

## The Relationship Between Indicators of Political Reform and The Level of Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Jordan

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### Abstract

**Objectives:** This study aims to demonstrate the impact of political modernization plans and programs (transparency, rule of law, size of government, organizational efficiency, women's empowerment, political rights, anti-corruption measures, political participation) on achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Methods:** The study adopted a quantitative approach, employing this methodology to present and analyze indicators of sustainable development and political modernization in Jordan, using quantitative methods to test the relationship between the study variables.

**Results:** The results of Pearson correlation coefficient analysis indicate a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between political modernization plans and programs and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan. There is a noted relationship between political modernization plans and programs (transparency, rule of law, government size, regulatory efficiency, women's empowerment, political rights, anti-corruption, political participation) and the achievement of sustainable development goals in Jordan. This suggests that political modernization plans have had a weak impact on achieving sustainable development goals.

**Conclusions:** The study concludes that efforts should be made to improve the legislative environment to ensure equality of rights for all before the law and to achieve social justice by promoting the principles of citizenship, rule of law, and equal opportunities. Additionally, enhancing political participation is crucial to strengthen the role of the parliamentary institution in the Jordanian state and to achieve sustainable development.

**Keywords:** Relationship, indicators of political modernization, objectives, sustainable development, Jordan.

### العلاقة بين مؤشرات التحديث السياسي ومستوى تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة في الأردن تمارا أحمد الزريقا\*

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#### ملخص

**الأهداف:** بيان تأثير خطط وبرامج التحديث السياسي (الشفافية، سيادة القانون، حجم الحكومة، الكفاءة التنظيمية، تمكين المرأة، الحقوق السياسية، محاربة الفساد، المشاركة السياسية) على تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة في الأردن. **المنهجية:** اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج الكمي، وتم توظيف المنهج في هذه الدراسة في عرض مؤشرات التنمية المستدامة والتحديث السياسي في الأردن، وتحليل هذه المؤشرات بالاعتماد على المنهج الكمي، واختبار العلاقة بين متغيرات الدراسة. **النتائج:** تشير نتائج تحليل معامل ارتباط بيرسون إلى وجود علاقة إيجابية ضعيفة دالة إحصائياً بين خطط وبرامج التحديث السياسي وتحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة في الأردن، حيث تبين وجود علاقة بين خطط وبرامج التحديث السياسي (الشفافية، سيادة القانون، حجم الحكومة، الكفاءة التنظيمية، تمكين المرأة، الحقوق السياسية، محاربة الفساد، المشاركة السياسية) وتحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة في الأردن، مما يشير إلى أن خطط التحديث السياسي كان لها تأثير ضعيف على تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة.

**الخلاصة:** العمل على تحسين البيئة التشريعية لضمان تحقيق المساواة في الحقوق للجميع أمام القانون، وتحقيق العدالة الاجتماعية، من خلال تعزيز مبادئ المواطنة وسيادة القانون وتكافؤ الفرص، وتعزيز المشاركة السياسية التي تسهم في تعزيز دور المؤسسة البرلمانية في الدولة الأردنية وتحقيق التنمية المستدامة.

**الكلمات الدالة:** العلاقة، مؤشرات التحديث السياسي، أهداف، التنمية المستدامة، الأردن.



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## Introduction

After the emergence of the Jordanian popular movement that demanded political reforms, the political system's response to the demands of the movement was quick and comprehensive. A royal committee was formed in 2011 tasked with reviewing the constitutional texts to achieve a balance between them and the powers, and to remove distortions in the structural framework of the state's constitutional institutions. Consequently, a package of constitutional amendments was approved in 2011, including forty-two amendments. Among the most important results were: the establishment of the Independent Election Commission, the establishment of the Constitutional Court, amendments related to empowering and protecting freedoms, in addition to providing constitutional guarantees for the dissolution of the House of Representatives represented by the resignation of the government that recommends dissolving the council within a week from the date of dissolution. The amended law for the Jordanian election law for 2012 was issued, the integrity system was formed in 2012, the Political Parties Law No. 39 for the year 2015, and the election law for the House of Representatives for 2016. The Decentralization Law for 2015 was also issued.

Within King Abdullah II's vision for the comprehensive reform process in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, a series of discussion papers were issued during the period (December 2012 to April 2017) to present his modernization vision in various fields, leading to the formation of the Royal Committee for the Modernization of the Political System on June 10, 2021, as an added value to the royal discussion papers and to transition Jordan towards its second centenary with more modernity and strength. It was found that after more than ten years of the popular modernization demands at the political and economic level and the multiple attempts to implement programs and plans of political and economic transformations in Jordan, and the challenges involved in managing this stage, hindered focusing on effecting tangible change on the political and economic reality, and does not rise to achieving the goals of sustainable development in Jordan. The modernization process requires improving conditions for various segments of citizens, protecting their future, and providing new job opportunities to achieve higher and more inclusive growth for the citizen's needs, requiring sound economic management accompanied by reform efforts that create a suitable climate for political development. Therefore, efforts were made to form the Political, Economic, and Administrative Modernization Committee in 2021 with the goal of restructuring various political, economic, social, and administrative policies and programs to ensure the success of the political and economic modernization process.

To consolidate the principle of the rule of law, to entrench the principle of separation of powers, to enhance the independence of parliamentary work to ensure the effectiveness of programmatic parliamentary blocs, to ensure the constitutional oversight role of the members of the Senate and to develop and enhance legislative performance, and to empower women, youth, and people with disabilities and enhance their role and status in society. The amendments aimed at developing the parliamentary work mechanisms to keep up with the political and legal developments that the Jordanian constitutional system has witnessed since the constitution was issued in 1952, to enhance the party system and political life in general, and to allow members of the House of Representatives the right to choose the speaker of the council and to evaluate his performance annually and to grant two-thirds of the council members the right to establish its president, in addition to immunizing political parties and protecting them from any political influences and entrusting the authority to supervise their establishment and follow up their affairs to the Independent Authority as a neutral and independent entity from the government to promote principles of justice, equality, equal opportunities, and to avoid any government influences, and to unify the judicial discretion issued in the appeals presented in the validity of the membership of the House of Representatives members, and to entrench the principle of transparency and equal opportunities between candidates for parliamentary elections, and to entrench the principle of non-conflict of interests and to tighten restrictions on transactions and actions prohibited for members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives during their membership. The Political Parties Law No. (7) for the year 2022 came with important contents, among them:

1. Seeking to transform into effective programmatic parties, and this comes through establishing the party based on citizenship and equality among Jordanians, commitment to democracy, respect for political pluralism, and it is not permissible to establish on religious, sectarian, ethnic, or factional bases, nor on the basis of discrimination because of

gender. The law also required the party to publish its program on its website, which defines its vision, goals, plans, and solutions regarding the basic issues in different fields.

2. Youth participation in party life: The Royal Committee for the Modernization of the Political System took the youth into consideration, which positively reflected on the election and parties law for the year 2022, through legal texts that highlight the importance of youth presence within political parties and the legal guarantees for protection and non-exposure of party members, including the youth, according to Article (4).

A new document titled "Jordan 2025: A National Vision and Strategy" was issued in Jordan in 2015, in which the government set a detailed list of development goals and the measures to be taken to achieve them, issued before Jordan ratified the sustainable development goals. Although the document does not explicitly refer to these goals, many of the mentioned goals align with the vision supported by the sustainable development goals, meaning that the document represents Jordan's ongoing commitment to improving social and economic conditions within Jordan. Regarding the first goal of the sustainable development goals, related to eradicating poverty in all its forms, there are two subsections of the document related to "Poverty and Deprived Communities" and "Cost of Living," respectively. The document emphasizes the need to increase social spending, especially in the form of subsidies and retirement pensions, to face challenges posed by rapid population growth and refugee flows. Regarding the issue of food security and nutrition, which relates to the second goal of the sustainable development goals, the document refers to Jordan's dependence on imports, which "is severely exposed to fluctuations in international commodity prices" and affected by demographic shocks, which have burdened the state budget through increased need for food and other goods support (Prime Minister's Office, 2023: 4). Therefore, the study came to investigate the relationship between indicators of political modernization and the level of achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Study Problem:** Since the beginning of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Plan for 2030 in Jordan, there has been some evidence of the Jordanian governments' commitment to achieving the goals. However, only a few of the programs set to achieve the sustainable development goals in Jordan have entered the implementation phase, and most local efforts were theoretical and preparatory in nature, linked to policy formulation and strategy development, and have not yet turned into tangible practical actions. The Department of Statistics collects the necessary statistics for policy formulation, and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation is responsible for developing these policies and supervising their implementation. The efforts made to integrate the sustainable development goals into Jordan's development strategy are still limited, and most Jordanian governments lack the commitment to pursue the necessary structural changes, limited to applying customized solutions to the social and economic problems Jordan faces, and government actions have largely focused on policy formulation, which lacked adequate oversight and follow-up in their implementation. Therefore, the study seeks to answer the following main question: What is the impact of political modernization plans and programs (transparency, rule of law, government size, organizational efficiency, women's empowerment, political rights, fighting corruption, political participation) on achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan? This branches into the following sub-questions:

- What is the reality of political modernization in Jordan?
- What are the indicators of political modernization in Jordan?
- What are the indicators of sustainable development in Jordan?

**Study Importance:** This study gains its importance through two fields:

**The first is the scientific field:** It is hoped to be considered as one of the recent studies that addressed the impact of the relationship between political modernization and sustainable development, gaining importance through the researcher's attempt to provide the Jordanian and Arab library with an analytical study of the political and economic modernization system in Jordan, and adding something new to the studies that presented the study problem, to serve as a scientific contribution that meets the efforts of previous researchers, and to be a foundation for those who will continue the topic from the researchers.

**The second is the practical field:** The importance of this study comes as it is one of the few political studies, to the

researcher's knowledge, that investigated the relationship between political modernization and sustainable development, highlighting the study's significance in its results that will enhance the ability to achieve sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Study objectives:** The study aims to demonstrate the impact of political modernization plans and programs (transparency, rule of law, government size, organizational efficiency, women's empowerment, political rights, fighting corruption, political participation) on achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan. This branches into the following subsidiary objectives:

- To clarify the nature and implications of the political modernization plan in Jordan for 2021.
- To show the level of implementation of political modernization indicators in Jordan.
- To demonstrate the level of achievement of sustainable development indicators in Jordan.

**Study hypotheses:** The study is based on the main hypothesis that: "There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs (transparency, rule of law, government size, organizational efficiency, women's empowerment, political rights, fighting corruption, political participation) and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan".

#### **Previous studies Firstly: Arab studies:**

1. Osman's study (2021), titled: A Future Vision for Modernizing Political Development Theory 2050: An Applied Study of the Role of the Developmental Security Strategy in the Continuity of Sustainable Development, aimed to find flexible alternative policies to modernize the role of political development theory within the framework of activating the developmental security strategy to meet the requirements of the 2050 vision. The study adopted a descriptive analytical approach and concluded that the major changes witnessed by the international system in the last decade of the 20th century confirmed a decline in the application of political development, affecting the sustainable development work system, necessitating confrontation to ensure its continuity, marking a step towards establishing a new theory of political development 2050 under the name "Developmental Security Theory."

2. Al-Kharisha's study (2017), titled: Political Development and its Impact on Political Stability in Jordan (1999-2017), aimed to explain the concept of political development and its relation to political stability, examine the reality of political development in Jordan, and identify the challenges facing the development and political reform process. The study used a combined methodological approach consisting of an analytical method and a decision-making method, concluding that political culture plays an important role in the state-building and development process, representing a mutual system between the political system and society.

3. (Bani Salameh, Bani Ananzah, 2015) study, titled: Constitutional Reforms in Jordan A Critical Analysis, aimed to analyze the political reforms launched by King Abdullah II, including constitutional amendments, relying on the descriptive analytical method. The findings indicated that these reforms are an important step towards developing and enhancing the democratic process in Jordan, positively reflecting on political, economic, social, and cultural fields, and establishing a foundation for comprehensive and sustainable development in the country, the establishment of a rule-of-law state, institutions, rights, and justice, and creating a society of justice and equality based on respect for human dignity, rights, and freedoms.

4. (Satloff, 2013), titled: Political Instability in Jordan, aimed to highlight the most significant internal and external challenges facing Jordan, contributing to political instability, whether political or economic. The study adopted a descriptive analytical approach and a decision-making method, indicating that Jordan has survived the political storm that swept most of the Middle East since late 2010. However, many emerging challenges have the potential to evolve into serious threats to the stability of the Hashemite Kingdom, while moderate non-ideological threats and the negative revolution of Jordan's political culture act as mitigating factors for the risks of internal instability.

**What distinguishes this study from previous studies:** The current study addresses the topic of the relationship between indicators of political modernization and the level of achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, where none of the previous studies reviewed addressed the current study's topic. Osman's study (2021) focused on a future vision

for modernizing political development theory 2050, Al-Kharisha's study (2017) aimed to clarify the concept of political development and its relation to political stability, (Bani Salameh, Bani Ananzah, 2015) study aimed to analyze the political reforms launched by King Abdullah II, including constitutional amendments, and (Satloff, 2013) study highlighted the most significant internal and external challenges facing Jordan. This makes the current study distinct for its novel approach to the subject of political modernization indicators and the level of achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Study Methodology:** This study relied on a quantitative approach that uses closed-ended questions with "yes" or "no" answers, enabling the researcher to generalize the results to the study population. The quantitative data collected by the researcher is represented through tables, graphs, and charts to facilitate their presentation and interpretation, and all quantitative research data consists of numbers and statistics (Al-Mutairi, 2021: 22). This approach was employed in this study to present and analyze the indicators of sustainable development in Jordan, based on the quantitative method.

**Study Terms:** Modernization: Modernization is defined as "a set of structural and cultural transformations in the political systems of societies undergoing modernization. It generally refers to the economic, social, political, and technological developments that occurred in Western society with the rise of capitalism." Modernization includes the gradual acceptance by individuals and societies of global standards of achievement to effect change in the fundamental value system of society, such as freedom of expression, belief in the importance of equitable distribution, democratization of society, industrialization, and education" (Higott, 2001: 232-233).

Sustainable Development: Sustainable Development is defined as a socio-economic term adopted by the United Nations to chart a course for environmental, social, and economic development globally. It aims to improve living conditions for every individual in society, develop production means and methods, and manage them in ways that do not lead to the depletion of Earth's natural resources, meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the rights of future generations. The term also refers to achieving a rapid, cumulative, and permanent increase over a period of time in national production and community services as a result of using scientific and practical efforts in joint governmental and popular activities, thus representing societal advancement and transition to a better condition through the exploitation of different energies available to society members, and directing their employment for the best (United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development Report, 2022: 6).

#### **First: The Reality of Political Modernization in Jordan:**

In 2011, Jordan experienced a popular movement calling for reform in the wake of the Arab Spring revolutions. The Jordanian leadership, led by King Abdullah II, responded by initiating a comprehensive review of the Jordanian Constitution and issuing discussion papers aimed at advancing democracy. These actions reflected the King's vision for political reform, emphasizing the establishment of a civil state grounded in the rule of law as the foundation for the nation's development.

Significant reforms included the Election Law No. (4) of 2022, which altered the composition of the House of Representatives to include 138 deputies, with seats allocated to local constituencies, party lists, and reserved seats for women, Christians, and Chechens/Circassians. The law introduced changes in candidacy age, electoral district divisions, and the voting system, aiming to enhance popular participation and ensure the parliament reflects the people's will. Criticism of the law centered on concerns that it favored larger parties and wealthier candidates, potentially marginalizing smaller parties. Despite this, the law's gradual increase in seats allocated to the national constituency indicates a shift towards greater political party involvement in elections. Constitutional amendments in 2022 also played a critical role, introducing measures to lower the candidacy age for the House of Representatives, promote gender equality and youth participation, and establish rights for persons with disabilities. These changes underscored Jordan's commitment to empowering women and youth, ensuring equality, and enhancing the political, administrative, and social roles of all citizens. Additionally, the formation of the National Security Council highlighted the state's focus on security and governance reforms.

**The Political Parties Law No. (7) of 2022 in Jordan, announced on April 4, 2022**, has sparked diverse opinions regarding its impact on political parties. While some view the law as a restriction on political parties' licensing and an attempt to limit their development and audience engagement, others believe it enhances the effectiveness of political parties by promoting broad membership, idea diversity, and political modernization.

Key amendments include a deadline for political parties, licensed prior to the law's issuance, to rectify their status by May 13, 2023. Out of the existing parties, only 27 managed to comply, with 19 failing to do so, leading to mergers and disqualifications for some.

The law aims to strengthen programmatic parties' political roles, advocating for pluralism and parliamentary representation capable of forming government blocs. It introduces criteria for political legitimacy, requiring parties to have a minimum number of founders and ensuring 20% youth and women representation. Additionally, it mandates general and inaugural conferences within a year of registration, promotes youth and women's leadership roles, and encourages political activity in educational institutions and electronic membership.

The legislation reflects the broader goal of political modernization in Jordan, aligning with King Abdullah II's vision for democratic culture and youth involvement in state institutions. Despite concerns over expanded royal powers in certain appointments, the government maintains that the reforms aim to establish party-based parliamentary governments and ensure the neutrality of key positions, contributing to national stability and development amidst societal complexities and changing public-government dynamics.

### **Secondly: Indicators of Political Modernization in Jordan**

Democratic transition is a comprehensive process that involves significant changes in political, social, economic, and cultural dimensions. It alters power dynamics, involving both elites and institutions, and impacts relations within society. Transition methods vary across countries and systems, influenced by the existing political environment. Transitions can occur through peaceful means, such as elections or constitutional amendments initiated by the ruling authorities, or through non-peaceful means, including violence, military coups, or popular uprisings.

The role of democracy in evaluating a country's modernization and development has led to the creation of various reports and indicators, like the Global Democracy Index by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). This index assesses democracy across 167 countries based on categories like electoral process, government functioning, political participation, democratic culture, and civil liberties, classifying them into full democracies, flawed democracies, hybrid regimes, and authoritarian regimes.

Jordan, in the latest report, ranked 122nd globally on the Democracy Index with a score of 3.20 out of 10. Factors contributing to this rank include low voter turnout at 29.9% in the 2020 parliamentary elections and a general trend of voter apathy, attributed to disappointment over unchanging government performance and weak civil society institutions. The democracy indicators from 2006 to 2022 reveal fluctuations in Jordan's global and Arab world rankings, highlighting challenges in maintaining democratic standards and public engagement in the political process.

**Table (1): Democracy Index in Jordan during the period (2006-2022)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Score</b>
2006	3.92
2008	3.93
2010	3.74
2011	3.89
2012	3.76
2013	3.76
2014	3.76
2015	3.86
2016	3.96
2017	3.87
2018	3.93
2019	3.93
2020	3.62
2021	3.49
2022	3.20

Source: Jordanian Strategy Forum: Economic Freedom Index 2023 - Jordan's Performance and Priorities for Improvement.

Below is an analytical overview of some of the democracy indicators in Jordan directly related to achieving sustainable development: The following table shows democracy indicators for the period (2015-2022) related to criteria (order and security, civil justice, absence of corruption, criminal justice, regulatory enforcement, and government transparency):

**Table (2) Democracy Indicators**

Indicator	Year		
	2015	2020	2022
Order and Security	0.79	0.76	0.76
Civil Justice	0.62	0.62	0.60
Absence of Corruption	0.59	0.60	0.58
Criminal Justice	0.58	0.60	0.58
Regulatory Enforcement	0.51	0.60	0.54
Fundamental Rights	0.52	0.48	0.46
Constraints on Government Powers	0.49	0.49	0.45
Government Transparency	0.46	0.42	0.38

Source: Jordan Strategy Forum: Economic Freedom Index 2023 - Jordan's Performance and Priorities for Improvement.

Regarding Jordan's performance on the Democracy Index axes, Jordan performed best in the Order and Security axis with a score of (0.76/1). However, its weakest performance was in the Government Transparency axis with a score of (0.38/1), indicating weaknesses in Jordan's democratic indicators. This is evident through the following:

1. In the axis of Government Overreach, Jordan ranked low with a total score of (0.45/1) internationally. In the Absence of Corruption axis, Jordan achieved a relatively good ranking (2/7) at the Arab level, and a total score of (0.58/1) internationally. The researcher believes this is due to the executive power's dominance over the authorities, resulting from the weak role of the Jordanian parliament.
2. In the Government Transparency axis, Jordan had a modest ranking among Arab countries (4/7), with a total score of (0.38/1). In the Fundamental Rights axis, Jordan achieved a relatively good ranking (2/7) Arabically, with a total score of (0.46/1). This could be attributed, from the researcher's perspective, to the freedom environment in Jordan post-COVID-19 and the constitutional amendments, although there still exists a restriction on freedom of opinion and media, highlighted by the Electronic Crimes Law of 2023.
3. In the Order and Security axis, Jordan achieved a good ranking (2/7) among Arab countries, with a score of (0.76/1) internationally. Similarly, in the Regulatory Enforcement axis, Jordan ranked (2/7) Arabically, with a score of (0.54/1). Jordan's ranking was relatively good in the Civil Justice axis, achieving a ranking of (2/7) and a score of (0.60/1), as well as in the Criminal Justice axis, with a ranking of (2/7) and a score of (0.55/1).

Transparency and Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International (TI): Regarding Jordan's ranking on the global corruption perceptions index, the table below shows fluctuations in Jordan's transparency index as released by Transparency International (TI). It shows that Jordan scored (48) out of 100 in 2012 and was ranked (58) among (119) countries worldwide. It dropped to (47) points in 2022, thus falling to rank (61). This reflects a decline in the administrative transparency of Jordanian institutions. It's important to note that the ranking of countries on this index is based on opinion polls and impression surveys conducted by independent international institutions. The countries are ranked on the index according to a special formula used to determine the results ranging between (zero = most corrupt) and (100 = most integrity). The following table shows the ranking and transparency score for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan during the period 2012-2022.

**Table (3) The ranking and transparency score for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 2012-2022**

Year	Global Ranking	Score
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2012	58	48
2015	45	53
2018	58	49
2021	58	49
2022	61	47

Source: <https://images.transparencycdn.org/images/report-cp12022-english>.

The researcher believes that the decline in administrative transparency in Jordan reflects the level of bureaucratic slack in Jordanian state institutions, their weakness, and their inability to fulfill their role in providing services to the citizen and solving the problems they face, which necessarily affects sustainable development indicators and constitutes an obstacle in improving the level of achievement in achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

Rule of Law Index by the World Justice Project (WJP): The rule of law is linked to social justice, equality of rights, accountability, and fairness. The World Justice Project (WJP) is responsible for measuring rule of law indicators based on survey data from approximately (140) countries by calculating average rates of several factors including: absence of corruption, government transparency, civil justice, public order and security, and social and criminal justice to determine the extent of governmental institutions' compliance with laws. Despite Jordan achieving good results compared to other countries, there has been a decline. According to the Jordan Strategy Forum's analysis of Jordan's performance on the Rule of Law Index, Jordan's best performance was in the Order and Security aspect, while its weakest was in the Government Transparency aspect. The table below shows the scores Jordan achieved during the period (2015-2023), with the score on a linear index starting from (0.0) to (1.0).

**Table (4): Jordan's scores on the Rule of Law Index**

Year	Score	Global Ranking
2015	0.56	41
2016	0.59	42
2017-2018	0.60	42
2019	0.57	49
2020	0.57	50
2021	0.55	59
2022	0.54	61
2023	0.55	62

Source: The table is prepared by the researcher based on reports issued by the World Justice Project for the years (2015-2023) [www.worldjustice.org/jordan](http://www.worldjustice.org/jordan)

From the previous table, it is observed that Jordan's ranking has gradually declined, recording rank (41) in 2015 and dropping to rank (62) in 2023. The researcher believes that the decline in the Rule of Law Index indicates a serious problem related to the enforcement and application of law according to global standards that achieve equality and justice among citizens. The weakness and decline in its indicators will definitely reflect on the operation of state institutions, and thus on the level of achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

Political Modernization and Women: The implementation plan for women for the period (2023-2025) included (50) initiatives and (268) programs and projects, with a total cost of approximately (216.2) million dinars. The following table shows the total of initiatives, projects, and the overall cost distributed according to strategic objectives and axes for the years (2023-2025).

**Table number (5): Initiatives, projects, and total cost distributed according to strategic objectives and axes for the years 2023-2025**



Strategic Objective	Axis	Number of Initiatives	Number of Projects	Total Cost (Million JOD)
Strategic Objective 1: Women and girls are able to access their human, economic, and political rights to participate and lead freely in a society free from gender-based discrimination.	Economic Empowerment	9	85	134.7
	Political Empowerment and Participation in Decision Making	3	20	1.2
	Human Rights	13	43	62.4
Strategic Objective 2: Women and girls enjoy a life free from all forms of gender-based violence.	Combating Violence Against Women and Girls	8	53	10.9
Strategic Objective 3: Positive social norms, attitudes, and roles support gender equality and women's empowerment.	Community Culture	8	24	2.3
Strategic Objective 4: Institutions implement and ensure the sustainability of policies, structures, and services that support justice and gender equality and women's empowerment and respond to national and international commitments.	Gender Mainstreaming at the Institutional Level in the Public and Private Sectors.	9	43	4.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>216.2</b>

Source: The implementation plan for the national strategy for women in Jordan 2023-2025, the Jordanian National Commission for Women Affairs.

The initiatives and projects proposed the strategic objectives and axes for the years (2023-2025) to achieve the first strategic goal of economic empowerment for women through nine initiatives with (85) projects and a cost of (134.7) million dinars. Political empowerment and participation in decision-making were presented through (3) initiatives with (20) projects and a cost of (1.2) million dinars. Human rights were presented through (13) initiatives with (43) projects and a cost of (62.4) million dinars. The second strategic goal was presented to combat violence against women and girls through (8) initiatives with (53) projects and a cost of (10.9) million dinars. The third strategic goal related to women's community culture was presented to achieve eight initiatives with (24) projects and a cost of (2.3) million dinars. The fourth strategic goal of integrating the gender perspective at the institutional level in the public and private sectors was presented through (9) initiatives with (43) projects and a cost of (4.6) million dinars, with a total through (50) initiatives with (268) projects and a cost of (216.2) million dinars. (The implementation plan for the national strategy for women in Jordan 2023-2025, the Jordanian National Commission for Women Affairs).

From the above, the researcher sees that the Jordanian political system has gradually adopted the option of political modernization, ensuring positive reflections on the political life across its various sectors. Despite the state's adoption of modernization policies at the official level and the effective contribution of many civil society institutions, foremost among them political parties and associations concerned with political and community empowerment, there are many reform axes that require stable legislation to ensure the best results that positively reflect on the future of development and political participation in Jordan. The election law has been a point of political debate in the Jordanian society, and although the election law has evolved from a single non-transferable vote system to partially adopting a list-based electoral system, the controversy remains over the nature of this law and which electoral system to adopt.

Thirdly: Sustainable Development Indicators in Jordan In the fourth goal in Jordan, we find a relative progress, where in 2021, the net enrollment rate in primary education was about 79.92%, while it improved significantly in 2022 to 81.3%. Regarding the enrollment rates in secondary education, there was a slight improvement, where it reached 66.36% in 2022, after being 64.5% in 2021. Despite this relative progress, the percentage of those enrolled in higher education in Jordan is only 34%, which is a very low rate (The Madrasati initiative expands education in Jordan, 2022).

Jordan experiences a state of stagnation in assessing the results of the fifth goal for 2022, due to the significant stability of indicators since 2020. Despite the kingdom's adoption of a number of legislative and awareness-raising measures in cooperation with civil society during 2022 to increase the economic and social empowerment of women, this movement has not yet reflected on the indicators of the fifth goal. The female to male participation rate in the workforce was 22.8% in 2022, and it was 22.5% in 2021. Also, the percentage of seats occupied by women in the House of Representatives is 11.5%, with 15 female members in the 2020 parliamentary elections, thus it decreased from 2016 when the rate was 15.4% (Al Ghad newspaper, 2020).

Like other Arab countries, the Levant showed care and efforts concerned with goal 9 of goal 17. For Jordan, the UAE, Jordan, and Egypt announced the launch of the integrated industrial partnership to achieve sustainable economic development in five industrial areas, and about allocating an investment fund worth 10 billion dollars and establishing a high partnership. Jordan and the United States signed a memorandum of understanding for economic development worth 10.1 billion dollars for 7 years for the period between 2023-2029. Moreover, it entered a partnership to establish the Mediterranean Blue Economy to support the development of a blue economy in the southern neighborhood countries of the European Union in the Mediterranean area, including Jordan, Egypt, and Morocco with the European Union for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, and the Union for the Mediterranean during 2022 (Sky News Arabia, 2022).

A partnership was signed with the United Nations as a provider of humanitarian assistance and development within the framework of the United Nations Cooperation in Sustainable Development for the period between 2023 and 2027 to provide assistance worth approximately 914.1 million in 2021, including 268.6 million dollars in development areas. Jordan signed a financing agreement for the program to enhance the resilience of the agricultural sector and develop the value chain and innovation worth 125 million dollars aimed at enhancing and developing the agricultural sector for the period 2022: 2027 for about 30,000 agricultural families to adopt climate-sensitive agricultural practices and create 12,000 job opportunities for Jordanians.

**Main Hypothesis:** Ho1: There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs (transparency, rule of law, government size, regulatory efficiency, women's empowerment, political rights, combating corruption, political participation) and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Table (6): Results of the Pearson correlation test between political modernization plans and programs and the achievement of sustainable development goals in Jordan.**

Hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	Correlation Coefficient R	Statistical Significance
Secondary Main Hypothesis	4	0.402	0.010*

\*The correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ )

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate a weak positive relationship that is statistically significant between political modernization plans and programs and the achievement of sustainable development goals in Jordan, with a Pearson correlation coefficient (R) of 0.402 and a statistical significance of 0.010. Accordingly, the alternative secondary main hypothesis, which states there is a statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs (transparency, rule of law, government size, regulatory efficiency, women's empowerment, political rights, combating corruption, political participation) and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, is accepted. This suggests that political modernization plans have had a weak impact on achieving sustainable development goals, possibly due to political modernization and changes in laws, systems, and constitutional amendments in Jordan not contributing to creating a political environment that enhances political participation, supports the rule of law, and builds a state of institutions. There are political challenges and obstacles affecting political modernization plans in Jordan, which impacted the efficiency of the state's executive and legislative institutions, especially the legislative

institution responsible for enacting laws and regulations that contribute to achieving sustainable development goals, which necessarily require real guarantees for practicing freedoms and national rights.

Therefore, the state, from a political development perspective, focuses on the rules and frameworks governing the form of governance itself, what the nation endows itself with power, legitimacy, sovereignty, organization, participation, etc., within the framework of construction, ensuring the state's survival. The vision is that political development is achieved by resolving these crises and overcoming them, as a crisis is the product of changes and events at the level of the political system itself or in its interaction with other subsystems within society forming its internal environment, or from its external environment. This depends on the nature of societal demands and the availability of necessary resources to meet these demands. If the pressure of demands increases and there is a shortage of resources, a crisis arises. Its severity and extent largely depend on the performance of the political and economic system and its ability to balance between demands and resources, and its ability to produce outputs capable of responding to popular demands.

**First Sub-Hypothesis:** Ho.1.1: There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the transparency index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Table (7): Results of the Pearson correlation test between political modernization plans and programs through the transparency index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.**

Hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	Correlation Coefficient R	Statistical Significance
First Sub-Hypothesis	4	0.326	0.013*

\*The correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ )

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate a weak positive relationship that is statistically significant between political modernization plans and programs through the transparency index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, with a Pearson correlation coefficient (R) of 0.326 and a statistical significance of 0.013. Accordingly, the first sub-hypothesis is accepted, stating there is a statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the transparency index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan. This may be attributed to the fact that achieving transparency in the operation of government institutions contributes to justice and equality in opportunities, and the general distribution of development gains, thereby contributing to achieving sustainable development goals.

**Second Sub-Hypothesis:** Ho.1.2: There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the rule of law index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Table (8): Results of Pearson correlation test between political modernization plans and programs through the rule of law index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.**

Hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	Correlation Coefficient R	Statistical Significance
Sub-hypothesis 2	4	0.399	0.010*

\*The correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate a weak positive relationship, statistically significant, between political modernization plans and programs through the rule of law index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan. The Pearson correlation coefficient (R) was (0.399) with statistical significance (0.010). Therefore, the second sub-hypothesis, which posits a statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the rule of law index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, is accepted. This may be attributed to the fact that despite the progress observed in the Jordanian state, it is insufficient to achieve sustainable development goals.

**Sub-hypothesis 3: Ho.1.3:** There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political

modernization plans and programs through the size of government index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Table (9): Results of Pearson correlation test between political modernization plans and programs through the size of government index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.**

Hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	Correlation Coefficient R	Statistical Significance
Sub-hypothesis 3	4	0.341	0.012*

\*The correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate a weak positive relationship, statistically significant, between political modernization plans and programs through the size of government index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan. The Pearson correlation coefficient (R) was (0.310) with statistical significance (0.012). Therefore, the third sub-hypothesis, which posits a statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the size of government index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, is accepted. This suggests that the lack of governmental stability, the mechanism of forming governments, and the overlap of their jurisdictions affect the level of progress in achieving sustainable development goals.

**Sub-hypothesis 4: Ho.1.4:** There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the organizational efficiency index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Table (10): Results of Pearson correlation test between political modernization plans and programs through the organizational efficiency index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.**

Hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	Correlation Coefficient R	Statistical Significance
Sub-hypothesis 4	4	0.301	0.014*

\*The correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate a weak positive relationship, statistically significant, between political modernization plans and programs through the organizational efficiency index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan. The Pearson correlation coefficient (R) was (0.301) with statistical significance (0.014). Therefore, the fourth sub-hypothesis, which posits a statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the organizational efficiency index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, is accepted. This indicates that the capability of Jordanian governmental official bodies to perform their roles is weak, leading to the introduction of an administrative modernization system for all public sector bodies in Jordan to update their services and solve problems negatively affecting the achievement of sustainable development goals.

**Sub-hypothesis 5: Ho.1.5:** There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the women's empowerment index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Table (12): Results of Pearson correlation test between political modernization plans and programs through the women's empowerment index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.**

Hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	Correlation Coefficient R	Statistical Significance
Sub-hypothesis 5	4	0.317	0.013*

\*The correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between political modernization plans and programs through the women's empowerment index and achieving sustainable

development goals in Jordan, where the Pearson correlation coefficient (R) was (0.317) with statistical significance (0.013). Therefore, the alternative fifth sub-hypothesis, which posits a statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the women's empowerment index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, is accepted. This suggests that all constitutional amendments and changes in systems and laws have not contributed to a transformation in the status and role of women in Jordanian society. Indicators of inequality and discrimination against women, and the low level of their political and economic participation, indicate a lack of achievement in integrating gender and reflecting on the women's goal in sustainable development goals.

Sub-hypothesis 6: Ho.1.6: There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the political rights index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Table (13): Results of the Pearson correlation test between political modernization plans and programs through the political rights index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.**

The hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	Correlation Coefficient R	Statistical Significance
Sub-hypothesis 6	4	0.333	0.013*

\*The correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between political modernization plans and programs through the political rights index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, where the Pearson correlation coefficient (R) was (0.333) with statistical significance (0.013). Therefore, the alternative sixth sub-hypothesis, which posits a statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the political rights index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, is accepted. This may be attributed to the fact that rights and freedoms require a democracy for their exercise, in addition to providing a national political climate that contributes to the exercise of political rights, which is a fundamental pillar for achieving sustainable development goals.

Sub-hypothesis 7: Ho.1.7: There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the anti-corruption index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Table (14): Results of the Pearson correlation test between political modernization plans and programs through the anti-corruption index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.**

The hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	Correlation Coefficient R	Statistical Significance
Sub-hypothesis 7	4	0.309	0.014*

\*The correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between political modernization plans and programs through the anti-corruption index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, where the Pearson correlation coefficient (R) was (0.309) with statistical significance (0.014). Therefore, the alternative seventh sub-hypothesis, which posits a statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the anti-corruption index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, is accepted. This may be attributed to the fact that achieving sustainable development requires progress in corruption indicators, which has not been realized in Jordan, where financial corruption remains one of the major issues affecting Jordanian state institutions.

Sub-hypothesis 8: Ho.1.8: There is no statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the political participation index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.

**Table (15): Results of the Pearson correlation test between political modernization plans and programs through the political participation index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.**

The hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	Correlation Coefficient R	Statistical Significance
Sub-hypothesis 8	4	0.327	0.013*

\*The correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between political modernization plans and programs through the political participation index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, where the Pearson correlation coefficient (R) was (0.327) with statistical significance (0.013). Therefore, the alternative eighth sub-hypothesis, which posits a statistically significant relationship at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between political modernization plans and programs through the political participation index and achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, is accepted. This may be attributed to the weakness of political development indicators at the level of political participation, where low participation rates reflect a crisis of trust between the citizen and state apparatus, and its ability to encourage effective political participation that contributes to achieving sustainable development goals.

**The study concluded the following results:**

- The study showed that political modernization plans in Jordan have undergone a significant transformation in light of constitutional amendments and the issuance of party and election laws, which enhances the building of a state of institutions and law. This fosters opportunities for achieving social justice, equality, equal opportunities, and enhancing political, social, and economic participation, leading to an increased capacity of the Jordanian state to achieve sustainable development goals. The constitutional amendments in 2022 introduced changes that contributed to enhancing political participation in the decision-making process, in addition to accepting differences and diversity in opinions. The amendments also improved the reality of women's rights in decision-making processes, emphasizing the importance of women's empowerment, non-discrimination, and violence against them.
- The study highlights the challenges of the negative relationship between achieving sustainable development goals and political modernization, which often results in a clear decline in the levels of achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan. This is evident through inequality, enhancing equal opportunities, social justice, combating corruption, and addressing poverty and unemployment issues.
- Political modernization plans play an important role in building and developing the civil state, as it adheres to the constitution and laws, and is based on the principles of peace, tolerance, respect for pluralism and other opinions. It also protects the rights of society's members and ensures their rights and freedoms regardless of their religious or ideological affiliations, where everyone is equal in rights and duties. This represents a realistic foundation for achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan, which often witnesses a clear decline in the level of achievement in development or in achieving sustainable development goals.

**Recommendations based on the study's findings include:**

- Political modernization plans should strive to integrate a wide range of citizens into formal institutions, making citizens' trust in the parliament and parties vital for their success. This requires working to restore citizens' trust in the Jordanian state institutions.
- Official entities concerned with political development should empower youth and ensure the freedom of political and party work for university students.
- Developing a national strategy for political development and democratic empowerment to serve as a reference for all plans and efforts related to political work, including clear work programs with specific time frames, measurable, evaluable, and followable steps with a tangible impact on political effectiveness and the citizen's relationship with the state.
- Improving the legislative environment to ensure equality of rights for everyone before the law, in addition to enacting laws to combat all forms of violence.
- Achieving social justice by promoting the principles of citizenship, rule of law, and equal opportunities, which require enabling all citizens to have the necessary economic, social, and scientific conditions to compete in the economic and administrative fields, forming important foundations for achieving sustainable development.

- Enhancing legislative reforms to achieve gender equality, ensure decent work, integrate the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, and expand the provision of childcare and flexible work patterns.
- Modifying the legislative environment to ensure equality of rights for everyone before the law, in addition to enacting laws to combat all forms of violence.

The process of political modernization requires strong and effective roles for political parties, civil society organizations, and citizens, through enhancing political participation that contributes to strengthening the role of the parliamentary institution in the Jordanian state and achieving sustainable development and its progress.

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