

Progress towards prohibiting all corporal punishment in the Middle East

Prepared by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (www.endcorporalpunishment.org), January 2017



Global Initiative to
End All Corporal Punishment
of Children

The following table summarises the legal status of corporal punishment of children – and progress towards achieving prohibition – in all settings in all states in the Middle East and North Africa. Governments are increasingly enacting laws to prohibit this form of violence against children. As at January 2017, one state has achieved prohibition in all settings, including the home; the governments of one other has expressed a commitment to enacting full prohibition. Three states have prohibited corporal punishment in all alternative care settings and day care, 12 in all schools, 12 in penal institutions and 16 as a sentence for crime.

States with full prohibition in legislation

The following state has prohibited corporal punishment in all settings, including the home.

State	Prohibited in the home	Prohibited in alternative care settings	Prohibited in day care	Prohibited in schools	Prohibited in penal institutions	Prohibited as sentence for crime
Israel	YES ¹	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

States expressing commitment to law reform in UPR and other contexts

Governments in the following state has expressed a commitment to prohibition of all corporal punishment of children through unequivocally accepting recommendations to prohibit made during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

State	Prohibited in the home	Prohibited in alternative care settings	Prohibited in day care	Prohibited in schools	Prohibited in penal institutions	Prohibited as sentence for crime
Oman ²	NO	NO	[SOME] ³	YES	NO	[YES]

States without a clear commitment to law reform

The following 12 states have yet to make a clear commitment to prohibiting all corporal punishment.

<i>States without a clear commitment to law reform ...</i>						
State	Prohibited in the home	Prohibited in alternative care settings	Prohibited in day care	Prohibited in schools	Prohibited in penal institutions	Prohibited as sentence for crime
Bahrain	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
Iran	NO	NO	SOME ⁴	NO ⁵	YES	NO

¹ 2000 Supreme Court judgment ruled against all violence in childrearing; “reasonable chastisement” defence repealed same year

² Government accepted UPR recommendation to prohibit in all settings (2015)

³ Possibly prohibited in preschool provision

<i>States without a clear commitment to law reform ...</i>						
State	Prohibited in the home	Prohibited in alternative care settings	Prohibited in day care	Prohibited in schools	Prohibited in penal institutions	Prohibited as sentence for crime
Iraq	NO ⁶	NO	NO	NO	SOME ⁷	YES
Jordan ⁸	NO	[SOME] ⁹	[NO]	YES	[YES]	YES
Kuwait ¹⁰	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	[YES]
Lebanon	NO	NO	NO	NO ¹¹	[YES]	YES
Qatar ¹²	NO	NO	NO	NO ¹³	YES	NO
Saudi Arabia ¹⁴	NO	NO	NO	NO ¹⁵	NO	NO
State of Palestine	NO	NO	NO	SOME ¹⁶	[SOME] ¹⁷	[SOME] ¹⁸
Syrian Arab Republic	NO	NO	NO	NO ¹⁹	NO	YES
United Arab Emirates	NO	NO	NO	YES	[YES]	NO
Yemen	NO	NO	[SOME] ²⁰	YES	YES	NO

Note

The above information is based wherever possible on examination of national legislation; additional information is gathered from many sources, including reports to and by the United Nations human rights treaty bodies.

Information in square brackets is unconfirmed. We are very grateful to government officials, UNICEF and other UN agencies, NGOs and human rights institutions, and many individuals who have assisted us in our research. We welcome corrections and updates: email info@endcorporalpunishment.org. For further details on all states see the individual state reports at www.endcorporalpunishment.org.

Analysis prepared by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children
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⁴ Prohibited in day care centres (kindergartens)

⁵ Government directive states corporal punishment should not be used but no prohibition in law

⁶ But possibly prohibited in Kurdistan

⁷ Prohibited in prisons and detention centres

⁸ Government accepted UPR recommendation to prohibit in all settings (2009) but stated current laws do not prescribe corporal punishment and subsequently limited but did not repeal right to discipline according to “general custom”

⁹ Possibly prohibited in institutions

¹⁰ Government accepted 2010 UPR recommendation to prohibit but subsequently stated existing law adequate; Government accepted 2015 recommendation to prohibit but appeared to defend “simple discipline”

¹¹ Ministerial directive states corporal punishment should not be used but no prohibition in law

¹² Government accepted some UPR recommendations to prohibit but rejected another similar one, stating corporal punishment already prohibited (2010)

¹³ Code of Conduct for schools states corporal punishment should not be used but no prohibition in law

¹⁴ Government accepted UPR recommendations to prohibit corporal punishment in schools and penal system but stated already prohibited in schools and care settings (2009); recommendations to prohibit in 2013 UPR rejected

¹⁵ Ministerial circulars advise against corporal punishment but no prohibition in law

¹⁶ Prohibited in UNRWA schools and in East Jerusalem; elsewhere Ministerial direction advises against corporal punishment but no prohibition in law

¹⁷ Possibly unlawful in East Jerusalem

¹⁸ Possibly unlawful in Gaza

¹⁹ Ministry of Education advises against corporal punishment but no prohibition in law

²⁰ Possibly prohibited in preschool provision