



Jordan Report: Parliamentary Data Draft

This summary is compiled for the exclusive use of authors working on the state of the parliament in Jordan and ACRLI advisors. The findings reported below are extracted from the survey of expert users (Parliamentarians and Employees) carried out by Information International for the benefit of ACRI. The survey included a sample of 35 parliamentarians and 25 employees from Amman (Jordan).

The stratified sampling procedure was used for the selection of parliamentarians; 30 participants were randomly chosen from the independent group (المستقلون) and 5 were from the Islamic party (وجبهة العمل الإسلامي) (See Information International report for details; Appendix C).

For employees, participants were selected from the list of employees in all of the parliamentary parties (الجنة). From each group, 1 or 2 employees were chosen which amounts to an overall of 25 participants (See Information International report for details; Appendix C).

Refusal rate reached 16.7%, with seven parliamentarians and 5 employees refusing to participate in the survey. The ability to generalise to the entire population should be made cautiously.

The findings from the survey are presented in two parts. The first part presents an overview of the major findings from the survey, while the second part presents detailed findings from the individual items in the survey. Appendix B presents the detailed findings for each item from the survey and will be referred to during the discussion of the main findings from the survey below.

I. OVERVIEW OF KEY FINDINGS FROM SURVEY

Main Findings: Dimension Analysis

When items are combined to measure a dimension of a specific principles (e.g. items 1 & 2 as measures of “Free and fair elections”, a dimension of the general “representation and participation” principle), 7 dimensions proved to be problematic for parliamentarians, while 6 flagged as significant for employees.

The most important grievance for parliamentarians resided in their “Political financing rules for parties and Election campaigns” dimension [integrity]. Although still problematic, the least important complaint occurred in “Effective oversight of the executive” [performance].

On the other hand, employees voiced the most important grievance on the participation dimension [representation and participation] and the least important one on the “Equal opportunities” dimension [representation and participation].



Main Findings: Item Analysis

An important finding is that parliamentarians and employees have different evaluations of the state of the parliament in Amman. Overall, parliamentarians had a significantly higher number of grievances about the state of the parliament than employees did. Of the core questions asked, 8 were rated negatively by parliamentarians only (i.e. these items are unique to parliamentarians), while 3 items were rated negatively by employees only. Interestingly though, 8 items were sources of common complaint from both parliamentarians and employees in Amman; these 8 items are ranked from highest to lowest complaint in the table below (*Note*: Scores represent the average (mean) for each item on a scale from 1 to 5. Scores below 3 reflect a positive evaluation of the item, while scores above 3 reflect a negative evaluation):

1. Parliamentarians declare their financial assets in an accurate and honest manner (Item 58, $x = 4.18$)
2. Parliamentarians effectively adhere to conflict of interest rules. (Item 55, $x = 3.51$)
3. Parliamentarians consult with civil society organizations on the issues submitted to parliament. (Item 12, $x = 3.38$)
4. Parliamentary groups work according to their own internal organizational rules (Item 43, $x = 3.34$)
5. Parliament effectively investigates matters of corruption and mismanagement of public funds. (Item 33, $x = 3.27$)
6. Parliament effectively monitors the disbursement and collection of the funds in the budget (Item 29, $x = 3.21$)
7. Parliamentarians communicate periodically with their constituents on issues pertaining to public life. (Item 11, $x = 3.16$) par
8. Parliament has clear rules prohibiting conflict of interest (Item 54, $x = 3.08$)

Two of the 8 items above are within “representation and participation” (items 11 & 12), three are within the “performance” principle (items 29, 33 & 43), and three are within “integrity” principle (items 54, 55 & 58).

The three items to which only employees responded negatively (but not parliamentarians) are: a) Candidates for parliamentary seats have equal access to private and public media enabling them to communicate with their constituents (item 4), b) Parliamentarians occasionally legislate laws under undue pressures (internal or external) (reverse coded) (item 16), and c) Parliamentarians regularly use the resources (library or research centre or data bank) (item 49).

Parliamentarians as compared to employees had much higher rates of negative evaluation. Parliamentarians rated negatively 8 items; 1 item within “independence”, 6 items within “performance”, and 1 item within “integrity”. For an exhaustive list of items to which only parliamentarians provided negative feedback, please refer to appendix B.

Items Rated Most Negatively



As depicted above, many aspects of the state of the parliament were negatively evaluated. The five items least favourably evaluated by parliamentarians lead to the following conclusions:

	P	E
Parliamentarians do not effectively adhere to conflict of interest rules (item 55).	X	X
Parliamentarians do not declare their financial assets in an accurate and honest manner (item 58)	X	X
Parliamentarians do not communicate periodically with their constituents on issues pertaining to public life (item 11).		X
Parliamentarians do not consult with civil society organizations on the issues submitted to parliament (item 12)		X
Parliamentarians occasionally legislate laws under undue pressures (internal or external) (item 16, reverse coded)		X
Parliamentary staff are not selected according to objective professional criteria (item 46)	X	
Parliamentary staff do not regularly attend compulsory training sessions (item 47)	X	
Political finance is not regulated by clear rules (item 57)	X	

Parliamentarians ranked consecutively items 58, 57, 46, 55 and 47 as the least favourable in the state of the parliament in Amman; three of these items refer to the integrity principle (items 55, 57 & 58), and two to the performance principle (46 & 47).

Employees ranked items 58, 12, 55, 11 and 16 consecutively as the least favourable in the state of the parliament in Amman. Two of these items are in the integrity principle (items 55 & 58), one refers to independence (item 16), and two items pertain to “representation and participation” (items 11 & 12).

Items Rated Most Positively

On the more positive end of the analysis, the five items most favourably evaluated by parliamentarians and employees lead to the following conclusions:

	P	E
Parliamentarians are not subject to threats of physical harm (item 14, reverse coded)	X	X
Internal parliamentary rules are clear (item 39)	X	X
Anyone can access the minutes of parliamentary sessions without restrictions (item 60)	X	X
Parliamentarians study and debate draft laws seriously and in details before approving them (item 24)	X	
Parliamentary committees effectively study and debate draft laws before submission to the plenary assembly (item 35)		X
Parliamentary sessions are managed in full conformity with internal rules (item 41)	X	
Internal parliamentary rules are implemented in a way that guarantees the ability of the		X



Parliament to fulfill its mandate (legislation and monitoring) (item 40)		
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Parliamentarians ranked items 14, 39, 60, 24, and 41 consecutively as the most favourable in the state of the parliament in Amman; three of these items are within performance (items 24, 39 and 41), and one refers to each of the independence (item 14) and the integrity principles (item 60).

Employees ranked items 39, 35, 14, 60, and 40 consecutively as the most favourable in the state of the parliament in Amman. Three items pertain to the performance dimensions (items 35, 39 & 40), and one item refers to each of the independence (item 14) and integrity (item 60) principles.

Frequencies of Specific Items

The table below presents the percentage of participants who believe that the election campaigns are financed by several sources and that the parliament is influenced by several sources as well.

	P			E		
	Good/ Fine/ significant	Neutral	Poor/ weak/ insignificant	Good/ Fine/ significant	Neutral	Poor/ weak/ insignificant
5 Generally, to which degree are Election campaigns financed by Personal funds of the candidate	97.1%	2.9%		88%	8%	4%
6 Generally, to which degree are Election campaigns financed by Individual donations	3.7%	25.9%	70.4%	36.8%	15.8	47.4%
7 Generally, to which degree are Election campaigns financed by Corporate donations	7.4%	7.4%	85.2%	26.7%	20%	53.3%
8 Generally, to which degree are Election campaigns financed by Public funds			100%	6.7%	26.7%	66.7%
18 To which degree is the Parliament influenced/pressured by The government	60%	14.3%	25.7%	79.2%	12.5%	8.3%
19 To which degree is the Parliament influenced/pressured by Non-governmental entities	6.3%	31.3%	62.5%	27.3%	22.7%	50%
20 To which degree is the	30%	23.3%	46.7%	26.3%	26.3%	47.4%



Parliament influenced/pressured by International entities						
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Opinions on Most Needed Reform in Parliament

The questionnaire included a series of “reform” questions. Participants were asked to rate the importance of reform in each of the subsections of the state of the parliament questionnaire.

The five domains that require the highest need for reform according to parliamentarians and employees are presented:

	P	E
3 Reforms are needed to reinforce the freedom and fairness of elections	X	
34 Parliament should be more active in overseeing the executive	X	X
50 Improved staffing and equipment would strengthen the ability of parliament to function effectively	X	X
10 Reforms are needed to ensure equal media and campaign funding opportunities for all candidates	X	
31 It is essential to have specialized financial experts assisting parliamentarians in reviewing and overseeing the budget		X
38 It is essential to assign parliamentarians to committees based on their expertise in order to increase the committees’ efficiency		X
53 More specialized, on-going training for parliamentarians would make the parliament more competent and more efficient		X
56 Effective enforcement of conflict of interest rules is needed to ensure the integrity of the Parliament	X	
61 More transparency in parliamentary activity would improve the integrity of the Parliament	X	

Parliamentarians ranked items 34, 56, 61, 50, 3 and 10 consecutively as the most needed reforms in the state of the parliament in Jordan. Two of the domains highlighted above refer to performance issues (items 34 & 50), two to “representation and participation” (items 3 & 10), and two to integrity (items 56 & 61). Such clustering is highly indicative of the concerns of parliamentarians in Amman.

Again, employees identified items 50, 34, 38, 53, and 31 consecutively as those requiring reform in the state of the parliament in Jordan. All these domains relate to performance issues. In other words, employees’ reform requests focus on the performance within the parliament.

II. DETAILED FINDINGS FROM SURVEY



Representation and Participation

Respondents report that the elections are free and fair, but remain concerned with parliamentarians' lack of consultation with the public and civil society organizations. Only a plurality of respondents believes that there are equal opportunities for candidates, and a majority agrees that election campaigns are mostly financed by the personal funds from the candidate.

Free And Fair Elections

- Forty-four percent of respondents agree that the elections are administered in a free and fair manner without pressures.
- According to respondents, candidates have the means to contest the election results (56%).

Equal Opportunities for Candidates

- Forty-three percent think that candidates for parliamentary seats have equal access to private and public media enabling them to communicate with their constituents, but 36% disagree.
- Respondents think that election campaigns are financed by personal funds by the candidates (93%). However, respondents believe that election campaigns are not financed by public funds (82%), and individual (60%) and corporate (73%) donations. Sixty-six percent report that there are other sources of funds for election campaigns, including international support (100%).

Participation

- Forty-four percent do not think that parliamentarians communicate periodically with their constituents on issues pertaining to public life, and 53% also do not think that parliamentarians consult with civil society organizations on issues submitted to the Parliament.

Reforms

- Respondents strongly believe that parliamentarians should consult more frequently with constituents and civil society organizations to make the Parliament more representative (96%). Reforms are also needed to ensure the equal media and campaign funding opportunities (94%), as well as reforms to reinforce the freedom and fairness of elections (92%).

Independence

Respondents are concerned with the independence of the Parliament. There is a lack of confidence in the protection of the parliamentarians, as most think that parliamentarians are subject to threats of physical harm. Respondents perceive the government to place pressure on the Parliament, consequently undermining the independence of the Parliament.

Protection Of Parliamentarians

- A strong majority agree that parliamentarians are subject to threats of physical harm (96%).
- Only 43% think that parliamentarians receive the adequate financial compensation that guarantees their independence.



- A plurality agree that parliamentarians occasionally legislate laws under undue pressures (internal and external) (45%), but 38% disagree.

Independence Of Parliament In Fulfilling Its Mandate

- Respondents agree that the Parliament is influenced by the government (67%), but is not subject to pressure from non-governmental entities (57%) and international entities (46%).
- Forty-eight percent report that the Parliament does not frequently delegate its legislative power to the executive.

Reforms

- Ninety-eight percent indicate that reforms are needed to guarantee the parliamentarians fulfil their duties independently (94%), and reforms of the Parliament's administrative agencies to reduce the influence of the executive on them (91%).
- Respondents agree that additional measures are needed to increase their protection of parliamentarians and reinforce their independence (86%).

Performance

The legislative process, oversight of public finance, the parliamentary committees, and the performance of parliamentarians according to internal parliamentary rules strengthen the overall efficiency of the Parliament. Respondents are concerned with corruption and cite a lack of effective oversight of the executive. The efficiency of the parliamentary groups are questioned due to an absence of internal organizational rules. The inefficient parliamentary staff further compromises the overall performance of the Parliament. Respondents are also concerned with the competence of the parliamentarians as a result of a failure to participate in workshops for professional development.

Efficiency In The Legislative Process

- A majority agrees that parliamentarians study and debate draft laws seriously and in details before approving them (60%).
- A plurality thinks that Parliament refers to experts when studying draft laws (45% agree, 36% neutral, 18% disagree).

Effective Oversight Of Public Finance

- Forty-four think that parliamentarians resort to economists and financial experts to study and approve the budget, and 41% refer to the previous year's budget number to correct and estimate the projected year's budget.
- Respondents do not agree that the Parliament effectively monitors the disbursement and collection of the funds in the budget (50%).
- Forty-five percent indicate that the parliamentarians use the reports of the Court of Audit to correct the expenditure of public funds.

Effective Oversight Of The Executive

- There are mixed views on whether the Parliament effectively oversees the government in all of its activities (40% disagree, 35% agree, 25% neutral).



- A majority of respondents agree that the Parliament does not effectively investigate matters of corruption and mismanagement of public funds (57%).

Efficiency Of Parliamentary Committees

- Seventy-one percent agree that the parliamentary committees effectively study and debate draft laws before submission to the plenary assembly.
- Respondents are mixed as to whether the committees effectively oversee government activity (36% agree and disagree, 27% neutral).
- According to respondents, most committee meetings are run in an efficient manner (45% agree, 32% neutral, 22% disagree).

Performance Of Parliamentarians According To Internal Parliamentary Rules

- Eight-six percent agree that the internal parliamentary rules are clear, with 64% who agree that these rules are also implemented in a way that guarantees the ability of the Parliament to fulfill its mandate.
- A strong majority reports that the parliamentary sessions are managed in full conformity with internal rules (71%).

Efficiency Of Parliamentary Groups

- Respondents do not think that the parliamentary groups work according to their own internal organizational rules (46%).
- There are mixed opinions on whether the parliamentarians regularly attend the parliamentary block meetings and follow a set agenda (40% disagree, 36% agree, 23% neutral).

Efficiency Of Administrative And Technical Bodies

- Forty-two percent do not agree that the parliamentary staff are selected according to objective professional criteria and 50% do not think that the parliamentary staff regularly attend compulsory training sessions.
- Forty-seven percent indicate that the Parliament's resources are adequate, but there are mixed opinions on whether the parliamentarians regularly use these resources (36% agree, 35% disagree, 29% neutral).

Competence Of Parliamentarians

- Respondents agree that the parliamentarians have effective access to government documents (47% agree, 35% disagree).
- A plurality thinks that the parliamentarians do not participate in workshops for professional developments (38%, 32% neutral, 29% disagree).

Reforms

- Ninety-eight percent agree that the Parliament should be more active in overseeing the executive.
- Reforms are needed to improve staffing and equipment (98%) and the internal parliamentary rules (86%) to improve the efficiency of the Parliament.
- Respondents report that parliamentarians should be assigned to committees based on their expertise (93%) and there should be more specialized training for the parliamentarians (84%).



- Eighty-seven percent encourage the creation of parliamentary blocks to increase the efficiency of Parliament.
- According to respondents, it is essential to have specialized financial experts assisting parliamentarians in reviewing and overseeing the budget (89%).
- Only 50% agree that the use of independent research centers by parliamentarians would make the legislative process more efficient.

Integrity

Respondents are concerned with the lack of integrity of the Parliament. Parliament's failure to adhere to rules of conflict of interest and political finance undermines its integrity. However, respondents indicate that the parliamentary activity is transparent.

Conflict Of Interest

- There are mixed opinions on whether the Parliament has clear rules prohibiting conflict of interest (36% disagree, 31% agree and neutral).
- A majority of respondents report that the parliamentarians do not effectively adhere to conflict of interest rules (54%).

Political Financing Rules For Parties And Election Campaigns

- According to respondents, 48% do not think that political finance is regulated by clear rules. Seventy-one percent believe that the parliamentarians do not declare their financial assets in an accurate and honest manner.

Transparency Of Parliamentary Activity

- Respondents think that anyone can access the minutes of parliamentary sessions without restrictions (75%).

Reforms

- Ninety-three percent agree that more transparency in parliamentary activity would improve the integrity of the Parliament. Reforms of political financing rules (87%) and effective enforcement of conflict of interest rules (82%) are needed to strengthen the integrity of the Parliament.

III. Missing Data Analysis:

An analysis of missing data yielded significant findings that warrant attention. The overall pattern of missing responses did not exceed 8%. This indicates that the questionnaire, on the whole, did not create unexpected complications for participants. However, closer attention to the pattern of missing data points to

- 1- **Item 57** "Political finance is regulated by clear rules." had the highest rate of missing data with 26.7% of participants reporting their inability to assess this item. Either



- participants felt the item to be too sensitive or they did not feel confident enough to provide an assessment on that question.
- 2- **Item 58** “Parliamentarians declare their financial assets in an accurate and honest manner” had the second highest rate of missing data, with 23.3% of participants reporting their inability to assess the item.
 - 3- Five items hovered around the 15% rate of missing data; these are: **Item 6** “Generally, to which degree are Election campaigns financed by Individual donations” (16.7%), **item 8**¹ “Generally, to which degree are Election campaigns financed by Public funds” (15%), **item 21** “Parliament frequently delegates its legislative power to the executive” (13.3%), **item 39** “Internal parliamentary rules are clear” (11.7%), and **item 7** “Generally, to which degree are Election campaigns financed by Corporate donations” (11.7%).

Analysis based on the 7 items highlighted above need to be treated with caution. Results may be biased by a series of factors.

IV. LIMITATIONS

It is important to note that the study does not allow sweeping generalizations about the state of the parliament; the survey used a random sample of parliamentarians and employees, but the sample size is too small to allow for confident generalizations. Furthermore, difficulties accessing these population (see refusal rates) limit the ability to generalize to the population since those that accepted to participate in this survey and those that refused may have different characteristics and perspectives.

¹ Item 8 had the highest rate of “I don’t know / I can not evaluate” answers.