

Electric grid tripoli

After years of chronic power cuts, Libyans are now enjoying a stable electricity supply in the capital, Tripoli, during the summer. The city's public spaces are once again illuminated at night, marking a significant improvement for residents.

"If the electrical current is Reliable, then services will definitely be excellent. There won't be any additional costs for generators or production services, and prices will be stable. Therefore, economic returns are strongly affected by the electricity company's Consistency," explained Mohamad Rahoumi, spokesperson for a well-known pastry brand.

Until last year, power cuts could last 20 hours at a time in the capital, an unbearable situation without air conditioning when temperatures exceed 40 degrees Celsius, particularly for business owners.

"Before, we used to suffer a lot (with the power cuts) as we couldn't just sell customers spoilt meat. But now, things are much better, customers buy fresh and clean meat and there's always air conditioning," rejoiced Mohammed al-Maghribi, butcher.

"There's a significant and clear improvement from previous years in the electric network. Yet, there are still some issues related to strengthening the electrical grid, among other minor things. But thank God, there's such an improvement in comparison with past years," confirmed Lotfi Ahmad Aziz, Libyan citizen.

Since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, Libya has struggled with constant power shortages due to a damaged electrical network resulting from armed conflicts and looting.

In July 2022, with new management at Gecol and a restructuring plan, coupled with a relative calm after years of war, electricity supplies have greatly improved. This positive development has also encouraged foreign companies to resume projects that had been stalled for years.

This year, a blockade imposed by pro-LNA factions on all crude-oil extraction in protest of the GNA-backed Turkish intervention may exacerbate the electricity crisis even further compared to previous years.

Against 2020's unusual backdrop, this policy brief dissects the main dynamics of the nine-year-long electricity crisis affecting Tripoli. In doing so, it provides an overview of how the crisis has been politicized, exploited and exacerbated by Libya's civil war and illicit economy actors.

Since April 2019, Libya's civil war - between the internationally-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) and the eastern- based Libyan National Army (LNA) - has worsened living conditions in the capital,

Tripoli.

The electricity infrastructure has been one of the collateral victims of Libya's conflict while, in general, public assets and their maintenance have been neglected for years.

This policy brief looks at the electricity crisis affecting the greater Tripoli area, where the mismanagement, exploitation and politicisation of Libya's third-largest industrial sector has had serious consequences for the safety of its citizens and the country's economy.

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