, Checks on Government, Impartial Administration and Participatory Engagement. As Syria and Yemen are countries in conflict, the immediate priority must be ending these conflicts. For this reason, the policy considerations do not apply to these two countries.

 Representative Government		GSoD Indices score: Low (0.23)
 Elected Government:	<p>Nine countries in the Middle East are in the bottom 25 per cent of the world for Elected Government. Iraq and Lebanon, the only democracies in the region, perform in the mid-range, as does Syria.</p>	<p>Priority countries for reform: Bahrain, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE</p> <p>Priority areas for reform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for the decentralization of the government and its processes. • Focus on the subregional and then the national level, by building capacity for local councils.
 Clean Elections:	<p>Two countries (Bahrain and Yemen) have seen significant declines on Clean Elections between 2013 and 2018. Of all the countries in the Middle East, 58 per cent are now below the global average for Clean Elections. In addition, 42 per cent are in the bottom 25 per cent of global performance on this measure.</p>	<p>Priority countries for reform: Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia</p>



Inclusive Suffrage:

At 0.56, the Middle East has the lowest levels of Inclusive Suffrage of any region in the world. This is well below the global average of 0.84. In addition, 58 per cent of the countries in the Middle East are in the bottom 25 per cent of global performance. Kuwait is the only country in the region in the top 25 per cent of global performance.

Priority countries for reform:

Qatar and Saudi Arabia

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Kuwait (top 25% in the world)



Free Political Parties:

The Gulf monarchies (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE) are among the 15 lowest-scoring countries in the world on Free Political Parties. The Middle East has the lowest levels of Free Political Parties of any region in the world, at 0.28—well below the global average of 0.54.

Priority countries for reform:

The GCC monarchies

Priority areas for reform:

- The GCC monarchies should consider allowing the establishment of free political parties.
- Allow political parties to operate without restricting their agendas.



Fundamental Rights

GSoD Indices score: Mid-range (0.42)



Access to Justice:

On Access to Justice, 75 per cent of countries in the Middle East score in the mid-range. In addition, 42 per cent of countries in the region are in the bottom 25 per cent globally.

Priority countries for reform:

Bahrain



Civil Liberties:

A total of 11 countries in the Middle East (92 per cent) are in the bottom 25 per cent of global performance for Civil Liberties.

Priority countries for reform:

Bahrain, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE



Gender Equality:

A total of 10 countries in the Middle East (83 per cent) score low on Gender Equality, while only 2 (Jordan and Lebanon) score in the mid-range. All 12 countries in the Middle East are below the global average on Gender Equality, and in the bottom 25 per cent of the world. Of the 10 worst-performing countries in the world, 4 are in the Middle East. Yemen and Saudi Arabia score the lowest, with 0.19 and 0.20, respectively. Iraq is one of the three democracies in the world that score low on Gender Equality.

Priority democracies for reform:

Iraq

Priority areas for reform:

Encourage gender quotas in parliaments, as they have proved useful in other countries to encourage women's participation in politics.



Social Group Equality:

Half of the countries in the Middle East score in the bottom 25 per cent for Social Group Equality.

Priority countries for reform:

Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE



Basic Welfare*:

Half of the countries in the Middle East have high levels of Basic Welfare, while the other half have mid-range levels. No country in the region performs low on this measure; 58 per cent of countries in the Middle East are above the global average on Basic Welfare.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Lebanon and Qatar, which score at the top 25% in the world



Checks on Government

GSoD Indices score: Low (0.37)



Effective Parliament:

On Effective Parliament, 58 per cent of countries in the Middle East score in the bottom 25 per cent.

Priority countries for reform:

Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE



Judicial Independence:

Half of the countries in the Middle East score in the bottom 25 per cent for Judicial Independence. No countries in the region have high levels, or score over the global average, on Judicial Independence.

Priority countries for reform:

Bahrain, Iran, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE



Media Integrity:

On Media Integrity, 75 per cent of countries in the Middle East are in the global bottom 25 per cent.

Priority countries for reform:

Bahrain, Iran, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE



Impartial Administration

GSoD Indices score: Mid-range (0.41)



Absence of Corruption:

Half of the countries in the Middle East score below the global average on Absence of Corruption, while two (Oman and the UAE) are above the global average.

Priority democracies for reform:

Lebanon and Iraq

Priority areas for reform:

- Enforce anti-corruption laws and demand accountability and legal transparency.
- Use the digitalization of bureaucratic processes as a tool to fight corruption.



Predictable Enforcement:

On Predictable Enforcement, 41 per cent of countries in the Middle East have mid-range performance, while 50 per cent have low levels. No countries in the region has seen any advance on Predictable Enforcement since 2013.

Priority democracies for reform:

Iraq



Participatory Engagement

GSoD Indices score: Low



Civil Society Participation:

On Civil Society Participation, 67 per cent of countries in the Middle East are in the bottom 25 per cent. Iraq is the only country with high levels of Civil Society Participation.

Priority countries for reform:

Bahrain, Iran, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE

Priority areas for reform:

Help empower civil society and citizens by mobilizing them to rebuild political institutions and enhance their participation.

Good-practice countries for regional learning:

Iraq



Electoral Participation:

Three-quarters of the countries in the Middle East are in the bottom 25 per cent for Electoral Participation. No country is in the top 25 per cent. Iraq and Lebanon, both democracies, have a mid-range performance for this subattribute.

Priority countries for reform:

Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia



Direct Democracy:

The Middle East has the lowest average score in the world on Direct Democracy: all countries in the region have low performance for this subattribute, while 75 per cent score in the bottom 25 per cent worldwide.

Priority countries for reform:

All countries



Local Democracy:

No country in the Middle East has high levels of Local Democracy. While nine countries in the region have low levels of Local Democracy, two have mid-range levels. Kuwait does not have a score for this subattribute. There have been positive developments in the last 20 years with the percentage of countries with low levels of Local Democracy falling from 100 per cent in 1998 to 82 per cent in 2018.

Priority democracies for reform:

Iraq

Notes: *The data on Basic Welfare contains some gaps and may not be applicable in countries with quickly worsening conditions (e.g. Syria and Yemen) as not all indicator-level data is updated annually.

TABLE 2.15

Regime classification, the Middle East, 2018

This table shows the regime classification for all of the countries in the Middle East covered by the GSoD Indices, as well as their respective scores on the five GSoD attributes.

Country	GSoD attribute				
	Representative Government	Fundamental Rights	Checks on Government	Impartial Administration	Participatory Engagement
Democracies					
Iraq	0.49 =	0.44 =	0.58 =	0.34	Low
Lebanon	0.50 =	0.54 =	0.57 =	0.398 =	Mid-range
Hybrid regimes					
Jordan	0.403 =	0.59 =	0.53 =	0.55 =	Low
Kuwait	0.41 =	0.59 =	0.59 =	0.50 =	Low
Oman	0.35 =	0.54 =	0.30 =	0.53 =	Low
Non-democracies					
Bahrain	0.23 =	0.22 =	0.21 =	0.33 =	Low
Iran	0.28 =	0.43 =	0.41 =	0.43 =	Low
Qatar	0 =	0.46 =	0.25 =	0.42 =	Low
Saudi Arabia	0 =	0.34 =	0.23 =	0.36 =	Low
Syria	0 =	0.21 =	0.21 =	0.17 =	Low
United Arab Emirates	0.12 =	0.45 =	0.22 =	0.703 =	Low
Yemen	0 –	0.27 –	0.29 –	0.21 =	Low

■ High ■ Mid-range ■ Low

Notes: = denotes no statistically significant increase or decrease in the last five-year period; + denotes a statistically significant increase in the last five-year period; – denotes a statistically significant decrease in the last five-year period.

Source: International IDEA, The Global State of Democracy Indices (2019), <<http://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices>>.

References

Africa

- Abderrahim, T. and Aggad, F., 'Starting afresh: The Maghreb's relations with sub-Saharan Africa', European Centre for Development Policy Management Discussion Paper No. 225, April 2018, <<https://ecdpm.org/publications/starting-afresh-maghreb-sub-saharan-africa/>>, accessed 26 July 2019
- Abebe, A. K., 'It's time for the African Union to put a stop to "third-termism"', Al Jazeera, 8 July 2019, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/time-african-union-put-stop-termism-190704090900437.html>>, accessed 18 July 2019
- Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 'Scrapping Presidential Age Limits Sets Uganda on a Course of Instability', 27 August 2018, <<https://africacenter.org/spotlight/scrapping-presidential-age-limits-sets-uganda-on-course-of-instability/>>, accessed 18 July 2019
- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, 2007, <<https://au.int/en/treaties/african-charter-democracy-elections-and-governance>>, accessed 18 July 2019
- African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, 1986, <<https://au.int/en/treaties/african-charter-human-and-peoples-rights>>, accessed 7 May 2019
- African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, 'Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa', 11 July 2003, <<https://au.int/en/treaties/protocol-african-charter-human-and-peoples-rights-rights-women-africa>>, accessed 12 August 2019
- African Development Bank Group (AfDB Group), Gender Equality Index, 2015, <<https://www.afdb.org/en/topics-and-sectors/topics/quality-assurance-results/gender-equality-index>>, accessed 7 May 2019
- , *African Economic Outlook 2019* (Abidjan: AfDB Group, 2019), <<https://www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/african-economic-outlook>>, accessed 11 April 2019
- African Union, 'The African Women's Decade: Grassroots Approach to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment', [n.d.], <<https://au.int/en/documents-43>>, accessed 7 May 2019
- Ahlijah, W., 'Togo protests: will the planned talks go anywhere?', African Arguments, 8 February 2018, <<https://africanarguments.org/2018/02/09/togo-protests-will-the-planned-talks-go-anywhere/>>, accessed 1 May 2019
- Akum, F., 'Does regime security come ahead of real reform in Gabon?', Institute for Security Studies, 11 February 2019, <<https://issafrica.org/iss-today/does-regime-security-come-ahead-of-real-reform-in-gabon>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Akum, F. and Donnefeld, Z., 'Gathering Storm Clouds: Political and Economic Uncertainty in Central Africa' (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2017), <<https://issafrica.org/research/central-africa-report/gathering-storm-clouds-political-and-economic-uncertainty-in-central-africa>>, accessed 1 May 2019
- Al Jazeera, 'Equatorial Guinea election: Incumbent expected to win', 25 April 2016, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/04/equatorial-guinea-election-160424044551251.html>>, accessed 17 June 2019
- , 'Egyptians approve extension to President el-Sisi's rule', 23 April 2019a, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/04/egyptians-approve-extension-president-el-sisi-rule-190423180853792.html>>, accessed 18 July 2019
- , 'Togo changes law to let president stand for two more terms', 9 May 2019b, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/togo-law-president-stand-terms-190509180859448.html>>, accessed 19 June 2019
- Annan, N., 'Violent conflicts and civil strife in West Africa: Causes, challenges and prospects', *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 3/1 (2014), pp. 1–16, <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/sta.da>>
- Associated Press, 'Abiy talks tough in coup aftermath, vows to protect Ethiopia's sovereignty', Africa News, 2 July 2019, <<https://www.africanews.com/2019/07/02/abiy-talks-tough-in-coup-aftermath-vows-to-protect-ethiopia-s-sovereignty/>>, accessed 4 July 2019
- Barka, H. B. and Ncube, M., 'Political Fragility in Africa: Are Military Coups d'Etat a Never-Ending Phenomenon?', African Development Bank Group Economic Brief, 19 October 2012, <<https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/document/economic-brief-political-fragility-in-africa-are-military-coups-detat-a-never-ending-phenomenon-29430>>, accessed 24 March 2019
- Berwouts, K., 'DRC: President Tshisekedi's leash just got a little tighter', African Arguments, 2 April 2019, <<https://africanarguments.org/2019/04/02/drc-president-tshisekedi-leash-tighter/>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Besaw, C. and Frank, M., 'No coups occurred in 2018. Will next year be so stable?', The Conversation, 13 December 2018, <<https://theconversation.com/no-coups-occurred-in-2018-will-next-year-be-so-stable-108387>>, accessed 10 September 2019
- Biryabarema, E., 'Uganda seeks constitutional change that would let Museveni extend rule', Reuters, 14 July 2017, <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-uganda-politics-idUSKBN19Z1KS>>, accessed 17 June 2019
- Blomfield, A., 'Warnings over "Africa's Yugoslavia" as Ethiopia coup attempt heightens risk of violent Balkan-style split', *The Telegraph*, 30 June 2019, <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/06/30/warnings-africas-yugoslavia-ethiopia-coup-attempt-heightens/>>, accessed 4 July 2019
- Burke, J., 'Zimbabwe election: Mnangagwa narrowly wins presidential poll', *The Guardian*, 3 August 2018, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/02/mnangagwas-zanu-pf-on-track-to-pull-off-narrow-win-in-zimbabwe-election>>, accessed 1 May 2019
- The Carter Center, 'Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in Sierra Leone: Final Report', 23 March 2018, <<http://aceproject.org/ero-en/regions/africa/SL/sierra-leone-expert-mission-report-on-march-7>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Chrisafis, A. and Black, I., 'Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali forced to flee Tunisia as protesters claim victory', *The Guardian*, 15 January 2011, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/14/tunisian-president-flees-country-protests>>, accessed on 11 April 2019
- Cline Center for Advanced Social Research, Coup D'etat Project, 2013, <<https://clinecenter.illinois.edu/project/research-themes/democracy-and-development/coup-detat-project-cdp>>, accessed 20 June 2019
- Democracy Reporting International, 'Tunisia should establish Constitutional Court soon', 9 May 2017, <<https://democracy-reporting.org/fr/tunisia-should-establish-constitutional-court-soon/>>, accessed 11 April 2019
- Diome, M., 'Between representation crisis, social movements representivity crisis and media propaganda: What role for Senegalese citizens?', in N. S. Sylla (ed.), *Liberalism and Its Discontents: Social Movements in West Africa* (Dakar: Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, 2014)
- Galvin, M., 'Cameroon's Failure of Politics', Council on Foreign Relations, 25 July 2018, <<https://www.cfr.org/blog/camerouns-failure-politics>>, accessed 26 July 2019
- Goldberg, E., 'Egypt's new political system of one: its President,' *Washington Post*, 15 August 2018
- Grewal, S. and Hamid, S., 'Tunisia just lost its anchor of stability. That's a good thing', *Foreign Policy*, 12 October 2018, <<https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/10/12/tunisia-just-lost-its-anchor-of-stability-thats-a-good-thing/>>, accessed 11 April 2019
- Hartmann, C., 'ECOWAS and the restoration of democracy in The Gambia', *Africa Spectrum*, 52/1 (2017), pp. 85–99, <<https://doi.org/10.1177/000203971705200104>>

- Human Rights Watch, 'State of Emergency Ends in Ethiopia', 7 Aug 2017, <<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/08/07/state-emergency-ends-ethiopia>>, accessed 17 June 2019
- International Crisis Group, 'Making the Central African Republic's Latest Peace Agreement Stick', 18 June 2019, <<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/central-african-republic/277-making-central-african-republics-latest-peace-agreement-stick>>, accessed 19 June 2019
- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), *The Role of Regional Organizations in the Protection of Constitutionalism*, International IDEA Discussion Paper, 24 August 2016, <<https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/role-regional-organizations-protection-constitutionalism>>, accessed 10 September 2019
- , 'Three decades of democratic transition in Africa: What are the dividends for citizens?', 27 April 2018a, <<https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/three-decades-democratic-transition-africa-what-are-dividends-citizens>>, accessed 20 June 2019
- , 'Corruption and the Global State of Democracy Indices', GSoD In Focus No. 4, December 2018b, <<https://doi.org/10.31752/idea.2018.76>>
- International IDEA and Hanns Seidel Stiftung, *Judicial Review Systems in West Africa: A Comparative Analysis* (Stockholm: International IDEA and Hanns Seidel Stiftung, 2016), <<https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/judicial-review-systems-west-africa-comparative-analysis>>, accessed 26 July 2019
- Jeffang, K., 'Gambia: Constitutional Review Commissioners Sworn-in', All Africa, 5 June 2018, <<https://allafrica.com/stories/201806050854.html>>, accessed 19 June 2019
- Kelecha, M., 'Protest, Repression and Revolution in Ethiopia', Review of African Political Economy, 6 August 2016, <<http://roape.net/2019/01/24/protest-repression-and-revolution-in-ethiopia/>>, accessed 17 June 2019
- Kherigi, I., 'The Role of Decentralization in Tunisia's Transition to Democracy', Fletcher Forum of World Affairs, 29 October 2018, <<http://www.fletcherforum.org/home/2018/10/14/the-role-of-decentralization-in-tunisias-transition-to-democracy>>, accessed 11 April 2019
- Kohnert, D., 'No change in sight: Togo's Political and Socio-Economic Development (2017–2019)', *AfricArXiv*, 23 June 2019, <<https://doi.org/10.31730/osf.io/h45ya>>
- Latek, M., 'Zimbabwe's post-electoral challenges', European Parliament Briefing, 13 September 2018, <[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI\(2018\)625183](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI(2018)625183)>, accessed 17 June 2019
- Law Hub Gambia, Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission Act, 2017, <<https://www.lawhubgambia.com/truth-reconciliation-reparations-commission>>, accessed 18 July 2019
- Lührmann, A. et al., 'State of the world 2017: Autocratization and exclusion?', *Democratization*, 25/8 (2018), pp. 1321–40, <<https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2018.1479693>>
- MacDougall, C. and Cooper, H., 'George Weah Wins Liberia Election', *New York Times*, 28 December 2017, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/28/world/africa/george-weah-liberia-election.html>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- McVeigh, T., 'Rwanda votes to give President Paul Kagame right to rule until 2034', *The Guardian*, 20 December 2015, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/20/rwanda-vote-gives-president-paul-kagame-extended-powers>>, accessed 17 June 2019
- Makulilo, B. A. et al., *Election Management Bodies in East Africa: A Comparative Study of the Contributions of Elections Commission to the Strengthening of Democracy* (Johannesburg: Open Society Foundation, 2015), <<https://reliefweb.int/report/burundi/election-management-bodies-east-africa-comparative-study-contribution-electoral>>, accessed 26 July 2019
- Mattes, R. and Bratton, M., 'Do Africans still want democracy?', Afrobarometer Policy Paper No. 36, November 2016, <<https://afrobarometer.org/publications/pp36-do-africans-still-want-democracy>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Mbaku, J. M., 'Elections in Africa in 2018: Lessons from Kenya's 2017 Electoral Experiences', Brookings Institution, 1 February 2018, <<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2018/02/01/foresight-africa-viewpoint-elections-in-africa-in-2018-lessons-from-kenyas-2017-electoral-experiences/>>, accessed 26 July 2019
- Mikhael, D., 'Burundi: crisis looms as 2020 elections open up old divisions', *The Conversation*, 24 January 2019, <<https://theconversation.com/burundi-crisis-looms-as-2020-elections-open-up-old-divisions-110049>>, accessed 17 June 2019
- Mkandawire, T., 'In "African democracy", the big men believe in choosing their own voters', *Daily Nation*, 18 April 2008, <<http://allafrica.com/stories/200804171247.html>>, accessed 27 May 2010
- Moore, J., 'Uganda Lifts an Age Limit, Paving the Way for a President for Life', *New York Times*, 20 December 2017, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/20/world/africa/uganda-president-museveni-age-limit.html>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Murray, E. and Mangan, F., *The 2015–2016 CAR Elections, A Look Back*, United States Institute of Peace Special Report No. 403, May 2017, <<https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/05/2015-2016-central-african-republic-elections-look-back>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Nossiter, A., 'Algeria's President Bouteflika is gone. What happens now?', *New York Times*, 3 April 2019, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/03/world/africa/algeria-bouteflika-what-now.html>>, accessed 17 June 2019
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *OECD Economic Surveys: Tunisia 2018*, 29 March 2018, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco_surveys-tun-2018-en>
- Ogola, G., 'Shutting down the internet doesn't work—but governments keep doing it', *Quartz Africa*, 20 February 2019, <<https://qz.com/africa/1554643/internet-shutdowns-dont-work-but-governments-still-do-them/>>, accessed 19 June 2019
- Oguonu, C. N. and Ezeibe, C. C., 'African Union and conflict resolution in Africa', *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5/27 (2014), pp. 325–32, <<https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n27p325>>
- Reinl, J., 'ICC prosecutor: Omar al-Bashir must answer for Darfur abuses now', *Al Jazeera*, 19 June 2019, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/icc-prosecutor-omar-al-bashir-answer-darfur-abuses-190619155025202.html>>, accessed 20 June 2019
- Reuters, 'Sudan: former president Omar al-Bashir moved to prison', *The Guardian*, 18 April 2019, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/18/sudan-former-president-omar-al-bashir-moved-to-prison>>, accessed 17 June 2019
- Schulz-Herzenberg, C., 'Voter participation in the South African elections of 2014', Institute for Security Studies Policy Brief No. 61, August 2014, <<https://issafrica.org/research/policy-brief/voter-participation-in-the-south-african-elections-of-2014>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- M. Söderberg Kovacs and J. Bjarnesen (eds), *Violence in African Elections: Between Democracy and Big Man Politics* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute and Zed Books, 2018), <<http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1192338&dsid=2031>>, accessed 26 July 2019
- Temin, J., 'The Alarming Decline of Democracy in East Africa', *Foreign Affairs*, 27 November 2017, <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/east-africa/2017-11-27/alarming-decline-democracy-east-africa>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Tobor, N., 'Mal's Internet shutdown on the eve of elections', *iAfrican*, 13 August 2018, <<https://www.iafrican.com/2018/08/13/mali-internet-shutdown-elections/>>, accessed 18 July 2019
- Tsolakis, M., 'Street discussion spaces in post-conflict Côte d'Ivoire: non-formal learning, dialogue and daily life', *Educação & Realidade*, 43/3 (2018), <<https://dx.doi.org/10.1590/2175-623674797>>
- Wienkoop, N.-K. and Bertrand, E., 'Popular Resistance to Authoritarian Consolidation in Burkina Faso', *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 16 May 2018, <<https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/05/16/popular-resistance-to-authoritarian-consolidation-in-burkina-faso-pub-76363>>, accessed 19 June 2019
- Wodrig, S. and Grauvogel, J., 'Talking past each other: regional and domestic resistance in the Burundian intervention scene', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 51/3, 2016, pp. 272–90, <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836716632559>>

The Middle East

- Abdelaziz, M., 'The hard reality of civil society in the Arab world', Washington Institute, 11 December 2017, <<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/fikraforum/view/the-hard-reality-of-civil-society-in-the-arab-world>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Al Jazeera, 'Syria's civil war explained from the beginning', 14 April 2018, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/05/syria-civil-war-explained-160505084119966.html>>, accessed 13 June 2019
- Al Rahim, R., 'Women MPs in the Iraqi parliament', Wilson Center, 18 March 2019, <<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/women-mps-the-iraqi-parliament>>, accessed 18 August 2019
- Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), *Shattering the Façade: A Report on Bahrain's Implementation of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) Recommendations Four Years On* (Washington, DC: ADHRB, 2015), <<https://www.adhrb.org/2015/11/shattering-the-facade-a-report-on-bahrains-implementation-of-the-bahrain-independent-commission-of-inquiry-bici-four-years-on/>>, accessed 19 August 2019
- Arab Barometer, 'Lebanon: Five Years after the Arab Uprisings: Findings from the Arab Barometer', 20 October 2017, <<https://www.arabbarometer.org/countries/lebanon/>>, accessed 19 May 2019
- Article 19, 'Lebanon: Right of access to information law a major step despite enforcement challenges', Refworld, 24 February 2017, <<https://www.refworld.org/docid/58b3ff994.html>>, accessed 18 August 2019
- Associated Press, 'Saudi Arabia tortured female right-to-drive activists, say Amnesty', *The Guardian*, 21 November 2018, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/21/saudi-arabia-tortured-female-right-to-drive-activists-says-amnesty>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), *Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry* (Manama: BICI, December 2011), <<http://www.bici.org.bh/BICIREportEN.pdf>>, accessed 19 August 2019
- Barnes-Dacey, J., 'The end of the post-Khashoggi era? Europe's collapsing unity on Saudi Arabia', European Council on Foreign Relations, 6 March 2019, <https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_the_end_of_the_post_khashoggi_era_europes_collapsing_unity_on_sa>, accessed 18 August 2019
- BBC News, 'Arab Uprising: Kuwait', 16 December 2013, <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-19401680>>, accessed 17 May 2019
- , 'Gaza protests: thousands mark "Great Return" anniversary', 30 March 2019, <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-47758369>>, accessed 8 July 2019
- Borshchevskaya, A., 'Will Russian–Saudi relations continue to improve?', *Foreign Affairs*, 2017, <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/saudi-arabia/2017-10-10/will-russian-saudi-relations-continue-improve>>, accessed 3 June 2019
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, '2012 Egyptian Parliamentary Elections', 22 January 2015, <<https://carnegieendowment.org/2015/01/22/2012-egyptian-parliamentary-elections-pub-58800>>, accessed July 15, 2019
- Cesari, J., *What is Political Islam?* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2017)
- Chakchouk, M. et al., 'From revolution to reform: recommendations for spectrum policy in transitional Tunisia', *Journal of Information Policy*, 3 (2013), pp. 575–600, <<http://www.doi.org/10.5325/jinfopoli.3.2013.0575>>
- Cohn, L., '15 female candidates ran for Parliament in Kuwait's latest election. Only this woman won', *Fortune*, 28 November 2016, <<https://fortune.com/2016/11/28/kuwait-parliament-election-women/>>, accessed 3 July 2019
- Council on Foreign Relations, 'Yemen 2019: Current Peace Effort', 2019, <<https://www.cfr.org/interactive/interactive/womens-participation-in-peace-processes/yemen>>, accessed 31 August 2019
- Dalacoura, K., 'Women and gender in the Middle East and North Africa: Mapping the field and addressing policy dilemmas at the post-2011 juncture', Middle East and North Africa Regional Architecture (MENARA) Final Report No. 3, March 2019, <<http://www.menaraproject.eu/portfolio-items/women-and-gender-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa-mapping-the-field-and-addressing-policy-dilemmas-at-the-post-2011-juncture/>>, accessed 19 August 2019
- Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), 'Lebanon commits to implement EITI', 31 January 2017, <<https://eiti.org/news/lebanon-commits-to-implement-eiti>>, accessed 18 August 2019
- Fanack, 'Press Freedom in Kuwait', 2018, <<https://fanack.com/kuwait/human-rights/press-freedom/>>, accessed 15 July 2019
- Fontevicchia, A., 'Coup d'etat in Egypt: Military removes President Morsi and suspends the constitution', *Forbes*, 3 July 2013, <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/afontevicchia/2013/07/03/revolution-in-egypt-military-removes-president-morsi-and-suspends-the-constitution/#boe33846202f>>, accessed 20 June 2019
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office [UK], 'Jamal Khashoggi's death: joint statement by UK, France and Germany foreign ministers', Press release, 21 October 2018, <<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/joint-uk-france-and-germany-statement-on-jamal-khashoggis-death>>, accessed 7 September 2019
- Foy, H., 'Russia–Saudi Arabia rapprochement reshapes more than oil market', *Financial Times*, 30 October 2018, <<https://www.ft.com/content/aa39b74c-4f0c-11e8-ac41-759eee1efb74>>, accessed 16 June 2019
- Freedom House, 'Bahrain: Halt violence against protesters', 26 January 2017, <<https://freedomhouse.org/article/bahrain-halt-violence-against-protesters>>, accessed 18 May 2019
- Frontline Defenders, 'Case history: Nabeel Rajab', 2019, <<https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/es/case/case-history-nabeel-rajab>>, accessed 19 August 2019
- GAN Integrity, 'Oman corruption report', Business Anti-Corruption Portal, March 2016, <<https://www.ganintegrity.com/portal/country-profiles/oman/>>, accessed 29 May 2019
- , 'Iran Corruption Report', Business Anti-Corruption Portal, April 2017, <<https://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/iran/>>, accessed 21 May 2019
- Gerecht, R. M., 'The Middle East still needs democracy', *Washington Post*, 15 February 2019, <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/02/15/middle-east-still-needs-democracy/>>, accessed 19 August 2019
- Hall, R., 'Jamal Khashoggi: Russia refuses to criticize Saudi Arabia in wake of journalist's murder', *The Independent*, 23 October 2018, <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/jamal-khashoggi-russia-putin-saudi-arabia-murder-latest-turkey-consulate-istanbul-a8597646.html>>, accessed 28 May 2019
- Hirschkind, C., 'What is political Islam?', *Middle East Report*, 205 (1997), pp. 12–14, <<https://doi.org/10.2307/3013086>>
- Human Rights Watch, 'Jordan: Terrorism Amendments Threaten Rights', 17 May 2014, <<https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/05/17/jordan-terrorism-amendments-threaten-rights>>, accessed 22 May 2019
- , 'Saudi Arabia: Free right-to-drive activists', 11 September 2018, <<https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/09/11/saudi-arabia-free-right-drive-activists>>, accessed 19 May 2019
- , 'Iran: Events of 2018', *World Report 2019* (New York: HRW, 2019), <<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/iran>>, accessed May 21, 2019
- International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), 'Civic Freedom monitor: Yemen', 14 November 2018, <<http://www.icnl.org/research/monitor/yemen.html>>, accessed 19 August 2019
- International IDEA and the Center for Constitutional Transitions, *Constitutional Courts after the Arab Spring* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2014), <<https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/constitutional-courts-after-arab-spring-appointment-mechanisms-and-relative>>, accessed 17 May 2019
- Inter-Parliamentary Union, 'Kuwait: Majles Al-Ommah (National Assembly)', 2017, <http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2171_A.htm>, accessed 15 July 2019
- , 'Percentage of women in national parliaments', 1 February 2019, <<https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking?month=2&year=2019>>, accessed 13 June 2019
- Khaleej Times, 'New powers to Council of Oman welcomed', 19 March 2011, <<https://www.khaleejtimes.com/region/new-powers-to-council-of-oman-welcomed>>, accessed 19 August 2019
- Magid, P., 'How ISIS still threatens Iraq', *Foreign Policy*, 28 May 2019, <<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/28/how-isis-still-threatens-iraq/>>, accessed 10 June 2019

- Mammadov, R., 'Growing ties with Russia could strain Saudi–US relations', Middle East Institute, 5 February 2019, <<https://www.mei.edu/publications/growing-ties-russia-could-strain-saudi-us-relations>>, accessed 1 July 2019
- Manea, E., 'Yemen', in S. Kelly and J. Breslin (eds), *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Progress Amid Resistance* (New York: Freedom House; Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), <<https://freedomhouse.org/report/women039s-rights-middle-east-and-north-africa/womens-rights-middle-east-and-north-africa-2010>>, accessed 9 August 2019
- Mesa Delmonte, L., 'Trump genera incertidumbre en Qatar' [Trump creates uncertainty in Qatar], *Siempre!*, 18 March 2017a, <<http://www.siempre.mx/2017/03/generan-incertidumbre-en-qatar/>>, accessed 25 June 2019
- , 'Arabia Saudita neutraliza a Trump' [Saudi Arabia neutralizes Trump], *Siempre!*, 1 April 2017b, <<http://www.siempre.mx/2017/04/arabia-saudita-neutraliza-a-trump/>>, accessed 25 June 2019
- Michaelson, R., 'Saudi Arabia bails three women on trial for human rights activism', *The Guardian*, 28 March 2019, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/28/saudi-arabia-releases-three-human-rights-activists-on-bail>>, accessed 21 August 2019
- Ollivant, D. and Bull, B., 'Iraq after ISIS: what to do now', *New America*, 24 April 2018, <<https://www.newamerica.org/international-security/reports/iraq-after-isis-what-do-now/>>, accessed 2 June 2019
- Open Doors, 'World Watch List: Iran', 2019, <<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/world-watch-list/iran/>>, accessed 28 June 2019
- Reporters Without Borders, 'World Press Freedom Index 2019', 2019a, <<https://rsf.org/en/ranking?#>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- , 'Syria', 2019b, <<https://rsf.org/en/syria>>, accessed 19 May 2019
- Reuters, 'Europe may need to change Saudi policies over Khashoggi case—Merkel ally', 17 October 2018a, <<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-saudi-politics-dissident-germany/europe-may-need-to-change-saudi-policies-over-khashoggi-case-merkel-ally-idUKKCN1MR0OP>>, accessed 7 September 2019
- , 'No arms for Riyadh while Khashoggi questions remain: Germany's Merkel', 21 October 2018b, <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-khashoggi-merkel/no-arms-for-riyadh-while-khashoggi-questions-remain-germanys-merkel-idUSKCN1MVoST>>, accessed 7 September 2019
- Salama, S., 'The UAE's giant strides towards universal suffrage', *Gulf News*, 2 May 2015, <<https://gulfnews.com/uae/government/the-uaes-giant-strides-towards-universal-suffrage-1.1503012>>, accessed 19 May 2019
- Schwedler, J., 'Studying political Islam', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 43/1 (2011), pp. 135–37, <<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743810001248>>
- Shahidsaleh, S., 'Corruption a way of life in Iran', *Middle East Eye*, 12 March 2016, <<https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/corruption-way-life-iran>>, accessed 18 May 2019
- Simon, S. W., 'The US rebalance and Southeast Asia: a work in progress', *Asian Survey*, 55/3 (2015), pp. 572–95, <<http://www.doi.org/10.1525/as.2015.55.3.572>>
- Social Media Exchange (SMEX), 'Egyptian parliament passes cybercrime law to legitimize its efforts to curb free speech', 14 June 2018, <<https://smex.org/egypt-passes-cybercrimes-law-to-legitimize-its-efforts-to-curb-free-speech/>>, accessed 21 August 2019
- Storey, H., 'After Khashoggi: a Saudi pivot to Russia and China?', *Foreign Brief: Geopolitical Risk Analysis*, 8 February 2019, <<https://www.foreignbrief.com/middle-east/after-khashoggi-a-saudi-pivot-to-russia-and-china/>>, accessed 29 May 2019
- Szmlolka, I., 'Political change in North Africa and the Arab Middle East: constitutional reforms and electoral processes', *Arab Studies Quarterly* 36/2 (2014), pp. 128–48, <<http://doi:10.13169/arabstudquar.36.2.0128>>
- Taylor, A., 'What became of the Arab Spring's ousted dictators', *Washington Post*, 4 December 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/12/04/what-became-of-the-arab-springs-ousted-dictators/?utm_term=.d9c115955153>, accessed 21 May 2019
- The Telegraph*, 'Jordanian King sacks his cabinet to stem protest', 1 July 2011a, <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/jordan/8296137/Jordanian-King-sacks-his-cabinet-to-stem-protests.html>>, accessed 20 August 2019
- , 'Jordan's King Abdullah II names prime minister to push through reforms', 17 October 2011b, <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/jordan/8832315/Jordans-King-Abdullah-II-names-prime-minister-to-push-through-reforms.html>>, accessed 20 August 2019
- Tran, M., 'Interview: Islam belongs in people's lives, not in politics, says Karima Bennouna', *The Guardian*, 28 October 2013, <<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/oct/28/islam-politics-karima-bennouna-fatwa-fundamentalism>>, accessed 8 September 2019
- Transparency International, 'People and corruption: Middle East and North Africa survey 2016', 3 May 2016, <https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/people_and_corruption_mena_survey_2016>, accessed 16 May 2019
- , 'Corruption Perception Index 2018', 2018, <<https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>>, accessed 18 May 2019
- United Nations, High Commissioner for Refugees, 'Emergencies: Yemen humanitarian crisis', 2019, <<https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/yemen/>>, accessed 5 May 2019
- , Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Occupied Palestinian Territory, 'Data on casualties', [n.d.], <<https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties>>, accessed 8 July 2019
- , Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Yemen: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview', 14 February 2019, <<https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/yemen-2019-humanitarian-needs-overview-enar>>, accessed 9 August 2019
- , Office of the High Commission on Human Rights (OHCHR), Human Rights Committee, 'Concluding observations on the initial report of Bahrain', CCPR/C/BHR/CO/1, 15 November 2018, <https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1213&Lang=en>, accessed 9 August 2019
- , Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, 'Full text of the Stockholm Agreement', 13 December 2018, <<https://osesgy.unmissions.org/stockholm-agreement>>, accessed 13 June 2019
- , Office in Geneva, 'Remarks by the Secretary-General to the Pledging Conference on Yemen', 3 April 2018, <[https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear_en\)/27F6CCAD7178F3E9C1258264003311FA?OpenDocument](https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/27F6CCAD7178F3E9C1258264003311FA?OpenDocument)>, accessed 9 August 2018
- , UN News, 'Palestine refugee crisis "expanding"; leaving highest number at risk this century across Gaza', 29 January 2019a, <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/01/1031562>>, accessed 8 July 2019
- , UN News, 'Humanitarian crisis in Yemen remains the worst in the world, warns UN', 14 February 2019b, <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/02/1032811>>, accessed 9 August 2019
- United Arab Emirates, Ministry of State for Federal National Council Affairs, 'Federal National Council Elections', 2015, <<https://www.mfnca.gov.ae/en/areas-of-focus/elections/2015/>>, accessed 20 May 2019
- Warraq, I., 'Is Islam compatible with democracy and human rights?', *Center for Inquiry*, 16 November 2018, <<https://centerforinquiry.org/blog/is-islam-compatible-with-democracy-and-human-rights/>>, accessed 8 September 2019
- World Vision, 'Syrian refugee crisis', 2019, <<https://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/syrian-refugee-crisis-facts>>, accessed 16 May 2019
- World Watch Monitor, 'Iran: staggering number of Christians arrested: 114 in a week', 2018, <<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/12/iran-staggering-number-of-christians-arrested-114-in-a-week/>>, accessed 17 May 2019