

OIC Countries: Freedom and Governance Report

INTRODUCTION

Islam & Liberty Network is a global platform committed to “explore and promote a Muslim case for freedom”. In line with marking its 10th year of work in 2021, which closely follows 10 years of the Arab Spring, calls have been made at several formal and informal meetings by council members of Islam & Liberty Network (**ILN**) to create the Islam & Liberty Index (**ILI**), that would shine a light on what is identified to be the two most fundamental factors in explaining the humanitarian, political and economic crises that unfortunately have become common place in many Muslim majority countries: human freedom and quality of governance. Human freedom has been identified by ILN to be comprised of religious (freedom of religion and faith, expression and practice), political (liberal democracy, rule of law and limited government) and economic (open markets, voluntary exchange, and low taxes) freedom. On the other hand, for human rights to be respected and protected in a sustainable manner, good governance is required. ILN has not adapted a specific definition of this factor, but according to Worldwide Governance Indicators (**WGI**) the key attributes of good governance are Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. These will be adopted in this paper, too, except the indicator Rule of Law, given that it is part of indicators for political freedom.

The objective of this paper is to produce a new monitoring tool for OIC countries that is based on the policy-priorities of Islam and Liberty Network. Even though there are existing tools in form of various indices, i.e., the popular CATO Institute’s Human Freedom Index (**HFI**) and less known but very comprehensive Islamicity Indices (**IIN**) by Islamicity Foundation, this paper is evaluating those against the objective to have a tool that is focusing on aspects of freedom as stipulated by ILN. An alternative index is offered that is to match the stated objectives and compensate the identified shortcomings of existing indices and provide a tool that is to become a flagship publication of ILN. An index overview based on latest data is provided and compared to results of other indices.

OBJECTIVES OF THE INDEX

Freedom is a very complex, multi-dimensional and dynamic process, one that is a result of complicated socio-economic and political factors. As such, it is very difficult to produce a comprehensive indicator that will include the many variables needed to capture the complexities mentioned above. Since for this purpose, composite indices are to be used, an additional level of difficulty is added since the final evaluation will depend on, not only on the chosen components, but also on the weights attached to them. Both segments, the components and weights, to be frank, simply reflect the ideological or policy objectives of the evaluator. It is the same in case of ILN, and as such, its priorities might not be in line with many other organizations, governments and individuals. In fact, on its Instagram page, ILN itself

explicitly mentions that “We believe that Islam promotes freedom. Millions don’t.”¹ **As a result, the index that is to be used by ILN must confirm to the segments as identified by ILN, i.e., segmented based on religious, political and economic freedom as well as good governance. The weight must be equally distributed between these segments, given that each segment is given equal importance.**

Given that we are exposed to extensive data, including too many indicators might lead to an overload of information and dilution of policy focus. The objective of ILI is not to create an index that is highlighting all, but the ones that are the most relevant ones to priorities set by ILN. **As a result, the index should include indicators that are evaluated to be at least very important.** For ILI, these are issues that are directly mentioned in the ILN’s definition of freedom. However, this is also a dynamic process and factors included might change in the future.

ILN is to make a case for its indicator to be adopted by a targeted audience, which in case of ILI, should be governments, institutions and populations of OIC member countries. These countries share many common elements, including a religious and geographical connection, making it easier to cross-adapt positive policies among those countries. Yet, it is an important factor to ensure the index falls within the Overton Window, or the range of policies acceptable to the targeted audience at a given time, creating a practical window of policy discourse. Otherwise, if the themes are in the area of radical or unthinkable policies, the tool might not gain acceptance and as such will not have significant practical value. This task also requires a soft touch. **As a result, the index should include only policy directions that seem to be at least acceptable, excluding radical or unthinkable policy directions.** This will be done by measuring the mean values of subsegments against class intervals as shown in Tab. 1:

Table 1: Overton window classification

| Overton window category | Mean value of subsegment |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Unthinkable | 0.0 - 2.0 |
| Radical | 2.0 - 3.5 |
| Acceptable | 3.5 - 5.0 |
| Sensible | 5.0 - 6.5 |
| Popular | 6.5 - 8.0 |
| Policy | 8.0 – 10.0 |

EXISTING INDICES

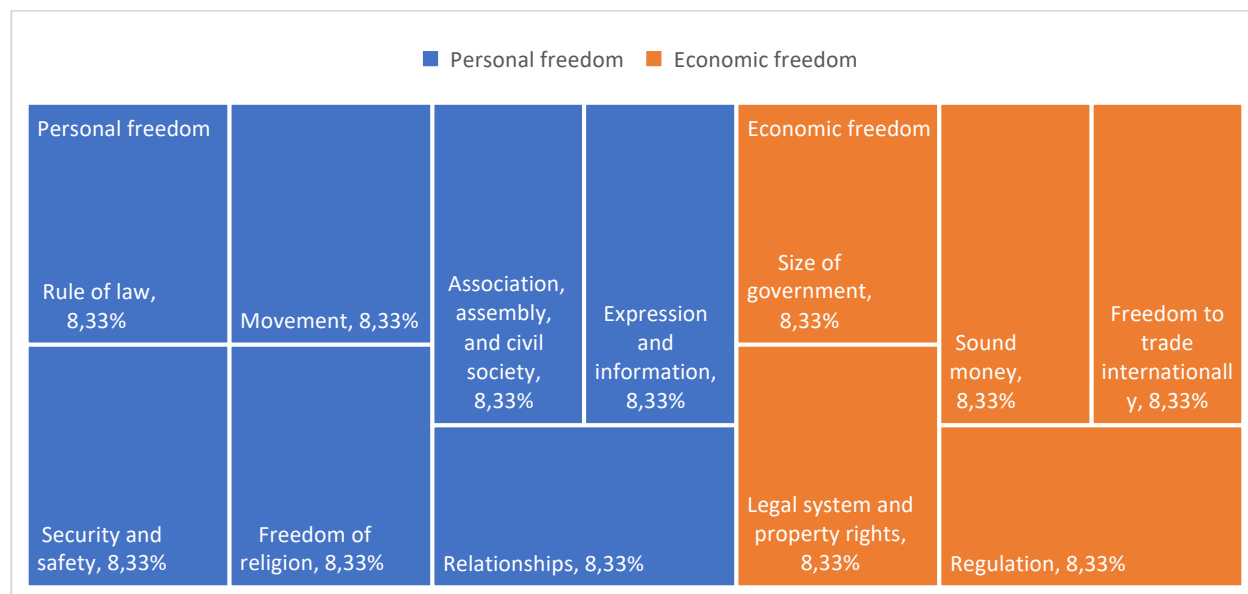
HFI and IIN are the two identified candidates (**Candidate indices**) that could take on the role of being ILI. Both are measuring freedom, whereby IIN takes a wider approach and measures additional aspect of socio-economic aspects of social development.

¹ <https://twitter.com/libertyislam>

Human Freedom Index

The Candidate indices have a very different segment structure. Thus, HFI has two main segments, personal and economic freedom. Personal freedom is further divided into 7 subsegments, while Economic freedom is divided into 5 subsegments (see Fig.1)

Figure 1: Overview of segments and subsegments of HFI



The choice made by CATO was to give each subsegment equal weight. As such, each subsegment adds 8,33% to the overall index value, and as a result, personal freedom indicators total a 58,33%, while economic freedom indicators contribute the remaining 41,67%.

The first problem in using HFI to fulfill the needs of ILN is already in the way indicators are structured. Thus, ILN defines economic freedom as part of personal freedom, while in HFI those are two separate segments. We do not have a separate insight into political freedoms, while freedom of religion, and economic freedom are underrepresented. Also, the individual segments of freedom are differently defined. Thus, the subsegment Size of government in HFI is placed under Economic freedom, but under ILN it is under Political freedom (as indicator of limited government). Another option is to use the index data and reorganize it to fit the needs of ILN. The resulting coverage of segments by reorganizing the index according to the requirements of ILN is shown in Tab. 2. As can be seen, under the total figure, after reorganizing and eliminating the inappropriate indicators, the segments Religious and Economic freedom, as well as Quality of governance are underrepresented, while Political freedom is overrepresented. This could be corrected by modifying the weights of segment, but still, the shortcomings are obvious. Quality of governance does not receive any special attention, but ILN places a very important position of this factor to achieve and maintain freedom in a society. Only the subsegment Security and safety could be used for this segment, but that is clearly not enough to have a solid representation of indicators for this segment.

Table 2: Evaluation of HFI

| Subsegment | Rel. free. | Pol. free. | Eco. free. | Gov. | Overton w. ² | Importance |
|--|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Rule of law | | X | | | Acceptable | Very important |
| Security and safety | | | | X | Popular | Very important |
| Movement | | | | | Popular | Important |
| Freedom of religion | X | | | | Popular | Very important |
| Association, assembly, and civil society | | X | | | Sensible | Very important |
| Expression and information | | X | | | Sensible | Very important |
| Relationships | | | | | Acceptable | Important |
| Size of government | | X | | | Popular | Very important |
| Legal system and property rights | | X | | | Acceptable | Very important |
| Sound money | | X | | | Popular | Very important |
| Freedom to trade internationally | | | X | | Sensible | Very important |
| Regulation | | | X | | Popular | Very important |
| Total | 1 (8,33%) | 6 (50,00%) | 2 (16,67%) | 1 (8,33%) | | |

Note: Identification of segments is based on ILN criteria. For example, the segment Size of government in HFI is placed under Economic freedom, but under ILN it is under Political freedom (as indicator of limited government).

To conclude, HFI in its original form is not fit to fulfill the needs of ILN and cannot play the role of ILI. However, its segments could be used to create a custom ILI, in full or by partial adaptation.

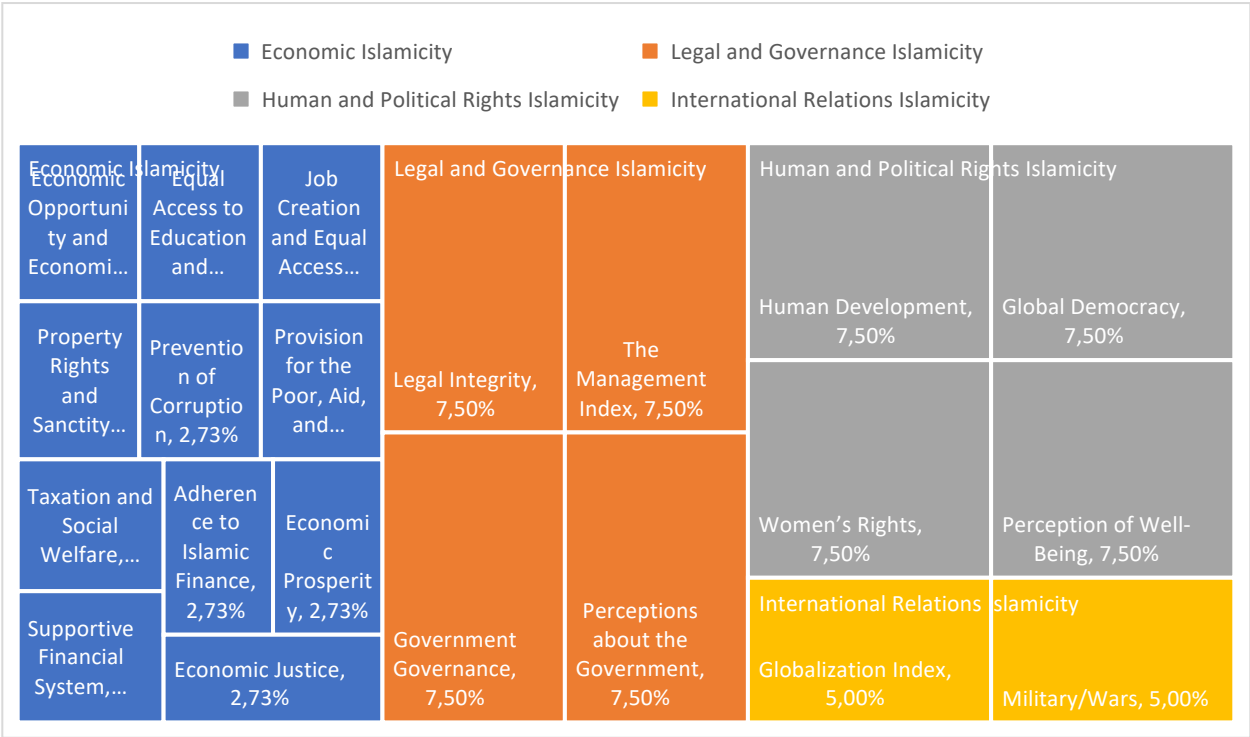
Islamicity Indices

IIN has four main segments, Economic Islamicity, Legal and Governance Islamicity, Human and Political Rights Islamicity and International Relations Islamicity. Economic Islamicity is further divided into 11 subsegments, Legal and Governance Islamicity into 4 subsegments, Human and Political Rights Islamicity into 4 subsegments, too, while International Relations Islamicity is

² See Appendix A for evaluation.

divided into 2 subsegments (see Fig.2). Thus, IIN has a total of 21 subsegments, or 9 more than HFI.

Figure 2: Overview of segments and subsegments of IIN



The approach made by Islamicity Foundation differs from CATO not only in the choice of the quantity and structure of indicators, but also in the way each subsegment is weighted. Instead of each subsegment having fixed equal weights, it is the main segments that have fixed weights (Economic Islamicity: 0.3, Legal and Governance Islamicity: 0.25, Human and Political Rights Islamicity: 0.35, International Relations Islamicity: 0.1), resulting with different weights for the subsegments, as each main segment has different number of subsegments. Consequently, the quantity of subsegments simply increases the number of factors defining individual segments of socio-economic and political conditions of a society.

The application of the Overton window classification of subsegments as provided in Tab. 1 also shows that IIN includes subsegments that are based on policy expectations that are too radical for OIC countries, i.e., the segments Legal and Governance Islamicity and Human and Political Rights Islamicity (see Tab. 3). Including those subsegments might be counterproductive, as they might induce strong resistance of the targeted audience, and thus make the ILI ineffective as a tool to influence policies in OIC countries.

An additional problem in using IIN to fulfill the needs of ILN is the fact that the Islamicity Foundation does not offer the values of individual subsegments, but only the values of the main ones. As a result, one has only the option to use the values as they are structured in their index.

Table 3: Evaluation of IIN

| Subsegment | Rel. free. | Pol. free. | Eco. free. | Gov. | Overton w. ³ | Importance |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Economic Islamicity | | | X | | Acceptable | Very important |
| Legal and Governance Islamicity | | | | X | Radical | Very important |
| Human and Political Rights Islamicity | | x | | | Radical | Very important |
| International Relations Islamicity | | | | | Acceptable | Important |
| Total | 0 (0,00%) | 0 (0,00%) | 1 (30,00%) | 0 (0,00%) | | |

Given that the main segments do not match those of ILN, that means that the IIN has no use value for ILN at all.

To conclude, IIN in its original form is not fit to fulfill the needs of ILN and cannot play the role of ILI. Likewise, its segments cannot be used to create a custom ILI, neither by full nor by partial adaptation.

ISLAM & LIBERTY INDEX

Given that the Candidate indices in their original form do not satisfy the objectives of ILN and cannot be used as ILI, ILN must create its own index. I will propose here a structure that should meet the defined objectives for an appropriate ILI.

As such, the index that is to be used by ILN must confirm to the segments as identified by ILN and mentioned above, i.e., segmented based on religious, political and economic freedom as well as good governance. The weight will be equally distributed between these segments, given that each segment is given equal value.

Table 4: Segments and distribution of ILI

| Islam & Liberty Index | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Segments | Religious freedom | Political freedom | Economic freedom | Quality of governance |
| Weights | 25,00% | 25,00% | 25,00% | 25,00% |

The choice of subsegments is a more subtle matter. Even though the HFI included a subsegment on Freedom of religion, which could be used by simply applying a higher weight, I have decided to use the special index on Freedom of religion developed by Pew Research

³ See Appendix A for evaluation.

Center (**Pew**). They are publishing an annual report on *Global restrictions on religion*, providing two subindices: (1) **The Government Restrictions Index** - measuring government laws, policies and actions that restrict religious beliefs and practices, and (2) **The Social Hostilities Index** – measuring acts of religious hostility by private individuals, organizations or groups in society. This includes religion-related armed conflict or terrorism, mob or sectarian violence, harassment over attire for religious reasons, or other religion-related intimidation or abuse.

Another significant benefit from using the Pew data is the ability to use the annual reports the center is providing, and that include detailed developments worldwide on the topic of religious freedom. Those can be used as a source for more detailed information on individual countries and the conditions leading to scores that have been provided in their indices.

The segment Political freedom will be based on HFI data, combining various indicators from both, Personal and Economic freedom that are used in HFI. The Rule of Law subsegment will be comprised of the Rule of Law indicator, enhanced by the Legal System & Property Rights indicator. The Limited government subsegment will be structured using the Size of Government and Sound money indicators. The subsegment Liberal democracy will be constructed using the Association, Assembly, and Civil Society and Expression and Information indicators.

As for the segment Economic freedom, the HFI offers enough economic freedom indicators to cover all aspects of economic freedom as defined by ILN. Thus, the subsegment Open markets will be constructed by the Business regulations and Freedom to Trade Internationally indicators. The subsegment Voluntary exchange will be evaluated by the Regulation indicator. The subsegment Low taxes will be based on the Marginal Tax Rate indicator.

The whole segment Quality of governance will be based on WGI indicators, i.e., Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, and Control of Corruption. Rule of law is also considered to be an indicator of the quality of governance but given that it has been placed under the segment Political freedom it will not be included in this segment.

As such, the ILI segments have been measured using indicators as chosen by three sources, i.e., Religious freedom by indicators selected by Pew Research Center, Political and Economic freedom by indicators selected by CATO Institute and Quality of governance by indicators selected by Worldwide Governance Indicators project.

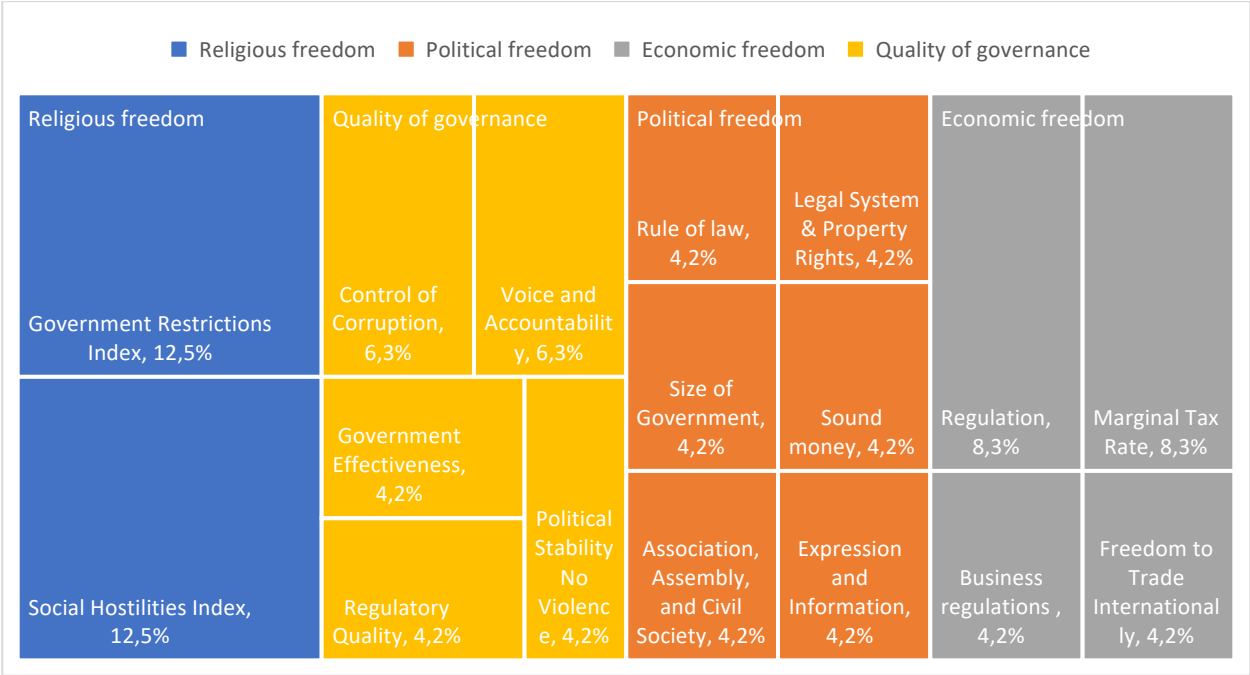
The full overview of the segments, subsegments and indicators is provided in Tab. 5.

Table 5: Structure of ILI

| Religious freedom | Political freedom | Economic freedom | Quality of governance |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>A. Government Restrictions</p> <p>i. Government Restrictions Index (Pew)</p> | <p>A. Rule of law</p> <p>i. Rule of law (HFI)</p> <p>a. Procedural justice</p> <p>b. Civil justice</p> <p>c. Criminal justice</p> <p>ii. Legal System & Property Rights (HFI)</p> <p>a. Judicial independence</p> <p>b. Impartial courts</p> <p>c. Protection of property rights</p> <p>d. Military interference in rule of law and politics</p> <p>e. Integrity of the legal system</p> <p>f. Legal enforcement of contracts</p> <p>g. Regulatory costs of the sale of real property</p> <p>h. Reliability of police</p> | <p>A. Open markets</p> <p>i. Business regulations (HFI)</p> <p>ii. Freedom to Trade Internationally (HFI)</p> <p>a. Tariffs</p> <p>b. Regulatory trade barriers</p> <p>c. Black-market exchange rates</p> <p>d. Controls of the movement of capital and people</p> | <p>A. Government Integrity</p> <p>i. Control of Corruption (WGI)</p> <p>ii. Voice and Accountability (WGI)</p> |
| <p>B. Social Hostilities</p> <p>ii. Social Hostilities Index (Pew)</p> | <p>B. Limited government</p> <p>i. Size of Government (HFI)</p> <p>a. Government consumption</p> <p>b. Transfers and subsidies</p> <p>c. Government investment</p> <p>d. Av State Ownership of Assets</p> <p>ii. Sound money (HFI)</p> <p>a. Money growth</p> <p>b. Standard deviation of inflation</p> <p>c. Inflation: Most recent year</p> <p>d. Freedom to own foreign currency bank accounts</p> | <p>B. Voluntary exchange</p> <p>i. Credit market regulations (HFI)</p> <p>ii. Labor market regulations (HFI)</p> | <p>B. Government Effectiveness</p> <p>i. Government Effectiveness (WGI)</p> <p>ii. Regulatory Quality (WGI)</p> <p>iii. Political Stability/No Violence (WGI)</p> |
| | <p>C. Liberal democracy</p> <p>i. Association, Assembly, and Civil Society (HFI)</p> <p>a. Civil society entry and exit</p> <p>b. Freedom of assembly</p> <p>c. Freedom to form and run political parties</p> <p>d. Civil society repression</p> <p>ii. Expression and Information (HFI)</p> <p>a. Press killed</p> <p>b. Press jailed</p> <p>c. Freedom of academic and cultural expr.</p> <p>d. Harassment of journalists</p> <p>e. Government censorship effort</p> <p>f. Internet censorship effort</p> <p>g. Media self-censorship</p> <p>h. Media freedom</p> <p>i. Freedom of expression</p> | <p>C. Low taxes</p> <p>i. Top Marginal Tax Rate (HFI)</p> | |

The resulting structure of ILI segments and subsegments is shown in Fig. 3. Given that the weighting system is based on equal value for the main segments, the individual subsegments have different weights, the most influential one being those related to religious freedom. However, this is not to be misinterpreted that only two factors determine most value of the index, given that both subsegments are based on indices comprised of a total 33 individual indicators. The same is with Quality of governance indicators, that are summarized in 5 cumulative indicators that are comprised of many individual indicators.

Figure 3: Overview of segments and subsegments of ILI



INITIAL RESULTS

The results of the initial ranking are presented in Tab. 6. It also presents the ratings and rankings for the individual segments. The focus is on OIC countries; hence the results are all ranked based on inter-competitiveness between OIC countries only.

According to this proposed ILI index, the top 5 jurisdictions are Albania, Suriname, The Gambia, Senegal and Guyana. The bottom five (excluding countries with missing data), in descending order, are Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Libya and Yemen.

The average ILI rating for OIC countries is 5.53, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 represents more freedom. The best result is in the subsegment Economic freedom, with an average score of 6.78, followed by Religious freedom with 5.89 and Political freedom with 5.62. By far, the worst

Table 6: ILI Index and subindices, 2021

| Countries | ILI | ILI rank | RF | RF Rank | PF | PF Rank | EF | EF Rank | QG | QG Rank |
|------------------------|------|----------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|
| Albania | 7.22 | 1 | 8.80 | 6 | 7.35 | 1 | 7.89 | 12 | 4.84 | 7 |
| Suriname | 6.86 | 2 | 9.55 | 1 | 6.66 | 11 | 6.52 | 28 | 4.69 | 11 |
| Gambia, The | 6.81 | 3 | 8.45 | 9 | 6.77 | 9 | 7.65 | 13 | 4.36 | 18 |
| Senegal | 6.75 | 4 | 9.25 | 2 | 6.97 | 5 | 5.72 | 42 | 5.06 | 5 |
| Guyana | 6.62 | 5 | 8.75 | 7 | 7.09 | 3 | 5.97 | 36 | 4.65 | 13 |
| United Arab Emirates | 6.62 | 6 | 6.55 | 21 | 5.43 | 28 | 8.50 | 4 | 5.98 | 2 |
| Brunei Darussalam | 6.38 | 7 | 5.50 | 34 | 4.74 | 40 | 8.93 | 1 | 6.33 | 1 |
| Benin | 6.37 | 8 | 8.25 | 10 | 6.84 | 7 | 5.82 | 39 | 4.58 | 15 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 6.32 | 9 | 7.50 | 12 | 6.66 | 10 | 7.16 | 19 | 3.96 | 24 |
| Jordan | 6.27 | 10 | 5.65 | 32 | 6.82 | 8 | 7.95 | 11 | 4.67 | 12 |
| Burkina Faso | 6.25 | 11 | 7.90 | 11 | 6.36 | 17 | 6.74 | 26 | 3.98 | 23 |
| Togo | 6.19 | 12 | 8.60 | 8 | 6.13 | 20 | 6.49 | 30 | 3.52 | 27 |
| Guinea-Bissau | 6.19 | 13 | 9.25 | 3 | 5.46 | 27 | 7.02 | 21 | 3.01 | 41 |
| Cote d'Ivoire | 6.13 | 14 | 9.15 | 4 | 6.44 | 15 | 5.02 | 51 | 3.92 | 25 |
| Qatar | 6.13 | 15 | 5.95 | 28 | 4.55 | 41 | 8.46 | 5 | 5.56 | 4 |
| Oman | 6.12 | 16 | 7.10 | 15 | 4.28 | 48 | 8.24 | 6 | 4.87 | 6 |
| Kuwait | 6.07 | 17 | 6.45 | 22 | 4.84 | 37 | 8.24 | 7 | 4.75 | 9 |
| Kazakhstan | 6.05 | 18 | 5.90 | 31 | 5.89 | 24 | 8.17 | 9 | 4.22 | 20 |
| Malaysia | 6.02 | 19 | 2.70 | 55 | 7.05 | 4 | 8.61 | 2 | 5.70 | 3 |
| Sierra Leone | 5.96 | 20 | 7.45 | 13 | 6.60 | 13 | 5.70 | 43 | 4.07 | 21 |
| Gabon | 5.83 | 21 | 8.95 | 5 | 5.24 | 33 | 5.70 | 44 | 3.42 | 30 |
| Bahrain | 5.81 | 22 | 6.00 | 27 | 4.29 | 47 | 8.56 | 3 | 4.39 | 16 |
| Comoros | 5.76 | 23 | 6.85 | 20 | 5.03 | 35 | 8.16 | 10 | 3.00 | 42 |
| Lebanon | 5.72 | 24 | 6.05 | 26 | 6.62 | 12 | 7.21 | 18 | 3.00 | 43 |
| Mozambique | 5.68 | 25 | 7.10 | 16 | 5.86 | 25 | 6.27 | 33 | 3.48 | 29 |
| Niger | 5.63 | 26 | 7.00 | 19 | 6.23 | 18 | 5.89 | 38 | 3.38 | 32 |
| Uganda | 5.59 | 27 | 6.30 | 24 | 5.98 | 22 | 6.55 | 27 | 3.52 | 28 |
| Djibouti | 5.56 | 28 | 7.25 | 14 | 4.89 | 36 | 6.79 | 25 | 3.32 | 33 |
| Kyrgyz Republic | 5.53 | 29 | 4.45 | 44 | 6.43 | 16 | 7.54 | 14 | 3.69 | 26 |
| Indonesia | 5.43 | 30 | 2.80 | 54 | 7.11 | 2 | 6.96 | 22 | 4.83 | 8 |
| Mauritania | 5.37 | 31 | 5.65 | 33 | 6.02 | 21 | 6.39 | 31 | 3.40 | 31 |
| Guinea | 5.33 | 32 | 7.10 | 17 | 5.42 | 29 | 5.52 | 48 | 3.27 | 35 |
| Tunisia | 5.31 | 33 | 4.60 | 42 | 6.49 | 14 | 5.45 | 49 | 4.70 | 10 |
| Morocco | 5.31 | 34 | 4.95 | 38 | 5.93 | 23 | 5.98 | 35 | 4.36 | 17 |
| Saudi Arabia | 5.25 | 35 | 4.70 | 41 | 3.84 | 52 | 8.21 | 8 | 4.25 | 19 |
| Azerbaijan | 5.15 | 36 | 6.15 | 25 | 4.09 | 51 | 7.05 | 20 | 3.30 | 34 |

Table 6: ILI Index and subindices, 2021 (continued)

| Countries | ILI | ILI rank | RF | RF Rank | PF | PF Rank | EF | EF Rank | QG | QG Rank |
|--------------------|------|----------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|
| Mali | 5.10 | 37 | 5.95 | 29 | 6.15 | 19 | 5.35 | 50 | 2.94 | 44 |
| Nigeria | 5.09 | 38 | 3.30 | 51 | 6.86 | 6 | 7.31 | 16 | 2.88 | 45 |
| Cameroon | 5.02 | 39 | 6.45 | 23 | 5.17 | 34 | 5.70 | 45 | 2.75 | 46 |
| Chad | 5.02 | 40 | 7.05 | 18 | 4.76 | 39 | 5.95 | 37 | 2.30 | 49 |
| Turkey | 4.93 | 41 | 4.75 | 40 | 5.26 | 32 | 5.74 | 41 | 3.98 | 22 |
| Bangladesh | 4.92 | 42 | 4.20 | 47 | 5.29 | 31 | 6.91 | 23 | 3.26 | 36 |
| Tajikistan | 4.66 | 43 | 4.50 | 43 | 4.13 | 50 | 7.30 | 17 | 2.70 | 47 |
| Sudan | 4.50 | 44 | 5.95 | 30 | 4.32 | 46 | 5.76 | 40 | 1.97 | 52 |
| Pakistan | 4.50 | 45 | 3.00 | 52 | 5.60 | 26 | 6.30 | 32 | 3.10 | 38 |
| Somalia | 4.26 | 46 | 4.35 | 46 | 4.80 | 38 | 6.86 | 24 | 1.04 | 55 |
| Iran, Islamic Rep. | 4.24 | 47 | 4.45 | 45 | 4.51 | 43 | 5.65 | 46 | 2.34 | 48 |
| Algeria | 4.10 | 48 | 3.00 | 53 | 5.29 | 30 | 4.85 | 52 | 3.24 | 37 |
| Egypt, Arab Rep. | 4.02 | 49 | 2.40 | 56 | 4.54 | 42 | 6.09 | 34 | 3.04 | 40 |
| Iraq | 3.97 | 50 | 1.85 | 57 | 4.45 | 44 | 7.45 | 15 | 2.11 | 50 |
| Libya | 3.89 | 51 | 3.45 | 48 | 4.39 | 45 | 6.49 | 29 | 1.23 | 54 |
| Yemen, Rep. | 3.55 | 52 | 3.35 | 49 | 4.19 | 49 | 5.65 | 47 | 1.02 | 56 |
| Palestine | #N/A | - | 4.75 | 39 | #N/A | - | #N/A | - | #N/A | - |
| Maldives | #N/A | - | 5.05 | 36 | #N/A | - | #N/A | - | 4.60 | 14 |
| Uzbekistan | #N/A | - | 5.15 | 35 | #N/A | - | #N/A | - | 3.08 | 39 |
| Turkmenistan | #N/A | - | 5.05 | 37 | #N/A | - | #N/A | - | 2.07 | 51 |
| Afghanistan | #N/A | - | 3.30 | 50 | #N/A | - | #N/A | - | 1.84 | 53 |

Note: RF – Religious freedom, PF – Political freedom, EF – Economic freedom, QG – Quality of governance.

performance is not in the segments of freedom, but in the subsegment Quality of governance, with an average score of 3.69, barely qualifying to be included in the index at all, given that one of the objectives of creating the ILI was to include only policy directions that do not seem to be too radical, the limit being an average score of minimum 3.50 (see Tab. 1). Having identified Quality of governance as an important factor for upholding freedom, we can see that there is a systemic problem of having higher levels of freedom in OIC countries.

The top performing countries in subsegment Religious freedom are Suriname, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Cote d'Ivoire and Gabon, while the bottom performing are Algeria, Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt and Iraq.

The top performing countries in subsegment Political freedom are Albania, Indonesia, Guyana, Malaysia and Senegal, while the bottom performing are Oman, Yemen, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Saudi Arabia.

The top performing countries in subsegment Economic freedom are Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Qatar, while the bottom performing are Guinea, Tunisia, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Algeria.

As for the subsegment with the lowest average score, that is Quality of governance, the top performers are Brunei Darussalam, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Qatar and Senegal, while the at the bottom we have Sudan, Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia and Yemen, with scores below 2.00.

When comparing the results with non-OIC countries, we can see that the biggest disparity is in the area of Quality of governance (see Tab. 7).

Table 7: Result differences between OIC and non-OIC countries

| | ILI | | RF | | PF | | EF | | QG | |
|------------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|---------|-------|------------|
| | Score | OW | Score | OW | Score | OW | Score | OW | Score | OW |
| OIC | 5.53 | Sensible | 6.01 | Sensible | 5.62 | Sensible | 6.78 | Popular | 3.69 | Acceptable |
| Non-OIC | 6.60 | Popular | 7.23 | Popular | 6.77 | Popular | 6.98 | Popular | 5.42 | Sensible |
| Difference | -1.07 | | -1.22 | | -1.15 | | -0.20 | | -1.72 | |

Note: OW – Overton window.

Considering the interval differences used in Tab. 1, all differences are less than 1.5, and thus at a very similar policy level in the Overton window comparison, except for Quality of governance, the difference being a whole interval range. Still, only Economic freedom is at par, while all other areas are one Overton window category lower than in non-OIC countries.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have attempted to answer the call to establish an index that is to monitor two most fundamental factors in explaining the humanitarian, political and economic crises that unfortunately have become common place in many Muslim majority countries: human freedom and quality of governance. A set of evaluation criteria has been established and applied upon two potential candidates to play the role of the Islam & Liberty Index, i.e. the 1) Human Freedom Index published by CATO Institute and 2) Islamicity Indices published by the Islamicity Foundation. After analyzing the two options, it was concluded that none of the two can fully answer the needs of ILN. Consequently, a new index has been developed, using indices from three different sources, i.e. Pew Research Center, CATO Institute and the Worldwide Governance Indicators. An overview of the initial scores and rankings has been provided for OIC countries, providing an insight how the Islam & Liberty Index could look like.

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Edo Omerčević a multidisciplinary professional, with a focus on his current role as a professor of economics at American International University, Kuwait. Additionally, he also has a vast experience as an economic analyst, researcher, general manager and even a translator. The result of this versatility is a rich experience that enables him to form a comprehensive understanding of business situations and generally market and social developments. Starting with accounting, continuing with fund management, and ending up with general management of companies, his experience is also supported by his work in think tanks and research projects, at the national as well as international level. He is the author of numerous academic articles, translator of four books and he was an invited speaker at numerous events in various parts of the world. He is a founding member of Islam and Liberty Network and was for 10 years a member of its Council.

APPENDIX A: OVERTON WINDOW PLACEMENT OF SELECTED INDICES

A) HUMAN FREEDOM INDEX BY CATO INSTITUTE AND FRASER INSTITUTE

| Year | Countries | A Rule of Law | B Safety & Security | C Movement | D Religion | E Association, Assembly, & Civil Society | F Expression & Information | G Relationships | A Size of Government | B Legal System & Property Rights | C Sound Money | D Freedom to trade internationally | E Regulation |
|------|------------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------|------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2019 | Albania | 5 | 9.34 | 9.87 | 9.74 | 9.05 | 6.91 | 8.75 | 8 | 5.26 | 9.86 | 8.23 | 7.7 |
| 2019 | Suriname | 5.02 | 8.86 | 9.66 | 9.57 | 9.21 | 8.06 | 10 | 5.75 | 4.47 | 7.08 | 6.39 | 7.58 |
| 2019 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 5.25 | 9.19 | 8.32 | 8.72 | 8.38 | 6.97 | 9.38 | 6.49 | 4.27 | 8.36 | 7.81 | 7.39 |
| 2019 | Guyana | 4.58 | 7.52 | 8.42 | 9.72 | 9.31 | 8.12 | 8.75 | 6.21 | 5.33 | 8.12 | 6.77 | 7.01 |
| 2019 | Benin | 4.15 | 9.06 | 8.61 | 9.57 | 8.17 | 7.32 | 7.9 | 7.96 | 4.57 | 7.12 | 6.18 | 7.24 |
| 2019 | Kyrgyz Republic | 4.06 | 8.58 | 8.14 | 7.21 | 7.02 | 5.9 | 9.38 | 7.4 | 4.91 | 9.36 | 7.14 | 7.03 |
| 2019 | Malaysia | 5.65 | 8.92 | 8.09 | 7.44 | 7.06 | 7.51 | 3.75 | 7.04 | 5.83 | 8.43 | 7.63 | 8.67 |
| 2019 | Indonesia | 4.32 | 9.36 | 8.07 | 6.49 | 7.38 | 7.62 | 5.63 | 8.16 | 4.9 | 9.64 | 7.02 | 6.58 |
| 2019 | Senegal | 4.93 | 9.07 | 8.47 | 9.26 | 8.37 | 8.52 | 5 | 7.06 | 4.35 | 7.18 | 6.82 | 5.83 |
| 2019 | Jordan | 5.63 | 9.01 | 7.79 | 5.96 | 5.87 | 5.66 | 5 | 7.84 | 4.3 | 9.87 | 8.02 | 7.9 |
| 2019 | Cote d'Ivoire | 3.88 | 7.58 | 7.97 | 9.31 | 7.79 | 6.96 | 8.46 | 6.79 | 4.47 | 7.3 | 5.47 | 6.89 |
| 2019 | Gambia, The | 4.56 | 8.22 | 9.63 | 9.66 | 8.07 | 6.64 | 0.61 | 7.06 | 5.01 | 9.45 | 6.53 | 7.13 |
| 2019 | Burkina Faso | 4.71 | 7 | 7.86 | 9.29 | 8.32 | 8.04 | 6.86 | 5.99 | 4.05 | 6.79 | 6.3 | 7.06 |
| 2019 | Gabon | 4.04 | 8.18 | 8.48 | 9.59 | 6.76 | 6.78 | 8.75 | 6.79 | 2.69 | 6.49 | 5.93 | 7.1 |
| 2019 | Mozambique | 3.47 | 7.03 | 8.04 | 8.92 | 7.34 | 6.73 | 9.38 | 5.55 | 4.46 | 7.58 | 6.91 | 6.23 |
| 2019 | Guinea-Bissau | 3.21 | 9.21 | 9.49 | 9.63 | 7.1 | 6.84 | 5.57 | 8.32 | 2.77 | 6.73 | 6.48 | 5.88 |
| 2019 | Kazakhstan | 5.07 | 8.31 | 7.82 | 4.81 | 4.06 | 3.61 | 10 | 7.83 | 5.58 | 9.12 | 7.13 | 7.96 |
| 2019 | Lebanon | 4.15 | 8.06 | 7.96 | 8.84 | 7.51 | 6.44 | 4.38 | 8.12 | 4.14 | 9.19 | 5.91 | 6.46 |
| 2019 | Sierra Leone | 3.95 | 9.28 | 8.24 | 8.99 | 8.16 | 7.75 | 3.47 | 7.73 | 4.42 | 7.12 | 6.41 | 4.94 |
| 2019 | Togo | 3.87 | 7.42 | 8.15 | 8.06 | 6.33 | 6.81 | 5.55 | 7.28 | 5.1 | 7.32 | 5.63 | 6.43 |
| 2019 | Brunei Darussalam | 6.15 | 9.93 | 7.5 | 5 | 2.5 | 6.25 | 3.75 | 6.67 | 4.98 | 8.84 | 7.21 | 8.78 |
| 2019 | Tunisia | 4.69 | 8.58 | 8.36 | 7.13 | 8.28 | 7.56 | 3.13 | 5.41 | 5.04 | 6.61 | 6.31 | 6.46 |
| 2019 | Niger | 3.93 | 7.04 | 8.41 | 8.38 | 7.17 | 7.55 | 4.95 | 6.46 | 3.69 | 7.07 | 5.76 | 6.53 |
| 2019 | Kuwait | 5.52 | 9.1 | 7.95 | 6.19 | 4.01 | 5.34 | 4.38 | 5.96 | 4.94 | 8.01 | 7.29 | 7.38 |
| 2019 | Uganda | 3.15 | 7.07 | 7.66 | 6.58 | 4.25 | 5.69 | 4.37 | 7.54 | 4.47 | 9.48 | 7.76 | 7.84 |
| 2019 | Nigeria | 4.1 | 2.35 | 6.88 | 7.78 | 7.67 | 7.87 | 3.89 | 8.33 | 3.7 | 8.82 | 6.06 | 7.93 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2019 | Mali | 3.59 | 4.54 | 8.13 | 9.06 | 7.83 | 7.38 | 5.29 | 5.89 | 3.49 | 7.36 | 6.05 | 6.34 |
| 2019 | Azerbaijan | 4.28 | 8.8 | 7.42 | 5.12 | 3.57 | 3.13 | 9.38 | 5.38 | 5.24 | 7 | 7.24 | 7.37 |
| 2019 | Qatar | 6.34 | 9.69 | 7.1 | 5.38 | 2.7 | 4.68 | 2.5 | 5.94 | 5.37 | 8.34 | 8.36 | 7.47 |
| 2019 | Comoros | 3.48 | 8.24 | 7.89 | 4.75 | 6.85 | 5.77 | 3.13 | 6.74 | 3.8 | 7.13 | 7.13 | 7.94 |
| 2019 | United Arab Emirates | 6.21 | 8.95 | 6.72 | 6.43 | 2.33 | 3.24 | 2.5 | 5.41 | 5.94 | 9.06 | 8.48 | 7.51 |
| 2019 | Oman | 6.05 | 9.34 | 7.57 | 5.66 | 2.17 | 4.26 | 2.5 | 5.11 | 5.24 | 8.23 | 7.61 | 7.28 |
| 2019 | Morocco | 4.14 | 9.09 | 6.45 | 4.02 | 5.33 | 5.16 | 3.13 | 6.54 | 5.7 | 7.32 | 6.9 | 6.99 |
| 2019 | Djibouti | 3.76 | 7.89 | 7.15 | 5.3 | 4.98 | 4.33 | 3.27 | 6.2 | 3.41 | 9.6 | 6.95 | 7.26 |
| 2019 | Guinea | 3.58 | 7.84 | 8 | 8.97 | 6.19 | 6.4 | 0.76 | 4.29 | 3.94 | 7.49 | 5.53 | 6.87 |
| 2019 | Turkey | 3.86 | 7.32 | 5.44 | 4.16 | 4.29 | 2.93 | 8.75 | 6.53 | 4.85 | 8.54 | 6.98 | 5.82 |
| 2019 | Bangladesh | 3.09 | 7.41 | 6.37 | 7.78 | 5.7 | 4.57 | 3.75 | 8.11 | 2.87 | 6.97 | 5.76 | 6.56 |
| 2019 | Bahrain | 5.96 | 8.64 | 5.42 | 2.96 | 1.82 | 2.36 | 5 | 6.73 | 4.73 | 9.24 | 8.25 | 7.71 |
| 2019 | Mauritania | 3.58 | 7.84 | 6.67 | 5.23 | 6.05 | 6.07 | 0.84 | 6.83 | 3.56 | 8.14 | 6.7 | 7.22 |
| 2019 | Cameroon | 2.79 | 6.3 | 6.31 | 7.64 | 5.02 | 4 | 6.22 | 7.5 | 2.76 | 7.19 | 5.13 | 6.7 |
| 2019 | Pakistan | 3.27 | 6.7 | 6.01 | 6.26 | 6.13 | 5.08 | 4.38 | 8.23 | 3.62 | 6.16 | 5.67 | 6.05 |
| 2019 | Chad | 3.18 | 5.36 | 7.52 | 7.87 | 4.38 | 5.11 | 5.4 | 8.6 | 2.69 | 6.77 | 5.07 | 4.87 |
| 2019 | Tajikistan | 3.26 | 7.44 | 6.58 | 3.01 | 2.48 | 3.52 | 7.5 | 5.77 | 4.75 | 8.62 | 6.63 | 6.71 |
| 2019 | Algeria | 5.07 | 8.95 | 6.76 | 5.45 | 4.75 | 5.11 | 2.5 | 4.62 | 4.14 | 7.34 | 2.55 | 5.84 |
| 2019 | Saudi Arabia | 5.45 | 8.02 | 5.2 | 2.36 | 1.45 | 2.24 | 2.5 | 4.7 | 6.14 | 8.75 | 7.39 | 7.29 |
| 2019 | Libya | 2.29 | 5.61 | 5.2 | 5.29 | 6.65 | 4.9 | 6.25 | 4.98 | 3.47 | 8.02 | 1.96 | 6 |
| 2019 | Iraq | 2.49 | 1.22 | 7.5 | 7.34 | 6.25 | 4.34 | 2.32 | 5.05 | 3.18 | 7.71 | 5.98 | 6.91 |
| 2019 | Somalia | 1.51 | 5.52 | 4.5 | 4.32 | 5.48 | 3.18 | 1.27 | 7.53 | 2.41 | 9.43 | 8.36 | 5.6 |
| 2019 | Iran, Islamic Rep. | 3.91 | 7.67 | 5.67 | 3.88 | 2.26 | 3.11 | 2.5 | 6.65 | 3.56 | 6.18 | 3.41 | 5.5 |
| 2019 | Egypt, Arab Rep. | 3.38 | 6.8 | 5.7 | 3.2 | 3.03 | 3.01 | 0.32 | 5.43 | 3.58 | 7.72 | 6.24 | 5.43 |
| 2019 | Sudan | 3.4 | 6.77 | 5.45 | 5.87 | 5.62 | 5.74 | 0.34 | 8.52 | 2.74 | 1.82 | 2.53 | 5 |
| 2019 | Yemen, Rep. | 2.41 | 4.21 | 4.13 | 2.93 | 3.45 | 2.57 | 2.04 | 7.83 | 2.74 | 7.78 | 5.38 | 3.5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Mean values | 4.18 | 7.68 | 7.36 | 6.77 | 5.81 | 5.61 | 4.91 | 6.71 | 4.26 | 7.86 | 6.41 | 6.76 |
| | Overton Window | Acc. | Pop. | Pop. | Pop. | Sen. | Sen. | Acc. | Pop. | Acc. | Pop. | Sen. | Pop. |

Note: Acc. – Acceptable; Sen. – Sensible; Pop. – Popular.

B) ISLAMICITY INDICES BY ISLAMICITY FOUNDATION

| Score | ECONOMY | Legal | Human | INTL |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Afghanistan | 2.28 | 0.93 | 0.84 | 1.85 |
| Albania | 5.52 | 5.04 | 6.25 | 6.59 |
| Algeria | 3.44 | 3.07 | 3.31 | 1.72 |
| Azerbaijan | 6.26 | 3.96 | 3.55 | 1.66 |
| Bahrain | 6.59 | 4.97 | 3.92 | 1.62 |
| Bangladesh | 3.71 | 1.93 | 2.93 | 5.60 |
| Benin | 3.00 | 4.12 | 4.02 | 5.83 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 4.19 | 3.96 | 5.65 | 5.43 |
| Burkina Faso | 3.28 | 3.52 | 3.06 | 4.27 |
| Cameroon | 2.59 | 1.26 | 1.93 | 4.87 |
| Chad | 2.22 | 0.72 | 1.31 | 2.35 |
| Cote d'Ivoire | 3.84 | 3.14 | 3.19 | 5.89 |
| Egypt | 3.92 | 2.99 | 2.26 | 1.92 |
| Gabon | 3.06 | 2.43 | 3.43 | 3.74 |
| Guinea | 3.66 | 2.07 | 2.44 | 4.60 |
| Guyana | 3.29 | 4.61 | 5.30 | 5.73 |
| Indonesia | 5.45 | 5.14 | 4.29 | 7.45 |
| Iran | 2.79 | 2.21 | 3.34 | 1.69 |
| Iraq | 3.26 | 1.06 | 2.53 | 0.66 |
| Jordan | 5.45 | 5.48 | 3.43 | 3.01 |
| Kazakhstan | 6.29 | 5.11 | 4.63 | 4.74 |
| Kuwait | 5.69 | 5.45 | 4.59 | 3.97 |
| Kyrgyzstan | 5.19 | 2.99 | 4.06 | 3.87 |
| Lebanon | 4.43 | 2.10 | 4.48 | 0.73 |
| Libya | 1.89 | 0.98 | 2.40 | 4.01 |
| Malaysia | 6.95 | 6.79 | 5.05 | 7.22 |
| Mali | 3.01 | 1.93 | 2.44 | 2.78 |
| Mauritania | 2.72 | 2.11 | 1.79 | 2.28 |
| Morocco | 5.08 | 4.96 | 2.94 | 3.11 |
| Mozambique | 2.30 | 2.23 | 3.04 | 5.63 |
| Niger | 3.34 | 2.79 | 2.41 | 4.27 |
| Nigeria | 2.88 | 1.59 | 2.51 | 4.87 |
| Oman | 6.26 | 6.26 | 3.97 | 2.95 |
| Pakistan | 4.06 | 2.29 | 2.15 | 1.13 |
| Qatar | 6.86 | 6.75 | 4.56 | 4.93 |
| Saudi Arabia | 4.97 | 5.16 | 3.56 | 1.13 |
| Senegal | 3.75 | 4.70 | 3.89 | 6.13 |

| | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|---------|---------|------------|
| Sierra Leone | 3.16 | 2.76 | 3.31 | 8.28 |
| Sudan | 2.18 | 0.67 | 1.08 | 1.99 |
| Suriname | 2.79 | 4.01 | 5.57 | 5.00 |
| Tajikistan | 3.27 | 2.57 | 2.96 | 5.76 |
| Togo | 3.02 | 2.96 | 2.83 | 3.58 |
| Tunisia | 4.25 | 5.00 | 4.42 | 3.68 |
| Turkey | 4.95 | 4.25 | 3.54 | 0.93 |
| Turkmenistan | 2.79 | 1.72 | 2.93 | 5.46 |
| Uganda | 3.75 | 3.06 | 2.62 | 4.07 |
| United Arab Emirates | 7.45 | 7.31 | 4.66 | 4.50 |
| Uzbekistan | 3.78 | 2.69 | 3.39 | 3.44 |
| | | | | |
| Mean values | 4.06 | 3.41 | 3.39 | 3.89 |
| Overton Window | Acceptable | Radical | Radical | Acceptable |