

# Laws relating to freedom of expression in Qatar

## Constitution

### Article 18

The Qatari society is based upon the pillars of justice, charity, freedom, equality, and good morals.

• Freedom of opinion/thought/conscience

### Article 47

Freedom of opinion and scientific research are guaranteed, according to conditions and circumstances laid down by the law.

• Freedom of press

### Article 48

Freedom of the press, printing, and publishing is guaranteed according to the law.

• Freedom of religion

### Article 50

The freedom to worship is guaranteed to all, according to the law and the requirements to protect the public order and public morals.

### Article 64

The Prince is the Head of the State. His person is inviolable, and his respect is a duty.

## Penal Code

### Article 134

The penalty of imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years shall apply to any person who challenges by any public means the exercising by the Emir of his rights or authorities, or criticizes his person.

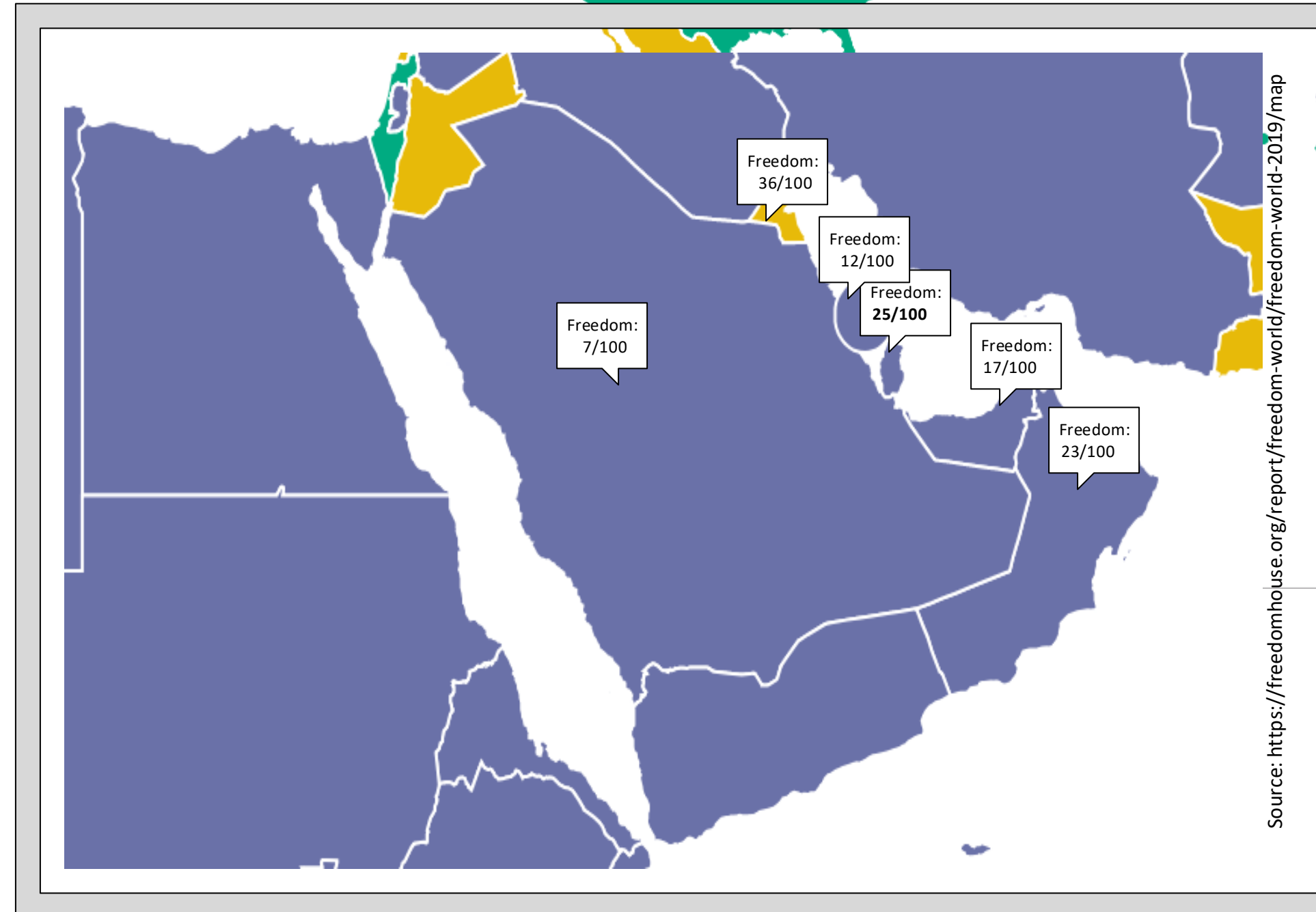
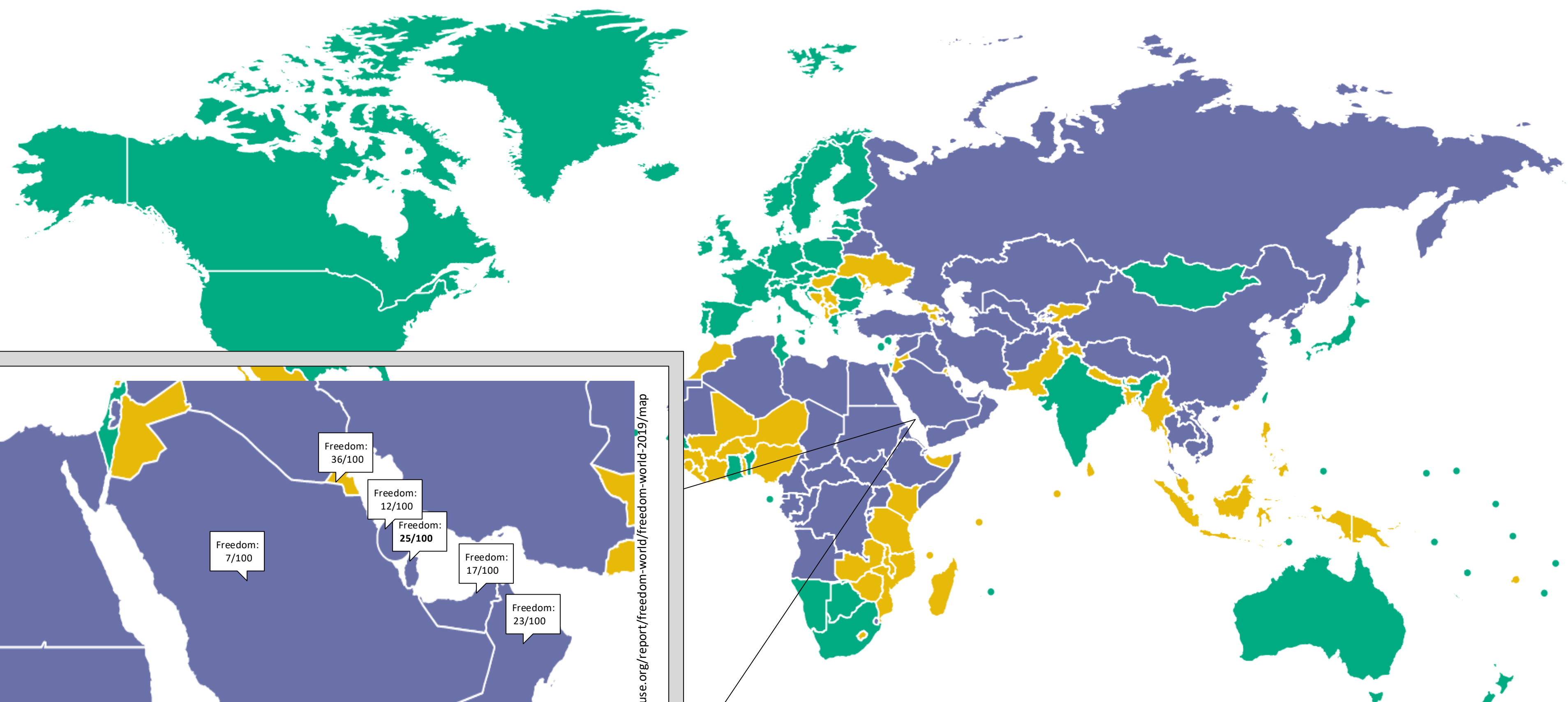
The same penalty shall apply to any person who commits any of the previous offences on the deputy Emir or the Crown Prince.

Whoever commits the following acts shall be punished with imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years:

- 1- Insulting Allah through writing, drawing, gesturing or in any other way or through any other means.
- 2- Offending, misinterpreting or violating the Holy Quran.
- 3- Offending the Islamic religion or any of its rites and dictates.
- 4- Cursing any of the divine religions according to the regulations of Islamic law.
- 5- Insulting any of the prophets through writing, drawing, gesturing or in any other way or through any other means.
- 6- Sabotaging, breaking, damaging or violating sites or their contents if they are made to perform religious rites for one of the divine religions according to the regulations of Islamic law.

## Law no.14 of 2014 regarding cybercrime

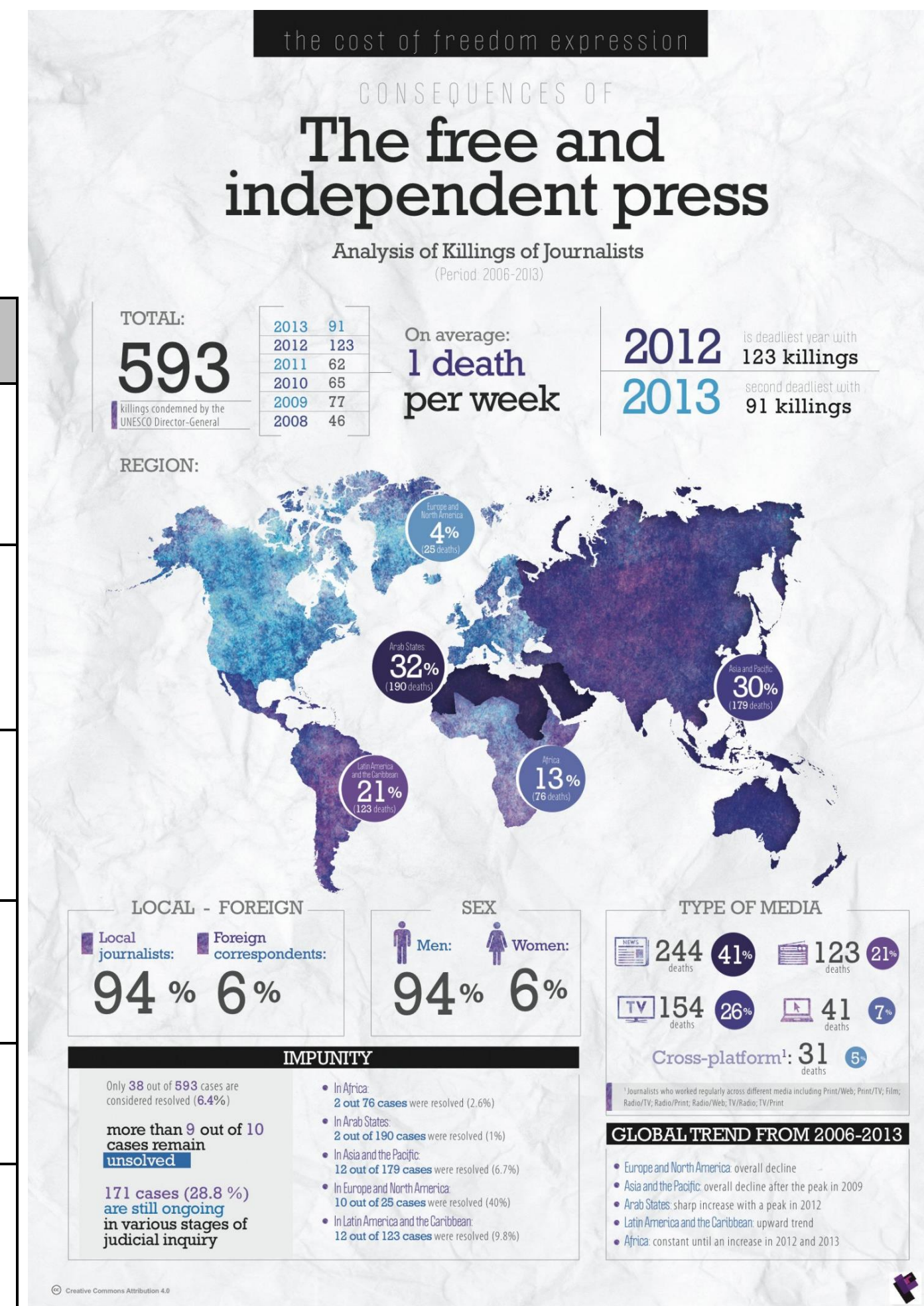
1. The law stipulates a 10 year jail term and a fine of up to QR 200,000 for forging any official e-document, or a three year jail term or a fine of a maximum of QR 100,000 if the document forged is unofficial. Similar punishments await those who impersonate individuals or entities, or are involved in identity theft or steal movable property using the Internet.
2. Provisions on so-called "content crimes" that make it illegal to publish "false news". These terms are not defined, making it unclear what content would land local journalists and social media users in trouble. Therefore news agencies, social media users and journalists must be careful to verify the source of the news before broadcasting it to the public in order to avoid contravening the law.
3. A jail term of up to three years and a fine of up to QR 200,000 for unauthorized possession or use of e-card, whether it is an ATM or credit card, or stealing numbers or forging e-cards.
4. A jail term of up to three years and a fine of up to 500,000 Qatari riyals for the breach of intellectual property rights by using the internet article 13), be it copyrights, patents, trade secrets, trademarks, trade names, geographical indications and industrial designs, or designs of integrated circuits.



Source: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2019/map>

## COMM 365 – Spring '19 Dr. "Bo Turki" Creel

	Qatar	Oman	Kuwait	Bahrain	UAE	KSA
<b>Freedom of opinion and scientific research</b>	Guaranteed, according to conditions laid by the law.	Guaranteed, according to conditions laid by the law.	Guaranteed, according to conditions laid by the law.	Guaranteed, according to conditions laid by the law.	Guaranteed, according to conditions laid by the law.	Not guaranteed.
<b>Freedom of press</b>	Guaranteed, according to conditions laid by the law.	Guaranteed, according to conditions laid by the law.	Guaranteed, according to conditions laid by the law.	Guaranteed, according to conditions laid by the law.	Not specified.	Not guaranteed.
<b>Publication of anything that has negative connotation with regards to the Ruling regime</b>	Illegal.	Prohibited.	Not specified.	Illegal.	Crime.	Not explicit.
<b>Publications related to Privacy of individuals</b>	Illegal.	Prohibited.	Illegal.	Not specified.	Crime.	Prohibited.
<b>Negative publications related to officials</b>	Illegal but is not liability if it is true.	Illegal but is not liability if it is true.	Not specified.	Not specified.	Liabile even if true.	Not explicit.
<b>Publication with potential insult to Religion</b>	Illegal.	Illegal.	Illegal.	Illegal.	Illegal.	Illegal.



## Human Rights Watch Report on Freedom of expression (latest up to 2018)

**KSA**

**No charge Arrest**

**9** Female Activists remain arrested without a charge

**Kuwait**

In July, Kuwait's Court of Cassation convicted 16 people and sentenced them to from two to three-and-a-half years in prison with labor for storming parliament during a 2011 protest.

**UAE**

**Life in Prison**

May 2018, UK citizen and PhD candidate have been arrested in Dubai airport! Charge? spying spent 5 month in solidarity before his confession!!

**Oman**

According to the Omani Center for Human Rights (OCHR), the Court of First Instance in Muscat sentenced former media presenter Khaled al-Rashdi on January 2, 2018, to one year in prison under article 19 of the Cyber Crimes Law and a \$2,600 fine for tweeting about "official institutions."

**BH**

**10yrs in prison**

March 2018 Sayed Al-Mousawi was sentenced for covering protests in 2014

**Qatar**

In March (2016), Qatar's emir pardoned and released the poet, Mohamed al-Ajami, whom an appeal court had sentenced to 15 years in prison in 2013 on the basis of the content of poems posted online that criticized Qatar's ruling family and other Arab rulers.

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