

Arab Competition Policy Bulletin

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Regional competition highlights

Key legal and policy updates from across the Arab region.

ESCWA Corner

News on ESCWA latest tools, forums, and publications.

Foreword



In recent years, the Arab region has increasingly acknowledged the vital role that fair competition and well-functioning markets play in fostering resilient, inclusive, and innovation-driven economies. As national authorities continue to strengthen legal frameworks, improve enforcement, and deepen cooperation, the importance of knowledge sharing and regional visibility has never been greater.

This bulletin is part of the broader efforts of ESCWA to supporting Arab countries in advancing their competition and consumer protection agendas. It highlights key developments, updates on our ongoing initiatives, and fosters dialogue among stakeholders. Whether through the Arab Competition Forum, the Arab Business Legislative Framework, or the Arab Legislative Portal, our initiative remains dedicated to bridging knowledge, policy, and practice.

We hope this bulletin will serve as a valuable platform - not only to inform, but to inspire continued progress and shared learning throughout the region.



Regional competition highlights



New comprehensive merger control reforms

📍 United Arab Emirates

Effective 31 March 2025, the United Arab Emirates implemented a major overhaul of its merger control regime under Federal Decree-Law No. 36 of 2023, as supplemented by Cabinet Resolution No. 3 of 2025. Key reforms include the introduction of a turnover-based notification threshold of AED 300 million, alongside the retention of the existing 40 per cent market share threshold.

The notification period has also been extended from 30 to 90 days prior to transaction completion. These changes aim to align the United Arab Emirates competition framework with international practices and to strengthen regulatory oversight of mergers and acquisitions.

[Read more](#) —

Parliamentary oversight and legislative reforms

📍 Jordan

In March 2025, Jordan's Lower House referred the draft amendment to Competition Law to the Parliamentary Investment Committee for further review. The proposed amendments aim to enhance market competition and improve enforcement mechanisms in line with international best practices. A key change involves restructuring the Competition Directorate within the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply into an independent Competition Protection Department. This new body would report directly to the Minister and be led by a Director-General.

[Read more](#) —



Competition Law Provisions ruled unconstitutional

📍 Kuwait

On 5 February 2025, Kuwait's Constitutional Court declared Paragraph 1 of Article 34 of the Competition Protection Law No. 72 of 2020 unconstitutional. The court found that granting the competition authority the power to impose fines of up to 10 per cent of a company's revenues lacked proportionality and violated constitutional guarantees of due process. This landmark ruling is expected to have significant implications for future enforcement provisions and the scope of agency authority.

[Read more](#) —



Merger control developments and threshold revisions

📍 Saudi Arabia

In February 2025, the General Authority for Competition (GAC) issued the fifth edition of its Economic Concentration Guidelines, introducing revised thresholds for merger notifications.

For acquisitions, notification is required when the combined global turnover of the parties exceeds SAR 200 million, and the target company either generates more than SAR 40 million globally or contributes over SAR 40 million in revenue within Saudi Arabia.

For mergers and joint ventures, at least two parties must each have global turnover exceeding SAR 40 million, with their combined local revenue also surpassing SAR 40 million. These updated thresholds aim to enhance clarity and reduce unnecessary filings.

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Enforcement actions against bid-rigging in public contracts

📍 Egypt

In February 2025, the Egyptian Competition Authority (ECA) found that five advertising companies had violated Article 6(c) of Competition Law No. 3 of 2005 by colluding to abstain from participating in tenders for advertising rights along the 26th of July Corridor in 6th of October City. This coordinated action aimed to manipulate the bidding process, undermining fair competition and potentially reducing the efficiency of public procurement.



The ECA ordered the companies to cease any such anti-competitive agreements and called on industry associations to strengthen compliance with competition regulations among their members.

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Regional cooperation to strengthen competition enforcement

📍 Saudi Arabia and Qatar

In April 2025, Saudi Arabia Council of Ministers approved a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the General Authority for Competition and Qatar's Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The agreement aims to strengthen cooperation in the field of competition law and enforcement, representing a significant step toward greater regional alignment and the exchange of expertise in tackling anti-competitive practices.

[Read more](#) —



ESCWA Corner



Arab Business Legislative Frameworks: competition law comprehensive assessment

The 2023 edition of the Arab Business Legislative Frameworks report evaluates 22 Arab countries across five key legal domains: competition, consumer protection, anti-corruption, foreign direct investment (FDI), and corporate law. The report highlights regulatory strengths and gaps to support efforts toward legal modernization and economic reform across the region.

[Go to report](#) ____



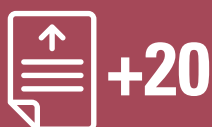
Arab Legislative Portal: enhancing access to legal frameworks

ESCWA Arab Legislative Portal is a dynamic digital platform that provides access to business-related legislation across the Arab region. Designed to support comparative research and evidence-based policymaking, the platform features a searchable database of legislative texts.

In its latest update, the portal includes data visualizations showcasing the most recent scores from the Arab Business Legislative Frameworks assessment. This new feature offers users a clear and accessible overview of regional trends and country-level performance over recent years.

[Visit portal](#) ____

In 2025



+20

The ESCWA Competition team has uploaded over 20 documents to the Arab Legislative Portal.



The Arab region's average score in the competition law advancement assessment remains at 4.1 out of 7, placing it on the threshold of the "Developed" Category.

This bulletin is published by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) as part of its ongoing efforts to support the development of competition and consumer protection policies across the Arab region.

Contact information:

Nathalie Khaled

Email: khaled@un.org