



# Democracy in Jordan 2008

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**Center for Strategic Studies  
University of Jordan  
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## Introduction

The Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan conducted an opinion poll on democracy in Jordan during the period between Nov. 11 and Nov. 30, 2008. The completed national sample included **1152** respondents from an original 1200, and the national sample was distributed among the districts as shown in Table 1. 42 individuals refused to participate in the poll (the participation rate was 96%). This is the 15<sup>th</sup> annual poll the Center has conducted as part of the study of democratic transformation in Jordan. The poll aims to identify the views of Jordanians about the democratic transformation in

| Governorate | Percentage |
|-------------|------------|
| Capital     | 40         |
| Irbid       | 18         |
| Zarqa       | 15         |
| Balqa       | 7          |
| Mafrq       | 4          |
| Karak       | 4          |
| Jerah       | 3          |
| Madaba      | 2          |
| Ajloun      | 2          |
| Aqaba       | 2          |
| Ma'am       | 2          |
| Tafilah     | 1          |
| Total =1152 | %100       |

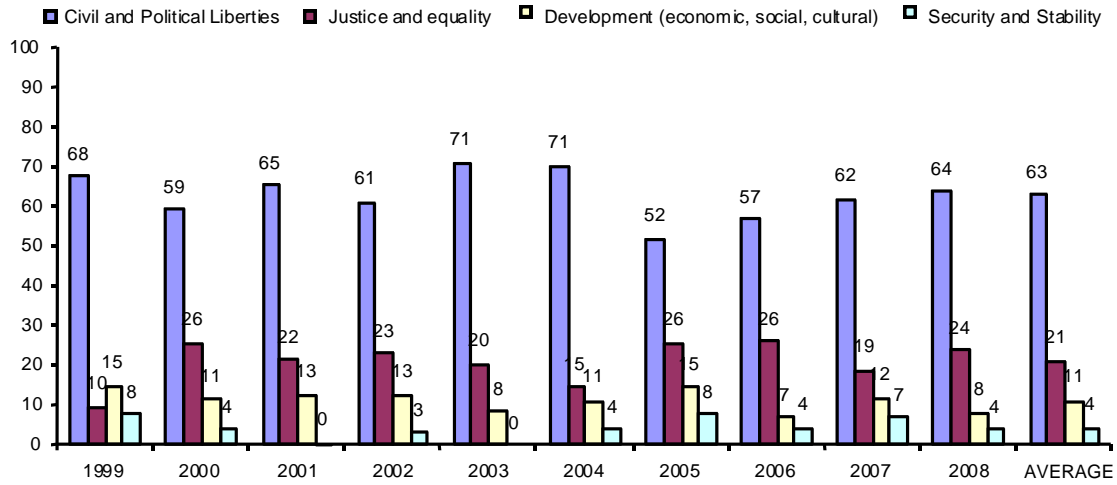
Jordan in general. It measures the level of democracy as perceived by citizens, identifies what democracy means to Jordanians, what type of political system Jordanians prefer, and what political system they perceive as the best to address the issues of poverty, unemployment, and financial and administrative corruption. Additionally, the poll measures the extent to which public freedoms are guaranteed and explores the factors that pose the largest obstacles to democracy in Jordan. The poll also tackles the extent of participation in the 15th parliamentary elections, and the political orientations for which citizens voted. The poll also addresses audio-visual media and people's degree of confidence in it with regard to local, Arab, and international political news. The most important results of the poll are presented below.

### I. Concept of Democracy

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Most Jordanians conceptualize democracy as closely related to civil and political liberties. This understanding, in essence, does not differ from the concept of democracy in advanced democratic countries. Since the 1999 poll and until the time of this poll, 63% of total responses defined democracy as civil liberties and political rights. Alongside this political perception of democracy, there is a sociological understanding that defines democracy by linking it with justice and equality (21%), and with social, political and economic development (11%). A small percentage of respondents defined democracy as security and stability (4%), as shown in Figure 1.

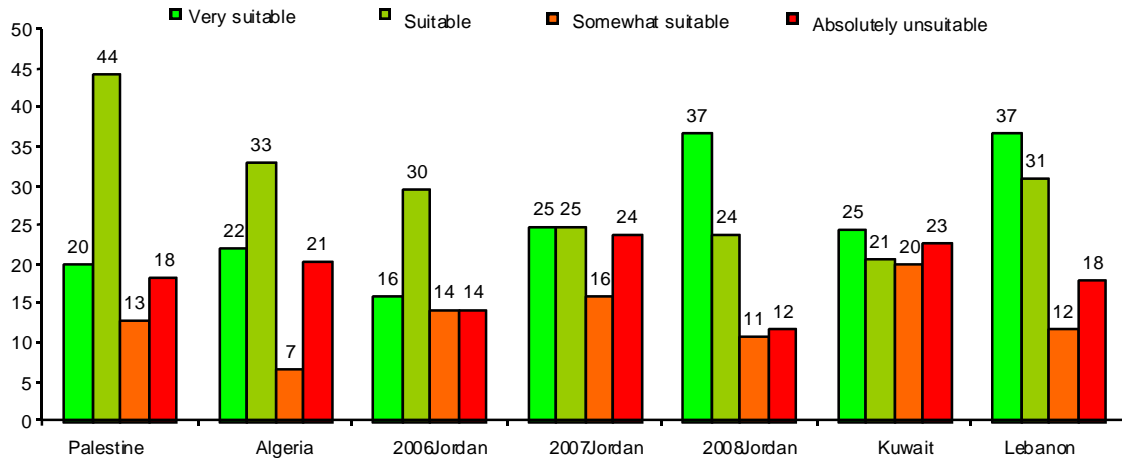
**Figure 1: The concept of democracy according to Jordanians**



**The suitable political system for Jordan:**

Previous polls indicated that the overwhelming majority of Jordanians prefer the democratic political system. Over 80% of respondents say that the democratic system is “very good or good” for the country’s governance and reject the authoritarian political system. Since 2006, a new set of questions have been posed that evaluate this position with different wording to test the extent of the Jordanian public’s consistency with regard to supporting democracy. The results of this poll show that the position of Jordanians towards democracy is positive despite the changed questions, as the difference in their position was a matter of degree and not of nature. 61% of respondents think that “a parliamentary system in which nationalist, leftist, rightist and Islamist parties compete through parliamentary elections” is a very suitable system (37%) or suitable for Jordan (24%). 11% of respondents indicated that this system is somewhat suitable while 12% think it is completely unsuitable for Jordan. Comparing this poll with the polls from the two previous years indicates that the Jordanian public favors a competitive political system over other systems, including political systems governed by Islamic Shari’a. Comparing Jordanians’ opinions with the opinions of other Arab societies reveals that Jordan does not differ significantly from the Palestinian and Lebanese societies in terms of preference for a competitive democratic system. In this sense, Jordanian society moved ahead of the Algerian and Kuwaiti societies in terms of its conviction that this system is suitable for Jordan, as shown in Figure 2. Likewise, the percentage of respondents that do not think this system is suitable for Jordan is the smallest compared with other Arab societies. This poll captured a significant decrease in this percentage compared with the 2006 and 2007 polls.

**Figure 2:** The extent to which “a parliamentary system in which nationalist, leftist, rightist and Islamist parties compete through parliamentary elections” is suitable for Jordan compared with the opinions of citizens of other Arab societies regarding the extent to which this system is suitable for them.



Source: The 2007 and 2008 democracy in Jordan polls and the evaluation of Arab public opinion. The Center for Strategic Studies – The University of Jordan

Despite the presence of other preferences in Jordanian public opinion, the public’s rejection of political authoritarianism is evident in its absolute rejection of “a political system ruled by a strong authority that makes decisions without considering election results or opposition opinions.” The percentage of those who said that this system is absolutely unsuitable for Jordan was 50%, compared with 5% who said it was “very suitable.” In addition to its rejection of this type of authoritarianism, the Jordanian public also rejects religious and other forms of authoritarianism. This is shown by 39% of Jordanians saying that “a parliamentary system in which only Islamist parties compete in parliamentary elections” is absolutely unsuitable for Jordan while only 7% said that it is very suitable, as outlined in Table 2. In spite of this rejection, the idea of “a system governed by Islamic Shari’a without elections or political parties” garnered noticeable support, as it ranks second behind a competitive political system (comparing the percentages each system obtained, see Table 2.)

**Table 2:**

| I will mention some of the political systems that currently exist in some Middle Eastern countries, and I would like to know the extent to which these systems would be suitable in Jordan. |  |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
|   | A parliamentary system in which only Islamist parties compete in parliamentary elections | A political system ruled by a strong authority that makes decisions without considering election results or opposition opinions | A system governed by Islamic Shari'a without elections or political parties | A parliamentary system in which nationalist, leftist, rightist and Islamist parties compete through parliamentary elections |
| Very Suitable   | 7  | 5   | 5   | 37  |
| Suitable  | 21   | 15  | 15  | 24  |
| Somewhat Suitable   | 18   | 14  | 14  | 11  |
| Absolutely Unsuitable   | 37   | 50  | 50  | 12  |
| Don't Know  | 15   | 16  | 16  | 16  |

The largest percentage of Jordanians think that a competitive parliamentary political system is the “best” to solve the problems of unemployment, poverty and financial and administrative corruption. 44% of respondents think this system is the best to solve the problem of financial and administrative corruption, 38% think that it is the best to solve the poverty problem, and 41% think it is the best to solve the unemployment problem. Although the “system governed by Islamic Shari'a without elections or political parties” was ranked second, this position is closer to “respect” for the idea of Shari'a, because the parliamentary system in which only Islamist parties compete obtained the lowest percentage of responses among the four systems. This is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3:**

| <b>Which of the following systems is the best for addressing the issue of “Administrative and Financial Corruption”</b>         | <b>Administrative and Financial Corruption</b> |      | <b>Poverty</b> |      | <b>Unemployment</b> |      |
|---|--|------|----------------|------|---------------------|------|
|   | 2008   | 2007 | 2008           | 2007 | 2008                | 2007 |
| A parliamentary system in which only Islamist parties compete in parliamentary elections  | 9  | 9    | 9              | 10   | 7                   | 8    |
| A political system ruled by a strong authority that makes decisions without considering election results or opposition opinions | 5  | 14   | 7              | 15   | 7                   | 15   |
| A system governed by Islamic Shari’a without elections or political parties   | 30   | 28   | 31             | 28   | 29                  | 28   |
| A parliamentary system in which nationalist, leftist, rightist and Islamist parties compete through parliamentary elections     | 44   | 38   | 38             | 33   | 41                  | 35   |
| None of these systems   | 1  | 3    | 1              | 5    | 1                   | 5    |
| Don’t know  | 15   | 8    | 16             | 9    | 15                  | 9    |
| <b>Total</b>  | 100  | 100  | 100            | 100  | 100                 | 100  |

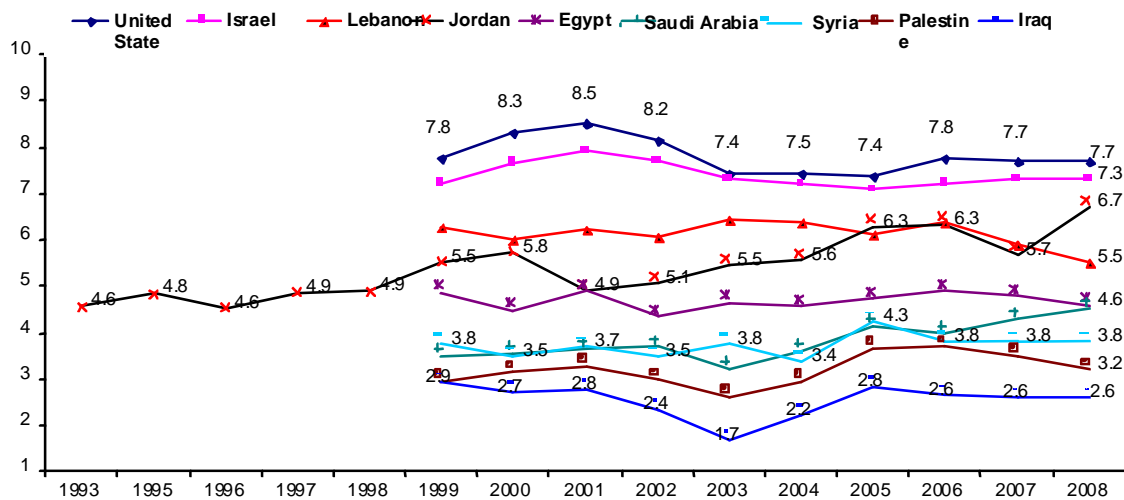
## II: Level of Democracy

The Jordanian public’s evaluation of the level of democracy in Jordan increased compared to last year, as it reached 6.7 on a scale of 10. There are four factors that may have contributed to this increase. First, this increase in the general indicator reflects the noticeable positive change in subsidiary indicators: freedom of opinion, freedom of the press, freedom to organize sit-ins and demonstrations, in addition to the fact that the freedom to join political parties maintained the same evaluation as last year. Although the changes in the evaluations of these indicators were not statistically significant, they indicate a general positive trend in Jordanian public opinion and a partial contribution to the improvement in Jordanians’ evaluation of the level of democracy in Jordan this year. Second, the Jordanian public was somewhat relieved after the government reduced fuel prices. This had a positive impact on people’s evaluation of the government’s performance and created a positive atmosphere that may have resulted in Jordanians’ improved evaluation of the level of democracy. Third, public freedoms witnessed a procedural advance, as the government licensed many political protests and festivals and approved turning the weekly Sabil newspaper, a publication of the Islamic opposition, into a daily paper. Further, His Majesty the King prohibited imprisoning journalists. Fourth, the fluctuations accompanying the November 2007 parliamentary elections, preceded by the municipal elections of July 2007, contributed to decreasing the public’s evaluation of the level of democracy in Jordan in 2007 to 5.7 from 6.3 in 2006 and 2005.

Therefore, the difference in the level of democracy between 2005 and 2008 is only about .4 points. This is a reasonable increase when considering the development of the public's evaluation of the level of democracy in Jordan since 1993.

Jordanians' evaluation of the level of democracy in their country and other countries reflects an advanced understanding of the content of democratic governance in general. Jordanians have consistently categorized Israel and the United States as democracies from 1999 until 2008. Iraq occupies the lowest position out of all of the countries included in the study, followed by Palestine. It is noteworthy that Jordanians' evaluation of the level of democracy in Iraq and Palestine did not change significantly after elections resulting in the formation of elected governments in both countries, indicating that the Jordanian public is not convinced that the developments in these countries constitute successful democracy.

**Figure 3:** The Jordanian public's evaluation of the level of democracy in Jordan and a number of other countries. A score of 10 indicates the highest level of democracy and a score of 1 indicates that the country is still in the early stages of democracy.



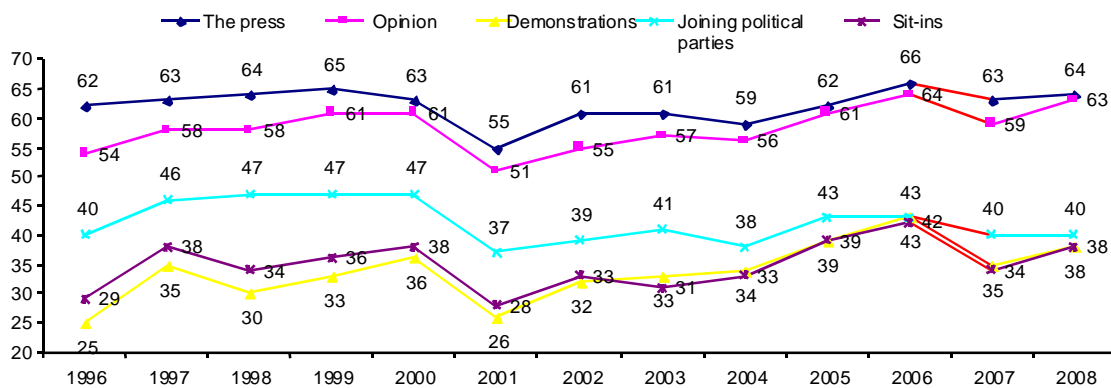
It is important to point out that respondents' evaluation of the levels of democracy in different countries depend on the extent of their understanding of the concept of democracy. This understanding is linked to a great extent with public freedoms, and does not necessarily reflect an objective evaluation of the internal democratic performance, or lack thereof, of the countries included in the poll. However, this evaluation is an important indicator that should not be ignored.

### III: Democracy Indicators

#### Public Freedoms

As most Jordanians define democracy as public freedoms, it is necessary to determine the extent of their belief that these freedoms are guaranteed in Jordan. The results of this poll reflect a general trend indicating a **slight increase** in the extent to which the Jordanian public believes that public freedoms are guaranteed. It is noteworthy that this increase reflects the increase in the evaluation of the level of democracy in Jordan compared with last year. Arithmetic means of responses on the freedom of opinion, freedom of the press and the freedom to join political parties indicate that these freedoms are guaranteed to a certain extent. The freedom of the press is considered the most guaranteed freedom, as stated by 64% of respondents in this poll, compared with 63% of respondents in the 2007 poll, 66% in the 2006 poll, 62% in the 2005 poll, and 59% in the 2004 poll. Freedom of the press is followed by freedom of opinion with 63%, compared with 59% in the 2007 poll, 64.3% in 2006, 61% in 2005 and 56% in 2004. This was followed by the freedom to join political parties, as only 40% of respondents believe that this freedom is guaranteed in Jordan. This was the same percentage recorded for this freedom last year, compared with 43% in both the 2006 and 2005 polls and 38% in the 2004 poll as indicated in Figure 5. With regard to the freedom to demonstrate and organize sit-ins, despite the slight increase in the percentage of respondents who believed that these freedoms were guaranteed in this poll compared with last year, this percentage remained slightly lower than in the 2006 poll, as show in Figure 5. The percentage of respondents who believe that the freedom to demonstrate is guaranteed increased from 35% in 2007 to 38% in this poll, while the percentage for the freedom to organize sit-ins increased from 34% in 2007 to 38% in 2008. In spite of this increase, the majority of respondents still believe that that these freedoms are not guaranteed (62% for each), as indicated in Figure 5.

**Figure 5: Arithmetic means of responses regarding the extent to which public freedoms are guaranteed in Jordan**

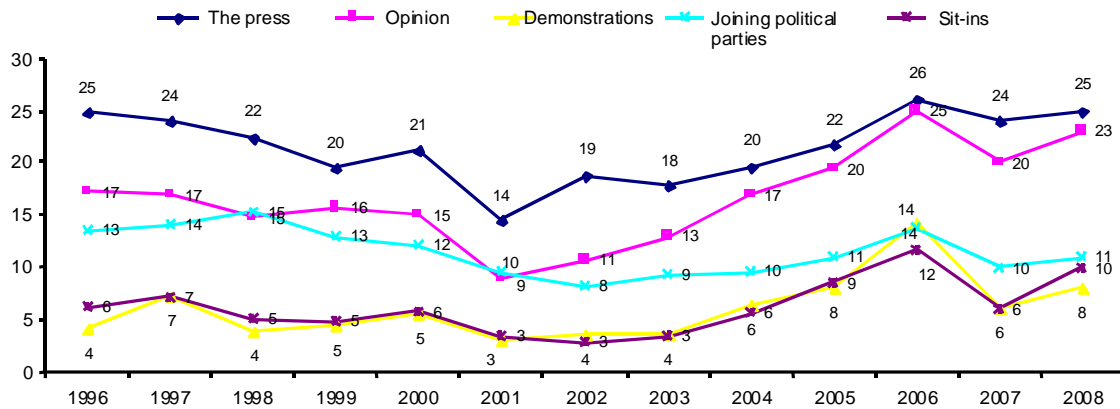


Elaborating on the above results, we find that the increase in the percentage of respondents who believe that public freedoms are guaranteed “to a great extent” certainly



reflects the improvement in the level of democracy. In general, the percentages of those who believe that they are able to express their opinions without risk (those respondents who believe these freedoms are guaranteed to a great extent) are very small, particularly with regard to demonstrating, organizing sit-ins and joining political parties. We find that compared with the percentages for 2007, the freedoms of “written and oral expression” and “physical expression” increased, such as the freedom to demonstrate, organize sit-ins, and join political parties, as shown in Figure 6.

**Figure 6: Extent to which freedoms are guaranteed – to a great extent**



### Fear of Publicly Criticizing the Government

It seemed very clear that the fear of **publicly criticizing the government** and disagreeing with it is based on perceptions and impressions that respondents formed previously based on practices that were limited but rapidly generalized. These impressions and perceptions continued to constitute the reference framework for respondents with regard to **criticizing the government**. Despite the fact that almost 80% of respondents stated that they are afraid of publicly criticizing the government because they fear persecution related to their security status or livelihoods, as indicated in Figure 7, the percentage of respondents who said that they had been subjected to such persecution as a result of criticizing the government or participating in peaceful opposition activities is very low. However, these experiences are quickly spread and generalized, so that they seem to be the prevalent practice for dealing with those who publicly criticize the government. When those individuals were asked about the type of punishment they were subjected to, two of them (0.2%) said they were prohibited from giving sermons and lessons. These respondents were between 35-44 years old, as shown in Table 4. Eight other respondents (0.7%) said police subjected them to beatings and imprisonment because of participation in demonstrations. These respondents were distributed among all of the age categories. Two other respondents (0.2%) said that they were deprived of personal freedoms and public employment, and they were in the 45 and over age category. One person was subjected to attacks and sent to the intelligence department, and two other individuals were interrogated and investigated from the 35 and over age category.

Table 4: Number of individuals who stated that they were subjected to punishments and the types of punishments they experienced. Text of the question: What punishment were you or any member of your family subjected to?

| Age   | Prohibited from giving sermons or lessons | Beaten and imprisoned by the police because of participation in a demonstration | Attacked and sent to the intelligence department | Deprived of personal freedoms and government jobs | Investigated and interrogated | Refuse to answer | Unclear | Total |
|-------|---|---|--|---|-------------------------------|------------------|---------|-------|
| 18-24 | 0   | 2   | 0  | 0   | 0                             | 0                | 4       | 6     |
| 25-34 | 0   | 1   | 1  | 0   | 0                             | 0                | 2       | 4     |
| 35-44 | 2   | 3   | 0  | 0   | 1                             | 0                | 0       | 6     |
| 45+   | 0   | 2   | 0  | 2   | 1                             | 1                | 2       | 8     |
| Total | 2   | 8   | 1  | 2   | 2                             | 1                | 8       | 24    |

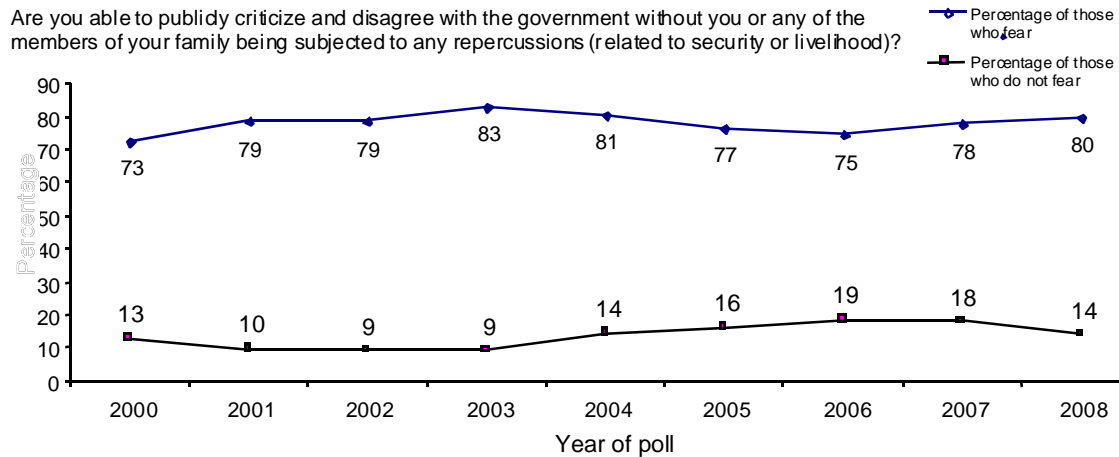
Regarding the areas in which individuals are more able to criticize the government, the results reveal that familial and personal relations are the most welcoming environment for this type of political activity. 33% of respondents said that they can publicly criticize the government, to varying degrees (Table 5), in “meetings with family, relatives and tribe members”, and 34% said they could criticize the government in meetings with friends, acquaintances and colleagues. Meanwhile, the percentage of those who said they could criticize the government by means of other forms of expression (protests, meetings, the media, letters and petitions) was about 20%.

Table 5: To what degree are you able to criticize the government by means of “demonstrations, organized sit-ins and protests” without fearing that you will be subjected to punishment related to your security status or livelihood?

|  | Demonstrations, sit-ins and protests | Meetings, seminars and lectures | Media outlets including the Internet | Petitions and letters | With family, relatives and tribe members | With friends, acquaintances and colleagues |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|
|  | Percentage                           |                                 |                                      |                       |  |  |
| To a great extent  | 2                                    | 3                               | 3                                    | 2                     | 10                                       | 10   |
| To a medium extent   | 9                                    | 9                               | 7                                    | 7                     | 11                                       | 12   |
| To a limited extent  | 9                                    | 9                               | 9                                    | 9                     | 12                                       | 12   |
| <b>Absolutely cannot criticize the government</b>                                | <b>69</b>                            | <b>68</b>                       | <b>71</b>                            | <b>70</b>             | <b>56</b>                                | <b>57</b>                                  |
| Don't know   | 8                                    | 8                               | 9                                    | 9                     | 8  | 8  |
| Refused to answer  | 2                                    | 2                               | 2                                    | 2                     | 2  | 2  |
| Total  | 100%                                 | 100%                            | 100%                                 | 100%                  | 100%                                     | 100%                                       |
| % Previously participated in this activity                                       | 2.4                                  | 3.0                             | 1.0                                  | 1.0                   | 13.8                                     | 14.0                                       |
| Percent who were subjected to punishments as a result of their participation     | 38.3                                 | 20.9                            | 25.2                                 | 28.6                  | 2.2                                      | 3.7  |
| Percent who were not subjected to punishments as a result of their participation | 61.7                                 | 79.1                            | 74.8                                 | 71.4                  | 97.8                                     | 96.3                                       |
| Percent who were subjected to punishments from the overall sample                | 0.9                                  | 0.6                             | 0.3                                  | 0.3                   | 0.3                                      | 0.5  |

On the other hand, there is a difference in the level of fear depending on the question posed. When respondents were asked a question in which answers are limited to two (yes/no), the percentage of those who feared criticizing the government was 80%, and when they were asked to what degree they were able to criticize the government without fearing punishment on a scale of four degrees, an average of 65% of respondents were absolutely unable to criticize the government through four means of expression, as shown in Table 4. However, the other side of this picture is that the percentage of those who criticized the government and were subjected to punishment out of the entire sample was less than 1%. This means that the majority of citizens adopt their positions based on what to less than 1% of people experience.

**Figure 7: Fear of publicly criticizing the government**



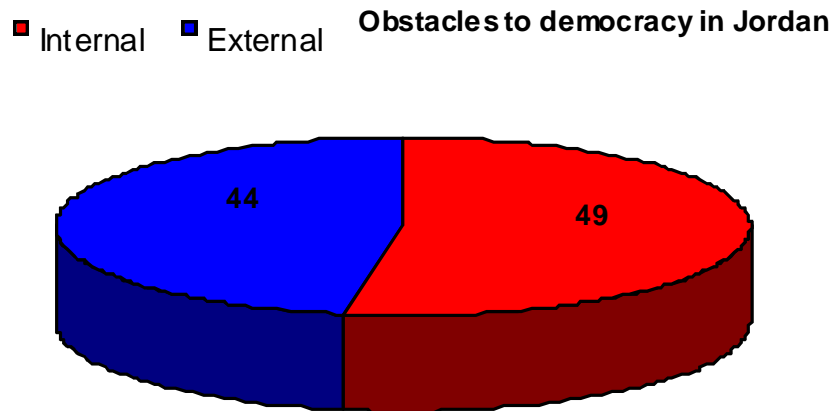
## IV: Obstacles to Democracy

In order to determine the Jordanian public's position regarding the issues that constitute obstacles to democracy in Jordan, we asked respondents to choose the most prominent obstacle to democracy in Jordan from a list of possible obstacles. The most prominent obstacle was "the spread of financial and administrative corruption, favoritism and nepotism" at 17.4% compared to 18.9% in the 2007 poll, followed by "regional instability" at 12.3% compared to 9.8% in 2007. If we add to that the percentages for other factors which fit into the category of regional instability but are more specific, such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, instability in Iraq and fear about the issue of the alternative homeland for Palestinians in Jordan, we find that the regional instability issue constitutes 28.9% compared to 27.4% in 2007 and 37.3% in 2006. When comparing internal and external obstacles, we find that 40% of respondents perceive the obstacles to democracy as external in this poll, compared with 40.1% in 2007 and 50% in the 2006 poll, while 49% of respondents think that the obstacles to democracy in Jordan are internal, compared with 52.8% and 42.9% in the 2007 and 2006 polls respectively. These figures are indicated in Table 5.

**Table 5: Most prominent obstacles to democracy in Jordan:**

| <b>Obstacles</b>  | <b>Type of Obstacle</b> | <b>Percentage 2006</b> | <b>Percentage 2007</b> | <b>Percentage 2008</b> |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Administrative and financial corruption, favoritism and nepotism                        | Internal                | 12.7                   | 18.9                   | 17.4                   |
| Regional instability  | External                | 17.6                   | 9.8                    | 12.3                   |
| The U.S. does not want democracy in Jordan  | External                | 11.0                   | 9.3                    | 10                     |
| Ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict  | External                | 9.4                    | 7.1                    | 8.2                    |
| Tribalism in the society  | Internal                | 4.9                    | 8.2                    | 7.1                    |
| Lack of democratic systems in neighboring countries                                     | External                | 1.7                    | 3.4                    | 5.4                    |
| Lack of desire of economic elites to have democracy in Jordan                           | Internal                | 3.0                    | 3.0                    | 5.2                    |
| Lack of political elites' desire to have democracy in Jordan                            | Internal                | 4.5                    | 3.9                    | 4.7                    |
| Society's lack of readiness to practice democracy                                       | Internal                | 4.0                    | 6.7                    | 4.7                    |
| Incompatibility of Jordanian culture with democracy                                     | Internal                | 4.4                    | 4.1                    | 4.6                    |
| Fear of the alternative homeland for the Palestinians in Jordan                         | External                | 7.8                    | 6.8                    | 4.3                    |
| Ongoing instability in Iraq   | External                | 2.5                    | 3.7                    | 4.1                    |
| Lack of executive authority's seriousness about the democratic transformation in Jordan | Internal                | 4.5                    | 3.9                    | 2.8                    |
| Fear of Islamist control of Parliament  | Internal                | 4.9                    | 4.1                    | 2.5                    |
| Other reasons   |                         | 2.3                    | 0.7                    | --                     |
| Don't know + refused to answer  |                         | 4.7                    | 6.4                    | 6.7                    |
| <b>Total</b>  |                         | <b>100</b>             | <b>100</b>             | <b>100</b>             |

**Figure 8: Obstacles to democracy in Jordan according to the Jordanian public**



## **V: Political Parties**

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### **Evaluation of the Parties' Performance**

The position of the respondents regarding the performance of the political parties did not significantly improve. Approximately one-fourth of respondents stated that they did not know or were not concerned with whether the parties were successful or not in their political work. When comparing previous polls since 1996 and through the current poll, it is clear that Jordanians' evaluation of the performance of political parties has not changed substantially, as the Jordanian public still believes that the parties are suffering a political crisis in terms of their ability to reach the people. When respondents were asked whether political parties in Jordan work to serve the interests of the people or the interests of party leaders, 59% of respondents said that they work to serve the interests of their leaders compared with 61.5% in the 2007 poll, 58.7% in the 2006 poll, 53.3% in the 2005 poll, and 49.1% in the 2004 poll. In contrast, 10% of respondents in this poll said that the parties work to serve the interests of the people, compared with 13% in the 2007 poll, 14% in 2006, 13.8% in 2005, and 12.8% in 2004. It is notable that 28% of respondents stated that they did not know, compared with 24.4% in the 2007 poll, 24% in 2006, 29.7% in 2005 and 35.3% in 2004.

### **The popularity of parties among citizens**

The information obtained from the poll indicates that all existing political parties represent only 5% of the political, social and economic aspirations of citizens, down from 9.7% in 2007 and compared with 6.8% in the 2006 poll, 6% in 2005, and 9.8% in 2004. This result means that more than 90% of respondents do not think that the existing parties represent their aspirations. The Islamic Action Front was more representative of citizens'

political, social and economic aspirations than any other Jordanian political party, as indicated by 3.7% of respondents in this poll compared with 5.6% in 2007, 4.2% in 2006, 4% in 2005, 6.6% in 2004, and 14.7% of respondents in the 2003 poll that was conducted after the parliamentary elections held on June 17, 2003. The National Front ranked second with 0.3% of responses, while the National Constitutional Party came third with 0.2% of responses compared with 0.7% in the 2007 and 2006 polls, 0.6% of responses in the 2005 and 2004 polls, and 1% in 2003. None of the other parties obtained percentages of responses exceeding .1%.

When respondents were asked the following question: “Which of the existing parties in Jordan do you believe is qualified to form a government?”, 75% of respondents said “none”, compared with 80% in the 2007 poll, 90.4% in 2006, 82.4% in 2005, and 84.2% in 2004. The Islamic Action Front received 3.3% of responses in this poll, compared with 3.4% in the 2007 poll, 2.5% in the 2006 and 2005 polls and 3.5% in the 2004 poll (this result is different from the representation of aspirations mentioned above). None of the other parties received percentages of responses over 0.2%. Respondents’ opinions about the parties are reflected in their positions regarding the potential rise of such parties to power – 64% of respondents said that they would not personally accept the rise of a political party that they did not agree with to power, compared with 68.9% in the 2007 poll, 64% in 2006, 58.4% in 2005, and 57.7% in 2004. 12% of respondents said they would accept such a situation, compared with 12.5% in the 2007 poll, 12.4% in 2006, 13.4% in 2005, and 11% in 2004.

The concept of political parties among the Jordanian public remains incomplete. When respondents were asked, “Which of these two statements is closer to your point of view?”, 59% said that the statement “the party is a political organization that seeks to participate in the political process without assuming power” is closer to their opinion, while 60.9% of respondents chose this statement in 2007, 65.8% in the 2006 poll, 63.4% in the 2005 poll and 63.7% in the 2004 poll. In contrast, 35% of respondents said that the statement “the party is a political organization that aims to assume power through constitutional means” is closer to their opinion, compared with 31.6% in the 2007 poll, 24% in the 2006 poll, 21.9% in the 2005 poll, and 25.1% in the 2004 poll. This understanding could reflect the gap that characterizes the relationship between the political parties and the people in general.

## **VI: Audio-Visual Media**

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### **Most Reliable Sources for Local Political News**

51% of those who identified the most trusted source for local political news consider Jordan Television the most reliable source compared with the same percentage in the 2007 poll, 43% in the 2006 poll, 43% in 2005, 48% in 2004, and 52.2% in 2003. Jordan Television was followed by Al-Jazeera with 23% in this poll, 28% in the 2007 poll, 29% in 2006, 27% in 2005, 25% in 2004, and 20.6% in 2003. Al-Arabiya was considered the

most reliable source for local political news by 6.3% of respondents in this poll, compared with 4.7% in the 2007 poll.

#### **Most Reliable Sources for Arab Political News**

54% of those who identified the most trusted source for Arab political news consider Al-Jazeera the most reliable source, compared with 57.1% in the 2007 poll, 45.3% in the 2006 poll, 42% in the 2005 poll, 39% in 2004 and 35.5% in 2003. Al-Jazeera was followed by Jordan Television with 16.3% of respondents in this poll, compared with 30.4% in the 2007 poll, 25% in 2006, 29% in 2005, 33% in 2004, and 32.3% in 2003. Al-Arabiya was considered the most reliable by 16.1% of respondents, compared with 12.8% in the 2007 poll, 17.5% in the 2006 poll, 12% in the 2005 poll, 14% in 2004 and 7.9% in 2003.

#### **Most Reliable Sources for International Political News**

58% of respondents who identified the most trusted source for international political news said that Al-Jazeera is the most reliable source as compared with 57.3% in the 2007 poll, 44.3% in the 2006 poll, 41% in the 2004 and 2005 polls, and 34.9% in the 2003 poll. Al-Arabiya was considered the most trusted source for international political news by 17.2% of respondents in this poll compared with 13.5% in the 2007 poll, 17.5% in the 2006 poll, 13% in 2005, 14% in 2004 and 8.5% in 2003. Jordan Television followed Al-Arabiya with 14% of respondents in this poll, compared with 18.8% in the 2007 poll, 24.2% in the 2006 poll, 26% in the 2005 poll, 31% in 2004, and 31.2% in 2003.

## **VII: Prevalence of Computers and the Internet**

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The percentage of computer users increased from 29.5% in 2003 to 35% in 2004, to 38% in the 2005 and 2006 polls, to 39.9% in the 2007 poll, and to 48% in this poll. The percentage of Internet users has also increased since 2002, reaching 15.6% in that year, 17.4% in 2003, 17.5% in 2004, 22.8% in 2005, 22.2% in 2006, and 23.6% in 2007. This percentage also increased in this poll to 26.6%. It is important to note here that these percentages only apply to individuals aged 18 and over.