



Annual Report of the Politics and Society Institute

2024

The Politics and Society Institute is an independent legal entity, operating with financial, administrative, and technical autonomy in line with the laws of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. It functions as a think tank, research, and training center committed to credibility in its publications, positions, programs, and projects. The Institute seeks to serve marginalized and vulnerable groups, particularly youth and women, and to be a trusted hub for thought and empowerment that bridges the gap between knowledge and policymaking. It strives to foster inclusive dialogue and pluralism rooted in societal consensus, and to promote a culture of moderation, respect for the rule of law, good governance, and democratic development.

The Politics and Society Institute was established in Amman, Jordan in 2020 as an initiative by a group of political and academic elites who identified a growing gap between decision-makers and state institutions on one hand, and members of society and civil organizations on the other. This gap signaled a clear fragility within civil society and its institutions, highlighting the need for active, capable organizations that can build bridges between the two sides, facilitating mutual understanding, communication, and engagement. However, achieving this requires advanced knowledge, objective research, and specialized community empowerment to enable individuals and groups to express their needs and perspectives in structured and impactful ways. This vision led to the founding of the Politics and Society Institute as a think tank and research center that supports civil society in shaping its policies, interventions, and engagement with public policy and decision-makers based on evidence-based methodologies.

As a non-profit research institute, the Politics and Society Institute aims to empower communities with the tools and knowledge needed to engage meaningfully in public policy processes and articulate their needs in an organized, effective manner. It further contributes to evidence-based decision-making and the promotion of democratic participation.

Guided by its strategic vision, the Politics and Society Institute aims to play a leading role across both national and regional arenas, serving as a key reference in democratic transformation, public policy development, and community capacity-building—particularly for women, youth, and marginalized groups. The Institute operates according to a strategy developed in 2022, through which it implements a diverse array of programs grounded in the principles of dialogue and pluralism, built on societal consensus. These efforts aim to promote stability and prosperity in Jordan and the broader region. The Institute also works to strengthen knowledge frameworks and analytical tools for understanding regional dynamics by engaging with innovative public policies, monitoring emerging risks and challenges, conducting research and studies, and implementing impactful programs and projects.

Executive Director's Foreword

I am honored to present the Politics and Society Institute's Annual Report for the year 2024, which reflects the scale of the continuous efforts and collective work carried out by the Institute's team across its various programs, research initiatives, and community-based projects.

This year witnessed a notable expansion in the Institute's areas of work, whether through the launch of new initiatives that address the priorities of Jordanian society or through the deepening of our specialized research output, which engages with political and social challenges in their regional and international contexts. Youth empowerment, the promotion of political dialogue, and the advancement of a culture of participation and openness remained central to our priorities, reflected in the training programs and community-based projects implemented across the Kingdom's governorates.

We are proud of the institutional partnerships we cultivated this year with local and international research centers and funding organizations. These collaborations are vital to ensure the sustainability of our work and amplifying its impact. We extend our sincere appreciation to all who believed in our mission and supported the Institute, financially, intellectually, or morally.

In 2024, the Israeli genocide against Gaza had a profound impact on political dynamics across the region. The Institute closely monitored developments and their implications for national and regional security. We focused our efforts on analyzing the consequences of this crisis through in-depth studies that examined its effects on regional stability, its complications for Arab-Israeli relations, and the international community's role in responding to the ensuing humanitarian and political emergencies. This critical challenge compelled us to intensify our engagement with regional political transformations and to renew our commitment to supporting policies aimed at promoting peace and security across the region.

Additionally, the research department continued to monitor security developments along the Jordanian-Syrian border, both during the lead-up to and following the fall of the Assad regime. This program was established in collaboration with the Omran Center for Strategic Studies, with the aim of examining the Syrian file and its implications for Jordan's national security.

A key achievement in 2024 was the publication of the periodic research journal JPS, which released its first two issues in English. The journal will continue to feature special editions on international and regional issues in each release, with a focus on the impact of these matters on Jordan's national security and the Kingdom's foreign relations.

We fully recognize that the upcoming phase demands increased focus and strategic planning, especially in light of the rapid regional and local transformations. This compels us to build upon our achievements and to enhance our tools and the quality of our performance, thereby

reinforcing the Institute's position as an independent center of expertise committed to the values of moderation, scientific rigor, and openness.

In conclusion, I extend my sincere gratitude to the Institute's team, our partners, researchers and institutions alike, and everyone who contributed to the success of 2024. We look forward to the coming year with hope for greater achievements, opportunities, and positive impact.

Dr. Rasha Fityan Saleem

Annual Report of the Politics and Society Institute for the Year 2024

The year 2024 witnessed a significant and wide-ranging level of activities at the Politics and Society Institute, reflecting its deep commitment to its mission of developing public policies, enhancing political participation, and consolidating the values of democracy and moderation in Jordan and the broader region. Over the course of the year, the Institute successfully implemented a wide range of programs and initiatives targeting vital sectors, notably youth, decision-makers, and civil society. Additionally, it launched in-depth research projects addressing local and regional challenges within their complex contexts.

Programs and Projects

The Institute implemented a number of projects aimed at empowering youth and civil society organizations, as well as promoting a culture of political and social participation:

1. **“New Horizon” Project:** This initiative aims to increase the participation of youth and women in political and public life through training and organizing meetings to enhance their understanding of the outputs of the Royal Committee for the Modernization of the Political System. The project targets six governorates (Mafrq, Irbid, Zarqa, Madaba, Karak, and Tafilah) over a 24-month period, commencing in early 2024. The project built the capacities of 90 young individuals and 15 civil society organizations on key themes including civic and political engagement, the rule of law, justice, transparency, environmental sustainability, climate change, and strategic communication. Five community initiatives were launched, connecting these themes to youth-driven public policy proposals aligned with the Royal Committee's recommendations. The digital campaign during the first phase of the project achieved over 100,000 views, with more than 1,000 participants engaging in various activities. The “New Horizon” project is funded by the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF).

2. "Jordan Sustainability Lab" Project:

This 18-month project, funded by the U.S. Embassy in Amman and launched in 2023, aims to empower Jordanian youth to address sustainability challenges and contribute to a greener future, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The project provided training for 27 young men and women and engaged 270 civically active youth from across various governorates. As a result, participants produced 12 policy papers addressing tangible and pressing local issues related to sustainable development. These papers were presented and discussed with relevant experts and decision-makers from both governmental and private sectors and were published on a dedicated platform hosted on the Institute's website.

3. "Siyasometer" Project:

This project aims to position Jordanian universities as political spaces for youth by studying students' political orientations and enhancing their engagement in political and partisan activities. The Institute trained over 160 students from ten public universities and organized three dialogue workshops with university presidents and deans of student affairs. The project also produced two policy papers on partisan engagement within universities, focusing on student elections held as a simulation ahead of the first parliamentary elections following the political modernization process.

4. "Adapting the Norwegian Experience in Political Reform to Jordan" Project:

This project is a partnership between the Politics and Society Institute and the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Jordan. It seeks to draw comparative insights between the democratic experiences of Norway and Jordan and to benefit from shared lessons and examples. A central activity of the project was a two-day conference held in October, which brought together around 165 participants: including activists, politicians, researchers, and decision-makers from both countries. The conference featured six sessions and hosted a number of experts and political figures. It resulted in the production of four working papers addressing key themes such as youth and women's participation, historical contexts, and political transitions. These papers were later compiled and published in a volume titled Democratic and Political Transition. The project will continue with a series of dialogue meetings throughout the first quarter of 2025.

5. "Institutional Capacity Development for the Politics and Society Institute" Project:

Funded by the SAWT Project, this initiative focused on strengthening the Institute's internal capacities in project management and formalizing internal policies related to

human resources, finance, and other operational areas—ensuring integrity and transparency across the Institute’s functions and activities. The project, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with Internews, aims to enhance the Institute’s internal governance by improving its administrative and financial systems.

6. United Nations Day:

Organized by the Institute in collaboration with the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Jordan and the University of Jordan in November 2024, this event focused on the United Nations Charter and the importance of multilateral efforts. It brought together over 250 participants, including diplomats, academics, researchers, political activists, and youth. The event highlighted the international initiatives led by the UN General Assembly and its agencies in promoting peace, resolving conflicts, and providing humanitarian support to communities affected by political crises in the region and around the world.

Research Initiatives

○ Jordan Politics and Society Journal (JPS):

This scholarly journal, published in English, aims to establish an academic platform that fosters rigorous intellectual and scientific debate among researchers, experts, and elites on issues related to domestic and foreign policies and Jordan’s political society. It seeks to develop scientific and conceptual frameworks for engaging with various real-world changes. The journal also analyzes key international and regional events, their repercussions, and their impact on Jordan, offering in-depth insights into how these developments influence the Kingdom’s internal and external policies.

Each issue features contributions from a distinguished group of Jordanian and Arab experts and researchers, alongside international scholars, enhancing the diversity of perspectives and enriching intellectual dialogue across multiple disciplines and levels.

- Issue 1 – June 2024: Regional repercussions of the war on Gaza.
- Issue 2 – December 2024: Jordan’s national security: Challenges and priorities in 2024.

○ Track II Diplomacy Program:

Track II dialogues focus on rebuilding relationships and addressing complex and sensitive conflicts and issues, aiming to contribute to more sustainable solutions that enhance

cooperation and coordination between countries through the exchange of perspectives, proposals, and recommendations.

In this context, the Politics and Society Institute plays a crucial role as a research institution comprising experts, researchers, and elites capable of initiating dialogue or hosting conversations between parties. The goal is to facilitate genuine dialogue and propose solutions that improve relations, reduce tensions, or stimulate and strengthen cooperation.

The Institute has pioneered this role in Jordan, particularly on regional issues closely tied to Jordan's national security, by organizing, hosting, or participating in such dialogues at both regional and international levels.

This initiative began with Palestine, in partnership with a group of academics and civil society activists.

- **Adnan Abu Odeh Program for Studies on the Zionist Movement and Israel:**

Announced in December 2024, this program aims to guide a select group of 8 to 10 researchers specializing in the Zionist movement and Israeli affairs. It responds to the escalating threats facing Jordan from its western borders, impacting national security and strategic interests due to the ongoing Zionist project linked to international agendas and Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian territories. The program also addresses the growing risks posed by initiatives that could undermine Jordan's interests and regional security. The implementation of the program is set for 2025.

- **Abdullah Al-Jbour Program for Empowering Young Political Minds:**

This program aligns with the Institute's vision to empower and develop youth by enhancing their role in the public sphere and equipping them with the skills and tools necessary for success in the labor market. It aims to enable young people to propose innovative ideas and practical solutions that address local and regional challenges in political, economic, and social domains. Additionally, the program seeks to strengthen their engagement in public life within a framework of national values that promote a culture of moderation, the rule of law, good governance, and democratic development.

The program targeted 40 young participants (25 females and 15 males) across three cohorts.

- **Political Party Spectrum Project in Jordan Concurrent with the 2024 Parliamentary Elections: A Field Survey Study**

This research study was conducted by the Politics and Society Institute in collaboration with King Abdullah II Fund for Development. The project aims to analyze the status of political

parties in Jordan, especially in the context of preparations for the 2024 parliamentary elections.

The study involved a field survey including interviews with representatives of political parties and dialogue sessions held across various Jordanian governorates. It explored the challenges and opportunities related to partisan work, political participation, and the positioning of parties within the political spectrum.

The findings were compiled into a publication titled *Democratic Transition in Jordan: The Experience of Political Parties and the 2024 Parliamentary Elections*, which provides a comprehensive overview of the party landscape in Jordan and offers recommendations to strengthen the role of parties in the democratic process and achieve the desired political reform.

The study was conducted in six governorates, targeting 33 parties with the participation of 100 individuals.

- **Jordanian–Syrian Affairs Program:**

This research program aims to study the impact of Syrian affairs on Jordan's domestic and foreign policies, with a focus on shared issues and security, political, and economic challenges. The program analyzes the dynamics of the Syrian internal landscape and regional efforts to rehabilitate Syria and reintegrate it into the regional context. It also examines the roles of key actors within Syria and their actions affecting Jordan's national security.

The program provides analyses, findings, and recommendations for decision-makers and relevant stakeholders. Implemented in partnership between the Politics and Society Institute and the Omran Center for Strategic Studies, it includes research publications, seminars, and workshops designed to enhance mutual understanding and knowledge exchange between researchers and policymakers.

- **Study: “Conflict and Women across Multiple Sectors in Jordan”**

Conducted in partnership with Chemonics UK under the Tamakkon Project, this study aims to understand the diverse needs, priorities, interests, and capacities of women and men in Jordanian communities, with a focus on gender-based violence, power dynamics, and participation in peacebuilding.

The primary objectives of this analytical study include providing detailed information on the different needs and priorities of women and men in Jordan, understanding power relations and current gender dynamics, and identifying how gender-based violence acts as a barrier

to peace and stability. It also examines the obstacles to women's participation in leadership positions and in peacebuilding processes such as dialogue, negotiation, and mediation.

Furthermore, the study explores changes in gender and power dynamics in Jordan over the past five years, focusing on productive work, gender-based division of labor, unpaid domestic work including reproductive and care-related activities, and the participation of women and men in social, economic, and political spheres.

Lastly, the study identifies priorities and opportunities among civil society organizations and communities to integrate gender issues into conflict transformation, dialogue, mediation, and peacebuilding at local, national, and regional levels.

- **Climate Justice Conference: Governance as a Tool**

On October 9, the Politics and Society Institute, in partnership with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Middle East Program) and supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), convened the conference "Climate Justice: Governance as a Tool." Over two days, a distinguished group of researchers, experts, government and private sector representatives, civil society members, and journalists from the Middle East, North Africa, and other countries gathered to discuss the challenges and opportunities related to climate governance in the MENA region.

The conference aimed to promote dialogue on climate justice and inclusive governance, highlighting gaps in public climate policies and developing effective mechanisms for climate mitigation and adaptation. It also addressed the roles of civil society, youth, and women in shaping and evaluating climate policies, as well as ways to ensure transparency and accountability in managing natural resources and financing green projects.

Furthermore, the event underscored the persistent challenges in regional climate policy, including lack of transparency, limited participation of diverse groups in decision-making, and inadequate accountability in natural resource management.

- **Book Discussion: "The Northern War: Drug Networks in Syria, Jordanian Response, and Regional Options"**

This book, launched by the Politics and Society Institute in partnership with the Center for Strategic Studies, analyzes the phenomenon of organized drug trafficking networks in Syria and their security, political, and social repercussions on Jordan and the wider region.

Authored by researcher Hassan Jaber, an expert on Syrian affairs and Middle Eastern issues, the study employs both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including numerous interviews with academics and experts from Jordan, Syria, and neighboring countries, to gain a precise understanding of the complex drug network issue.

The book provides an in-depth examination of the reality of drug trafficking networks in Syria as a security phenomenon with complex regional dimensions and dynamics. It highlights the emergence of these networks since the onset of the Syrian crisis in 2011 and explores the factors that contributed to the spread of organized crime networks within Syria.

Additionally, the study investigates Jordan's response mechanisms to these cross-border networks, discussing the security and diplomatic options and alternatives adopted by Jordan to address the threats posed by drug trafficking along the Jordan-Syria border.

Participation in International Activities

This section documents all regional and international engagements of the Politics and Society Institute throughout 2024. These engagements include conferences, seminars, consultative meetings, and workshops that the Institute either organized or participated in at the regional and international levels.

The Institute participated in the 2024 annual conference titled "Mediterranean Foresight – Exploring Future Scenarios in the Euro-Mediterranean Region." The conference featured both plenary sessions and parallel foresight workshops, aimed at highlighting possible scenarios the region may encounter in the coming years. This conference took place in the context of supporting strategic planning efforts by Euro-Mediterranean cooperation institutions, particularly in Brussels, ahead of the upcoming changes in the European Parliament and Commission.

The plenary sessions addressed critical issues, including:

- Security dynamics,
- Migration trends,
- Socioeconomic developments, and
- Prospects for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

Additionally, the foresight workshops engaged participants in in-depth discussions on:

- Political scenarios following regional elections,
- The future trajectory of the conflict in Gaza, and
- Opportunities for enhanced energy cooperation across the Mediterranean.

1. 2024 Conference in Collaboration with Euromesco, Brussels

"Mediterranean Foresight – Exploring Future Scenarios in the Euro-Mediterranean Region"

2. Open Consultations on the Future Vision and Mandate of the Union for the Mediterranean

Held on 14 February 2025 at the headquarters of the Union for the Mediterranean in Barcelona, the consultations brought together representatives of member states, regional partners, and Euro-Mediterranean cooperation institutions. The event aimed to review the Union's strategic vision and outline its future direction in light of ongoing political, economic, and social transformations in the region. Participants discussed the latest version of the agenda and participant list and engaged in dialogue on joint priorities and emerging regional challenges.

3. Euro-Mediterranean Community Conference: “Restoring Our Shared Humanity – Promoting Mutual Understanding and Addressing Polarization in the Euro-Mediterranean Region”

Organized by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), with support from the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI), the conference addressed the rise of hate speech and polarization in both physical and digital spaces, particularly in the context of ongoing conflicts, most notably, the war in Gaza. It emphasized the impact of these dynamics on social cohesion in Europe and the wider Mediterranean region.

The conference sought to support civil society's efforts to counter hate speech and reaffirm the importance of building inclusive societies grounded in mutual respect and human dignity.

The program featured multiple dialogue and exchange sessions, focused on key themes:

- Empowering women in peacebuilding efforts
- Uncovering hate speech in times of conflict
- The role of youth in countering disinformation and hate narratives on social media

The Politics and Society Institute actively participated in the conference. The Institute's Executive Director served as an official speaker in the opening session, “From Polarization to Peacebuilding: Empowering Women's Roles.” Her intervention highlighted the importance of integrating a gender perspective into peacebuilding and social transformation processes. She also emphasized the critical role women play in fostering societal reconciliation and transforming divided communities into more inclusive and cohesive ones, drawing on lessons from Euro-Mediterranean contexts.

4. Regional Workshop: “Post-Assad Syria – Scenarios and Regional Dynamics” – Istanbul, January 31 – February 1, 2025

The Politics and Society Institute participated in the regional workshop titled “Post-Assad Syria – Scenarios and Regional Dynamics,” organized by the Middle East Council on

Global Affairs in collaboration with the Institute and hosted in Istanbul on January 31 – February 1, 2025.

The workshop brought together a distinguished group of experts, policymakers, and researchers from Syria and the broader Arab region, alongside representatives from the United States, Europe, and Russia. Discussions focused on the political, security, and economic implications of the fall of Bashar al-Assad in December 2024 and explored potential future trajectories for Syria and the wider region.

Impact by the Numbers

- Number of Activities: Over 40
- Direct Youth Beneficiaries: 936
- Direct Female Beneficiaries: 975
- Number of Papers and Publications: Over 21
- Conferences Held: 4
- Workshops and Sessions: 40
- Partnerships Established: 11
- Publications: 78 in Arabic, 29 in English
- New Partnerships in 2024: 5

Partnerships and Collaborations

- Crown Prince Foundation
- Omran Center for Strategic Studies
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- Bdoor Association for Development and Charity
- Royal Norwegian Embassy in Amman

Ongoing Activities from 2024

- Sustainability Lab Activities: Launch of policy papers and website scheduled for Q1 of 2025.
- "New Horizon" Project: Continuation of the digital campaign and university workshops until June 2025.

- Project on Applying the Norwegian Political Reform Experience to Jordan: Implementation of the remaining workshops to be completed in Q1 of 2025.

Work Plan for 2025

- Publication of the third issue of the Jordanian Journal of Politics and Society (JPS).
- Jordanian-Syrian Affairs Program.
- "Ayn – Adnan Abu Odeh Program for Israeli and Zionist Studies" under the Track II diplomacy path.
- Expansion of regional partnerships within Track II.
- Development of the Institute of Politics and Society's strategic plan for 2025–2027.
- Strengthening funding and future partnerships.
- Project to enhance youth student political participation in Jordanian universities.
- Young Women Researchers Project on Gender, Environment, and the Green Economy.
- Jordanian Youth Barometer Project.

Conclusion

This report reflects the Institute of Politics and Society's commitment to fostering a vibrant intellectual environment, promoting public awareness, and empowering the next generation of leaders and researchers in Jordan and the region. The Institute has successfully positioned itself as an influential hub in shaping public policy, generating knowledge, and building bridges of trust between citizens and state institutions.