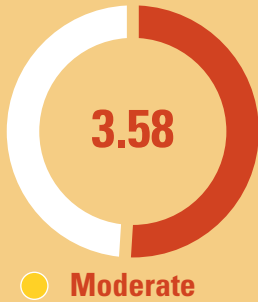
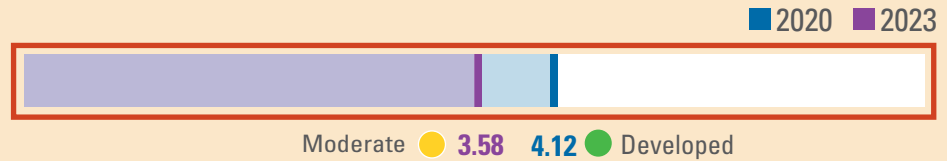




ARAB BUSINESS LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS



CONSUMER PROTECTION

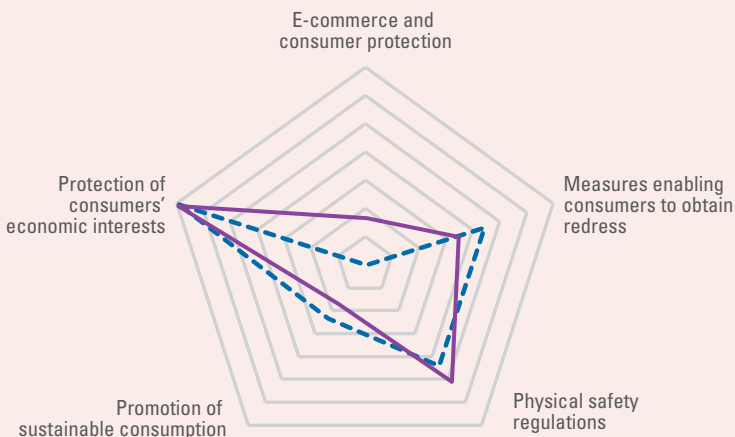


Very weak Weak Basic Moderate Developed Strong Very strong

COMPONENTS	2020	2023
E-commerce and consumer protection	—	1.75
Measures enabling consumers to obtain redress	4.38	3.50 ▼
Physical safety regulations	4.38	5.25 ▲
Promotion of sustainable consumption	2.33	1.75 ▼
Protection of consumers' economic interests	7.00	7.00 ▶

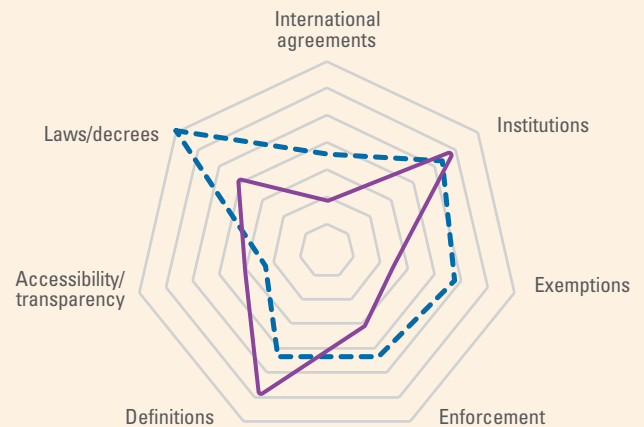
COMPONENTS

2020 2023



ELEMENTS

2020 2023



The Syrian Arab Republic adopted its Consumer Protection Law No. 2/2008 in 2008. In 2021, the law was amended by Legislative Decree No. 8/2021. The 2021 decree clearly aimed to protect consumer rights, ensure food safety and prevent monopoly by setting controls for the trade practices, pricing, and impose control over the quality of materials and products. The newly enacted Law has tightened sanctions and fines on infringers for monopoly, selling without an invoice, not announcing prices, tampering with weight and measures, selling at excessive prices, and fraud.



Physical safety regulations

Article 3 of the consumer protection law No. 8/2021 guarantees consumer rights to health and safety during the use/consumption of products. Article 11 charges the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection with taking the necessary measures for preventing practices such as monopoly and price gouging, and with monitoring the adherence to the practice of announcing the prices and fees for goods and services. Also, articles 12 to 15 allow the Minister to establish committees that aim to fix and control prices as well as the fees of services linked to the goods and products.

Law No. 8/2021 does not include any exemption for suppliers. However, according to article 4, consumers cannot obtain redress in the following cases, among others: If the material, product, or commodity is manufactured according to special specifications set by the consumer, and if the material, product, or commodity is not in the same condition as it was at the time of delivery for a reason attributed to the consumer, etc.



Protection of consumers' economic interests

Articles 3 and 4 guarantee the following rights for consumers, among others: receiving the product according to the purpose for which it was prepared, obtaining correct and accurate information regarding product prices and specifications, having the freedom of choice of products, getting redress without expense, and presenting complaints in cases of infringements, etc.

Articles 5 to 10 and 16 to 23 list supplier duties, which include: guaranteeing redress for consumers, informing the Directorate of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection in the province of defects in products and announcing the

prices of materials, products, goods or services, in a clear and legible manner. The articles also prohibit sale of corrupt materials and of materials that are not within the supplier's normal range of specialization.

In chapter 5, employees authorized with the powers of judicial police officers are allowed to enter into suspect entities, investigate, request documents and draft reports for the competent authorities. Also, pursuant to chapter 6 (articles 37 to 67), a categorized sanction regime (fines and/or imprisonment) is adopted for infringements.



Measures enabling consumers to obtain redress

According to article 4(a) consumers are granted the right, for one time, to replace a product or commodity with another of the same class or of the same value without incurring any additional expenses, within three days of receiving it, and without prejudice to any guarantees, legal conditions or agreement. As mentioned before, article 4 (1–5) lists the cases in which the consumer has no right to replace products.

Article 4 also guarantees the right of consumers to present complaints. Articles 24 to 32 clarify the process for sampling and the drafting of the report to be referred to the competent authorities. Article 27 of the law clearly states that suspicious materials, products, or commodities from which samples were taken are considered in custody until the analysis results are revealed. Finally, according to article

30, it is prohibited to advertise or promote, by any means, counterfeit materials, products or goods that contain symbols, shapes or specifications that are not authentic, and that can lead to fraud or deception of the consumer.

Articles 68 to 72 allow the establishment of consumer protection associations which have the following roles, among others: representing consumer interests, raising consumer awareness, coordinating with authorities that address consumer complaints and following up on them, etc.



Promotion of sustainable consumption

None of the articles in the consumer protection law No. 8/2021 directly tackle sustainable consumption. Moreover, there are no strategies for that purpose. The only reference

is in article 69, which states that consumer protection associations have the role of guiding consumers towards better consumption practices.



E-commerce and consumer protection

There is no specific chapter in the Syrian legislation that covers e-commerce. Only, according to article 1, suppliers and sellers are defined as those who provide a service, produce, manufacture, import, sell, rent, offer or distribute

a commodity in order to present it to the consumer in any way, including through electronic means. This extends the consumer rights and supplier duties to transactions taking place online.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To establish a 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 develop more policies and legal provisions that tackle sustainable consumption, including consumer activities, duties on manufacturers, and a specific sanction regime.
- To further develop e-commerce practices and the protection of consumers in the digital market through a separate chapter in the law.
- 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 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.

