



معهد
السياسة والمجتمع
Politics & Society Institute

PROGRAM OVERVIEW





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Organizational Profile

The Politics and Society Institute (PSI) is a Jordanian nonprofit policy and research organization established to advance practical research, innovative ideas, and realistic solutions towards building a more prosperous Jordan and a stable region. The Institute is an independent organization that aims to deepen the understanding of public policy and decision-making processes and to build a better knowledge platform of domestic and regional dynamics that will define our future.

The Institute advances its mission guided by values of rule of law, civil society, good governance, and moderation. It provides an innovative, integrated, and global approach to its analysis of complex trends and transformations with particular attention to youth dynamics. A Board of Trustees oversees and guides the Institute's plans and programs. The Executive President manages all its programs with the support of the PSI team and Associated Advisors.

The Institute aims to provide practical solutions, based on up-to-date studies and research in political, economic, security, and social fields. The Institute hopes to define future trends for Jordan and the region through its analysis and projections, focusing on the impact of accelerating transformations on the politics and societies of the Middle East.

PSI seeks to organize capacity-building programs for youth to enhance civil society and the rule of law, policymaking, participatory politics, and good governance. By bringing together experts and thinkers from various disciplines and regions, the institute hopes to be able to build ideas and solutions through current and relevant research and integrated analysis that can help policymakers advance national interests and build a more stable region by effectively responding to complex challenges and rapid transformations.

Strategic Pillars for 2022 -2024

Pillar 1: Political System Reform

Pillar 2: Rule of Law and Good Governance

Pillar 3: Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE)

Pillar 4: Youth & Female Empowerment in Political, Public, and Civic Life



Completed Projects

Jordan in the 20th Century

In order to shed light on the past century of Jordan's history, PSI is developing a book titled "Political Economy: Challenges, Transitions, and Possible Future," which discusses Jordan's historical approaches to political transitions. The content was developed based on intensive virtual dialogue sessions between Jordanian youth and political, economic, and social experts. In addition, two dialogue sessions were held specifically between Jordanian youth. This project was executed in collaboration with the King Abdullah II Fund for Development (KAJD). – January-May 2021.

The Future of ISIS

This project aimed to shed light on the evolution of ISIS and assess the group's future as well as those of similar armed extremist organizations. During the project, five analysis papers were presented on the aforementioned themes by a group of Arab and foreign experts in closed discussion sessions. The outcomes of the discussions are published in the book "The aftermath of the Caliphate: Will ISIS make a comeback?", which will be translated into English and German. This project was carried out in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. – June 2021.

Within the Decade: Islamism After the Arab Spring

This project called for a revised approach to researching Islamist movements in the Arab world based on a thorough assessment of previous efforts to study and analyze these movements. **The aim was to transform the field from individual, independent research efforts to collaborative efforts that would provide more coherent conceptual frameworks and identify the core of the Islamist phenomena, its evolution, and changing trends.** This project consisted of virtual discussion sessions to study the transformations that have occurred in Islamist movements in many Arab countries in the decade after the Arab Spring revolutions. The papers resulting from these discussions are published in a book which will be translated into English and German. This project was carried out in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. – June-Oct. 2021.

Youth and Identity





This project aimed to build spaces for dialogue among Jordanian youth to raise awareness regarding issues including citizenship, democracy, statehood, political reform, and social justice. It resulted in the development of a Youth Charter outlining necessary reforms from a youth perspective, as well as a statistical analysis of youth attitudes towards citizenship and identity in Jordan. This project was carried out in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and a group of experts. Click [here](#) for a video on the project and see [here](#) the Youth Charter. – June-Aug. 2021.

The Key to Change: Youth and Parliamentary Elections

Focusing on youth political participation, this project spearheaded intensive dialogues between youth and members of the Jordanian parliament, resulting in a study titled "Jordanian Youth and the Debate on Political Participation in the 2020 Parliamentary Elections." This project was held in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the Phoenix Center for Informational and Economic Studies, and the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan. – October 2021.

Malloul

This project worked to promote the Jordanian national identity by preserving the folk song cultural heritage in the governorate of Jerash and investing in its local community. It consisted of two main initiatives: a musical show held at a major tourist site and a website displaying and highlighting the interconnectedness of the various folk songs, their background stories, and their relevant tourist sites. "Roots" was implemented in collaboration with the Tajalla Association for Music and Arts, the American Center of Research, and the US Agency for International Development. – Nov. 2021.

Royal Committee for Political Reform

This project comprised a three-day conference aimed at creating an opportunity for open dialogue between youth, political experts, and members of the Royal Committee for Political Reform. Recommendations from youth and political experts regarding elections and youth political engagement were taken into account in the final policy paper submitted by the royal committee on the modernization of the political system. The workshops were held in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. – August 2021.

Youth Idea Incubators

This pilot project aimed to establish a safe space for youth in governorates and local communities, inviting them to participate in constructive dialogue regarding political, economic, and social trends. The project comprises one of the various initiatives PSI spearheads to achieve its vision in shaping youths' ideas and guiding them to build innovative solutions. This project is being carried out in collaboration with the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy and the Creativity Club of Karak. – Nov. 2021.



EU Conferences

All three conferences were held with the support of the EU delegation to Jordan. – Feb-March 2022.

Mobilizing youth political participation

Since the formation of the Royal Committee for Political Reform, youth political participation has become more critical of an issue in Jordan than ever. Youth need to be engaged and encouraged to participate in politics and their perspectives must be considered in policy- and decision-making. **This conference therefore aimed to understand Jordanian youths' perceptions of the political climate and barriers to youth political participation; work with politicians, party members, and experts to influence the perceptions of young people who are hesitant to work in partisan and political activity; and promote accurate information about the royal committee's findings on youth.** PSI partnered with the Cultural Directorate of Karak for this conference.

Freedom of expression and youth in the public sphere: social media as a tool for political reform

This seminar aimed to analyze the influence of new media tools on the transformation of the political and social behavior of youth; build a safe space for dialogue on the role of youth and social media platforms in modernizing the political system; educate youth and support them in participating in the public sphere to contribute to the modernization of the political system; and advocate for the strengths of youth participation in the public sphere. The seminar was held in collaboration with Al-Qantara Center for Human Resources Development.

"Building common ground": national identity among Jordanian youth

National identity is a complicated and controversial issue in Jordan, where people from all over the surrounding regions have settled to find refuge or build a new life. As a result, there has been a remarkable growth in sub-identities, which at times can erode a sense of Jordanian national identity and cohesion. Demographic and social dichotomies represent a real challenge to any political reform project Jordan aims to adopt. **The conference aimed to expand knowledge about Jordanian youth's attitudes towards issues of national identity; find common ground between youth from different backgrounds, genders, and ages; examine and assess the erosion of a sense of Jordanian national identity; and introduce participants to the danger of identity politics and issues of national identity with regards to democratic reform.** For this conference, PSI partnered with the Naya Community Network in Al-Zarqa and the Athar Center for Youth Development in Rusaifa.

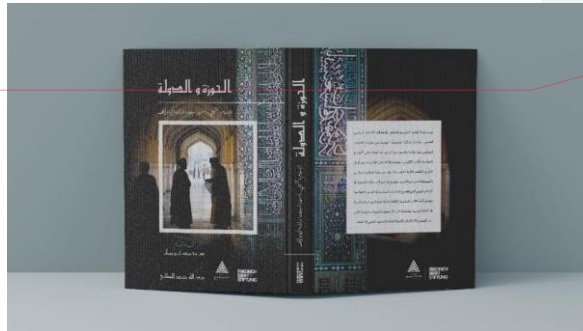


Conference on Shiite Political Islam

Ideological changes in Shiite political Islam have resulted in the emergence of transnational political movements. It is highly important to study Shiite political Islam today because of its deeply-rooted influence, power, and institutions in the Arab world. During our 2021 project “Islamism after the Arab Spring,” many participants highlighted the need for an in-depth study of Shiite political Islam. **In response, PSI held this conference to**

shed light on the dynamics of and developments in the Shiite political movement in the Arab world. Discussions during the conference assessed the controversial question of “exporting the revolution” and its impact on foreign policymaking and international trends, as well the influence of regional and international developments on the Shiite political Islam. This conference was held virtually and lasted for two days. It was held in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation. – May-June 2022

By the end of the conference a book titled “The Hawza and the State” was published, containing all of the conference’s papers. The book was first published in Arabic and an English version is forthcoming by the end of 2023.



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National Conference on Women’s Pathways in Visions of General Modernization

This conference aimed to address obstacles that may impede future goals of women’s empowerment in the context of modernization, with a particular focus on the specific obstacles women confront.

The purpose of the conference was to shed light on the roles and pathways for women in the context of modernization, with the objective of predicting the future societal trajectory of Jordan by analyzing the current efforts led by the Jordanian government. The conference also analyzed obstacles and made recommendations for advancing women's societal participation



and empowerment, which holds great significance for Jordanian women in the modernization process across the political, economic, and administrative spheres.

Mapping Political Parties

This project, carried out in collaboration with the King Abdullah II Fund for Development, aimed to assess and evaluate the readiness of Jordan's political parties to address the challenges and transformations associated with political modernization. Several key dimensions were evaluated, including internal democracy, representation of youth and women in leadership and administrative roles, strengths and weaknesses related to political mobilization and participation, access to decision-making positions, analysis of party policies, as applicable, and the issue of identity and diversity within parties.



Throughout the study period, the campaign collected data from political parties, researchers, specialists, and civil society organizations. A comprehensive review of existing literature and documentation was followed by a survey of fifty political parties registered in Jordan at the time. The survey results were analyzed to provide insight into the current state and prospective futures of political parties.

The results of this initiative are published in a comprehensive report titled "On the Cusp of Change," which summarizes the survey's findings and provides a comprehensive analysis of the current state of political parties. A conference held in August 2022 provided a forum for stakeholders to engage in discussions regarding the future trajectory of political parties.

Representation of Youth in Local Administration Councils

This project aimed to raise young people's awareness and knowledge about the law, local administration, and the importance of municipal and local councils for development and community building.

More specifically, the project aimed to build the youth's capacity to organize electoral campaigns and launch programs and to guide them toward effective political participation in local administration while bolstering their chances of success in local elections. The projects consist of an awareness session and three integrated pre- and post-election trainings surrounding the following themes: campaign management, leadership skills, and community outreach; media skills, public speaking, and holding electoral press conferences; determining the needs of the local community; identifying the priorities of local authorities; accountability and policy papers.



نقطة تحول - How Jordan and its partners can successfully navigate through uncertainty

This project was a conference organized in a mutual effort between the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation and PSI in the second half of 2022, amid recent shifts in the European security landscape, global power dynamics, and their implications for key partners in the Global South. The project aimed to facilitate discussion of likely scenarios for Jordan, its allies, and key stakeholders, and to develop recommendations for policy adjustments and a comprehensive and cooperative strategy for crisis mitigation.

The project consisted of five online seminars each discussing one of the Kingdom's allies and neighbors and the developments regarding this ally and its relations with Jordan. The first seminar discussed relations with the US, the second focused on relations with the EU, the third and fourth focused on developments in Palestine and Syria respectively, and the fifth focused on relations with the GCC countries. At the end of the project, five policy papers were published in a bilingual book on Jordanian foreign policy.



Supporting Political Parties: Strategic Planning

This project aimed to mobilize political party institutions and help re-establish their roles as primary actors in Jordanian politics after the diminishment of their roles in past decades. The absence of political parties from the field of political action has led to a tangible disconnect between parties and the tools of political planning, to the extent that political projects and goals lacked dedicated roles and spaces through which they could be carried out.

In this project, PSI partnered with a group of five Jordanian political parties to build or develop their strategic plans by providing advice and technical guidance to party members during the construction of these plans. With the cooperation and support of these parties, the project resulted in five clear strategic plans for all priority party sectors and areas of focus, and a clear and practical political and electoral statement and bylaws.

The project was implemented by the Institute in cooperation with the Netherlands Institute for Multi-Party Democracy as part of a series of joint projects with the aim of developing and mobilizing political parties in Jordan.

Our Community Story

This 12-month project targeted 36 Jordanian youth, both male and female, between the ages of 22 and 35, who assumed the roles of youth community leaders and advocates for social change



in their respective local communities. These participants were from six governorates in Jordan: Ajloun, Al-Mafraq, Al-Salt, Madaba, Ma'an, and Al-Tafilah. They learned how to use digital storytelling techniques and tools to address community challenges and effect positive change, narrating their communities' stories through local presentations and facilitating community-wide dialogues. The project's activities included phases of training, participant assessments of community needs, local storytelling events, international story-sharing presentations, and a closing ceremony.

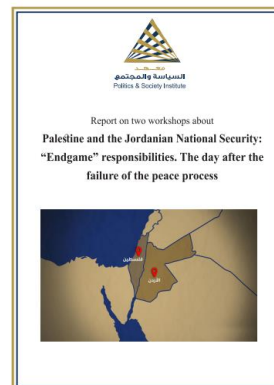
The project was carried out by the Institute in cooperation with the US Embassy in Jordan with the objective of raising cultural awareness between the United States and Jordan by engaging American youth in intercultural dialogue on issues of common ground.

The Day After the Collapse of the “Peace Process” Conference

The primary objective of this conference is to examine the proposed approaches to the peace process between Israel and Palestine. This discussion is particularly important given the significant ongoing setbacks over the past two decades, during which no substantial progress has been made towards resolving the conflict. These setbacks have hindered the exploration of potential solutions, such as the two-state solution or the one-state solution known as “the state of equal rights.”

It is crucial to consider these approaches in light of the current stalemate in negotiations and the increasing adoption of systemically racist practices by Tel Aviv that aim to establish and solidify a single Jewish settler colonial state. One prominent concern arising from this possibility is the potential demographic consequences, including the displacement of a large number of Palestinians to Jordan, Egypt, and other countries. Additionally, there is speculation regarding post-collapse or dissolution implications for the Palestinian National Authority.

By the end of the conference, a bilingual book was published under the title **“Palestine and Jordanian National Security: Endgame Responsibilities the Day After the Failure of the Peace Process.”**



The Young Leaders Advanced II



This program aimed to promote innovative ideas and effective solutions to aid in tackling political, economic, and social issues at the local and regional levels. It also examines the involvement of youth in politics and society, considering their significance within the framework of national values. The program further emphasizes the promotion of a culture of moderation, adherence to the rule of law, the establishment of good governance, and the development of democratic practices.

The underlying philosophy of the program involved the participation of over 20 young individuals from different regions of Jordan. Its primary objective was to train these youth with knowledge and practical skills, thereby enhancing the capacity of young leaders to effectively engage with their political environment. This initiative aligns with the ongoing national initiatives aimed at modernizing the political system, promoting democratization, and expanding popular involvement in the decision-making process.

The program concluded with policy papers prepared by the participants as a result of their experiences in the program. The paper that is accepted by the committee will be published on PSI's online platforms and its partners in this project at Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

The Political Parties' Developmental Project

This project, which was carried out by PSI in collaboration with the King Abdullah II Fund for Development, seeks to develop the capabilities of 45 members of local administration councils by raising awareness of local administration philosophy and its reflection of the societal significance of the role played by party members in provincial and municipal councils. Participation and rationale in local decision-making. The program also sought to strengthen the role of political parties by developing their future plans for local administration, candidacy, and elections in the direction of modern, integrated cities.

Through this project, the two partner organizations also aimed to enable the target group to participate in, monitor, and hold accountable the implementation of development plans for their governorates and municipalities during the electoral cycle, as well as to design development strategies based on the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and to incorporate partisan goals in development programs by focusing on issues important to the respective political parties. These issues include the environment and the local economy, action plans that adapt to societal needs in response to climate change, the degree to which budgets and climate adaptation plans uphold the rights of marginalized groups such as women and children, people with disabilities, and women's participation in political and economic decision-making.



This initiative is also concerned with enhancing interpersonal and communication skills, as well as digital media networks and its utility in societal change, advocacy campaigns and gaining support for amending legislative articles, and reform of political development and party programs.

Ongoing Projects

SAWT Internal Development Project

This core fund which is provided by the USAID and the partnership of Internews as a part of the (SAWT Program) aims to enhance the internal governance of the Politics and Society Institute (PSI) by building the capacities of the management and finance departments to foster growth, improve efficiency, and drive sustainable success over the course of one year between August 2023 and August 2024. By investing in the development of these key areas, we can empower our teams to make informed decisions, effectively allocate resources, and implement strategic initiatives that align with our long-term goals. PSI plans to advance its administrative management and financial sustainability through this core funding including upgrading governance policies (financial and management), media functions, and investment in additional fundraising efforts to sustain the organization in the long term.

Ciasometer

In light of the importance of shaping and developing programs specifically directed towards youth and students, the Ciasometer Project, executed by PSI in collaboration with the King Abdullah Fund, aims to prepare the public space within universities for political movements and affiliations. It seeks to identify political inclinations within mainstream currents by bolstering students' abilities to participate politically and within their local communities.

The project targets the following universities: The University of Jordan, Al-Yarmouk University, Princess Sumaya University for Technology, Jordan University of Science and Technology, Mu'tah University, The Hashemite University, Al al-Bayt University, Balqa Applied University, Tafila Technical University, and Al-Hussein Bin Talal University. It also involves monitoring the political tendencies of youth and students through various scientific tools and methodologies.



The Jordan Sustainability Youth Leaders Lab

The Jordan Sustainability Youth Leaders Lab (JY-SLL) is a project that aims to empower and engage Jordanian youth in addressing sustainability challenges and promoting a greener future through the lens of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The priority program area of the project is sustainable development, with a focus on finding innovative solutions in the industrial, environmental, economic, and social sectors.

The target audience of the JY-SLL is Jordanian youth, precisely 24 individuals within the age group (22-35 years old) representing a balanced gender ratio and inclusivity, including individuals with disabilities. These young leaders will be selected to serve on a highly-qualified national committee responsible for studying their communities' challenges and developing sustainable solutions.

The program objectives of the JY-SLL are to empower Jordanian youth to actively participate in decision-making processes related to sustainable development, raise awareness about the SDGs and the importance of youth involvement, foster collaboration and networking among stakeholders, and ensure the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all activities. On the other hand, the anticipated impact includes increased awareness and understanding of sustainable development among Jordanian youth, the development and implementation of youth-led sustainable projects aligned with the SDGs, improved cooperation between youth, government agencies, NGOs, businesses, and academia, and a more inclusive and environmentally conscious future for Jordan.

The JY-SLL project seeks to create a platform for young leaders to drive sustainable development in Jordan while benefiting from the guidance and support of the US Embassy. By empowering youth and encouraging their active involvement, the project aims to create a lasting impact and contribute to a greener and more sustainable Jordan.

Unifying the Dialogue of Youth and Women to Support the Modernization of the Government in Jordan

The project aims to increase the participation of youth and women in political and public life to support ongoing national efforts to modernize political, administrative, and economic sectors. It utilizes training, organization, and facilitation of meetings to bring together scattered youth and women organizations, enhancing their knowledge of emerging laws and policies, and strengthening their ability to advocate and engage in civil participation. The project also seeks to promote dialogue between youth and decision-makers.



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This project will have an impact on marginalized Jordanian youth who have been excluded from democratic processes, local decision-making, and effective civic participation. The project's theory of change is that if socially marginalized and excluded youth are equipped with the necessary skills to engage in civic activities, public and political life, and advocate for real change, they will be able to remain active agents of change in their local communities. This will contribute to the transition to democracy in Jordan and the promotion of a multi-party-political system. As youth gain the means for effective participation in political parties, leadership in political actions, and instigating change, they will have the opportunity to freely express their opinions and contribute to building a better political system in the country.

This project is implemented by the Politics and Society Institute with the support of the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF).