`Cadernos de Pós-Graduação em Direito Político e Econômico
ISSN 1678-2127 (Print)
ceapress.org/index.php/cpgdpe

Volume 26 · Issue 2 · 2026
Pages 1654–1668

Between Commitment and Outcome: Good Governance and the Institutional Targets of SDG 16 in Algeria (2015–2026) Entre engagement et résultat: Bonne gouvernance et cibles institutionnelles de l'ODD 16 en Algérie (2015–2026)

Dr. Mounir Biskri*[1], Dr. Abdellatif Bari[2]

[1] Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, Algeria.,Email: mounir.biskri@univ-biskra.dz , ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7107-8820

[2] Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, Algeria., Email: a.bari@univ-biskra.dz , ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0004-4719-9122

Received: 03/07/2026 | **Accepted:** 10/09/26 | **Published:** 28/10/2026

***Abstract*—**Since adopting the 2030 Agenda, Algeria has intensified its declared commitment to good governance and to the institutional targets of SDG 16 on anti-corruption, transparent institutions, participation and access to information. Drawing on the literature on quality of government and on the decoupling of formal structure from practice, this article argues that institutional density does not necessarily translate into governance outcomes, and formulates this as a conditional proposition: implementation occurs when a standard is specific, verifiable, costly to ignore and does not constrain incumbents' power; otherwise compliance remains formal. Combining structured, focused comparison with process tracing across four phases (2015–2026) and a regional benchmark of Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia, it finds that Algeria built a dense architecture for transparency, anti-corruption and digitalisation and remained relatively stable while its neighbours declined, but without improvements beyond the margin of error, alongside declining voice and accountability and weak e-participation. Judicial enforcement and asset recovery since 2019 have been real and sustained, but they run mainly through a specialised criminal court rather than the new oversight bodies. By contrast, Algeria completed its FATF action plan and exited the grey list in June 2026. In governance, complying with form is not the same as producing outcomes, unless the conditions of enforcement are present.

***Keywords*—**Good governance, SDG 16, implementation gap, horizontal accountability, digital governance, formal compliance paradox

Résumé:

Depuis l'adoption du Programme 2030, l'Algérie a intensifié son engagement déclaré en faveur de la bonne gouvernance et des cibles institutionnelles de l'ODD 16 relatives à la lutte contre la corruption, à la transparence des institutions, à la participation et à l'accès à l'information. S'appuyant sur la littérature concernant la qualité du gouvernement et le découplage entre la structure formelle et la pratique, cet article soutient que la densité institutionnelle ne se traduit pas nécessairement par des résultats en matière de gouvernance, et formule cette idée sous forme de proposition conditionnelle : la mise en œuvre intervient lorsqu'une norme est spécifique, vérifiable, coûteuse à ignorer et ne limite pas le pouvoir des dirigeants ; à défaut, la conformité demeure formelle. Combinant une comparaison structurée et ciblée avec le traçage de processus à travers quatre phases (2015–2026) et un benchmark régional incluant le Maroc, l'Égypte et la Tunisie, l'étude constate que l'Algérie a bâti une architecture dense pour la transparence, la lutte contre la corruption et la numérisation, et est demeurée relativement stable tandis que ses voisins reculaient, mais sans améliorations significatives au-delà de la marge d'erreur, parallèlement à un déclin de la voix et de la responsabilité (« voice and accountability ») et à une faible e-participation. L'application judiciaire et le recouvrement d'avoirs depuis 2019 ont été réels et soutenus, mais ils s'opèrent

How to cite: Biskri & Bari (2026). Between Commitment and Outcome: Good Governance and the Institutional Targets of SDG 16 in Algeria (2015–2026) Entre engagement et résultat: Bonne gouvernance et cibles institutionnelles de l'ODD 16 en Algérie (2015–2026). `Cadernos de Pós-Graduação em Direito Político e Econômico, 26(2), 12336–12350.

© 2026 The Author(s). Published by Centro de Estudos Acadêmicos Press [ceapress.org].

principalement par le biais d'un pôle pénal spécialisé plutôt que par les nouveaux organes de contrôle. En revanche, l'Algérie a achevé son plan d'action avec le GAFI et est sortie de la liste grise en juin 2026. En matière de gouvernance, se conformer à la forme ne revient pas à produire des résultats, à moins que les conditions d'application ne soient réunies.

Mots-clés : Bonne gouvernance, ODD 16, fossé de mise en œuvre, responsabilité horizontale, gouvernance numérique, paradoxe de la conformité formelle.

INTRODUCTION:

"Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels."

Target 16.6 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015) On 15 July 2023, Prime Minister Aïmene Benabderrahmane launched, at the Abdelatif Rahal conference centre in Algiers, the National Strategy for Transparency, Prevention and Fight against Corruption 2023–2027. The strategy was prepared by the High Authority for Transparency, Prevention and Fight against Corruption with methodological support from the United Nations Development Programme and experts from the OECD, the World Bank and UNODC (UNDP, 2023). It crowned a process that began with the constitutionalisation of the High Authority in Articles 204 and 205 of the 2020 Constitution (Algeria, 2020a), followed by its organisation under Law No. 22-08 of 5 May 2022 (ESCWA, 2025). It was the most intensive institutional moment in Algeria's fight against corruption since it ratified the UN Convention against Corruption in 2004; whether it changed the trajectory of governance quality remained open. In 2025 Algeria scored 34 on the Corruption Perceptions Index and ranked 109th of 182 countries, almost the same result as a decade earlier (Transparency International, 2026).

This episode reflected a broader post-2019 shift. After the Hirak protest movement and the legitimacy crisis that followed, the authorities sought to rebuild the institutional order through a constitutional revision put to referendum on 1 November 2020. It won 66.8% of valid votes, but turnout was only 23.8%, a record low for a major vote (Al Jazeera, 2020). New bodies for oversight, mediation, elections and civil society were created, while official discourse retained the same tenets: moralising public life, restoring citizens' trust and modernising the administration (Volpi, 2020).

Where reforms accumulate under both domestic and external pressure, reform itself becomes a signalling device. A state that simultaneously addresses the UN High-Level Political Forum, the Financial Action Task Force, donors and domestic opinion tends to produce what these audiences regard as markers of good governance, regardless of their actual effect (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Andrews, 2013). The effectiveness of reform therefore depends on its capacity to change accountability relations, not on the density of its announcements.

The question has gained salience since 2025. In June 2026, the FATF removed Algeria from its list of jurisdictions under increased monitoring, on which it had been placed in October 2024, noting that it had completed its action plan within the agreed timeframe (FATF, 2026a, 2026b). The following month, Algeria presented its second Voluntary National Review to the High-Level Political Forum, after a first review in 2019 (Government of Algeria, 2026). Yet the same year Algeria fell from 126th to 145th of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2026): more compliance where binding external standards exist, stagnation or decline where outcomes depend on domestic accountability.

Existing studies leave a pivotal question insufficiently addressed: does institutional density translate into governance outcomes? Algerian legal studies of the High Authority largely conclude that it is effective on the basis of the breadth of its powers under Law 22-08, without testing its effect on outcomes (Khedir, 2025; Ben Hamou, 2026), while assessments of Algeria's SDG progress rely on aggregate indicators without linking them to specific institutional reforms (Lachheb and Bourich, 2023). Did Algerian reforms transform governance quality, or merely achieve formal compliance with international standards?

The puzzle rests on a distinction between the signalling function of reform, demonstrating commitment to domestic and external audiences and measured by the existence of the law or the body, and its transformative function, reshaping accountability relations and measured by changes in outcomes. A state may succeed in the first and fail in the second, yet the systematic link between the two is almost absent in the Algerian case: the legal approach assesses the text, the quantitative approach assesses the indicator, and neither examines the pathways that are supposed to connect them.

The study is confined to the institutional targets of SDG 16: reducing corruption and bribery (16.5), developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions (16.6), ensuring participatory decision-making (16.7) and

ensuring public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms (16.10). Targets on violence, trafficking and criminal justice (16.1–16.4) fall outside its scope, since they require different data and methods.

The study therefore proposes a three-stage framework, from commitment through institutionalisation to outcome, on the premise that effective governance must convert the capacity to legislate into the capacity to enforce and hold to account. Three questions guide the analysis:

- **RQ1 (Commitment):** To what extent has Algeria incorporated the principles of good governance and the institutional targets of SDG 16 into its constitutional, legislative and strategic framework, and with what limits?
- **RQ2 (Institutionalisation):** Have these commitments been converted into mechanisms with the independence and binding powers needed to exercise accountability, or has the capacity to compel remained the preserve of the executive?
- **RQ3 (Outcome):** Do international indicators of governance quality and digital governance (WGI, CPI and EGDI) record a traceable improvement commensurate with the density of reforms, compared with Algeria's own trajectory and with that of its neighbours?

Literature Review: This section reviews the evolution of good governance and its relation to SDG 16, the literature on decoupling form from practice, and the conditions under which reform becomes outcome, concluding with a testable conditional proposition.

Good Governance and SDG 16: From Concept to Standard: The concept of governance entered World Bank discourse in the early 1990s as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development" (World Bank, 1992), in response to the failure of structural adjustment programmes that had neglected institutions. Santiso documented how international financial institutions moved from economic conditionality to a compound conditionality covering transparency, accountability and the rule of law, with the attendant tension between donor requirements and the needs of recipient societies (Santiso, 2001).

Rothstein and Teorell then shifted the debate from "who governs" to "how one governs", defining quality of government as the impartiality of institutions in implementing the law, that is, the output side of power rather than electoral procedures alone (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008). The distinction is crucial for studying implementation gaps: the existence of a rule does not guarantee its impartial application. Grindle, for her part, warned that the good-governance agenda had grown so long that it could not be achieved at once, and called for "good enough governance" that sequences priorities according to context (Grindle, 2004).

With the 2030 Agenda, governance moved from donor conditionality to a general UN standard. SDG 16 calls for peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice for all and effective, accountable institutions; its targets include reducing corruption and bribery (16.5), developing transparent institutions (16.6), ensuring participatory decision-making (16.7) and ensuring public access to information (16.10) (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). Yet such governance "through goals" rests on legally non-binding commitments, leaves the choice of means to states and relies on voluntary follow-up (Kanie and Biermann, 2017).

The literature acknowledges structural limits to this model. Reviewing more than 3,000 studies, Biermann and colleagues concluded that the political impact of the SDGs has been mainly discursive, changing how actors talk about development, while deeper normative and institutional change, such as legislation and resource reallocation, has remained rare (Biermann et al., 2022). For Algeria, Lachheb and Bourich found that the country leads the Maghreb on many indicators but lags behind European countries, attributing the gap to general political, economic and social factors (Lachheb and Bourich, 2023) without disaggregating them institutionally. Two gaps follow. The literature presupposes that adopting a standard is a first step towards implementing it, an assumption that fails where adoption is an end in itself; and applied studies rarely distinguish what a reform achieves for the state vis-à-vis external audiences from what it achieves for governance quality itself.

Form and Practice: Decoupling and Mimicry: Traditionally, adopting formal structures was assumed to change organisational behaviour. Meyer and Rowan complicated this by showing that organisations adopt formal structures as "myth and ceremony" that confer legitimacy, while decoupling them from actual activities to protect those activities from change (Meyer and Rowan, 1977).

Empirically, Pritchett, Woolcock and Andrews developed the notion of "isomorphic mimicry": states adopt the forms of institutions that succeeded elsewhere, laws, bodies and strategies, without their functions, and thus "look

like a state" without the corresponding capability, leading to a "capability trap" (Pritchett et al., 2013). Andrews adds that many institutional reforms act as signals to funders and partners and are judged by enactment rather than implementation (Andrews, 2013). Formal compliance thus secures acceptance, not transformation: it opens the door to external legitimacy, while behavioural change requires other conditions.

Algeria is a striking case. According to Hachemaoui, its rentier political economy has built clientelist and patronage networks that intertwine administration, politics and money, so that formal reforms are reshaped within the same distributive logic (Hachemaoui, 2013). Volpi showed that the December 2019 election allowed the ruling elite to secure continuity at the expense of legitimacy, and that the Hirak disrupted pseudo-democratic instruments without imposing institutional alternatives (Volpi, 2020). Yet this structure was not rigid: the state responded remarkably quickly when facing external standards backed by tangible costs, as the anti-money-laundering file will show.

Algerian legal scholarship, for its part, approaches the new bodies mainly through their legal regime. Ben Hamou analysed the High Authority's oversight powers, from administrative and financial inquiries to referring corruption offences to the courts and submitting an annual report to the President, and described it as "an actual tool for fighting corruption" (Ben Hamou, 2026). Khedir concluded that its role in combating illicit enrichment is "clear and effective" owing to its legal powers, while noting remaining shortcomings (Khedir, 2025). Bekkar showed that the National Observatory of Civil Society is a consultative body placed with the President (Bekkar, 2022), while Presidential Decree 20-45 places the Mediator of the Republic "with the President of the Republic, from whom he derives his authority" and confines its instruments to recommendations, proposals and referral to the President (Algeria, 2020b). These studies are valuable descriptions of the texts, but they infer effectiveness from competence without testing whether competence has produced outcomes. This is precisely the gap this study addresses.

From Commitment to Outcome: Accountability, Institutional Strength and the Conditions of Compliance: What allows reform to transform governance rather than merely manage it? The literature offers three answers. The first is O'Donnell's horizontal accountability: elections (vertical accountability) are not enough; state institutions themselves, such as courts and oversight bodies, must have the legal authority and the actual willingness to sanction transgressions by other agencies (O'Donnell, 1998). An oversight body without powers of referral or sanction becomes merely "decorative" accountability.

second is Levitsky and Murillo's notion of institutional strength, which combines enforcement and stability; "window-dressing" institutions are designed without the intention of enforcement and serve a symbolic function towards external audiences (Levitsky and Murillo, 2009). Persson, Rothstein and Teorell deepen this by showing that anti-corruption reforms fail because they assume "principled principals" monitoring corrupt agents, whereas in systemic corruption the problem is one of collective action in which those charged with oversight are part of the network being monitored (Persson et al., 2013). Mungiu-Pippidi argues that control of corruption is achieved when the "resources" for corruption are balanced by "constraints" imposed by an active civil society, a free press and an independent judiciary, not by legislation alone (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2015).

The third concerns digital governance. Dunleavy and colleagues argue that digitalisation can reintegrate government functions and reduce opportunities for corrupt intermediation (Dunleavy et al., 2006), yet transparency does not automatically produce accountability: Fung, Graham and Weil showed that disclosure is effective only when information is usable by actors able to act upon it (Fung et al., 2007). Digitalisation therefore needs a participatory dimension; otherwise it digitises services rather than accountability.

This literature explains why form and practice are decoupled, but is less clear about when the decoupling closes within the same state. Decoupling, isomorphic mimicry and window-dressing institutions describe a general condition; they do not explain why a state implements some international standards quickly while adopting others only formally. We therefore propose the "formal compliance paradox" not as a new label for decoupling, but as a conditional proposition specifying the variables of transition from form to outcome. There are three: the verifiability of the standard (does it specify concrete measures that an external party can check?), the cost of non-compliance (is a breach tied to a specific material or reputational sanction?) and the extent to which the standard constrains incumbents' power (does it subject central actors to independent oversight?). Two testable propositions follow:

- **P1:** Where a standard is voluntary and general, such as the institutional targets of SDG 16, the state tends towards formal compliance: dense adoption of laws and bodies decoupled from practice,

with no traceable effect on outcomes.

- **P2:** Where a standard is specific, verifiable and costly to ignore, and does not constrain incumbents' power, implementation follows; where it does constrain that power, compliance remains formal, or is reversible even when formal independence is high.

The study tests P1 on the trajectory of SDG 16's institutional targets in Algeria, and P2 by comparing that trajectory with the FATF file within the same case, and then with the contrasting case of Tunisia.

Methodology: The framework assesses governance by results rather than intentions (Figure 1), in three steps: periodising 2015–2026 into four phases as units of analysis and building the source corpus; converting qualitative and quantitative evidence into comparable indicators of commitment, institutionalisation and outcome according to explicit coding rules; and verifying assessments through triangulation, with process tracing as the tool of causal inference.

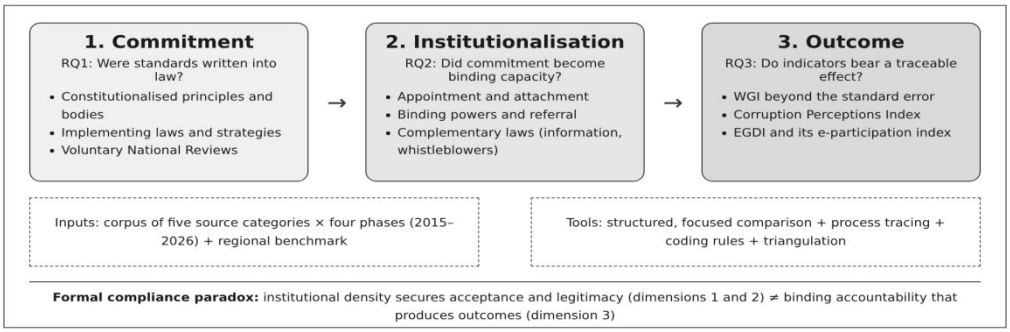


Figure 1. Analytical framework of the study: from commitment to outcome.

Structured, Focused Case Study: The study applies George and Bennett's "structured, focused comparison" to a single case (George and Bennett, 2005): the same questions are asked of each phase, and the analysis is confined to aspects bearing on the three research questions.

Two modes of analysis are combined:

- **Mode (a) – Cross-sectional:** each phase is a unit of analysis to which the three questions are posed, recording the legal and institutional instruments created and their results.
- **Mode (b) – Longitudinal:** reforms are traced over time against the trajectory of international indicators to identify any causal chain linking a specific reform to a measurable change in outcomes.

Mode (b) uses process tracing as developed by Beach and Pedersen, examining causal mechanisms within a case and the probative strength of each piece of evidence (Beach and Pedersen, 2019). We adopt the explaining-outcome variant: the aim is not to test a general theory but to explain why institutional density did not become outcome. The hypothesised mechanism has four links: (1) adoption of laws and bodies in response to legitimacy pressures; (2) attachment of the new bodies to the executive, or of their reporting to it; (3) confinement of their instruments to recommendation, notification and referral without direct sanction, together with the absence of complementary laws; (4) absence of a traceable effect on outcomes. Each link is subjected to two tests in Collier's typology: the "hoop test", which eliminates the link if failed, and the "smoking-gun test", which strongly confirms it if passed (Collier, 2011).

Periodisation and Units of Analysis: Periodisation follows two criteria: changes in the domestic political structure (regime continuity, the Hirak, the constitutional transition, the second presidential term) and changes in the nature of external pressures and standards (adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Voluntary National Reviews, Algeria's grey-listing and delisting) (Table 1).

Table 1: Phases of the study and units of analysis.

Phase	Period	Dominant feature	Reference events
First	2015–2018	Adoption of the 2030 Agenda in a late-rentier context	Adoption of the 2030 Agenda (September 2015); constitutional revision (March 2016)
Second	2019–2020	Hirak and constitutional transition	Hirak (February 2019); December 2019 trials; first VNR (2019); Economic and Financial Criminal Pole (September 2020); constitutional referendum (November 2020)
Third	2021–2023	Institutional and legislative construction	Legislative elections (June 2021); Law 22-08 (May 2022); national anti-corruption strategy (July 2023)

Table 1: Phases of the study and units of analysis. *(continued)*

Phase	Period	Dominant feature	Reference events
Fourth	2024–2026	Second term, digitalisation and external compliance	FATF grey-listing (October 2024); Digital Algeria 2030 strategy (May 2025); delisting and second VNR (June–July 2026)

Source: compiled by the authors from United Nations General Assembly (2015); Al Jazeera (2019, 2020, 2024); TSA (2020, 2021, 2022); ESCWA (2025); UNDP (2023); Algérie Eco (2025); FATF (2026a, 2026b); Government of Algeria (2026).

Constructing the Source Corpus: The corpus covers September 2015 to October 2026 across five categories (Table 2), enabling triangulation among theoretical literature, peer-reviewed case studies including Algerian legal scholarship, official and UN documents, international indicator databases and press coverage.

Table 2: Distribution of the source corpus by category and analytical function.

Source category	Number	Analytical function
Theoretical and methodological literature (books and peer-reviewed articles)	20	Defining assessment criteria and inferential logic
Peer-reviewed studies of the case (including four Algerian studies)	6	Interpreting the political structure and the legal regime of oversight bodies
Official, UN and institutional documents	9	Establishing legal facts and institutional frameworks
International indicator databases	4	Measuring outcomes, their evolution and the regional benchmark
Press and media coverage	13	Establishing dates of events, court rulings, enforcement figures and election data
Total	52	—

Source: cover September 2015 to October 2026. Given the recency of fourth-phase events, their documentation relies mainly on official documents, databases and press coverage. The full list appears in the References.

No finding rests on a single category: facts require an official or press source, interpretations a peer-reviewed or analytical source, and assessments criteria drawn from the literature.

Operationalising Indicators, Coding Rules and Verification: Each research question was operationalised as specific indicators with the required type of evidence (Table 3) and scored on a three-point ordinal scale according to explicit coding rules (Table 4). The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) are read as estimates on a scale from −2.5 to +2.5, taking the standard error into account: differences smaller than the standard error are not treated as evidence of real change (Kaufmann et al., 2011). We use the 2025 edition, which recalculated the full time series under a revised methodology, so that all temporal comparisons are made within that edition alone (World Bank, 2025).

Table 3: Operationalisation of the research questions into assessable indicators.

Dimension	Central question	Indicators	Type of evidence
Commitment (RQ1)	Were standards incorporated into the legal order?	Constitutionalisation of principles and bodies; implementing laws; national strategies; Voluntary National Reviews	Official texts; UN documents
Institutionalisation (RQ2)	Did commitment become binding capacity?	Rank of the founding text; attachment of the body; binding nature of its decisions; power of sanction; complementary laws (access to information, whistleblower protection)	Legal texts; peer-reviewed legal studies; reports of international organisations
Outcome (RQ3)	Do indicators bear a traceable effect?	Change in WGI estimates relative to the standard error and the regional benchmark; CPI trend; EGDI and its e-participation component (EPI)	International databases; process tracing

Source: Assessment thresholds for each dimension are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4: Coding rules: ordinal thresholds for each dimension.

Dimension	Limited	Moderate	High
Commitment	No new texts, or declaratory texts only	Constitutionalisation or special laws without a national strategy	Implementing laws and adopted national strategies
Institutionalisation (formal design)	Bodies governed by general texts, not constitutionalised	Constitutionalisation of bodies without new special laws	New or restructured bodies under new special laws
Institutionalisation (independence and enforcement) of new bodies	Instruments limited to recommendation, notification or referral	Power of sanction or binding decision in at least one new body	Power of sanction with non-executive appointment in most bodies
Outcome (governance quality)	Change in WGI estimates within one standard error	Improvement exceeding one standard error in one indicator	Improvement exceeding one standard error in two or more indicators, with a similar CPI trend
Outcome (digital services)	EGDI below 0.50 (“middle” group)	EGDI 0.50–0.75 (“high” group)	EGDI 0.75 or above (“very high” group)
Outcome (digital participation)	EPI below 0.25	EPI 0.25–0.50	EPI above 0.50

Source: EGDI thresholds are the performance groups used in the UN E-Government Survey; each phase is assessed on the latest available value. Source: compiled by the authors from Kaufmann et al. (2011) and UN DESA (2024).

In lieu of double coding, a triangulation rule applies: a score is accepted only if at least two source categories concur on its direction; conflicting sources are reported and weighed by proximity to the event and by their nature (perception-based or objective). Scores nonetheless remain interpretive judgements by the authors, albeit constrained by the stated thresholds.

To assess outcomes net of regional trends, Algeria's trajectory is compared with a regional benchmark of Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia, North African states exposed to similar shocks over the same period. Tunisia is also used as a "contrasting case" to test P2, since it had the strongest formal independence of oversight bodies in the region after 2014.

Analysis and Discussion:

RQ1 (Commitment): To what extent has Algeria incorporated good governance and the institutional targets of SDG 16 into its legal and strategic framework?

Across the four phases, the record shows genuine success in commitment. Algeria ratified the UN Convention against Corruption on 25 August 2004 and criminalised corruption under Law No. 06-01 of 2006 (ESCWA, 2025); it then incorporated the 2030 Agenda into official discourse, presented two Voluntary National Reviews (2019 and 2026) and set up an intersectoral committee to coordinate and monitor the SDGs, with focal points in 51 sectors and bodies (Government of Algeria, 2026).

Commitment peaked in the third and fourth phases. The 2020 revision constitutionalised the High Authority for Transparency, Prevention and Fight against Corruption (Articles 204 and 205) and the Court of Accounts as an independent body for ex post control of public funds (Algeria, 2020a). The High Authority was then organised by Law 22-08, which repealed Articles 17 to 24 of Law 06-01 on the previous body, and a new public procurement law (23-12) was adopted (ESCWA, 2025). The National Strategy 2023–2027 followed (UNDP, 2023), and in May 2025 the "Digital Algeria 2030" national digital transformation strategy, whose five axes include "digital governance" (Algérie Eco, 2025).

Commitment was not comprehensive, however. Legislative gaps remain at the core of targets 16.6 and 16.10: there is no dedicated law guaranteeing access to information despite its constitutional recognition, no clear legal definition of transparency and no obligation to publish a citizens' budget; whistleblower protection "does not clearly define the scope or modalities of such protection"; and the procurement law gives civil society no formal oversight role (ESCWA, 2025). Commitment was thus selective: dense in creating bodies, weak in the instruments that would allow society to hold them to account (Table 5).

Table 5: Commitment indicators across the phases of the study.

Phase	Predominant instrument	Outcome indicator	Assessment
First	Adoption of the 2030 Agenda; constitutional revision (2016) constitutionalising the anti-corruption body and access to information	Constitutional provisions without new implementing laws	Moderate
Second	Organic law on the Independent National Electoral Authority (2019); Mediator of the Republic (2020); 2020 Constitution	Broad constitutionalisation without a national strategy, with limited popular participation (23.8%)	Moderate
Third	Law 22-08; procurement law 23-12; national strategy 2023–2027	Completion of the legislative and strategic anti-corruption framework	High
Fourth	Digital Algeria 2030 strategy; FATF action plan; second VNR	Completion of the action plan and delisting	High

Source: Assessment by the authors according to the coding rules in Table 4, following triangulation across sources.

The post-2019 reform discourse marked a clear shift. The constitutional reform was presented as an institutional response to the Hirak's demands, but weak turnout in the referendum (23.8%) and in the early legislative elections of 12 June 2021 (23.03%) revealed a gap between the density of institutional supply and weak social demand for it (Al Jazeera, 2020; TSA, 2021). Turnout in the presidential election of 7 September 2024 was 46.1% according to the figures certified by the Constitutional Court, after all three candidates, including the winner, contested "contradictions" in the preliminary turnout figures (Al Jazeera, 2024). Commitment was formulated from above, without a social coalition to carry it.

In the fourth phase, this success in commitment held and was even reinforced under direct external pressure. After being placed under increased monitoring in October 2024, Algeria completed an action plan covering five areas: risk-based supervision, beneficial ownership, suspicious transaction reporting, targeted financial sanctions and oversight of non-profit organisations; in June 2026 the FATF removed it from the list (FATF, 2026a, 2026b). In the same vein, the second VNR acknowledged that 2019–2024 was marked by major exogenous shocks and that statistical indicator coverage remains partial (Government of Algeria, 2026).

Rising commitment thus coincided with persistent questions about outcomes, suggesting that commitment served external legitimacy more than it changed domestic accountability relations. This calls for examining whether commitment became binding capacity.

RQ2 (Institutionalisation): Were commitments converted into mechanisms with independence and binding capacity?

Algeria's capacity for formal institutionalisation is undisputed. Between 2019 and 2023 at least five bodies directly relevant to SDG 16's institutional targets were created or restructured: the Independent National Electoral Authority, the Mediator of the Republic, the National Observatory of Civil Society, the Constitutional Court and the High Authority for Transparency, together with a High Commission for Digitalisation. Under Law 22-08, the High Authority can periodically evaluate legal instruments, prepare and monitor the national strategy, receive reports, conduct administrative and financial inquiries, refer corruption offences to the courts, issue recommendations to remedy procedural weaknesses and submit an annual report to the President (ESCWA, 2025; Ben Hamou, 2026).

A comparison of these bodies, however, reveals a structural gap: the new bodies hold powers of monitoring, recommendation, notification and referral, while the power of sanction remains with the courts or with a body that predates the reforms, the Court of Accounts; and some are linked to the executive through attachment or reporting (Table 6).

Table 6: Matrix of accountability instruments in the main bodies created or restructured (2019–2023), with the Court of Accounts as a reference.

Dimension	High Authority for Transparency	Mediator of the Republic	National Observatory of Civil Society	Court of Accounts (pre-existing)
Legal basis	Constitution + Law 22-08	Presidential Decree 20-45	Constitution + Presidential Decree 21-139	Constitution
Institutional status	Constitutionally independent; annual report to the President	Subordinate to the President	Consultative body placed with the President	Constitutionally independent
Enforcement instrument	Inquiries, recommendations and referral to the courts	Recommendations and notification	Consultative opinions	Ex post control, sanctions and referral
Assessment (Table 4)	Limited	Limited	Limited	Not coded (reference)

Source: ESCWA (2025); Algeria (2020a, 2020b); Ben Hamou (2026); Bekkar (2022); assessment by the authors.

Unlike the oversight bodies in O'Donnell's model, the new bodies do not combine independence with the power of sanction (O'Donnell, 1998): the body with constitutional independence holds inquiry and referral powers, while sanction remains with the courts. Referral is not worthless, but its effect depends on the independence of another link in the chain. As Persson and colleagues argue, an oversight body linked to the power it is meant to monitor faces a collective-action problem rather than a technical design problem (Persson et al., 2013): when bodies are attached to the Presidency or report to it, the state gains compliance capital without acquiring the leverage that independent oversight confers. This is precisely where legal studies that infer effectiveness from competence stop (Khedir, 2025; Ben Hamou, 2026): competence is a necessary condition for impact, but not evidence of it.

Counter-evidence: judicial enforcement since 2019. One might object that Algeria has experienced the broadest enforcement drive in its history since 2019, and that this was a sustained, institutionalised process rather than a passing moment. On 10 December 2019, the Sidi M'hamed court convicted two former prime ministers (15 and 12 years), two former ministers (10 years) and several businessmen, with losses estimated by the prosecution at about US$920 million (Al Jazeera, 2019). In September 2020, an ordinance amending the Code of Criminal Procedure created the Economic and Financial Criminal Pole at the Algiers Court, with jurisdiction to investigate, prosecute and try complex economic and financial offences and the power to claim files from territorially competent courts (TSA, 2020). In its first nine months alone (September 2020–May 2021), the Pole received 141 reports, prosecuted 723 people, including 409 public officials, and issued 21 international arrest warrants and 53 letters rogatory, while 368 people were acquitted or discharged (Arab News, 2021), which suggests that the process was not one of automatic conviction.

Trials continued in later years. New sentences were handed down to the two former prime ministers in another case in September 2021 (Telquel, 2021), and in December 2022 the Sidi M'hamed court convicted three former prime ministers, including Noureddine Bedoui for the first time, and seven former ministers in procurement cases in the public works, water resources and post and telecommunications sectors (TSA, 2022).

Enforcement extended to asset recovery: the special fund for confiscated and recovered assets reached DA21 billion in 2022 and DA89 billion in 2023, and Algeria sent some 335 mutual legal assistance requests to 32 countries between 2019 and 2025, followed by 53 new asset-recovery requests to 11 countries (HATPLC, 2025). In October 2025, the President announced the recovery of the equivalent of US$30 billion, a figure for which no breakdown has yet been published (Jordan News, 2025).

The High Authority itself has begun to refer cases: at its fourth ordinary session in late 2025 it examined 18 files, referring about 15 to the competent prosecutors general and two to the Court of Accounts (TSA, 2025), and in July 2025 it launched the 1027 reporting hotline (HATPLC, 2025). This is consistent with the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, which recorded a gain of about 7.9 points for Algeria in the anti-corruption category between 2014 and 2023 (Afrik.com, 2026).

This evidence calls for qualifying the argument, not discarding it. It shows that judicial enforcement capacity is real, sustained and institutionalised in a specialised court, which may partly explain Algeria's resilience in control of corruption while its neighbours declined (Table 8).

Yet it also reveals the nature of that enforcement: it runs mainly through the criminal judiciary and the executive and is directed largely at files from the previous era, while the share of the new oversight bodies remains limited, though growing, since the High Authority's referrals number in the dozens against hundreds of prosecutions before the specialised court. Published data do not allow an assessment of how far current office-holders are subject to this oversight, which is the core of horizontal accountability (O'Donnell, 1998), and the selectivity of the early trials was debated (Al Jazeera, 2019).

We therefore distinguish, in the rest of the analysis, between *retrospective judicial enforcement*, which is strong and sustained, and *independent preventive oversight*, which is still taking shape; the gap identified in this study concerns the latter, not the former.

This is evident in the missing complement of social accountability. According to Mungiu-Pippidi, accountability is achieved when the resources for corruption are balanced by constraints from an active civil society and a free press (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2015).

Yet Algeria fell in the World Press Freedom Index from 126th in 2025 to 145th in 2026, with Reporters Without Borders describing an unprecedented deterioration in which provisions of the Penal Code are regularly used to prosecute journalists (RSF, 2026). Without an access-to-information law and effective whistleblower protection, oversight bodies produce reports that actors outside the administration find difficult to use.

This is consistent with the decoupling literature: organisations adopt formal structures to gain legitimacy while protecting actual practices from change (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). The FATF file illustrates the other side of the argument: when the external standard carried tangible costs for the banking system and foreign trade, together with a list of specific, verifiable measures, the action plan was completed in about twenty months (FATF, 2026a, 2026b). Yet this success should not be read as evidence of "external leverage" alone: anti-money-laundering reforms are essentially technical, strengthening state control over financial actors without subjecting the executive to independent oversight, and are thus low-cost for incumbents. This is exactly what P2 predicts, and it prevents generalising the result to standards that constrain power.

RQ3 (Outcome): To what extent do international indicators bear a traceable effect of the reforms?

Outcomes were assessed by their substance, asking three questions of each set of indicators: did the indicator change beyond the margin of error? does its trajectory differ from that of the neighbouring countries? does the change coincide with a specific, traceable reform? The analysis relies on published databases and avoids inferences from isolated annual changes.

Worldwide Governance Indicators. Between 2015 and 2024, the control of corruption estimate improved from −0.63 to −0.57, a difference of 0.06, while the standard error of this estimate ranges from 0.17 to 0.20 (World Bank, 2025); the change is statistically indistinguishable from zero. Rule of law improved from −0.87 to −0.70 and government effectiveness from −0.35 to −0.21, modest gains roughly within the standard error. Voice and accountability, by contrast, fell from −0.76 to −1.07, the only change clearly exceeding the margin of error, which occurred mainly between 2017 and 2020.

Corruption Perceptions Index. Algeria scored 36 in 2015, 35 in 2019, 33 in 2022, 36 in 2023 and 34 in 2024 and 2025, slipping from 107th to 109th between the last two years (Transparency International, 2026). The index fluctuates within a narrow band of three points over a decade, even though that decade saw the densest

wave of anti-corruption legislation since independence.

E-Government Development Index. Here there is genuine improvement: the index rose from 0.300 in 2016 (150th) to 0.596 in 2024 (116th), moving Algeria from the "middle" to the "high" performance group, driven mainly by the telecommunications infrastructure component, which jumped from 0.193 to 0.813 (UN DESA, 2024). By contrast, the e-participation component (EPI), which measures e-information, e-consultation and e-decision-making, remained below the 0.25 threshold in every survey, and its value fell from 0.227 in 2022 (148th) to 0.055 in 2024 (187th of 193). The survey's technical appendix cautions that methodological updates may affect comparability and that a decline in value or ranking "does not necessarily indicate a decline in performance" (UN DESA, 2024); we therefore do not read this decline as stand-alone evidence, but as an indication consistent with non-quantitative evidence: the absence of an access-to-information law and of any formal civil-society role in procurement oversight (ESCWA, 2025).

External procedural indicators. Delisting by the FATF is the only outcome that bears a clearly traceable Algerian imprint: a specific reform, a technical, non-perception-based external assessment and a documented result (FATF, 2026b). Yet the FATF itself required an on-site assessment to verify that implementation of the reforms has begun and is being sustained, so the judgement on impact remains contingent on implementation (FATF, 2026a).

Table 7: Selected outcome indicators for Algeria (2015–2026).

Indicator	2015/2016	2019/2020	2022	2024/2025
WGI – Voice and accountability	−0.76	−1.04	−1.09	−1.07
WGI – Government effectiveness	−0.35	−0.35	−0.33	−0.21
WGI – Rule of law	−0.87	−0.85	−0.81	−0.70
WGI – Control of corruption	−0.63	−0.63	−0.69	−0.57
CPI (0–100)	36	35	33	34
EGDI (rank)	0.300 (150)	0.517 (120)	0.561 (112)	0.596 (116)
EPI (rank)	0.119 (167)	0.155 (183)	0.227 (148)	0.055 (187)

Source: WGI estimates (2025 edition) on a scale from −2.5 to +2.5 for 2015, 2019, 2022 and 2024; CPI for 2015, 2019, 2022 and 2025; EGDI and EPI for the 2016, 2020, 2022 and 2024 surveys. Sources: World Bank (2025); Transparency International (2026); UN DESA (2024).

Regional benchmark. Placing these figures in their regional context partly changes their reading. Between 2015 and 2024, the control of corruption estimate fell in Morocco from −0.34 to −0.51, in Egypt from −0.53 to −0.81 and in Tunisia from −0.03 to −0.22, while Algeria was the only country in the group where it did not decline (Table 8). Voice and accountability fell in all four countries; Algeria's decline (−0.31) was larger than Morocco's (−0.03) and smaller than Egypt's (−0.38) and Tunisia's (−0.81) (World Bank, 2025). The more accurate judgement is therefore not "failure" but "relative stability without traceable improvement": Algeria held its ground on control of corruption against a declining regional trend, but without an improvement beyond the margin of error. Broad judicial enforcement and asset recovery since 2019 (see RQ2) may be among the main explanations of this resilience, rather than the new oversight bodies, whose referral activity began only recently.

Table 8: Regional benchmark: change in control of corruption and voice and accountability estimates (2015–2024).

Indicator	Algeria	Morocco	Egypt	Tunisia
Control of corruption 2015	−0.63	−0.34	−0.53	−0.03
Control of corruption 2024	−0.57	−0.51	−0.81	−0.22
Change	+0.06	−0.17	−0.28	−0.19
Voice and accountability 2015	−0.76	−0.65	−1.24	+0.22
Voice and accountability 2024	−1.07	−0.69	−1.62	−0.59
Change	−0.31	−0.03	−0.38	−0.81

Source: WGI estimates, 2025 edition. The standard error of Algeria's control of corruption estimate ranges from 0.17 to 0.20. Source: World Bank (2025).

Time lag. An important alternative explanation remains: reforms adopted in 2022–2023 may not yet have had time to show in the 2024 and 2025 indicators, especially since governance indicators move slowly and annual changes are small relative to the margin of error (Kaufmann et al., 2011). This explanation cannot be ruled out with the available data. Three elements limit its force, however: the only indicator that moved clearly (voice and

accountability) moved in the opposite direction; non-perception components (the absence of an access-to-information law and the limits of whistleblower protection) had not changed by 2025 (ESCWA, 2025); and the FATF file showed that the same state can produce a documented outcome in under two years when the conditions of enforcement are present. Our judgements on the third and fourth phases are therefore provisional and require confirmation by subsequent indicator updates.

Process-tracing tests. Table 9 summarises the results of testing the four links of the hypothesised mechanism. The first and second links pass the hoop test. The third passes it only partly: judicial enforcement has been broad and sustained since 2019, but it runs mainly through the specialised criminal court rather than the new oversight bodies, whose referrals have been growing since 2025; this weakens the link as an explanation for an absence of enforcement, while retaining it as an explanation for weak preventive oversight. The fourth link passes the hoop test (no improvement beyond the margin of error) but does not exclude the time-lag explanation, so its verdict remains conditional.

Table 9: Evidence tests for the links of the hypothesised causal mechanism.

Link	Evidence expected if the link holds	Type of test	Result
(1) Adoption in response to legitimacy pressures	Major texts coinciding with moments of pressure (Hirak, VNRs, FATF action plan)	Hoop	Passed: 2020 Constitution after the Hirak; financial reforms after grey-listing
(2) Link to the executive	Bodies attached to the Presidency or reporting to it	Hoop	Passed: Mediator and Observatory placed with the Presidency; High Authority's annual report
(3) Absence of sanction powers and complementary laws	Recommendation and referral instruments; no access-to-information law or whistleblower protection; enforcement concentrated outside the new bodies	Hoop	Partly passed: broad judicial enforcement through the specialised court; limited but growing referrals by the High Authority; legal gaps persist
(4) Absence of a traceable outcome	WGI changes within the margin of error; no improvement coinciding with a specific reform	Hoop	Partly passed: does not exclude the time-lag explanation

Source: Test typology following Collier (2011) and Beach and Pedersen (2019). Sources: Tables 5–8; Al Jazeera (2019); Arab News (2021); TSA (2020, 2022, 2025); HATPLC (2025); ESCWA (2025); Bekkar (2022); Algeria (2020b); Ben Hamou (2026).

Table 10: Composite assessment of governance performance across the three dimensions.

Dimension	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Commitment	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
Institutionalisation (formal design)	Moderate	High	High	High
Institutionalisation (independence and enforcement)	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited
Outcome (governance quality)	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited*
Outcome (digital services)	Limited	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Outcome (digital participation)	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited*

Source: Assessment by the authors according to the coding rules in Table 4.

(*) Provisional, owing to a possible time lag and the UN caveat on EPI comparability. "Limited" in governance quality denotes the absence of improvement beyond the standard error, not decline, in light of the regional benchmark (Table 8). The independence and enforcement dimension does not cover judicial enforcement through the specialised criminal court, which is treated as counter-evidence under RQ2.

Table 10 shows a clear divergence. Formal institutional design rises from the second phase and commitment from the third, both stabilising at their highest levels; digital services move into the high performance group as infrastructure expands; while independence and enforcement, governance quality and digital participation remain at their lowest levels throughout.

Outcomes peaked in digital services, where reform is technical and does not affect the distribution of power, and in the FATF file, where a specific, costly external standard that does not constrain incumbents was imposed; they remained limited where reform requires constraining the executive. This pattern supports both propositions: the voluntary and general institutional targets of SDG 16 produced formal compliance (P1), while the specific, costly and non-constraining financial standard produced actual implementation (P2). We call this "digitising services rather than accountability" in the digital dimension, and "compliance where it does not cost power" in the institutional dimension.

Robustness check: Tunisia as a contrasting case. If the absence of formal independence explains limited outcomes in Algeria, a case with high formal independence should show more durable outcomes. Tunisia is such a case: after 2014 it had the densest formal transparency architecture in the region, including a constitutional anti-corruption body, an organic law on access to information and an independent authority to guarantee it, created in

2016 (OCCRP, 2025). It does not test the Algerian pattern as such, but P2: is formal independence sufficient when the standard constrains incumbents' power?

The answer is negative (Table 11). In August 2021, security forces closed the headquarters of the National Anti-Corruption Authority and evicted its staff without explanation; the Supreme Judicial Council was later dissolved, and the offices of the Access to Information Authority were quietly closed in spring 2025 (OCCRP, 2025). The voice and accountability estimate fell from 0.22 in 2015 to −0.59 in 2024, rule of law from −0.05 to −0.37 and control of corruption from −0.03 to −0.22 (World Bank, 2025), and Tunisia scored 39 on the 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 2026). Formal independence, without a social and political coalition to protect it, proved reversible by executive decision, as P2 predicts when a standard constrains incumbents.

Table 11: Robustness check: Algeria and Tunisia as a contrasting case.

Indicator	Algeria (2015–2026)	Tunisia (2015–2026)
Density of the formal transparency framework	High (after 2020)	Very high (after 2014)
Dedicated access-to-information law	Absent	In force (2016)
Independence of oversight bodies	Limited	High, then effectively abolished after 2021
Change in WGI voice and accountability (2015–2024)	−0.31	−0.81
Change in WGI control of corruption (2015–2024)	+0.06 (within margin of error)	−0.19
Durability of outcomes	Limited	Limited (bodies dismantled 2021–2025)

Source: World Bank (2025); OCCRP (2025); ESCWA (2025); assessment by the authors.

Limited outcomes in Algeria might also be attributed to the exogenous shocks of 2019–2024, from the COVID-19 pandemic to the 2020 oil price collapse, which the second VNR explicitly mentions (Government of Algeria, 2026). Excluding 2019 and 2020 does not change the pattern, however: between 2021 and 2024, despite institutional stability, recovering revenues and a completed legislative framework, the control of corruption estimate moved from −0.65 to −0.57, within the margin of error, and voice and accountability remained stable at around −1.07. The same shocks also affected the benchmark countries. Finally, possible perception bias in the WGI and CPI (Thomas, 2010) does not explain the pattern on its own, since non-perception evidence (legal texts and their gaps, the institutional position of the bodies) points in the same direction. This points to the relational structure of accountability rather than to circumstances or measurement tools.

CONCLUSION:

This study traced good governance in Algeria in light of the institutional targets of SDG 16 from 2015 to 2026—moving from the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in a late-rentier context to dense institutional and legislative construction after 2019—to examine whether institutional density translated into substantive governance outcomes. The findings uncover a fundamental trade-off between legitimacy and outcome, defining what is termed here as the "formal compliance paradox." While Algeria successfully closed the "commitment gap" by constitutionalizing bodies, enacting laws, and presenting its Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), the resulting institutional density did not yield a commensurate improvement in governance quality, as structural accountability capacity remained constrained.

FINDINGS:

1. Algeria successfully established a robust legal reference and sustained judicial enforcement/asset recovery since 2019, remaining relatively stable on control of corruption while regional neighbours declined; however, this legitimacy-building did not translate into measurable improvements in governance quality beyond the margin of error.
2. The denser the laws and oversight bodies, the higher the public and international expectations of outcomes, yet independent preventive oversight—measured by SDG 16 institutional targets—remained the weakest link of the system.
3. Implementation successfully occurred where standards were specific, verifiable, and non-constraining to incumbents (as seen in the FATF file), whereas compliance remained formal where standards were voluntary and general (such as SDG 16 institutional targets).

4. The study advances legal scholarship by introducing a three-dimensional framework combining structured, focused comparison, process tracing, and a regional benchmark that rigorously separates formal commitment from actual outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Complete the reform path by enacting robust freedom-of-information legislation, effective whistleblower protections, and transparent mechanisms for appointing oversight leadership.
2. Mandate the public reporting of oversight bodies' findings, accompanied by a legal obligation for public administrations to formally respond.
3. Redesign national digital strategies to include active e-participation components rather than relying solely on administrative service delivery.
4. Overcome fragmented official and press statistics by establishing systematic, consolidated reporting series on judicial enforcement and asset recovery.

Research Prospects: Future research should test the proposed conditional proposition across other specific standards, such as trade-partnership commitments and data-protection agreements. Additionally, scholars should analyze the empirical performance of the High Authority and the Economic and Financial Criminal Pole through published series of referrals and rulings, while expanding comparative analyses to rentier states outside the immediate region.

Declaration of conflicting interests: The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding: The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Data availability statement: The study relies on publicly available data: the Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank, 2025 edition), the Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International), the UN E-Government Survey, and the official documents listed in the References. Coding tables are available from the authors upon reasonable request.

REFERENCES:

1. Afrik.com (2026) Corruption en Algérie: l'indice Mo Ibrahim conforte un pan du bilan Tebboune. *Afrik.com*, 13 July. Available at: https://www.afrik.com/corruption-en-algerie-l-indice-mo-ibrahim-conforte-un-pan-du-bilan-tebboune
2. Al Jazeera (2019) Algerian court convicts 2 former prime ministers of corruption. *Al Jazeera*, 10 December. Available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/12/10/algerian-court-convicts-2-former-prime-ministers-of-corruption
3. Al Jazeera (2020) Algerians approve new constitution after referendum. *Al Jazeera*, 13 November. Available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/13/algerias-new-constitution-approved-official-results-show
4. Al Jazeera (2024) Algeria court certifies President Tebboune's landslide re-election win. *Al Jazeera*, 14 September. Available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/9/14/algeria-court-certifies-president-tebbounes-landslide-re-election-win
5. Algeria (2020a) *Constitution de la République algérienne démocratique et populaire (révisée en 2020)*. Algiers. Available at: https://www.refworld.org/legal/legislation/natlegbod/2020/fr/116239
6. Algeria (2020b) Décret présidentiel n° 20-45 du 15 février 2020 portant institution du Médiateur de la République. *Journal officiel de la République algérienne* 9, 19 February: 5. Available at: https://natlex.ilo.org/dyn/natlex2/natlex2/files/download/112049/DZA-112049.pdf
7. Algérie Eco (2025) La Stratégie nationale de transformation numérique 2030 dévoilée. *Algérie Eco*, 12 May. Available at: https://algerie-eco.com/?p=217486
8. Andrews M (2013) *The Limits of Institutional Reform in Development: Changing Rules for Realistic Solutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
9. Arab News (2021) Lutte contre la corruption: 409 hauts fonctionnaires poursuivis en justice (reprinted from El Watan). *Arab News en français*, 11 June. Available at: https://www.arabnews.fr/node/104046/mosa%C3%AFque
10. Beach D and Pedersen RB (2019) *Process-Tracing Methods: Foundations and Guidelines*, 2nd edn. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
11. Bekkar A (2022) The founding and organizational framework of the National Observatory of Civil Society in Algeria [in Arabic]. *Journal of Legal Studies (Majallat al-Dirasat al-Huquqiyya)* 9(2): 513–547. Available at: https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/212365
12. Ben Hamou T (2026) The oversight powers of the High Authority for Transparency, Prevention and Fight against Corruption [in Arabic]. *Journal of Legal and Political Studies* 12(1): 29–39. Available at: https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/287381
13. Biermann F, Hickmann T, Sénit C-A, et al. (2022) Scientific evidence on the political impact of the Sustainable Development Goals. *Nature Sustainability* 5(9): 795–800. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-022-00909-5
14. Collier D (2011) Understanding process tracing. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44(4): 823–830. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096511001429
15. Dunleavy P, Margetts H, Bastow S and Tinkler J (2006) New public management is dead—long live digital-era governance. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 16(3): 467–494. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mui057

16. ESCWA (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia) (2025) *Arab Business Legislative Frameworks: Anti-Corruption – Algeria*. Beirut: ESCWA, December. Available at: https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/arab-business-legislative-frameworks-anti-corruption-algeria-english.pdf
17. FATF (Financial Action Task Force) (2026a) Jurisdictions under increased monitoring – 13 February 2026. Paris: FATF. Available at: https://www.fatf-gafi.org/en/publications/High-risk-and-other-monitored-jurisdictions/increased-monitoring-february-2026.html
18. FATF (Financial Action Task Force) (2026b) Outcomes FATF Plenary, 17–19 June 2026. Paris: FATF. Available at: https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/fatf-gafi/en/publications/Fatfgeneral/outcomes-fatf-plenary-june-2026.html
19. Fung A, Graham M and Weil D (2007) *Full Disclosure: The Perils and Promise of Transparency*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511510533
20. George AL and Bennett A (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
21. Government of Algeria (2026) *Voluntary National Review 2026: Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Algiers, June. Available at: https://www.ambassade-algerie.ch/actualites/2026/VNR%202026%20Algeria%20Report%20EN.pdf
22. Grindle MS (2004) Good enough governance: Poverty reduction and reform in developing countries. *Governance* 17(4): 525–548. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0952-1895.2004.00256.x
23. HATPLC (High Authority for Transparency, Prevention and Fight against Corruption) (2025) *Semi-Annual Journal of the High Authority*. Algiers: HATPLC. Available at: https://hatplc.dz/pdf/publications/Semi-Annual%20Journal%20of%20the%20High%20Authority.pdf
24. Hachemaoui M (2013) *Clientélisme et patronage dans l'Algérie contemporaine*. Paris: Karthala.
25. Jordan News (2025) Algerian President announces recovery of $30 billion in stolen funds. *Jordan News*, 11 October. Available at: https://www.jordannews.jo/Section-91/Africa/Algerian-President-Announces-Recovery-of-30-Billion-in-Stolen-Funds-45576
26. Kanie N and Biermann F (eds) (2017) *Governing through Goals: Sustainable Development Goals as Governance Innovation*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
27. Kaufmann D, Kraay A and Mastruzzi M (2011) The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and analytical issues. *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law* 3(2): 220–246. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1876404511200046
28. Khedir A (2025) The role of the High Authority for Transparency, Prevention and Fight against Corruption in combating illicit enrichment [in Arabic]. *African Journal of Legal and Political Studies* 9(1): 59–74. Available at: https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/269718
29. Lachheb S and Bourich A (2023) Analysis and evaluation of Algeria's efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals. *Alijtihed Journal on Legal and Economic Studies* 12(1): 409–423. https://doi.org/10.36540/x3g81r06
30. Levitsky S and Murillo MV (2009) Variation in institutional strength. *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 115–133. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.091106.121756
31. Meyer JW and Rowan B (1977) Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology* 83(2): 340–363. https://doi.org/10.1086/226550
32. Mungiu-Pippidi A (2015) *The Quest for Good Governance: How Societies Develop Control of Corruption*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
33. OCCRP (Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project) (2025) Civil society sounds alarm over Tunisia's clampdown on transparency oversight (Shenawy M and Sbouai S). *OCCRP*, 29 August. Available at: https://www.occrp.org/en/news/civil-society-sounds-alarm-over-tunisias-clampdown-on-transparency-oversight
34. O'Donnell G (1998) Horizontal accountability in new democracies. *Journal of Democracy* 9(3): 112–126. https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.1998.0049
35. Persson A, Rothstein B and Teorell J (2013) Why anticorruption reforms fail—systemic corruption as a collective action problem. *Governance* 26(3): 449–471. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0491.2012.01604.x
36. Pritchett L, Woolcock M and Andrews M (2013) Looking like a state: Techniques of persistent failure in state capability for implementation. *Journal of Development Studies* 49(1): 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2012.709614
37. Rothstein B and Teorell J (2008) What is quality of government? A theory of impartial government institutions. *Governance* 21(2): 165–190. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0491.2008.00391.x
38. RSF (Reporters Without Borders) (2026) Algeria: 2026 World Press Freedom Index country profile. Paris: RSF. Available at: https://rsf.org/en/country/algeria
39. Santiso C (2001) Good governance and aid effectiveness: The World Bank and conditionality. *Georgetown Public Policy Review* 7(1): 1–22.
40. Telquel (2021) Algérie: nouvelles condamnations pour d'ex-caciques de l'ère Bouteflika. *Telquel*, 27 September. Available at: https://telquel.ma/2021/09/27/algerie-nouvelles-condamnations-pour-dex-caciques-de-lere-bouteflika_1738130
41. Thomas MA (2010) What do the worldwide governance indicators measure? *European Journal of Development Research* 22(1): 31–54. https://doi.org/10.1057/ejdr.2009.32
42. Transparency International (2026) Corruption Perceptions Index 2025: Algeria and Tunisia country data (series 2012–2025). Berlin: Transparency International. Available at: https://www.transparency.org/country/DZA
43. TSA (Tout sur l'Algérie) (2020) Lutte contre la grande corruption: création d'un pôle pénal spécialisé. *TSA*, 3 September. Available at: https://www.tsa-algerie.com/lutte-contre-la-grande-corruption-creation-dun-pole-penal-specialise/
44. TSA (Tout sur l'Algérie) (2021) Législatives: 23,03 % de taux de participation, abstention record. *TSA*, 15 June. Available at: https://www.tsa-algerie.com/legislatives-2303-de-taux-de-participation-abstention-record/
45. TSA (Tout sur l'Algérie) (2022) Corruption: 3 ex-Premiers ministres et 7 anciens ministres lourdement condamnés. *TSA*, 1 December. Available at: https://www.tsa-algerie.com/corruption-3-ex-premiers-ministres-et-7-anciens-ministres-lourdement-condamnes

46. TSA (Tout sur l'Algérie) (2025) Lutte contre la corruption en Algérie: de nouvelles affaires entre les mains de la justice. *TSA*, 30 December. Available at: https://www.tsa-algerie.com/corruption-en-algerie-de-nouvelles-affaires-transmises-a-la-justice/

47. UN DESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs) (2024) *United Nations E-Government Survey 2024: Accelerating Digital Transformation for Sustainable Development* (incl. Technical Appendix). New York: United Nations; country data for Algeria (2016–2024) available at: https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data/Country-Information/id/3-Algeria

48. UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (2023) Prévention et lutte contre la corruption: Lancement officiel de la stratégie nationale 2023–2027. UNDP Algérie, 15 July. Available at: https://www.undp.org/fr/node/408816

49. United Nations General Assembly (2015) Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A/RES/70/1, 21 October. New York: United Nations.

50. Volpi F (2020) Algeria: When elections hurt democracy. *Journal of Democracy* 31(2): 152–165.

51. World Bank (1992) *Governance and Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

52. World Bank (2025) *Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2025 Update* (dataset and methodology revision; estimates and standard errors for Algeria, Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia, 2014–2024). Washington, DC: World Bank. Available at: https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators