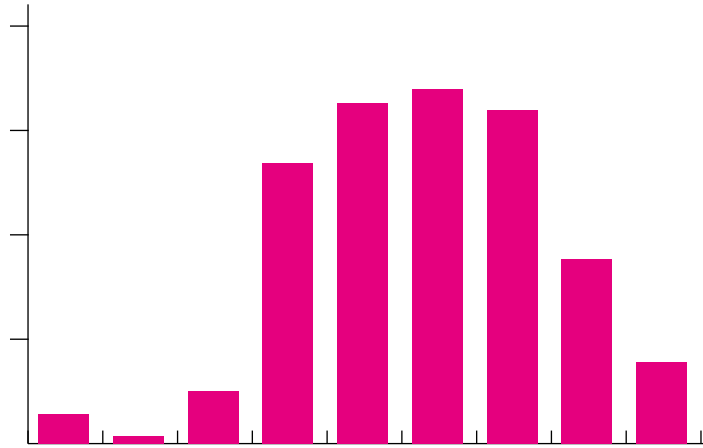


A Study

Post to 2013 Parliamentary Elections in Jordan

Investigating Trends within the Jordanian Society regarding Political Parties and the Parliament



**Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development
Researches & Studies Unit**

March 2013



Global Partners & Associates
International Development Partners



Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development

Tel: +962 6 5377330 Fax: +962 6 5377230

E-mail: info@hayatcenter.org

www.hayatcenter.org



www.facebook.com/hayatcenterjo

A Study
Investigating Trends within the Jordanian Society
regarding Political Parties and the Parliament
Post to 2013 Parliamentary Elections in Jordan

Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development



Introduction:

In cooperation with Global Partners and Associates, Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development conducted a study to investigate the trends within the Jordanian Society regarding Political Parties and the Parliament post to 2013 Jordanian parliamentary elections, as a continuation of the previously implemented efforts which aimed at gauging people's political knowledge, their relations with political parties and their stand regarding the 2013 parliamentary elections. This post-election study looks into citizens' electoral behavior in the 2013 parliamentary elections, their post-implementation views on the newly introduced proportional representation system (the party list system), as well as their expectations on the 17th Jordanian Parliament, and their initial impressions on the performance of the MPs. This study comes in line with Al-Hayat's work on enhancing democratic development and supporting electoral reform in Jordan.

Methodology:

A sample of 1,400 citizens was selected to represent different parts of the country using a Two Stages Cluster Random Sampling Technique, where 100 blocks have been chosen across the country based on demographic distribution and representation of urban and rural areas, according to the latest reports by the Jordanian Department of Statistics. Followed by the use of a Stratified Random Sampling Technique to select 14 households in each block, taking into account gender balance and the representation of all age groups 18 years or older. It should be noted that in case a household's residents were non-Jordanians the household was replaced with the one preceding it.

A survey was designed for the purpose of the study, which consisted of six sections; the first was concerned with the general information of the respondent, the second with political knowledge and public participation, and the third with the perceptions on the roles of the 17th parliament. While the fourth focused on effective communications between political parties and citizens, and the fifth focused on people's post-election political views and priorities, while the sixth section focused on communication with MPs and their interaction with local communities.

The survey was administered between March 13th and 17th, 2013, by 55 field researchers and supervisors, where all the data were collected by the researchers through direct interviews with respondents in their households. All answers were collected and reviewed, where 1,373 surveys were considered (27 were deemed not valid) and entered into a specially designed computer program, then analyzed using SPSS.

The analysis shows an error of $\pm 3\%$ at a confidence interval of 95% for the national sample, where the degree of error increase at the regional and governorates levels.

First: Sample Identification Information

Figure (1): Geographical Distribution By Governorate

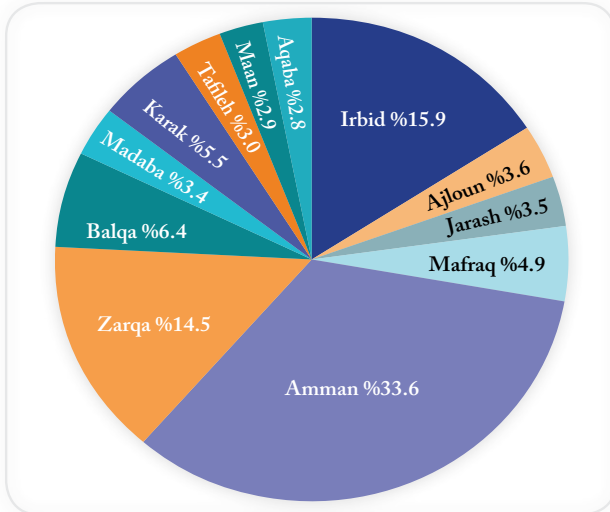


Figure (2): Demographic Distribution By Age Group

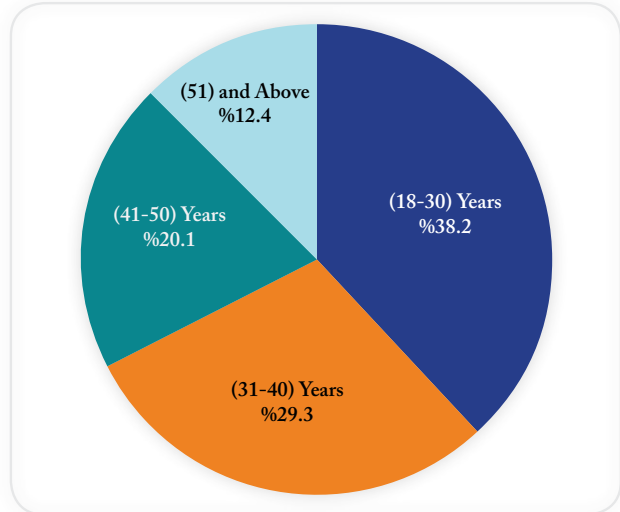


Figure (3): Educational Level Of The Respondents

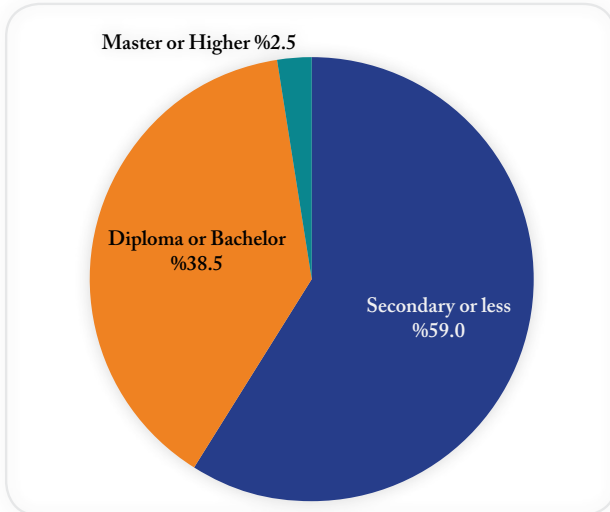
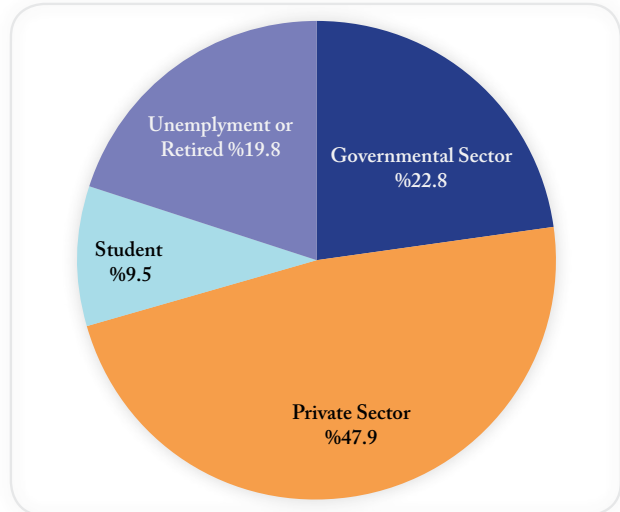


Figure (4): Employment Sector Distribution



5. Demographic Distribution By Gender And Marital Status:

As an outcome of the implemented gender-balance strategy, the sample's population was distributed with (51.0%) male respondents, and (49.0%) female respondents.

And in regards to the respondents marital status; (32.5%) of the sample's population were found to be single, while (65.1%) of them were married and only (2.4%) of the respondents were widowed or divorced at the time of implementation.

Second: Political Knowledge and public Participation

I) Participation In The 2013 Parliamentary Elections And Voting For General Lists:

The results of the survey revealed that (50.5%) of the respondents have voted in the 2013 parliamentary elections. Out of those only (90.2%) have used their general votes¹. This explains the high ratio of invalid votes for the general district that was calculated based on the IEC's turnout and the total votes gained by the lists, where the difference between the two numbers summed to (11,185) votes resampling (8.79%) of the voters, comparing to (3.42%) of invalid votes for the local electoral districts.

It's worth mentioning that the ratio of the female respondents who voted for national lists was significantly higher than that of male respondents with a difference of (4.1%) as shown in figure (5).

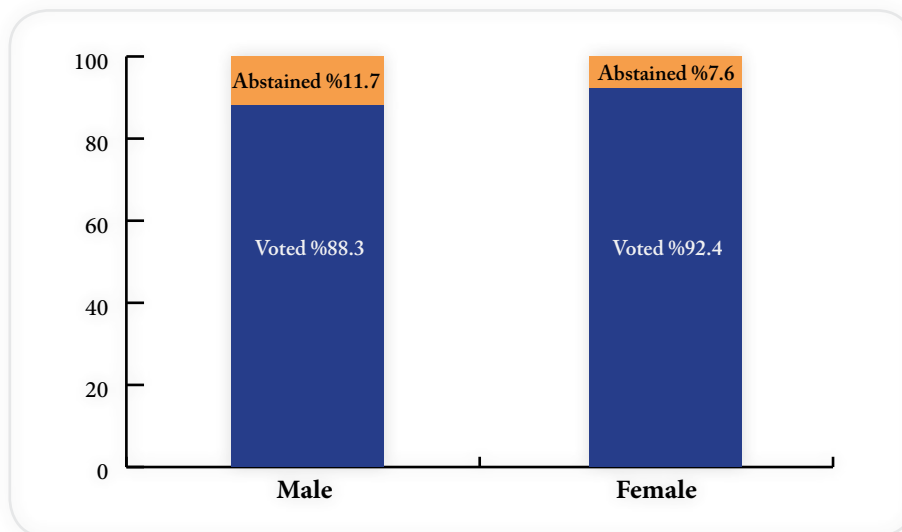


Figure (5):
Percentage of respondents who voted for general lists by gender

II) Reasons for Abstaining from Voting for General Lists (General Electoral District):

When asking the voters who abstained from voting for general lists and only voted for the local district seats about the reason behind such choice; (37.7%) of them indicated that the reason was their lack of understanding for the lists system², while (35.1%) mentioned that they abstained because of the lack of confidence in the running lists as shown in figure (6). It is worth mentioning that (6.5%) of these respondents have abstained because they were afraid to lose their right to vote for their candidate of the local district. To this end, this percentages reflect a significant lack in the electoral awareness, which was based on the rumors at the time of elections that voting for national lists prevent the right of voting for the local district's candidates.

¹The ones allocated for the general lists or the newly introduced proportional representation system for the general electoral district.

²The national List system was activated for the first time in Jordan as part of the Election Law No. 25 of the year 2012. The system allocated (27) seats in the parliament; (18%) of the total seats.

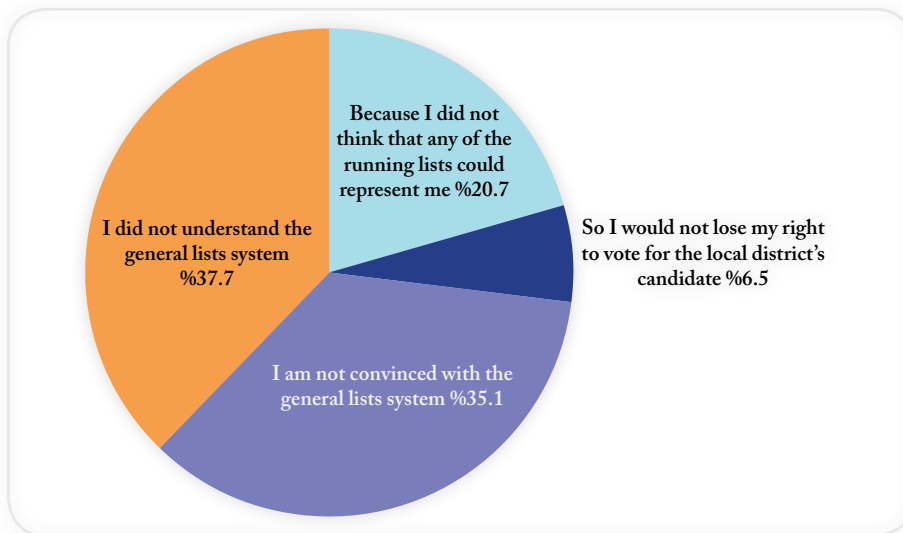


Figure (6): Reasons behind abstaining from voting to the general lists in the 2013 parliamentary elections

III) Motivations of Voting Behavior for General Lists:

When the respondents were asked about their sources of information regarding the lists they had voted for; it turned out that discussions with friends and families resampled the major source of their knowledge on their lists of choice (30.6%), followed by TV shows (25.8%), while only (0.7%) of the respondents have stated that they have voted randomly with no previous knowledge about any of the running lists as shown in figure (7). It's also worth mentioning that there was one case reported of a respondent who voted for the list based on a promotional phone call from the list's campaign.

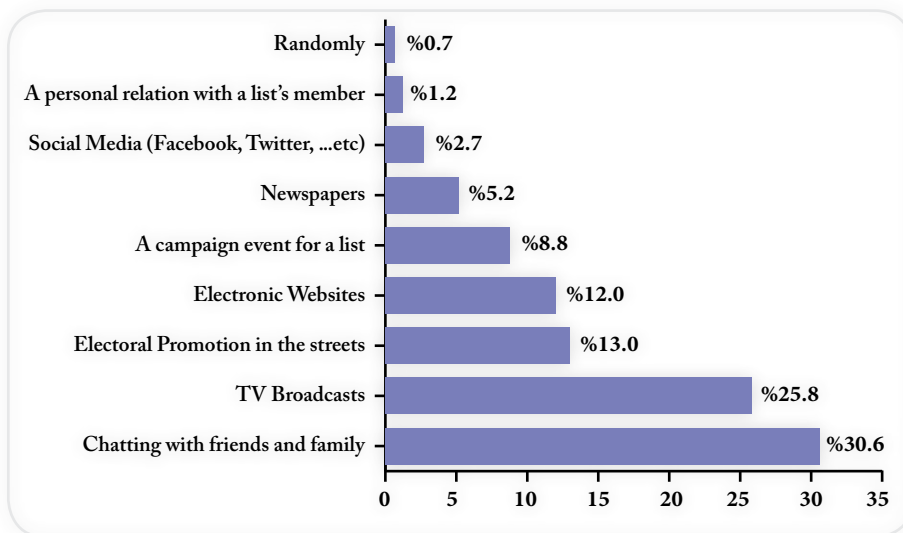


Figure (7): Sources of information about general lists running for 2013 Elections.

On the other hand, when the respondents were asked about the reasons standing behind their choices of voting for a particular list, (25.2%) of them indicated that they have voted for the lists because they had relatives running within the list, (23.4%) indicated that their choices were made based on the lists' announced agendas and promises; essentially lowering the prices, fighting against corruption, defending citizen's rights, assisting individuals, reducing youth unemployment and enhancing the economy and Jordanians' average income. Few respondents also stated «the list provides local services for the constituencies all the time, not only at election time».

Moreover, (6.6%) of the respondents have voted for particular lists based on the extensive media presence of the list's leader, while only (1.8%) of the respondents have indicated that their votes were based on their partisan affiliation, revealing significant impairment in the role of political parties for the 2013 Jordanian parliamentary Elections, as shown in figure (8).

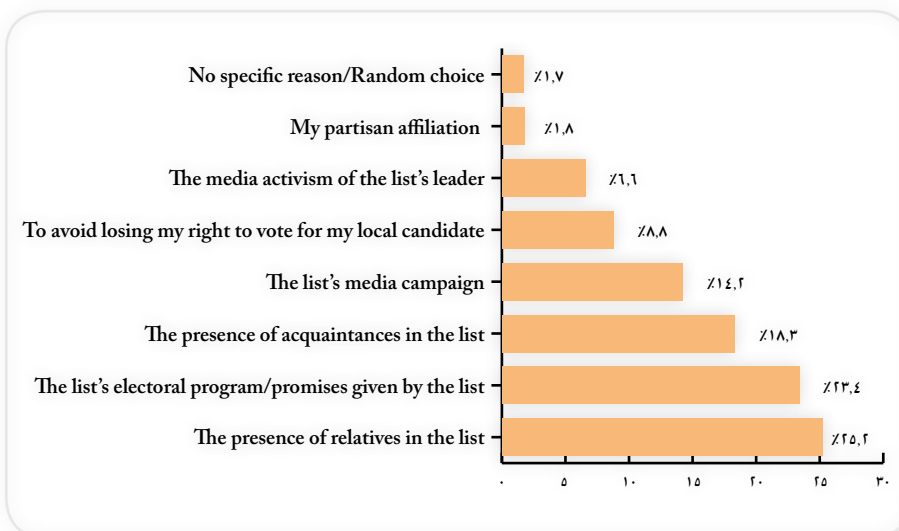


Figure (8): Reasons behind the respondents' voting behavior.

IV) Governmental Neutrality in the 2013 Parliamentary Elections:

(41.9%) of the respondents indicated that the government was not neutral in the 2013 parliamentary elections, while (52.3%) see that the government was neutral, as shown in table (1).

As for the breakdown of respondents' perceptions on the government's electoral neutrality by Gender, Education, and electoral participation, slight relations were revealed as shown in figure (9).

Table (1): Perceptions on governmental neutrality in the 2013 Parliamentary Elections.

Percentage	Choice
5.3%	Highly neutral
52.3%	Moderately neutral
34.7%	Biased
7.2%	Highly biased
0.5%	I prefer not to answer

The Results revealed that (56.3%) of the female respondents see that the government was neutral in the past elections, while male respondents have shown more of a negative view, where only 48.3% of them see that the government was neutral.

As for the educational level, it was found that the higher the educational level of the respondents, the more they perceive government as biased in the past elections.

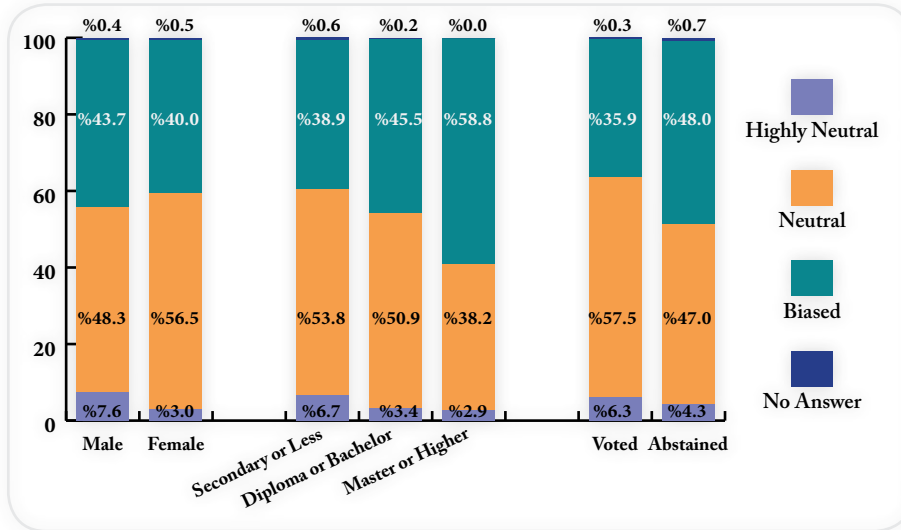


Figure (9): Breakdown of respondent's perceptions on the electoral neutrality of the government by gender, education and electoral participation.

Third: Trends on the Role of the Parliament

I) The Citizens trends on role of the 17th Jordanian parliament

The results indicated that (31.2%) of the citizens see that the major role of the 17th Jordanian parliament will be combating corruption and government oversight. in addition to oversight the general spending, while (27.2%) expect the parliamentarian to provide services and enhance the representation of their constituencies' demands and economic needs, and only (6.8%) of them expect the legislative role to be the major, as shown in figure (10).

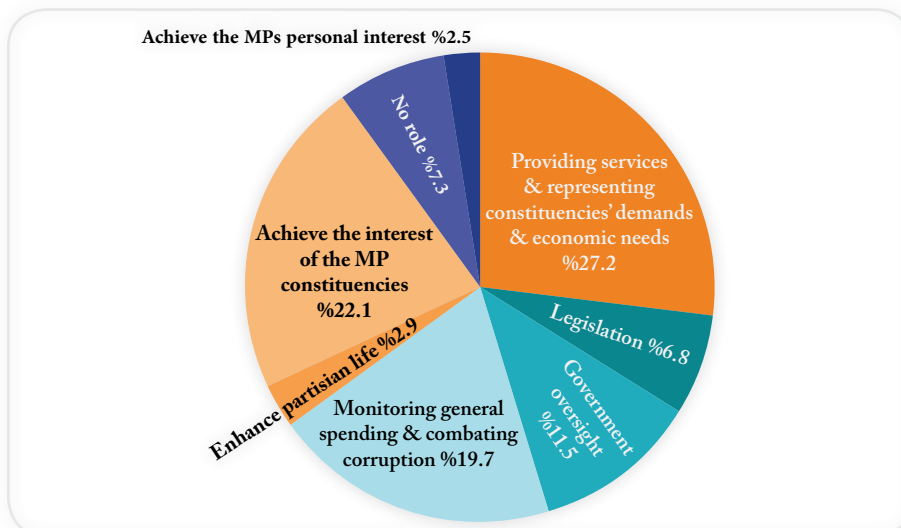


Figure (10): The Citizens trends on role of the 17th Jordanian parliament

II) Expected services to be provided by the 17th parliament:

The results indicated that (30.8%) of the respondents who have indicated that the major role of the 17th parliament is to provide services and enhancing the representation of their constituencies' demands and economic needs, see that the priority of the MPs will be improve the living condition, while (12.9%) think that the MPs' priority will be developing the infrastructure of their local constituencies, as shown in figure (11).

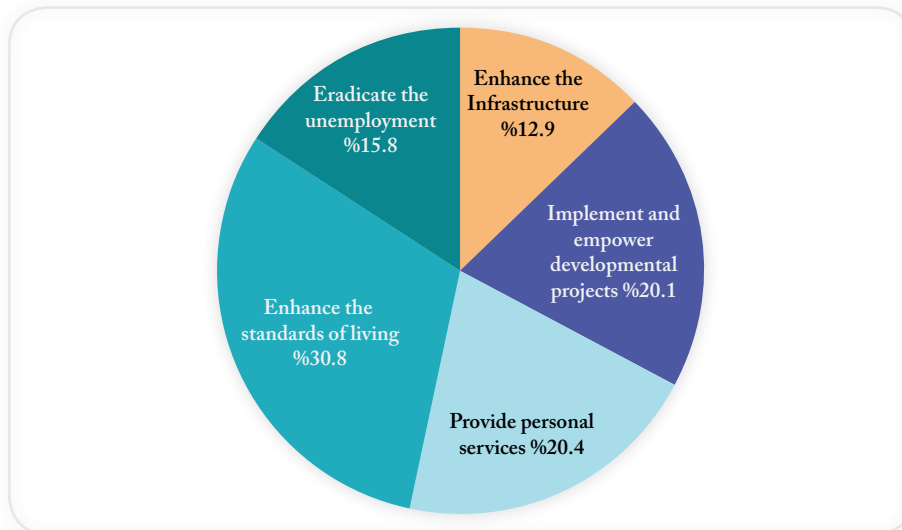


Figure (11): The expected services from the 17th parliament

III) The impact of the general lists system on the performance of the 17th Jordanian Parliament:

The study revealed that (45.7.0%) of the respondents believe that the newly introduced general lists system will positively impact the parliamentary performance, while (36.6%) stated otherwise. And when the results were broken down by gender and participation in the 2013 elections; it was found that male respondents are significantly more pessimistic in reference to the impact of the general lists system over the parliamentary performance, while on the other hand, respondents who actually voted were significantly more optimistic regarding such impact, as shown in figure (12).

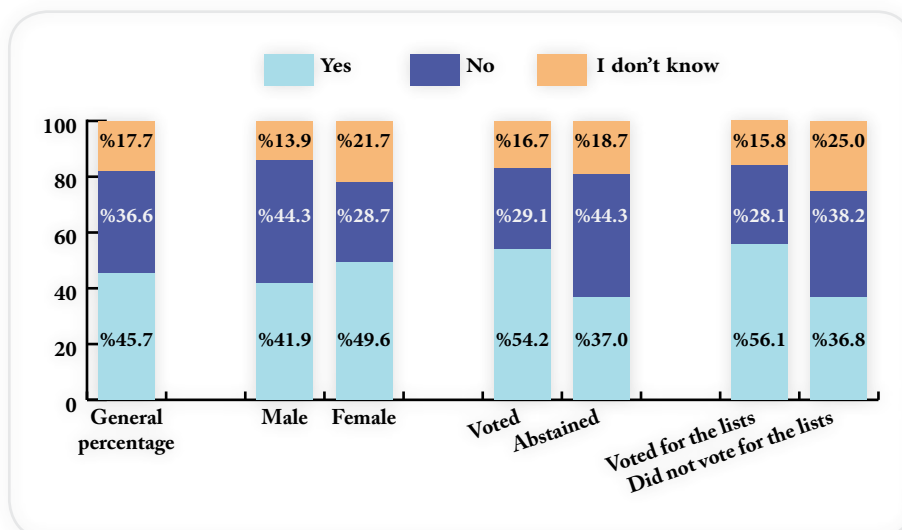


Figure (9): Perceptions on the efficiency of the General Lists system in enhancing parliamentary performance.

Fourth: Effective Communications between the Political Parties and local Communities

I) Evaluation for communications between general lists running for the 2013 elections and local communities:

The results indicated that (40.8%) of the respondents described the communication between general lists and local communities in the past elections as an effective communication, while (35.6%) of them thought it was not effective. Its worth mentioning that percentage of male respondents stating that the communication between general lists and local communities in the past elections was effective and very effective communication were higher than the percentages of the female respondents stating the same, it also observed that the higher the educational level of the respondents, the less satisfied they are about general lists' communications with local communities, as shown in table (2).

Table (2): Evaluation of lists communications with local communities during the 2013 elections.

General Percentage	Voting in 2013 Elections		Educational Level			Sex		Breakdown
	Abstained	Voted	Master or Higher	Diploma or Bachelor	Secondary or less	Female	Male	
10.2%	8.8%	11.5%	2.9%	8.5%	11.6%	8.8%	11.6%	Very efficient
40.8%	34.2%	47.3%	38.2%	40.6%	41.1%	43.2%	38.4%	Moderately efficient
25.4%	29.6%	21.3%	38.2%	29.9%	21.9%	24.2%	26.6%	Slightly efficient
10.2%	11.2%	9.2%	14.8%	10.4%	9.9%	6.3%	14.0%	Not efficient at all
13.4%	16.2%	10.7%	5.9%	10.6%	15.5%	17.5%	9.4%	I dont know

When respondents who described the lists' communication as «not effective» were asked about the reasons behind their choices, (19.4%) of them referred it to the inappropriate way of forming the lists, while (7.1%) referred it to the vote-buying campaigns conducted by the lists, as shown in figure (13).

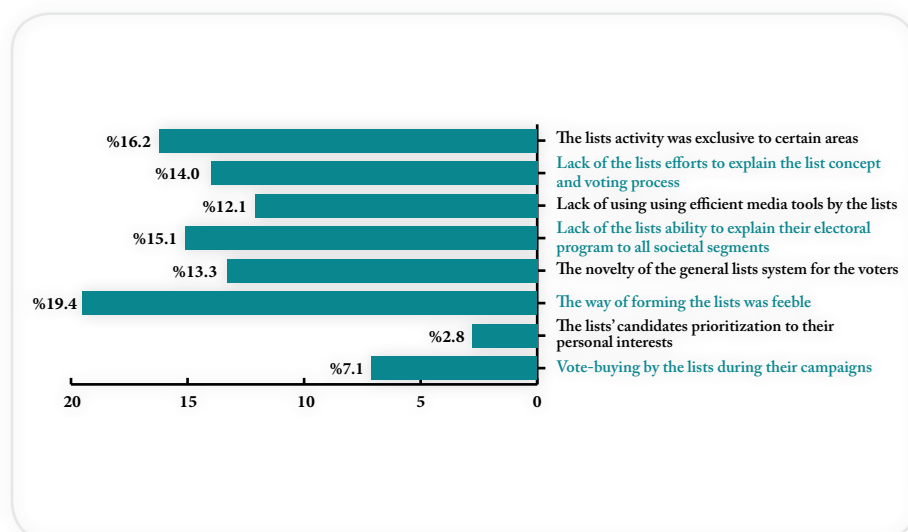
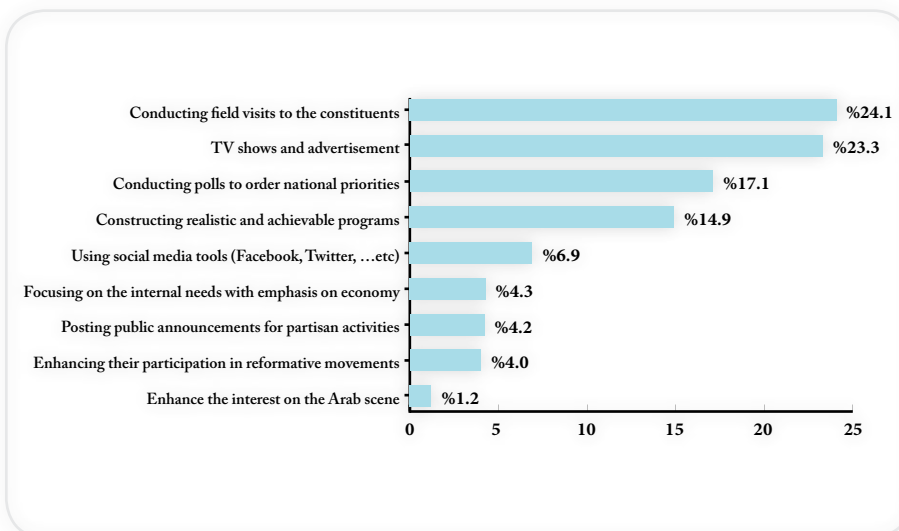


Figure (13): Reasons behind citizen's dissatisfaction with the communication between general lists and local communities in the 2013 parliamentary elections.

II) Means of communication between political parties and the constituents

The results show that the most effective mean of communication political parties can use and would influence the opinions of citizens according to the respondents is local field visits (24.8%), followed by presence in TV shows and TV-advertisements (23.3%), while only (4%) of the respondents think that participating in demonstrations and street movements is of the most effective means of communication between political parties an constituents, as shown in figure (14).



**Figure (14):
Effective means
of communication
between political
parties and the
constituents**

III) Actions/events that would encourage citizens to join a political party

The study revealed that nothing can convince (44.9%) of the citizens to join a political party, while (10.9%) of them would join a political party if it provided realistic and efficient economic and social programs, or if the political party would provide that it can influence the public policy (6.9%), or allow more space for youth leadership within the party (6.6%), as shown in table (3).

Table (4): Actions/events that would encourage citizens to join a political party

Percentage	Action
44.9%	Nothing would convince to join a political party
10.9%	If the party provided realistic and efficient socioeconomic programs
7.2%	Am not sure/ I don't know if I would join a party
6.9%	If the party proved an ability to make a political change
6.6%	If the party provided more space for youth inclusion in the leadership
6.3%	If the party proved independence from the government and that it's not being externally directed
4.1%	If the party advocated for an issue that concerns me on a personal level
3.4%	If the election law enforced voting for partisan lists
3.4%	If political parties proved significant impact in the parliament
3.3%	If the party proved democratic devolution of internal powers
1.6%	If the party provided financial benefits for members
1.4%	If a friend or family member joined the party

IV) Jordanian citizens' developmental priorities

The results indicate the economic situation sits at the top of public concerns (25.6%), followed by combating corruption (21.1%), as shown in figure (15).

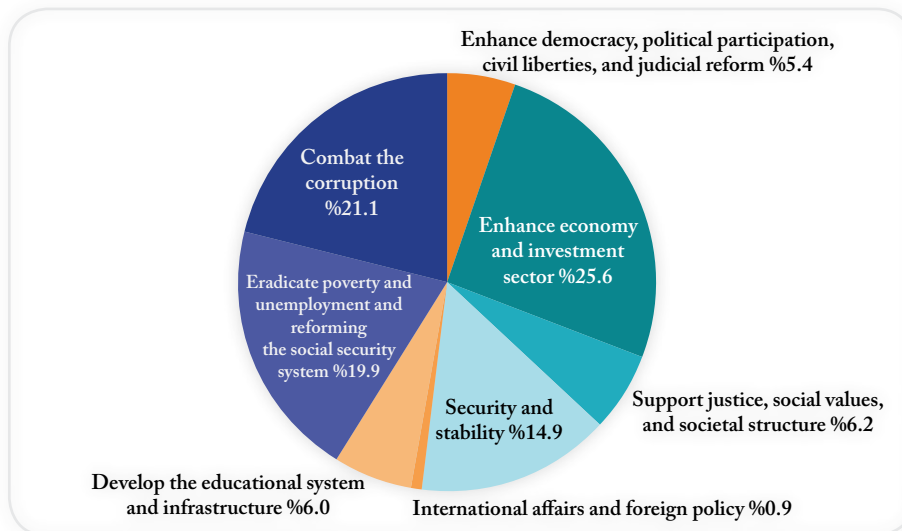


Figure (15): Jordanian citizens' developmental priorities

V) Political Parties campaigns in the 2013 Parliamentary elections:

When the respondents were asked about the partisan campaigns they have witnessed during the campaigns period of the 2013 Jordanian parliamentary elections, (23.4%) of them have answered with the names on non-partisan general lists; indicating their inability to distinguish between party-based lists and non-partisan based lists. Which indicate the lack of knowledge of the Jordanians' citizens on the licensed political parties in Jordan.

On the other hand, (22.4%) of the respondents were not able to remember witnessing any promotion for any political party during the campaign period; table (5) shows the parties that were mentioned by the respondents. it's worth mentioning that many respondents recalled some parties by their logos and slogans, but not names.

Moreover, (43.6%) of the respondents who witnessed partisan promotions in the past elections have indicated that they approach to this promotion thorough TV shows, while (30.6%) of them approach it through the promotional materials in the streets, and (10.3%) approach it through flyers, and (5.4 % and 10.1%) approach it through daily newspapers and electronic media respectively.

Table (4): Partisan promotions witnessed during the 2013 parliamentary elections

Percentage	Choices
26.9%	General lists
22.4%	I can't remember/ I don't know
18.2%	The Islamic Centrist Party
9.5%	The National Current Party
6.9%	The National Union Party
4.2%	Not interested
3.6%	I did not witness any promotion
3.5%	Al-Resala (the message) Party
4.8%	The rest of parties: Jordanian Democratic People's Party, Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, Jordanian Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party, United National Front Party, Freedom and equality Party, Jordanian Communist Party, Justice and Reform Party, Jordanian National Party, National Labor Party, Justice and Development Party, Reform Party, The Direct Democratic Nationalistic Movement Party, National Constitutional Party, Al-Hayat Party, Al-Rafah Party, Jordanian Youth Party, Dua'a Party, National Social Liberation Party (under establishment), the Free Assembly (under establishment).

Fifth: Jordanian Citizens' Stand on Political Issues

I) Perceptions on the pace of political reform in Jordan

The results show that (16.1%) of the people believe that political reforms in the country is moving at a normal pace, while (7.6%) believe that its moving fast or very fast, on contrast, (60.8%) of the respondents believe that the pace of political reform in Jordan is slow or very slow. It was observed during the analysis that a significant difference between the answers of citizens who voted in the 2013 elections and the ones who did not, where the perceptions of voters were more positive as shown in figure (16).

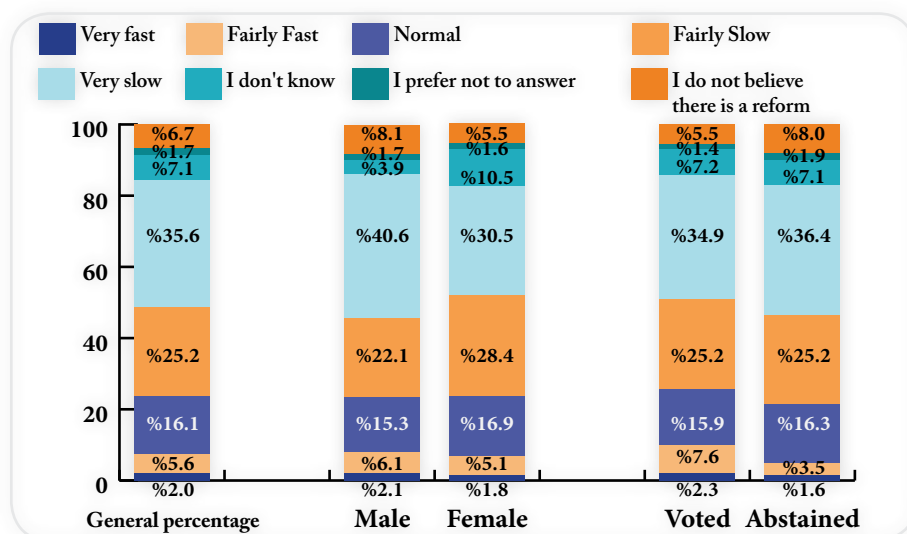


Figure (16): perceptions of citizens on the pace of political reform in Jordan

II) Perceptions on the Election Law and the electoral procedures implemented in the 2013 parliamentary elections.

The results show that (8.8%) of the citizens are strongly satisfied with the election law and the electoral procedures that were implemented during the 2013 Parliamentary Elections, while (51.1%) of the respondents were dissatisfied and strongly dissatisfied on the law and procedures, as shown in table (5). In regards to the most important amendment to be addressed by the election law, the respondents repeated the actual application of the international standards of integrity and the of the one-man one vote system with (49.1%), increasing the allocated seats for females as individual candidates and in the national lists and decrease the age of candidacy recorded (16.3%) as shown in figure (17).

Table (5): Perceptions on the Election Law and the electoral procedures implemented in the 2013 parliamentary elections.

Percentage	Choice
8.8%	Highly Satisfied
36.0%	Satisfied
37.2%	Fairy Dissatisfied
13.9%	Not satisfied at all
4.1%	Not Interested

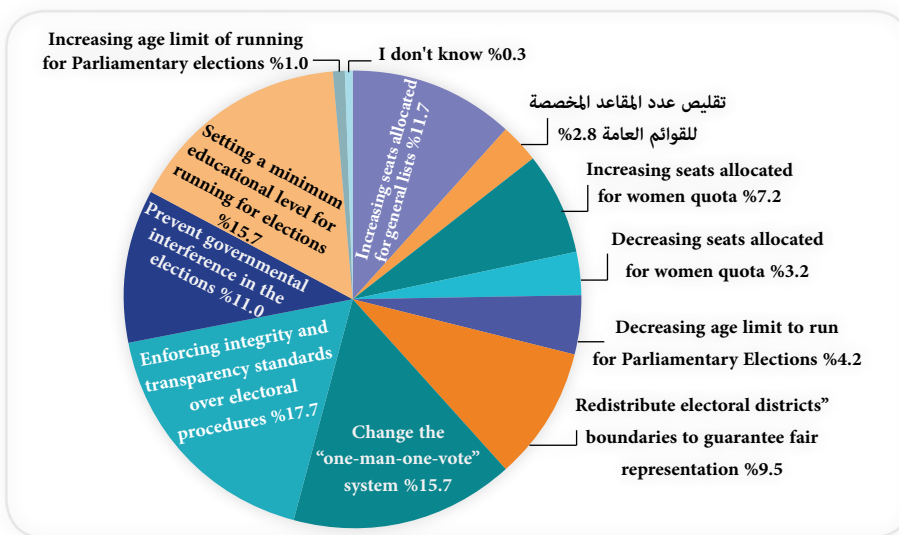


Figure (17): Citizen's Legislative priorities

I) Perception on the most important laws to be discussed by the 17th parliament

The results shows that Owners and tenants law is the most important law to be discussed under the parliament to attain more fairness among citizens, followed by the Anti-graft law, followed by the law of electricity, as shown by figure (18) and table (6)

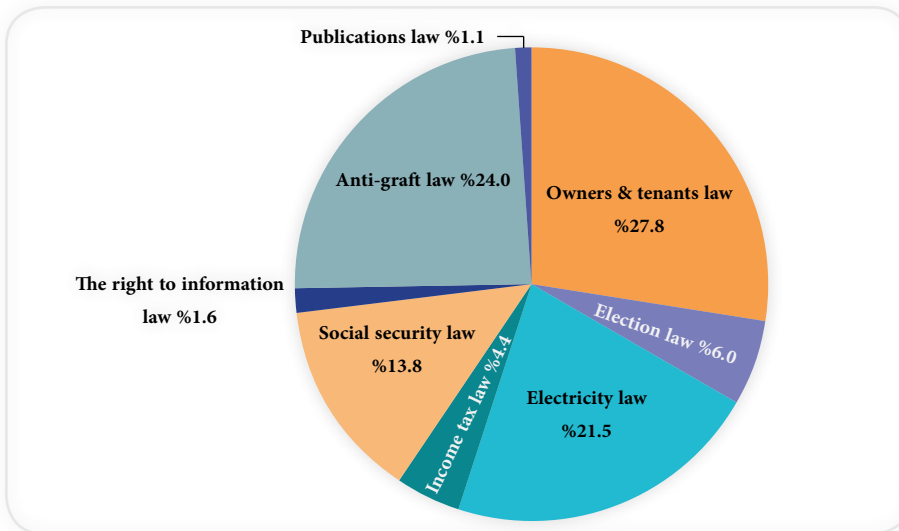


Figure (18): Perception on the most important laws to be discussed by the 17th parliament

Table: Perception on the most important laws to be discussed by the 17th parliament

Part 6: Communications between MPs and constituents, and MPs' role in the local level.

1. Citizens knowledge on the news and activities of their parliamentary representatives

The results have indicated that (7.1%) of the citizens know about the MPs news and activities at their constituencies, while (61.9%) of the citizens provided otherwise. This percentage is increasing among voters in the 2013 elections comparing to nonvoters. Similarly, it increases among the public sectors' employees comparing to the private sectors, as shown in figure (19).

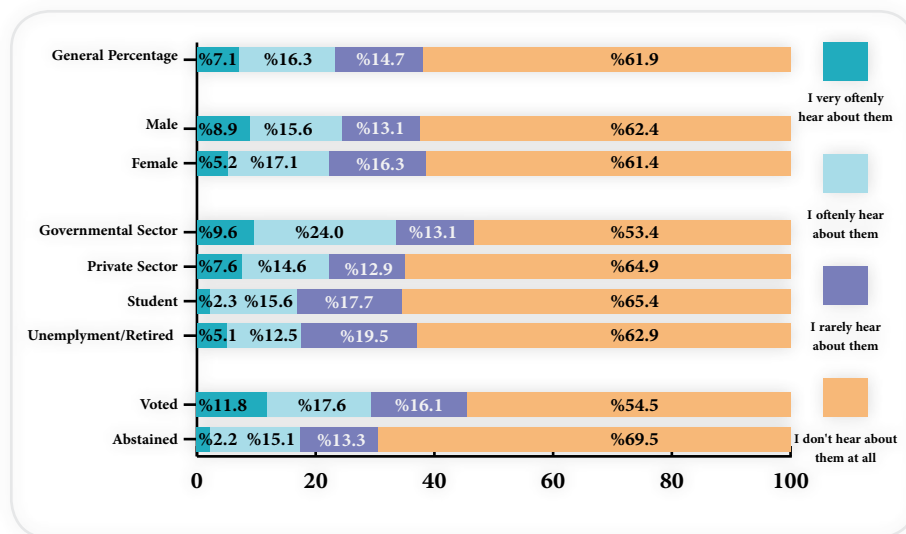


Figure (19): Citizens knowledge on the news and activities of the Member of parliaments in their constituencies

Communications between MPs and constituents

81.3 %) of the citizens indicated that they have never communicated with their MPs, while (18.7%) of the citizens indicated that they have communicated with their MP through personal interview, or written letter, or phone call, or through a mediator.

2. The presence of local offices for MPs at their constituencies

(25.5%) of the citizens pointed that their MP has an office at his electoral district, while (34.7%) of the citizens pointed otherwise, and (39.9%) of the citizens didn't know if their MP has an office or not. Out of those indicating that MP has an office.

(25.4%) of the citizens stated that they have visited the MP office for different reasons, while (74.6%) of the citizens indicated otherwise. In the same context, out of those who visited the MP office, (16.8%) stated that the visit was targeting a request for public services, while (15.8%) of the citizens have visited the office to support that MP, as shown in figure (20).

On the other hand, (44.4%) of the citizens, who have never visited the MP at his office, indicated that they are planning to visit this MP, while (55.6%) of the citizens stated otherwise.

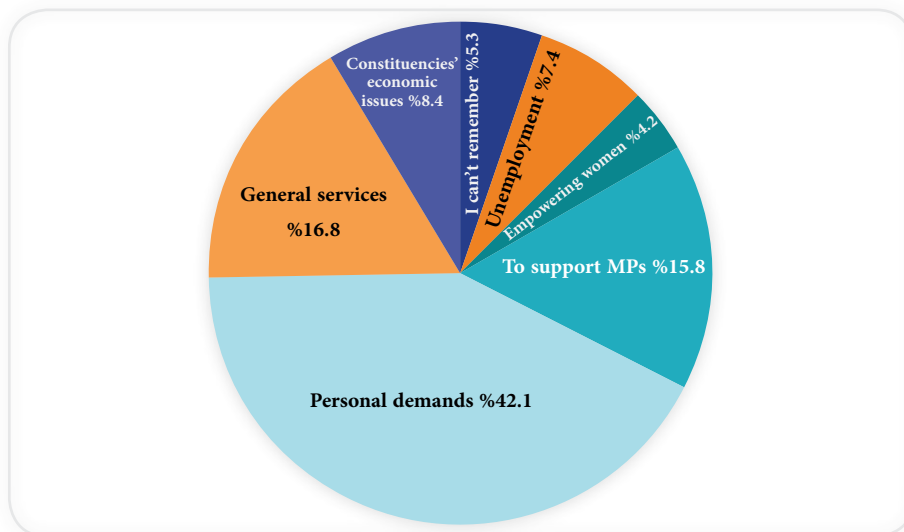


Figure (20) reasons behind citizens' visits to the MP at their constituencies