

## Measuring the Political Power Variables of Iraq and its Neighboring Countries Geographically

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### **Abstract**

*Political power is a crucial aspect of a state's moral power. It can be defined as the power that arises from a group of factors that collectively make up the will of the state. It is the basis on which the state relies to make national decisions, and it constitutes the institutional framework for political interactions that can mobilize and invest the various resources of the state. To measure this strength, seven main components and indicators were identified. These include the level of public freedoms, which is further divided into two parts: civil liberties and the human rights index, political stability and absence of violence, the fight against corruption index, the government efficiency rate (governmental effectiveness), the effectiveness of Parliament (representation and accountability), as well as organizational quality (organizational efficiency rate).*

**Keywords:** Moral Strength, Political Power, Fighting Corruption, Implementing Laws, Political Stability.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The political power of a state is a crucial element of its moral strength. It is defined as the power that arises from various factors that collectively represent the will of the state and the foundations on which it makes national decisions. This power includes the level of support from the public, the degree of stability within the state, and the status of its political leaders. It is an essential component of a state's moral strength and results from positive interactions between different groups of people and the state's governing institutions. These interactions lead to a state of political stability.

Which is reflected in the development and development of the rest of the comprehensive capabilities and vice versa in the case of negative interaction. The political ability of the state is estimated by evaluating the political structure of the state and the method and style of decision-making, its channels and levels, political cohesion and unity of the people, the extent of continuity and stability and the peaceful exchange of power and the extent of individual freedom and human rights that the citizen enjoys. The extent of the people's participation in political decisions, as well as the effectiveness of government agencies and interactive institutions and their ability to confront problems. Accordingly, what is meant by political power is the institutional framework and political interactions capable of mobilizing and investing the state's backward resources.

### **The Research Aims**

Measure the political power of Iraq and neighboring countries by examining seven main elements and indicators. These include the level of public freedoms, which is divided into two parts - civil liberties and the human rights index. Other indicators are political stability, absence of violence, anti-corruption index, government efficiency rate (government effectiveness), effectiveness of parliament (representation and accountability), and organizational quality (regulatory efficiency rate). The sub-elements and indicators of these seven main elements will be measured to understand the components of political power in the region. The research aims to measure the political power of Iraq and neighboring countries by examining seven main elements and indicators. These include the level of public freedoms, which is divided into two parts - civil liberties and the human rights index. Other indicators are political stability, absence of violence, anti-corruption index, government efficiency rate (government effectiveness), effectiveness of parliament (representation and

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accountability), and organizational quality (regulatory efficiency rate). The sub-elements and indicators of these seven main elements will be measured to understand the components of political power in the region.

### **The Research Problem**

Centers around the following question: What are the key elements of political power in Iraq compared to its neighboring countries, and how does Iraq rank among these countries? The aim is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of Iraq in this area.

### **Research Hypothesis**

This research is based on the hypothesis that Iraq, as well as its neighboring countries, possess certain elements of political power. However, there may be disparities in the distribution of these elements between countries. Iraq may rank lower than others in terms of these elements, which indicates the need for future solutions to address this issue and improve the country's current standing.

### **The Study Methodology**

Measured relevant indicators to rank countries politically. The study methodology measured relevant indicators to rank countries politically.

### **The Research Structure**

The research was divided into two parts, the first part includes indicators for measuring political power, which are: the level of public freedoms, which in turn is divided into (civil liberties and the human rights index), political stability, the absence of violence, the anti-corruption index, the government's efficiency rate, the effectiveness of Parliament (representation and accountability), and finally the extent of efficiency. The organizational structure of the government. The second section dealt with an analysis of the reality and determinants of Iraq's political power.

The first section of this study involves measuring indicators of the political strength of Iraq and its neighboring countries. Political power is gauged by evaluating the institutional framework and political interactions that can mobilize and invest the various resources of the state. To measure this power, several sub-elements and indicators are assessed. These include seven main elements and indicators such as the level of public freedoms, which is further divided into civil liberties and human rights index, stability, political level, absence of violence, anti-corruption index, government efficiency rate (governmental effectiveness), effectiveness of Parliament (representation and accountability), and organizational quality (regulatory efficiency rate). To measure the strength of the countries involved in the study, a methodology outlined in (Table No 1). was followed.

**Table 1. A guide to measuring the components of political power.**

Weight	Country	Arrangement
4.36	Kuwait	1
4.16	Jordan	2
3.56	Turkey	3
3.22	Saudi Arabia	4
2.77	Iraq	5
2.24	Iran	6
1.67	Syria	7

The table was prepared by the Researcher

It is evident that Iraq secured the fifth position with a weight of 2.77. Kuwait topped the list with a weight of 4.36, indicating the highest amount of political power elements and indicators. Jordan followed in second place with a weight of 4.16. Turkey ranked third with a weight of 3.56, while the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia secured the fourth position with a weight of 3.22. Iran came in sixth place with a weight of 2.24, while Syria ranked seventh and last with a weight of 1.67. To gain a better understanding, the weight of the sub-elements and their indicators can be reviewed as follows.<sup>1</sup>

First: The level of public rights and freedoms (political rights and civil liberties)

Human rights are inherent and universally established, even if not recognized or violated.<sup>2</sup>

Preserving the greatest basic value is a key goal of nations worldwide.

Individual rights emerge from the bond of solidarity and social unity that exists between members of society. The state strengthens this bond through various guarantees, insurances, and propaganda provided to its citizens, such as guaranteeing motherhood, childhood, and youth care, as well as women's rights, work, and cultural, social, and health services. Human rights are the cornerstone on which justice, peace, and freedom are based. Any democratic transformation in a country can only be achieved by establishing laws that ensure their enforcement and the full understanding of human rights. An increased interest in human rights has emerged in recent decades, aiming to reduce conflicts and achieve integrated development within society and its individuals.<sup>3</sup>

The limits of public freedoms differ according to the circumstances that prevail in the state. Under normal circumstances, the authority tries to grant a certain amount of limits to the exercise of those freedoms. However, exceptional circumstances such as war, crises, and other problems may require special treatment by the authority, which may result in authoritarian measures being used to restrict or take away those freedoms. This situation affects the general public, especially the democratic situation itself, as some may try to confront or violate it.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, this has become an important measure and indicator of the state of a society.

The concept of freedoms and its scope vary from country to country. It may include civil liberties, freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, demonstration, and sit-in, the right to security, the right to equal treatment, the right to subsistence, the right to a fair trial, the right to property, or the right to physical integrity. Positive civil laws establish that the right to equality goes hand in hand with the right to freedom to achieve a balance between the interest of the individual and society's interest. This necessitates restricting freedom to provide a minimum level of equality. Therefore, rights and freedoms are inseparable expressions, and wherever there is a right, there is freedom. The state must recognize all rights and freedoms, include them in its statutory legislation, and avoid negatively affecting public freedoms and increasing the gap between authority and response and granted them protection.

The rule here is that the greater the level of legal freedoms available and respected for human rights, the stronger the state is. By measuring these two indicators that express the level of public freedoms, we can determine the extent to which they are intentionally (5) neglected or upheld.<sup>5</sup>

According to the study, Kuwait ranked first with a weight of (1.40), while Jordan took the second place with a weight of (1.29). Turkey came in third place with a weight of (1.26), followed by Iraq<sup>6</sup> in fourth place with a weight of (1.17). Iran ranked fifth with a weight of (0.72), while Syria came sixth with a weight of (0.58). Finally, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ranked seventh and last in this element, with a weight of (0.54).

The weight	The total standard value of the Public Freedoms Index	The standard value of the civil liberties index	The standard value of the political rights index	Country	Arrangement
1.40	7.03	4.03	3.0	Kuwait	1
1.29	6.48	3.88	2.6	Jordan	2
1.26	6.3	3	3.3	Turkey	3
1.17	5.58	2.57	3.3	Iraq	4
0.74	3.47	3.12	1.62	Iran	5
0.58	2.92	1.24	1.68	Syria	6
0.54	2.47	1.54	1.2	Saudi Arabia	7

The table was prepared by the Researcher

## Second: Political Stability and Absence of Violence

Political stability is currently one of the most important aspirations and goals that countries and people seek. This is because it has positive repercussions on the state and society in all aspects, including political, economic, and social spheres. Achieving political stability requires the solidarity of the state and society.

Political instability is often linked to political violence. When the political system and its institutions meet the legitimate requirements and needs of society, they enjoy societal satisfaction and acceptance. This results in the absence of violence and the achievement of political stability. However, the concept of political stability is considered vague and complex.<sup>7</sup>

Instability is a phenomenon that is characterized by flexibility and relative proportions. What may cause stability in one country may not necessarily lead to stability in another country. Therefore, instability is one of the most prominent political phenomena with multiple dimensions and is also among the most ambiguous political concepts. People, being intertwined and complex, change with time and place, creating great differences between political thinkers about how to define and establish a unified definition.<sup>8</sup>

The approaches to dealing with the controversial phenomenon of political stability vary from one thinker to another. It is considered one of the most important forms of stability for the continuation and superiority of societies. A stable political system includes a system of policies that take into account all forms of change and the political system's ability to mobilize resources.<sup>9</sup> It must also be able to accommodate conflicts that arise within society to prevent violence from occurring. Political stability is not only the result of security forces, but also of political, social, economic, and cultural measures. Its military importance lies in the fact that it is a collective demand, regardless of the type of political system existing in any country.<sup>10</sup>

The quality of sound produced by a system is dependent on its level of rationality, accuracy, and adherence to planning and implementation processes. It is crucial for countries to respect each other's cultures and work towards a common set of concepts and foundations, as well as ensuring political stability.<sup>11</sup>

Political stability is a prerequisite for progress and development. There are certain indicators that researchers agree on, which are as follows:

1. Transfer of power in the state: The manner in which the transfer of power takes place, i.e., whether it happens constitutionally or through coups and military interventions, is an indicator of political stability.<sup>12</sup>

2. Legitimacy of the political system: This is a foundational pillar of political stability, and political stability is, in turn, an indicator of political legitimacy. Political legitimacy is defined as the justification of the ruling authority from the logic of collective will, which means that the political system gains its legitimacy by achieving the interests of the people, preserving the country's independence, and protecting the country's rights.<sup>12</sup> This legitimacy appears through the people's acceptance of the system and their voluntary submission to it.

3- The strength of a political system is a crucial indicator of political stability. A strong political system is necessary for fulfilling its responsibilities, such as defending the country's sovereignty and protecting society's security. If a political system lacks internal security, it may result in the strengthening of other systems. Therefore, the ability of a political system to protect society and the state's sovereignty is an essential element of political stability. The strength of a political system is a crucial indicator of political stability. A strong political system is necessary for fulfilling its responsibilities, such as defending the country's sovereignty and protecting society's security. If a political system lacks internal security, it may result in the strengthening of other systems. Therefore, the ability of a political system to protect society and the state's sovereignty is an essential element of political stability.<sup>13</sup>

4-Limited change in executive political leadership is an important factor for political stability. It refers to the survival of political leaders at the head of any political system for a long period. However, this stability must be accompanied by the satisfaction of the people. Frequent changes in leadership positions are one of the indicators of political instability.<sup>15</sup>

5-Political participation is an essential aspect of a democratic government. It is a measure of the government's ability to apply democratic rules in governance. In a democratic system, individuals have official channels to express their opinions on national issues and choose their representatives in parliamentary and local councils. Therefore, popular participation becomes a means of achieving internal stability and strengthening the political authority's rule of law.<sup>16</sup>

6-Political violence is a major factor contributing to political instability, and its absence is a significant indication of political stability. Political violence can be described as the use of physical force to harm others for political or economic reasons. It can be formal or informal, directed by the government against citizens or certain groups, or vice versa. Separatist movements, rebellions, and civil wars represent the most extreme forms of political instability as they often involve large-scale violence. Political violence is a major factor contributing to political instability, and its absence is a significant indication of political stability. Political violence can be described as the use of physical force to harm others for political or economic reasons. It can be formal or informal, directed by the government against citizens or certain groups, or vice versa. Separatist movements, rebellions, and civil wars represent the most extreme forms of political instability as they often involve large-scale violence.<sup>17</sup>

7- Societies that lack diversity, whether it be ethnic, religious, linguistic or sectarian, tend to be more stable. Politicians are among those who understand the importance of diversity in society. The problem is not with social diversity, but with how it is approached. There are two different models of dealing with minority groups: one involves assimilation by force and the other involves equality in rights and duties. The first model often results in different loyalties emerging, such as nationalism or subservient loyalties, which can lead to demands for independence or self-rule. On the other hand, the second model strengthens national unity and elevates national identity above sub-national identities.<sup>18</sup>

This index measures the ability of a government's institutions to manage crises and resolve conflicts within the state in a manner that helps maintain political stability, reduce violence, and increase the government's legitimacy<sup>19</sup>. The index considers factors such as the absence of violence, terrorism, and perceived possibility of terrorism, as well as the prevention of unconstitutional means to destabilize or overthrow the government. The higher the stability and lower the violence, the stronger the government. Iraq ranked second to last with a weight of 0.36, while Kuwait ranked first with a weight of 0.87. Jordan came in second with a weight of 0.69, followed by Saudi Arabia with 0.59, Turkey with 0.46, Iran with 0.41, and Syria last with a weight of (0.34).

### **Third: The Country's Level of Corruption Indicators**

The issue of corruption is one of the most important topics as it has a significant impact on the strength of a state. Corruption is a sensitive issue that can completely paralyze the administrative and financial apparatus of any country, rendering it unable to make progress. It also hinders any development programs that are undertaken by the government. Corruption goes against the principles of justice, integrity, and equality within society. Transparency International defines corruption as the abuse of entrusted power to achieve personal gains<sup>20</sup>.

The Anti-Corruption Index attempts to reveal public perceptions of the extent to which public power is exploited for personal gain. This includes both small and large forms of corruption, as well as elite control, economic and development interests in the state. This indicator reveals cases of corruption of all kinds - financial, administrative, and political. Holding corruptors accountable and referring them to the judiciary, combating corruption, and supporting growth are all important in the fight against corruption.<sup>21</sup>

Combating corruption should be the main goal of any governance system. Traditional methods of governance have proven ineffective in this regard. Therefore, the indicator of monitoring corruption in the state measures the extent to which public authority can limit personal gains and political elites' control over judgment. It's essential to note that corruption is the other face of terrorism that destroys the body of the state and society. Corruption has economic effects that hinder development.<sup>22</sup>

The proper management of public resources and the implementation of policies that serve the public interest are essential for a government to provide high-quality services. It is crucial to measure the quality of civil services and the degree of independence from political pressures. The effectiveness of government systems and their application must also be evaluated, along with the credibility of the government's commitment to these systems.<sup>23</sup> This indicator measures public opinion on the quality of public services, the independence of the civil service, and the quality of the policy formulation and implementation process in public health. Additionally,

it considers bureaucracy and administrative routines, the quality of procedures in government institutions, infrastructure coverage, and community satisfaction with these services.

According to our study, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has the highest weight of 0.55. Jordan ranked second with a weight of 0.49, and Kuwait ranked third with a weight of 0.44. Turkey came in fourth place with a weight of 0.43, while Iran ranked fifth with a weight of 0.25. Syria ranked seventh among the studied countries with a weight of 0.17. The state in question had a weight of 0.21.<sup>24</sup>

#### **Fourth: Government Efficiency (Government Effectiveness)**

The fourth aspect to consider is the government's efficiency, which is also known as government effectiveness. Measuring the institutional performance of the government can bring numerous benefits, such as avoiding unrealistic goal setting or insufficient effort towards achieving them. Clear goals can be established through measurement, and this enables an accurate description of the required work to be done to achieve these goals<sup>25</sup>. This description includes job responsibilities and obligations. Furthermore, measurement allows for preventive and corrective measures to be taken at the appropriate times, leading to citizen satisfaction and exceeding their expectations. Ultimately, the quality of services provided is improved.<sup>26</sup>

The government's performance in any country cannot be accurately measured without considering its rate of efficiency. Efficiency refers to the proper management of various government resources to achieve the highest return at the lowest cost. Due to the complexity of government work, measuring government efficiency requires a large number of performance indicators, which are usually combined into groups to obtain a composite index of government performance efficiency. This composite index falls under five axes and measures the effectiveness of government institutions in employing national resources to serve the public interest. It also measures the quality of public services, the independence of the civil service from political pressures, and the government's credibility in implementing policies and regulations.<sup>27</sup> Overall, this approach is comprehensive and diverse,<sup>28</sup> and it indicates the extent of the government's ability to work efficiently and effectively. According to the Human Development Report, the global average for efficiency ranges from 2.5 to +25. A higher rate towards 25 indicates the strength of the state. In a recent study, Iraq ranked sixth to last with a weight of 0.21. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ranked first with a weight of 0.55, followed by Jordan with 0.49, Kuwait with 0.44, Turkey with 0.43, and Iran with 0.25. Syria ranked seventh among the studied countries with a weight of 0.17.<sup>29</sup>

#### **Fifth - The Rule of Laws (Implementation of the Law)**

The principle of the rule of law refers to the respect for legal rules by all authorities, including legislative, executive, and judicial bodies. These rules are governed by the state and apply to all individuals, including rulers, according to their position in the state's legal system hierarchy, which includes the constitution, laws issued by the legislative authority, and regulations issued by the executive authority. The principle of the rule of law is one of the fundamental principles that are stable in a legal state, where people, rulers, ruled, and state authorities alike respect each other.<sup>30</sup>

Contemporary law requires all law enforcement agencies to comply with the principle of the rule of law as a basis for the legitimacy of their actions. However, this principle is not limited to mere compliance with the law's content or essence, but it also requires that the law guarantees the rights and freedoms of all individuals. This is the essence of the rule of law.<sup>30</sup>

This indicator reflects the efficiency and effectiveness of legal and judicial systems, as well as the confidence of those who interact with them. It encompasses aspects such as the quality of contracts and their implementation, property rights, the police, the courts, and the level of crime and violence. The rule of law is a legal principle that ensures that no one is punished in a particular case unless they violate the law. These laws apply to all individuals, institutions, and entities, including the public and private sectors. This includes the state itself and all officials in the state, before these laws are publicly issued. These laws also apply to adequate measures in areas of human rights, treating citizens equally, conforming to international rules and standards, and adhering to the principles of the rule of law, equality before the law, responsibility, and fairness in applying rules.<sup>31</sup>

The Rule of Law Index also tracks perceptions of the extent of separation of powers and participation in decision-making.

The trust and adherence of agents to the rules of society, such as contract enforcement, property rights, and the justice system, are essential for maintaining law and order. The Rule of Law Index is a crucial aspect of the national integrity system, which measures adherence to the rule of law and highlights any violations. This index also evaluates discretionary powers for state employees, issues related to freedom, and the use of administrative powers to prevent public meetings without just cause. It also attempts to measure the confidence of citizens in the application of the law, ensuring that everyone is subject to it and nothing is above it.<sup>32</sup> The legal framework should ensure the right to litigation, the independence of the judiciary, and the fair application of legal provisions without discrimination in all areas of economic, social, and political life. These rules must be respected and applied by all parties. The trust and adherence of agents to the rules of society, such as contract enforcement, property rights, and the justice system, are essential for maintaining law and order. The Rule of Law Index is a crucial aspect of the national integrity system, which measures adherence to the rule of law and highlights any violations. This index also evaluates discretionary powers for state employees, issues related to freedom, and the use of administrative powers to prevent public meetings without just cause. It also attempts to measure the confidence of citizens in the application of the law, ensuring that everyone is subject to it and nothing is above it. The legal framework should ensure the right to litigation, the independence of the judiciary, and the fair application of legal provisions without discrimination in all areas of economic, social, and political life. These rules must be respected and applied by all parties.<sup>33</sup>

According to the study, Kuwait ranked first with a weight of (0.48) for a certain element. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia came in second place with a weight of (0.478), while Jordan ranked third with a weight of (0.475). Turkey came in fourth place with a weight of (0.36), Iran came in fifth place with a weight of (0.26), and Iraq was in sixth place with a weight of (0.18). Syria ranked last with a weight of (0.17). Please refer to Table (27) for more details.<sup>34</sup>

### **Sixth: The Effectiveness of Parliament (Representation and Accountability)**

In any type of political system, be it presidential, parliamentary or mixed, the parliament represents the people. The legitimacy of the parliament comes from the elections, where individuals participate to elect their representatives. The head of state or executive authority cannot dissolve the parliament as it is the voice of the people<sup>35</sup>. For credible elections, it is essential to have a high participation rate, which means voters should feel that their vote matters and has an impact on the democratic process. The election process is one of the ways in which people participate in the democratic process.<sup>37</sup>

It is important to note that democracy cannot be achieved through just one act. Therefore, this indicator measures the ability of citizens in a country to participate in government elections, express their opinions freely, form civil society organizations, and the willingness of government officials to listen to and act upon the demands of all members of society, including women. It also measures the ability of individuals to express their opinions and be involved in decision-making processes based on the freedom of opinion and expression and basic human rights standards that benefit society.<sup>38</sup>

The "Expression of Opinion and Participation" index monitors citizens' perceptions of their ability to participate in the selection of their government and their freedom of expression, association, and access to media. Additionally, this indicator measures the effectiveness of the legislative authority (Parliament) through its representation, accountability, and ability to carry out its legislative and oversight functions. As a result, the stronger the ability of Parliament to exercise its powers effectively, the stronger the state becomes.

In this ranking, Iraq was placed fourth with a weight of 0.32, while Kuwait came in first place with a weight of 0.41. Jordan secured second place with a weight of 0.37, followed by Turkey in third place with a weight of 0.34. Iran came in fifth place, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia took sixth place with a weight of 0.18, while Syria came in seventh place with a weight of 0.10. Please refer to Table (26) for more information.<sup>39</sup>

**Seventh: The Organizational Quality Efficiency Index**

achieve the best outcome in the public policy cycle in the country.

The Regulatory Quality Index monitors perceptions of the government’s ability to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations, as well as taking preventive and corrective measures at the appropriate time. It also assesses the extent of their ability to control unsound policies represented by market policies such as price control, the adequacy of banking supervision, and the burdens imposed by excessive regulation in the country. A state with high organizational quality indicates greater state power.<sup>40</sup>

Iraq ranked fifth among the study countries with a weight of (0.14), while the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia came in first place with a weight of (0.30). Kuwait ranked second with a weight of (0.29), while Jordan came in third place with a weight of (0.29). Turkey ranked fourth with a weight of (0.28), and Iran occupied sixth place with a weight of (0.123), compared to Syria,<sup>41</sup> which ranked seventh and last with a weight of (0.12). For more information, see Table (27).

**Table 3. The normative strength of the elements of political power in Iraq and its geographical neighbors.**

The Standard Value For Each Country (Item Weight)								Countries concerned with the study	No
Syria	Jordan	Kuwait	Saudi Arabia	Turkey	Iran	Iraq			
Elements of political power									
2,92×0,20=0,58	6,48×0,20=1,29	7,03×0,20=1,40	2,74×0,20=0,54	6,3×0,20=1,26	3,74×0,20=0,74	5,87×0,20=1,17	Level of public freedoms	1	
1,94×0,18=0,34	3,84×0,18=0,69	4,84×0,18=0,87	3,3×0,18=0,59	2,56×0,18=0,46	2,31×0,18=0,41	2,01×0,18=0,36	Political stability And absence of violence	2	
1,22×0,16=0,19	3,58×0,16=0,57	3,4×0,16=0,54	3,86×0,16=0,61	2,87×0,16=0,45	1,76×0,16=0,28	1,58×0,16=0,25	Fight corruption	3	
1,22×0,14=0,17	3,54×0,14=0,49	3,21×0,14=0,44	3,92×0,14=0,55	3,13×0,14=0,43	1,85×0,14=0,25	1,51×0,14=0,21	Government efficiency rate	4	
1,32×0,13=0,17	3,66×0,13=0,475	3,73×0,13=0,48	3,86×0,13=0,478	2,81×0,13=0,36	2,02×0,13=0,26	1,42×0,13=0,18	Rule of laws (law enforcement),	5	
0,96×0,11=0,10	3,37×0,11=0,37	3,74×0,11=0,41	1,47×0,11=0,16	3,13×0,11=0,34	1,72×0,11=0,18	2,95×0,11=0,32	Effectiveness of Parliament (representation and accountability)	6	
1,52×0,08=0,12	3,63×0,08=0,28	3,64×0,08=0,29	3,87×0,08=0,30	3,28×0,08=0,26	1,54×0,08=0,123	1,84×0,08=0,14	regulatory efficiency rate	7	
1,67	4,16	4,36	3,22	3,54	2,24	2,77	the total		

The table was prepared by the researcher

**Table 4. Measuring the elements of the political power of Iraq and its geographical neighbors.**

Basic data of the elements of political power									
Organizational efficiency rating(0-100)	Parliament effectiveness (representation and accountability) (0-100)	Rule of laws	Government Efficiency Rating (0-100)	Fight corruption (0-100)	Political stability and its absence Violence (0-100)	Level of rights and Freedoms (0-100)	public	Elements	No
						Civil liberties	Political rights		
Country									
12,50	21,74	3,37	10,10	9,13	1,89	13	16	Iraq	1
4,81	9,18	17,79	18,27	13,46	7,55	10	4	Iran	2
49,04	23,67	36,54	49,52	40,38	12,26	16	16	Turkey	3
63,94	6,28	58,17	68,75	64,42	26,42	6	1	Saudi Arabia	4
58,17	29,95	59,13	51,44	53,37	55,66	23	14	Kuwait	5



57,69	26,09	57,69	59,62	57,69	36,79	22	11	Jordan	6
4,33	0,97	0,97	2,88	0,48	0,47	4	-1	Syria	7

Data for the following indicators: the level of public freedoms, political stability, the absence of violence, the rate of government efficiency and implementation of laws, and organizational feasibility were taken from the annual report of the **worldwide governance indicators** 2021, available on the following website: [www.govindicators.org](http://www.govindicators.org) zero is the weakest country and 100 is the strongest country.

In this section, we will analyze the political power of different countries based on various indicators. The results show that Kuwait ranked first with a weight of 4.36, followed by Jordan with a weight of 4.16, and Turkey with a weight of 3.56. Saudi Arabia came in fourth place with a weight of 3.22, while Iraq ranked fifth with a weight of 2.77. Iran came in sixth place with a weight of 2.24, and Syria was the last with a weight of 1.67.

When it comes to political stability, Iraq ranked sixth with a weight of 0.36, just above Syria. However, there are several obstacles that prevent Iraq from achieving conventional political stability. These obstacles have contributed to the country's instability. Some of the most significant obstacles include events and conditions that are unique to the Iraqi arena.<sup>42</sup>

1-The political system in Iraq is ineffective due to its inability to function in an unfavorable environment, which hinders political stability. The lack of a proper model of political governance in Iraqi society that can create a minimum level of societal will, facilitate the true expression of public interests, and provide the appropriate framework for reconciling them has resulted in weak political maturity. The Iraqi people have not embraced democratic approaches and behaviors due to cultural beliefs ingrained in their collective consciousness. This has resulted in political instability since 2003.<sup>42</sup>

The political system or the government may be unable or unwilling to efficiently and effectively perform its functions and provide the necessary services that society requires. This issue erodes citizens' confidence in the system and undermines its ability to gain popular support. The weakness of several sectors, including electricity, health, education, and industry, is a clear example. Agriculture and other industries have also been affected by crises, which successive governments since 2003 have failed to address appropriately. These factors have led to widespread dissatisfaction with government performance, manifesting in various forms, such as protests, demonstrations, and rejection.<sup>43</sup>

3-The sectarian and political quotas that appeared with the formation of the Transitional Governing Council in 2003 AD, and are still continuing, and although there is no constitutional or legal text that recognizes them, <sup>44</sup>they have become a form of A political custom followed in the political process since 2002, and quotas are reflected in political stability in Iraq directly and indirectly, and have affected the Iraqi social fabric, and have determined the ability of the political system to act effectively and formulate important strategic decisions in the areas of development, as well as the presence of many political parties.<sup>45</sup> With sectarian ideology and ethnic groups that could not comprehend the concept of democracy, as they were merely fronts for sectarian, political, or tribal entities participating in the political process,<sup>46</sup> the weakness or lack of trust between them, the conflict in personal and partisan interests and their primacy over the public and national interest, all of which greatly and negatively affected the political stability required in <sup>47</sup> Iraq.

4- Iraq has faced more terrorist threats than any other country since 2003. In 2014, ISIS captured several cities and regions in Iraq.<sup>48</sup>

5-External factors have a significant influence on the political stability in Iraq, particularly the regional conflict and the presence of Iraqi movements and forces that are aligned with different regional parties. These movements and forces often work according to their own agendas, which can be detrimental to the interests of Iraq. Their decisions and policies have contributed to political instability as they have not always been suitable for the Iraqi situation.<sup>49</sup>

Iraq ranks sixth in the corruption index due to several reasons:

1- The existence of a group of imbalances between the legislative and institutional framework in dealing with corruption cases,<sup>50</sup> and the degree of frankness and transparency in revealing issues that were and are still being covered up.<sup>51</sup>

2-The public decision-making process in Iraq inadequately addresses anti-corruption measures, allowing the exploitation of governmental positions for personal gain. There is also a lack of coherence within the government cabinet, leading to confusion and chaos within the public contracting system<sup>52</sup>. These issues have subsequently resulted in legal and institutional problems:

1-Distributing government contracts to multiple contracting departments can result in a fragmentation of the overall budget into smaller budgets. This, in turn, can lead to the division of projects into smaller projects that may be implemented by companies with little experience. Monitoring the performance of all employees in the contracting departments can also be challenging for the state.<sup>51</sup>

2-One of the major issues with contractual systems is the loss of experience for employees in contract departments due to frequent transfers and changes that occur as a result of various circumstances. In addition to this, there are also transparency issues that need to be addressed. These are not the only challenges that the contractual system faces, but they are significant ones nonetheless. The total number of problems associated with the contractual system is much higher. <sup>(52)</sup>

3-Disguised unemployment, unclear procedures, and confusion in organizational structures pose challenges to public accountability and anti-corruption mechanisms. The routine complexity, long work cycles, and unclear documentation further exacerbate the issue.<sup>53</sup>

4-The absence of necessary legislation to combat corruption, ambiguous texts, and legal loopholes have resulted in anti-corruption agencies being politicized and submitting to political balances and party quotas.

5-Corruption is a major hindrance for foreign institutions to engage in legal commercial transactions, lending and investment in Iraq, except in the oil sector. The decision of foreign institutions to invest and carry out commercial transactions in the country is influenced by the cost of corruption.<sup>54</sup>

The government performance effectiveness index has witnessed a significant decline, with Iraq ranking sixth among the countries studied. This decline can be attributed to the complex and challenging nature of working in government institutions in Iraq. The most pressing issues and difficulties faced include:

1-The nature of government services is such that measuring the quality of service provided by government agencies is an abstract concept that is difficult to define. This is due to the inaccuracy of evaluating and measuring results based on non-quantitative criteria, which makes the process challenging.

2-Having multiple and conflicting goals and priorities can hinder accountable decision-making and cause confusion.<sup>55</sup>

3-The absence of clear definitions for the tasks assigned to government agencies creates many difficulties and overlaps in their competencies. This lack of clarity leads to weak advancement of government responsibility. It is essential to provide precise descriptions of the duties of each unit to ensure the smooth functioning of official agencies and promote effective governance

4-Red tape in government agencies is a natural result of the absence of reliable quantitative standards for measuring performance.

5- Challenges related to the work component include job inflation and overlapping job specializations.

6-Government agencies exercise their power within a framework of political decisions aimed at maximizing social and political gains that cannot always be measured quantitatively due to political pressures.

7-There is often an overlap between the government and private sectors when it comes to providing the same service. This overlap can make it difficult to assess the performance of the agencies involved, particularly when the private sector is providing part of the service to citizens.<sup>56</sup>

8-The absence of transparency leads to misleading performance measurement, which creates doubt among citizens regarding the government's efforts to serve them. One of the reasons for this could be that many government positions and jobs are filled through quotas, mediation, and exploitation of influence, resulting in a lack of competence. This has led to the weakening of government institutions and the spread of corruption in various forms, which are some of the primary reasons for the ineffective performance of the government in Iraq.<sup>57</sup>

According to the rule of law index, which is an important measure, Iraq ranks sixth among the studied countries with a weight of 0.18. There are several reasons behind the low rule of law index in Iraq, including the overlap of powers and structural imbalance in its political system. Additionally, there is insufficient implementation of proper rule of law, political interference in the appointment of judges and public prosecutors, inadequate protection for them from political parties, and weakness among some judges and members of the Independent Electoral Commission.

The appointment of a small number of judges and the lengthy appeal periods and multiple stages of litigation in Iraq's judicial system have resulted from political party interference and the system's weakness. This failure has led to the inability of the Iraqi civil, penal, or administrative litigation procedures to keep up with modern judicial administration. The selective application of the law,<sup>58</sup> as well as the existence of favoritism in most state institutions, pose a challenge to equal opportunities. The law is strictly applied to ordinary citizens, while officials are given preferential treatment. Additionally,<sup>59</sup> the negative view of laws and the failure to convince citizens that the law is their protector has contributed to this problem.<sup>60</sup> Tribal, national, and sectarian loyalties play an overwhelming role, and weapons are not monopolized by state institutions. All of these factors contribute to the weakness of the concept of a comprehensive national identity for Iraqis.<sup>61</sup>

Iraq's organizational quality index has been declining, and it now ranks fifth among the countries that were studied. This is due to several factors, including the lack of a monopoly on weapons by state institutions, weakness in the concept of a comprehensive national identity for Iraqis, and the deterioration of the political, security, and economic conditions of the country<sup>62</sup>. In 2020, Iraq recorded a low score for governance (12.50) with a weight of 0.14, which is attributed to weak supervisory procedures in the state.

Iraq ranks fourth with a weight of 0.32 among the study countries, but this percentage falls between medium and weak, according to international standards. The International Institute for Democracy and Elections also confirmed that citizens' participation in the parliamentary elections in 2018 was low, indicating Iraq's weak accountability and participation index during the extended period of 2013-2020 (which reached -1.14). It did not witness any positive improvements and only reached 0.96 in 2019, which is still considered low.<sup>63</sup>

This negative score reflects the failure of actors to assume their responsibilities and the lack of awareness in political action in Iraq.

The study highlighted the imbalance in the elements of political capacity and put forth recommendations to address the issue. The most important of these recommendations are:

1. Activating mechanisms to combat political corruption through the presence of a strong and serious political will. This should be done in accordance with a clear strategy that applies a series of deterrent and preventive measures. It involves developing laws and legislation to combat corruption, limiting it in a way that is consistent with legal and societal reality. Everyone should be held accountable for corruption charges with conclusive evidence, regardless of their political, social, or security position. Disciplined mechanisms and texts should be put in place to hold accountable and reach the highest centers of corruption, no matter how high their status. Tightening the provisions related to combating bribery, nepotism, and employment exploitation is also crucial. The legislative authority should enact laws to combat corruption, and their implementation by the institutions, departments, and committees concerned in this field will undoubtedly achieve the legislative power of those laws and achieve deterrence of the corrupt. This, in turn, will achieve the goal of corruption and its elimination.

2. Limiting or abolishing the use of the political consensus system (quotas in selecting executive positions) is crucial to hold corruptors accountable. To achieve this, it is necessary to adopt transparency and job description mechanisms. These mechanisms should specify written conditions that are public, understandable, and not

secret for each administrative job, including military, judicial, diplomatic security. Working to issue periodic reports by this body that are accessible to the Iraqi citizen for the purpose of strengthening popular oversight is also necessary.

3- Strengthening the principle of the rule of law means applying the law and enforcing it in all aspects of the state and daily life while respecting constitutional frameworks, fair democratic elections, peaceful deliberation, and ensuring personal security for all citizens.

4- It is necessary for the law to apply to everyone without exception, and submission to the law should be the only option. The principle that the law is not subject to anything other than the law and its conscience should be established, and legal rules should have a general and abstract character, applicable to all judicial decisions.

5- Developing government performance involves creating government programs and objectives that can be measured quantitatively. Additionally, the government should divide any public service provided into two types: either a free service that meets social standards or an economic service that meets economic standards. This helps eliminate overlap and duplication in the exercise of tasks and competencies in government agencies, determine responsibility for errors and transgressions, and support accountability to measure performance. The procedures for services provided by government agencies to citizens should be simplified, and a time standard should be set for each service to contribute to measuring institutional performance.

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