

Foreword

The OECD report on *Regulatory Quality in Middle East and North African (MENA) Countries* is the first progress report that assesses the implementation of OECD regulatory policy principles in the MENA region. Regulatory policy in the MENA region is an increasing priority as part of the process of building better governance for encouraging and enabling sustainable development, competitiveness and inclusive growth. The report provides recommendations to MENA countries to improve their regulatory capacities to deliver better policy outcomes.

The report is joint work of the Regulatory Policy Committee and the MENA-OECD policy dialogue on the implementation of regulatory policy within the region (Working Group IV of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate (GOV), OECD). The report provides an analysis based on country questionnaires, interviews, MENA-OECD reports and research in addition to comparative analysis given the experience of OECD countries. The countries that participated in this report are Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia.

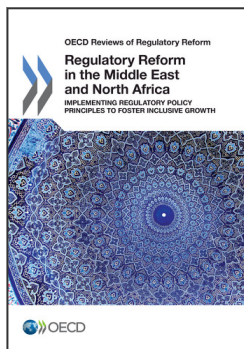
In 2009, the *Regional Charter for Regulatory Quality* (“the Charter”) provided a common framework of principles and good practice for regulatory management in countries of the MENA region. This Charter is based on the OECD 1995 Checklist for Regulatory Decision Making and the OECD 2005 Guiding Principles for Regulatory Quality and Performance. The *2012 OECD Policy Recommendations of the Council on Regulatory Policy and Governance* (“the Recommendation”) is the first comprehensive international statement on regulatory policy. The Recommendation provides governments with clear and timely guidance on the principles, mechanisms and institutions required to improve the design, enforcement and review of their regulatory framework to the highest standards. The 2009 Charter and 2012 Recommendation constitute a common framework for the design and implementation of an effective and high-quality regulatory reform policy.

This report reflects on regulatory governance in the MENA region which is an important part of the overall governance arrangements that are being enhanced or created to contribute towards sustainable development and inclusive growth. The report provides recommendations for enhancing the regulatory quality within MENA countries and assesses progress in the implementation of good regulatory practice principles.

The report points out that the progress made by countries under review in regulatory reform is considerable. However, it also demonstrates that regulatory policy is still relatively new within the region and therefore implementing core regulatory policy priorities can be more appropriate than implementing a sophisticated regulatory policy agenda.

The report provides recommendations to countries, especially those in transition, to help them build a better regulatory environment to support sustainable development and equitable growth whilst ensuring public participation and accountability. The report also recognises the diversity of contexts across MENA and therefore recommends that more detailed and tailored analysis through individual country reviews be conducted to assist in the specific challenges faced by each country.

The report consists of four chapters. The first chapter serves as a basis for understanding the importance and relevance of regulatory policy for the region. The second chapter sets out the OECD framework for good regulatory practices as outlined in the 2009 Charter and 2012 Recommendation. The third chapter looks at the current status of regulatory practices in certain MENA countries (Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia). It examines progress made with regard to *i)* core policies; *ii)* systems, processes and tools; and *iii)* actors, institutions and capacities highlighting positive aspects as well as limitations and areas that require improvement in relation to the 2009 Charter and 2012 Recommendations. The report concludes with recommendations for sustaining regulatory policy and governance reforms in the region to build on what has already been achieved.



From:

Regulatory Reform in the Middle East and North Africa

Implementing Regulatory Policy Principles to Foster Inclusive Growth

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264204553-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2013), "Foreword", in *Regulatory Reform in the Middle East and North Africa: Implementing Regulatory Policy Principles to Foster Inclusive Growth*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264204553-1-en>

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