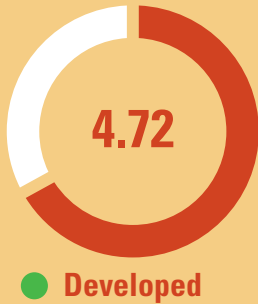
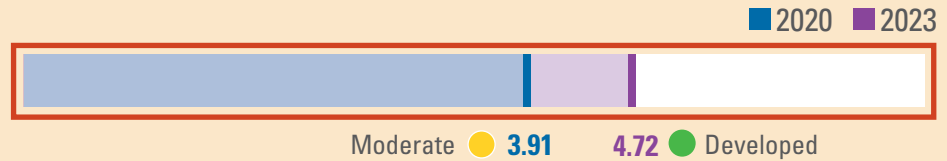




ARAB BUSINESS LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS



CONSUMER PROTECTION



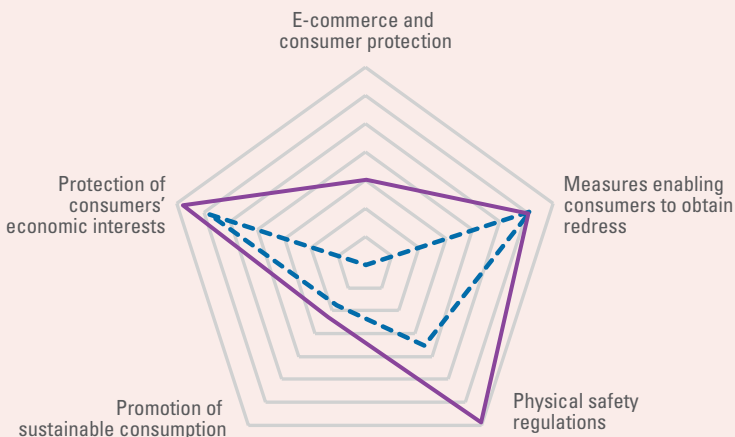
● Very weak ● Weak ● Basic ● Moderate ● Developed ● Strong ● Very strong

COMPONENTS

	2020	2023	
E-commerce and consumer protection	—	● 3.11	
Measures enabling consumers to obtain redress	● 6.13	● 6.13 ▶	
Physical safety regulations	● 3.50	● 7.00 ▲	
Promotion of sustainable consumption	● 1.75	● 2.33 ▲	
Protection of consumers' economic interests	● 5.83	● 7.00 ▲	

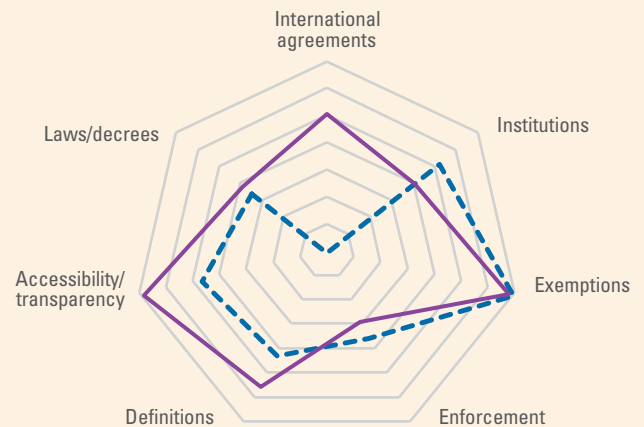
COMPONENTS

■ 2020 ■ 2023



ELEMENTS

■ 2020 ■ 2023



In 2008, Qatar has adopted its Consumer Protection Law No. 8/2008. The law covers different aspects of consumer protection, including food conditions in the markets, consumer rights and supplier obligations, and stipulates a sanction regime for infringements.



Physical safety regulations

Article 2(1) of the consumer protection law guarantees the right of the consumer to health and safety during the normal use of goods and services. Article 1 defines the competent authority as the special unit within the Ministry of Economy and Trade. The law, however, does not clarify the functions and full mandates of that unit.

Qatar had also ratified and issued the executive regulation for the Unified Law for Combating Commercial Fraud in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries No. 20/2019. According to article 3 of the Unified Law, and articles 2, 5, and 6 of its Executive Regulation, the suppliers should notify competent authorities of any contaminated or spoiled goods upon discovery or knowledge of them. The supplier is also required to stop selling or dealing with contaminated commodities and

must immediately initiate procedures for withdrawing the commodities and warning publicly against its use. Article 13 of the Unified Law states that the court should rule for the withdrawal of contaminated goods and publish its ruling in two daily newspapers at the expense of the supplier if no corrective measures were taken by the latter. Qatar coordinates with other GCC countries under the umbrella of the Secretariat General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which is represented by the GCC Standardization Organization.

It is worth noting that article 18 accords the advertiser an exemption from liability when the information included in the advertisement which was provided by the supplier is of a technical nature and its accuracy cannot be verified by the advertiser.



Protection of consumers' economic interests

Articles 2 and 3 guarantee rights of consumers, which include: the right to correct and accurate information, the right of free choice of goods and services, the right to participate in associations that protect consumer interests and the right to fair compensation for damage incurred due to the use of goods or services.

Articles 5 to 17 of the consumer protection law enumerate supplier duties, such as labelling commodities with the accurate information on price and specifications of products and providing guarantees on damaged goods. According to article 10, suppliers are prohibited from concealing any commodity, or refraining from selling it for the purpose of controlling the market price, or imposing the purchase of certain quantities, etc.



Measures enabling consumers to obtain redress

According to article 5 of the consumer protection law, if the sold product is found to be defective or noncompliant with standards, the supplier must accept the return of that product and provide the consumer with a refund or a replacement, or repair the defect free of charge.

Legal recourse is guaranteed in article 2 as consumers can present complaints regarding infringements. It is worth noting that the investigation procedure is not specified. Chapter 4 of the law lists a categorized sanction regime

(including fines and imprisonment). It is worth noting that article 22 allows the Minister of Commerce and Industry or his authorized delegate to settle any violations stipulated in this law prior to or during the institution of criminal proceedings or before the issuance of a final judgment based on specific conditions regarding the amount of penalties.

Finally, article 2(6) allows the establishment of associations, organizations and private institutions concerned with the protection of consumer interests.



Promotion of sustainable consumption

There are no legal provisions in the consumer protection law that target sustainable consumption. Rather, Qatar has adopted strategies to promote a culture of consumption rationalization and responsible consumption. Also, Qatar is moving strongly towards environment-friendly solutions, such as diversifying energy sources, investing in solar energy, moving towards an electric public transport system, shifting to green buildings and expanding natural solutions.¹

Also, the Environmental Protection Law No. 30/2002 aims to maintain environmental quality and natural balance, avoiding damage and adverse effects resulting from plans and programmes of construction, industrial, agricultural, or economic development, and raising environmental awareness, sustainable development of natural resources, and protecting the society and public health.



E-commerce and consumer protection

Qatar has adopted Law No. 16/2010 on electronic transactions and e-commerce. According to article 1 of this law, an electronic transaction is defined as any deal, contract, or agreement concluded or performed, in whole or in part, through electronic communications. Also, chapter 8 covers e-commerce in the context of consumer protection. According to article 53, electronic communication must be clear in identifying the person on whose behalf the commercial communication is made, and the nature of the online offers. According to article 60(4), the Supreme Council of Information and Communication (ictQATAR) takes the necessary measures against violators.

Article 55 requires from service providers, prior to an order being placed, to provide the consumer, in a clear and comprehensible manner, with the terms and conditions of the contract (including the accurate price) and a description of the product characteristics. Also, according to article 57, the consumer has, where contracts have been concluded by electronic communications, the right to rescind or terminate the contract within 3 days from the date of entering into the contract as long as the service provider does not fully implement the contract. Finally, pursuant to article 59, the privacy of consumer data is protected and guaranteed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To establish an independent consumer protection authority and empower it to investigate, conduct market studies and impose sanctions.
- To further develop and clarify the role of the judicial court in investigating and issuing decisions.
- To strengthen coordination mechanisms between the national consumer protection authority and other administrative authorities such as the competition, public health, customs, trade, and environmental authorities.
- To develop more policies and legal provisions that tackle sustainable consumption, including consumer activities, duties on manufacturers, and a specific sanction regime.
- To strengthen coordination and the establishment of agreements with regional and global consumer protection authorities to deter cross-border unfair practices that may be harmful to consumers.

¹ Qatar – Sustainable Development Goals.

