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INFORMATION ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT

JORDAN

AIDA AL-KAISY

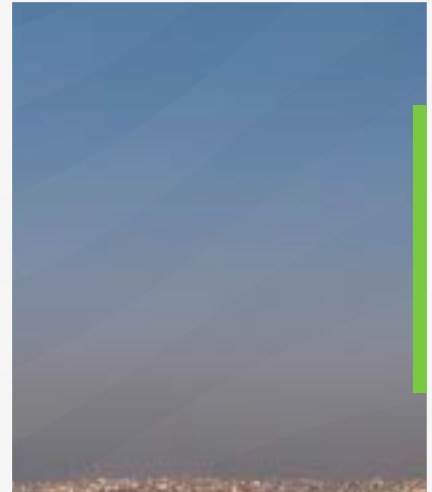




Photo by Politics and Society Institute (PSI). Description: University of Jordan Students during election season 2024

ABSTRACT

This report provides an assessment of the media landscape in Jordan from the perspective of its audiences. Based on audience research, it examines the key issues emerging around media usage, trust, content, and literacy. It is based on data that was collected throughout June and July 2023; the media landscape may have changed since the war in Gaza began.

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USAID Strengthening Civil Society and Media Systems (Sawt) Activity

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBC	British Broadcasting Association
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CNN	Cable News Network
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSS	Centre for Strategic Studies – University of Jordan
FES	Fredrich Ebert Stiftung
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ICNL	International Center for Non-Profit Law
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
IRI	International Republican Institute
JMI	Jordan Media Institute
JRTV	Jordan Radio and Television Corporation
KAS	Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
MENA	Middle East North Africa
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OSINT	Open Source Intelligence
PSD	Public Security Directorate
PWD	Person with Disabilities
VPN	Virtual Private Network
WVS	World Values Survey

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the media consumption habits of Jordanian audiences, focusing on usage, trust, content, and literacy. It is based on both qualitative and quantitative data that was collected throughout June and July 2023. The report finds that Jordanian media consumers have complicated mindsets and behaviours which are connected to their relationship with media, government, and technology. On the one hand, they rely heavily on technological tools and platforms to acquire information, communicate, and engage. On the other hand, they are critical of the media industry and voice concern about their overriding concern with commercial and political interests which they see to be driving mainstream and social media. Many see this as a failing in terms of professionalism and relevance of media content. Selective news avoidance is common particularly amongst younger rural audiences. Attention that is already fragmented is being drawn towards clickbait rather than the public interest which is having an impact on public trust in the media. As such, in a context where political stability is often threatened, and where the media is not providing the information that Jordanians need to make decisions about their own social and political destinies, trust in the media and journalists is low. Although citizens are participating and engaging in the media through comments, most see their engagement as having little impact on change. Civic engagement is threatened as a result.

The report draws the following conclusions:

- **Media consumption habits amongst Jordanian citizens are driven more by convenience and time pressures than they are by choice.** Audiences rely heavily on social media algorithms i.e., social media feeds and search engines for their information. That being said, much of the content which they are engaging with on their feeds or via Google is coming from mainstream media for example Roya, Al Mamlaka and Al Jazeera. Using search as a tool for news information is becoming less practiced as is going directly to websites for information.
- **Facebook is the most used social media platform.** However, Jordanian audiences are turning more towards video-led networks for example TikTok for alternative forms of content and information. In Jordan, where TikTok is banned, citizens are accessing TikTok via Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) further indication of their keen desire for video content. Instagram and Telegram are also growing in popularity.
- **Jordanians are both proud and critical of influencers and social media activists.** They are following influencers, some of whom are journalists, despite a concern with the commercial nature of their operations and the mental health impact of heavy social media use.
- **Interest in political news about Jordan is low** compared to economic or local service news. Audiences also showed limited knowledge of and engagement with news on political processes, reforms, and elections. However, there was universal knowledge and interest in local political events which involve citizens, for example the protests in Ma'an and teachers strikes. There was an expressed desire for more content on human rights, women's rights and health.
- **Jordanians are actively participating online via comments and reactively via likes and emotions.** However, they are commenting mainly to express themselves rather than because they view comment as means of affecting change. There is an overriding sense that no one is listening to or addressing their needs.
- **The perception that news on political processes and reforms is often inaccurate is one of the main factors behind the lack of interest in media content on such topics.** Jordanians recognise disinformation and some of the leading narratives as mainly political. However,

verification techniques are at best unsophisticated, and the media and the government are both blamed for its inception.

- **Barriers to accessing content include limited access to the internet and internet shutdowns.** Nonetheless, many Jordanians see government control of the media and narrative as a necessary evil to preserve national security. The army and political elites are considered to be justified in their clampdown on the media freedoms in the name of public protection.
- **Trust in the media and journalists is low.** Many Jordanians exhibit higher levels of trust in official institutions such as the army, security services and judiciary than they do in civil society and the media. Official and state-associated media channels, Jordan Radio and Television Corporation (JRTV) and Al Mamlaka, are the only media brands that audiences associated with higher levels of trust. That said, many do not actively seek out their content and trust does not appear to be driving media consumption choices. However, the levels of trust directed towards JRTV and Al Mamlaka does speak to the perceived legitimacy of official media channels amongst the public.
- In the midst of an economic crisis and financial concern, and where media is not seen to deliver relevant and useful content, **there is little appetite to pay for media content regardless of its editorial commitments or levels of trust.** This adds challenges to independent media efforts to monetize and digitize.



INTRODUCTION

The past few years have seen a number of events take place in Jordan which have impacted the information ecosystem and on the public's relationship with both the authorities and the Jordanian mainstream media. Jordan continues to suffer from the after effects of Covid-19 and a deepening economic crisis, with [46% unemployment amongst people under 25 years \(22.6% nationally\)](#), further compounded by increasing global commodity prices and other regional and global issues. The economic situation not only enables ideal conditions for brain drain, a critical issue for Jordanian businesses, media, and civil society, but is also limiting diverse financing options for media initiatives and creating obstacles to media independence and sustainability, as well as civic spaces.

While Jordan has enshrined freedom of expression in its constitution and appears to have an active and diverse public sphere, challenges to freedom of expression and civic spaces have become more heightened since the coronavirus pandemic which brought about further restrictions on media and civil society, including a controversial cybercrimes law, in the name of national security. Ongoing political and economic flux has manifested itself in a series of protests over rising fuel prices and the cost of living amongst other issues. This saw the space for civic and media freedoms worsen in 2022 as Jordanian authorities continue to introduce measures to curtail critical voices and debates, issuing gag orders, harassment, and detention through the continued use of archaic laws, including the Penal Code of 1960, the contentious Cybercrimes Law and other vague legislation. Internet throttling and shutdowns, and platform bans were also weaponised as a means of controlling public access to a healthy information system.





Photo by [Ziber](#) used under creative commons. Description: Jordanian's protest proposed tax laws in central Amman during June 2018.

Developing effective actions that can facilitate the increased participation of civil society and media as key stakeholders in national dialogue and public communication efforts sits alongside supporting the participation and inclusion of citizens in political processes and dialogue. Greater insight into the ingredients of successful civic engagement and drivers of trust in the media and civil society is essential to ensuring that their work is effective and relevant. Citizens, who are the media's audiences, play an important role in the media information ecosystem. Media consumption habits, trust in media, media and digital literacy are all important contributors to media viability as well as important indicators for media development and activities.

The following report will examine public perceptions of the media in Jordan as well as information needs and behaviours, with a view to presenting a set of recommendations for strengthening media and civil society in Jordan. The report is based on findings from the analysis of series of focus group discussions conducted across Jordan and a quantitative research piece conducted via telephone and online in June and July 2023, all outlined in the Methodology section below. A literature review which examined multiple quantitative research studies conducted during the past 5 years in Jordan also provided an analysis of changes in behaviours and attitudes. Interviews with a number of key media stakeholders and experts were used to provide additional insights and verify the findings from the research.

The report finds that the situation in Jordan is one where a restricted national mainstream media environment combines with increased availability of content via social media platforms and mobile applications. As such information consumption in Jordan is now being driven by social media platforms, habits, feeds, and algorithms. The report also finds that the Jordanian public, whether as a result of news fatigue, lack of trust in the media or simply due to time constraints, largely expects information and news to come to them rather than having to seek them out. Despite a widespread frustration with the quality of content that they receive, audiences are turning to their feeds, stories, trends and reels frequently for information that they consider affecting their daily lives. This information is often granular, providing very specific detailed information on traffic updates, crime, educational and job opportunities. Interest in news about political and electoral processes in Jordan is low, conversely, and the media are seen to be contributing to the general sense of feeling underwhelmed with potential political reform. There are few media platforms, be them traditional or social, that are perceived to truly represent Jordanians and their needs.

Following a section which examines the socio- political context and media environment, this report will provide an assessment of the media landscape in Jordan from the perspective of citizens. It will focus on the views and opinions of young people, women, and persons with disabilities in particular. It will examine aspects such as media and platform usage, information needs and gaps, and civic engagement. Conclusions will then be presented with a view to providing insights and recommendations which can be used by media owners and content providers as well as Internews and their partners in the Sawt project, namely advocates and policy makers keen on advancing media reforms.

METHODOLOGY

The research question guiding this study was the following:

How and why are Jordanian audiences accessing Jordanian media and what is their perception of its content?

The research broke down into three key areas and related questions:

1. Usage: What media channels are used when and how often? How and why do audiences in Jordan select their news and information sources?

2. Trust: Why do people turn to specific media platforms? What are the underlying purposes of use? What is driving trust in the media? What channels are the most and least trusted and why? What informal, personal, civic, community, individual content creators and other information sources are sought for information, who are most and least trusted and why?

3. Content: How do audiences perceive and analyse the quality of media content in Jordan? How do they verify information? What are their needs and gaps in information access? What is missing from their news/media consumption cycle?

The research unpacked the extent to which content gives people a platform for expression and voice. It also unpacked aspects related to mis- and disinformation and media and information literacy (MIL).

METHODS

The IEA used qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to generate the required information and analysis. Qualitative research provides insight into attitudes and drivers of behaviour; it also investigates probes, gauges spontaneous reactions, and generates lists of parameters for example motivations, contextual issues and consequences in the case of this research. Quantitative research justifies, validates, confirms, measures, and assesses various elements. It is structured and tends to be more rigid, dealing with larger samples. Used together, qualitative, and quantitative data will provide more detailed and culturally rich information on the practices and beliefs of the society that is being studied. Qualitative and quantitative data work collectively to verify the findings from different sources used in the study. The proposed methodology during the course of this research study was the collection of information via the following qualitative and quantitative research methodologies:

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH
Focus Groups	Telephone/Online Surveys
Key Informant Interviews	Literature Review

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Focus Group Research: this research took the form of robust focus group research which was conducted across Jordan in July 2023 in order to provide up to date data on media consumption and information access by women and men. The project researcher worked with a local Jordanian research agency, Analyzeize, to gather data on the ground. The local organisation recruited and moderated the focus groups based on a discussion guide developed by the researcher, providing audio and video recordings from which the researcher analysed and produced the report. The final report was then reviewed by the local organisation to ensure integrity of the data and verify the analysis.

FGD segmentation and timeline:

FOCUS GROUP SEGEMENTATION

			Central Amman, Zarqa, Madaba, Balqa		Northern Irbid, Mafraq, Ajloun, Jerash		Southern Karak, Ma'an, Tafleh, Aqaba		NO. of Groups
			Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Youth	Men	18-24	×			×			2
		25-29		×			×		2
	Women	18-24		×	×		×		3
		25-29			×			×	2
Positive Deviant	Men & Women	29+	Activists, Community Leaders, Community Influencers.					1	
TOTAL									10

Group number	Governate	Gender	Age	Date	Time
1	Central-Rural	Male	18-24	12.7.2023	15:00 - 17:00
2	Central-Urban	Male	25-29	12.7.2023	17:30 - 19:30
3	Central-Urban	Female	18-24	13.7.2023	15:00 - 17:00
4	Positive deviants	Mix	29+	13.7.2023	17:30 - 19:30
5	South-Rural	Male	25-29	14.7.2023	10:00 - 12:00
6	South-Rural	Female	18-24		12:30 - 14:30
7	South-Urban	Female	25-29		15:00 - 17:00
8	North-Urban	Male	18-24	15.7.2023	10:00 - 12:00
9	North-Rural	Female	18-24		12:30 - 14:30
10	North-Rural	Female	25-29		15:00 - 17:00

The qualitative study consisted of a series of ten moderator-led focus groups with a focus on women, youth and civil society activists. The age group was 18-30 which accounts for nearly [two-thirds of Jordan's national population](#). This age group was targeted as young people in Jordan continue to be amongst the

** 1-2 Persons with disabilities from each region were included within the focus group sessions.

most marginalized groups due to high levels of unemployment and a lack of representation in decision-making processes. FGDs consisted of 6-8 participants in total and lasted for a maximum of 100 minutes each. The recruitment of participants in focus group sessions took place through an in-depth screening process. Internews' Sawt Team observed a number of the FGDs in person.

A 'positive deviants' group included youth activists, volunteers, and community leaders. All participants were in the youth age group, and represented youth who are positively deviant, meaning they are more active, involved and engaged than a typical young person. The significance of having this group is to include representation from a smaller yet growing segment of youth who are more active and engaged. They are characteristically more informed, prone to more active civic and political participation, and more up to date on current affairs. Their media habits and perceptions are important to capture because they present a more positive view of trends and habits than citizens who tend to be more consumed by the minutia of their daily lives. They are also likely to be opinion formers and future leaders.



Photo by Politics and Society Institute (PSI). Description: Participant in an awareness session of Jordan Sustainability lab project by Politics and Society Institute in partnership with the US embassy in Amman, which was held in the University of Jordan.

Interviews:

In-depth Interviews were conducted with identified key stakeholders in Jordanian civil society/media/public institutions and included partners of USAID-Sawt. Interviews provided a deeper understanding of the nuanced media ecosystem, relationship drivers and trust between different institutions. See Annex I for full list of key informant interviews.

QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Telephone/Online Surveys: A questionnaire developed by the researcher and team was piloted and tested before launch. The questionnaire focused on the specific media consumption habits of the key target groups, youth, women and persons with disabilities. The research team worked with the Higher Council for the Rights of People with Disabilities in Jordan to ensure that the questionnaire was reflective of their needs. The questionnaire was also posted on their website to ensure wider reach and accessibility. Data was analysed and presented in the form of visualisations and infographics.

TARGET GROUP: Sample Design and Segmentation

SEGMENT	CRITERIA	TOTAL SAMPLE
Youth	Age (18-29) Mixed Gender	200
Adult Women	Age (30+)	80
Persons with Disabilities	Age (18+)	80

* Included respondents from Northern, Southern and Central Governorates in each segment.

** Women are included in the youth segment, and also in the adult women segment (adult 30+) and in the persons with disabilities segment.

*** Deaf persons were included via an online survey which was published on the website of the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The data collected via the telephone survey was then merged in a detailed quantitative analysis report, which is called a literature review in this report, merging multiple quantitative research studies conducted during the past 5 years in Jordan. The team utilized 30 public surveys, polls, and research studies conducted in Jordan between 2018-2023 involving perceptions and behaviour related to media consumption. All survey questions related to media; trust, behaviour, and perceptions were extracted, processed and analysed in this report. The Literature review also allowed for the inclusion of data from people over the age of 30 who were not covered by the qualitative and quantitative research. See Annex II for a list of studies used.

MAPPING THE JORDANIAN MEDIA INFORMATION ECOSYSTEM

Jordanian authorities maintain a strict control over the media and criticism of the king and state institutions is punishable by law. King Abdullah II has in the past expressed support for a free media. However, laws to reduce those freedoms have been ratified and the suppression of independent voices in the name of national security has been known to take place. Legal or 'gag' orders, requested by the government-controlled Media Commission and issued by the judiciary and attorney general, are common and restrict the media's ability to produce in-depth reporting on sensitive topics such as terrorism or, more recently, the Covid-19 pandemic. Self-censorship is widely practised in the media in order to eschew topics that are considered to be forbidden and the government has passed a number of laws that criminalise reporting on corruption, insulting the royal family, religion, or national values.

MEDIA LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Jordan was the first country in the Arab world to include reference to access to information in its National Charter in 1991. The Access to Information Act No. 47 in 2007 was also considered to be pioneering in the Arab context although it controversially includes information that cannot be released and allows for other laws such as the 1971 Protection of State Secrets and Documents Law No.50 to take precedence. In reality, what is written and what is enforced are very different things and journalists, as well as citizens, struggle to obtain the data and information they require from official institutions and government bodies. Media outlets continue to be closely monitored and harassed. This situation is further compounded by a lack of awareness amongst the public and media on how to best use access to information requests. The [UNESCO 'Assessment of Media Development in Jordan'](#) study has advocated for the Access to Information Act to be revised in line with international best practice.

Since 2010, Jordan has also imposed a number of pieces of controversial legislation to curb the freedom of online media. Online news websites are required by law to acquire government licenses and various other legal devices and loopholes in the law are often used to crack down on freedom of expression online. The 2015 Cybercrimes law, which has been actively opposed by civil society activists and media freedom campaigners due to its vague and spurious definition of hate speech and use of language, was replaced with an even more restrictive law that could see journalists and civil society activists as well as social media users, whistleblowers, and citizens be further persecuted and prosecuted by the government. This happened at the time of collecting data and writing this report.

In addition to continued use of archaic laws, including the Penal Code of 1960, and the contentious Cybercrimes Law and other vague criminal legislation, in April 2022, [via an amendment to Article 225](#) of the Penal Code, the Jordanian Parliament voted to increase the punishment for journalists reporting on secret trials or criminal investigations by adding a 3-month jail term to already punitive measures.

As navigating a growing restrictive environment becomes more difficult, many news websites are threatening to close down as they cannot afford to pay the legal fees and penalties should they end up being prosecuted. Self-censorship is also rife as result.



FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The declining space for civic and media freedoms has worsened since the pandemic as Jordanian authorities continue to introduce measures to curtail critical voices and debates, issuing gag orders, harassment, detention and hefty financial penalties. In February and March 2022, [12 activists](#) were arrested under the Law of Crime Prevention and Cybercrime Law for planning protests under the pretext that they were allegedly propagating ‘false news.’ March 2022 alone saw the arrest and charge of six journalists in Jordan, including the well-known [Ahmed Hassan Al-Zoubi](#), writer of one of Jordan’s socio-political websites, Sawalief, with a column published weekly in the state-owned newspaper Al Rai. Other journalists questioned on cybercrime charges in March 2022 included [Daoud Kuttab](#), allegedly following an investigative piece he wrote in 2019 about a US-Jordanian businessman, and [Taghreed Rishreq](#), formerly a journalist at Al-Ghad, purportedly over a now deleted tweet criticising an article which mocked the murdered Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi. [Three other journalists were arrested following the publication of work related to the Pandora Papers](#) investigation which revealed that the King of Jordan had amassed a [£70 million secret property empire in the UK and US](#).

The Jordanian courts continue to use gag orders to restrict news and investigative journalism and topics, in particular in relation to the Jordanian Teachers Union and strike action, and King Abdullah and the royal family, including news on the Kings use of Swiss bank accounts to hide his personal wealth leaked as part of a global investigation, [Suisse secrets](#). In June 2022, a [gag order](#) preventing the publication of news and social media about the shooting and murder of a young woman student, provoking widespread mis- and disinformation to spread about the case. A similar pattern emerged when a gag order preventing reporting on a shooting by a young woman in Irbid of members of her family in December 2022. In September 2022, a gag order prohibited references to the Public Security Directorate (PSD) further cementing concerns about freedom of speech and media in the country. Human Rights Watch published a [report](#) in the same month on the government’s continual crackdown on civic space.

MAINSTREAM MEDIA PLATFORMS

In 2019, [the media landscape in Jordan comprised 39 satellite television channels, 16 Jordanian and 23 international, 40 radio stations, 19 print publications, 7 of which were daily, and 122 licensed news websites](#). However, the mainstream media remains dominated by a handful of broadcasting organisations. JRTV and Al Mamlaka are both state-affiliated although Al Mamlaka’s remit is more public service and reflected in its funding and governance structures. The government also owns the national news agency Petra. The Public Security Directorate (PSD) runs a radio platform Amen FM, and the Jordanian armed forces control Al Raya Media Group which manages several radio channels and a news website. Roya TV and Roya News are privately owned by the Al Sayegh family of businessmen. The only other privately owned channel of significance is Amman TV which has ownership linkages with Rotana commercial radio. The two main daily newspapers Al Rai and Al Dustour are majority owned by the Social Security Investment Fund and controlled by government although newspaper readership is on the decline in Jordan. The privately owned Al Ghad newspaper, seen by many as the only remaining independent daily, has been working on digitalisation of its content and accessing audiences via its online website.

Online publications, websites and social media, are also significant players in the Jordan media information ecosystem. Aramram, Tiber, and Amman Net (part of Community Media Network) have been active for many years in providing independent news on political and current affairs in Jordan. Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ) is an Amman-based non-for-profit that is committed to supporting investigative journalism in the Arab world. They offer training, funding support and mentoring to

investigative journalists who aim to produce quality independent professional journalism. Sowt, is an Arabic language podcasting channel which launched in 2017 producing podcasts on political, social and cultural affairs in the region. These outlets are developing a new style of journalism that tackles corruption, calls governments and businesses to account and is addressing controversial issues such as sexuality, religion and ethnicity. These new media outlets tend to live on digital platforms using innovative techniques for the region such as podcasts to reach to new younger audiences. However, in a region where commercial and advertising opportunities are limited, they are working on developing new ways outside of donor funding to keep themselves sustainable. There is also an important network of what could be described as 'hyper local' media that deal with community issues, Radio Al Balad - among other community media and radios - being a case in point.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Digital rights and internet freedom have also become prominent issues in Jordan. In January 2022, [Front Line Defenders](#) reported that the phone of Hala Ahed Deeb, a lawyer and human rights defender, had been hacked with the Pegasus spyware. In April, further revelations included use of the spyware to hack several other activists including Suhair Jaradat, a journalist known to write and advocate for women's rights in Jordan. The government authorities [blocked access to social media and online platforms](#) during the period of high school exams for the third year in a row, claiming to clampdown on cheating. Further to a royal decree which restricted the communications of Prince Hamza, Facebook Live became inaccessible nationwide in May 2022. This followed a ban on Clubhouse in March 2021, a space known for its facilitation of debates around politically and socially controversial topics. The ban on the very popular TikTok, which has 4.4 million users in a country with just over 11 million people, became effective after truck drivers in Maan held protests over rising fuel prices in December 2022. It was alleged that Tiktok was used to [prevent the spread of live footage from the protests](#).

This in a country where over 90% of the population is now covered by [4G LTE infrastructure and 5G services](#) are expected to begin roll out in early 2024. Although internet access differs depending on factors such as rural location, gender and financial status, prices for internet broadband and mobile data are high in Jordan compared to the region. Mobile penetration rate is significant at [78.1%](#) and [Jordan has one of the highest internet penetration rates in the MENA region](#).



Photo by Hisham Zayadneh

DISINFORMATION AND HATE SPEECH

[Mis- and disinformation](#) have become common place in Jordan and are increasingly threatening stability and effective citizen engagement in social and political processes.¹ It is used by a number of different actors, official and unofficial, to undermine credibility and public trust. The global 'infodemic' that emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic has put pressure on governments and media/policy stakeholders to deal with the increase of false data around public health issues and coronavirus. Anti-vaccine narratives which question the safety and efficacy of vaccines is rife. In July 2021, [Facebook removed the profiles of a domestic Jordanian disinformation network which included 35 pages, 3 groups, 89 profiles and 16 Instagram accounts, ownership of which was attributed to 'those associated with the Jordanian military'](#). A report published by the [Stanford Internet Observatory argued that this was the first time a network for coordinated inauthentic behaviour had been suspended in Jordan and that a number of different disinformation narratives had been identified before its suspension](#).

¹ This report refers to the United Nation definitions of misinformation and disinformation which defines disinformation in the following sentence: 'While misinformation refers to the accidental spread of inaccurate information, disinformation is not only inaccurate, but intends to deceive and is spread in order to do serious harm.' Further detail is available at: <https://www.un.org/en/countering-disinformation>

Research conducted into online and social media activity during the [municipal elections held in March 2022](#) demonstrated that hate speech, defamation and cyberbullying were commonplace online.

The proliferation of disinformation and hate speech in the Jordanian media has resulted in a number of punitive laws and measures being implemented by the government. These are seen by some representatives from civil society and media to have been enforced as means to clampdown on freedom of media and expression. The Jordanian government has resorted in the main to overreliance on their cybercrimes law as means of punishment in order to frighten the media and public into self-censorship.

The lack of clarity around what qualifies as hate speech can magnify the danger to journalists and has had catastrophic effects in the case of Jordan. In September 2016, the Jordanian journalist, Nahed Hattar, was assassinated by a member of the public outside the courtroom in which he was standing trial for the crime of 'inciting sectarian strife and racism' for a cartoon he had shared which contained negative depictions of Islamist Jihadists. A rise in incidence of hate speech towards [refugees](#), [Christians](#), [women](#), and other [minority groups](#) has also been documented. Stakeholders commented on the proliferation of content using offensive language and hate speech, sometimes amongst comedians as well as journalists and influencers, in order to gather likes and shares and with a total disregard for ethics.

There are growing concerns about the increasing threats that artificial intelligence (AI) might pose globally becoming considerably more adverse in the unstable political and digital environment in Jordan. The current legal framework in Jordan has little provision in areas such as copyright and intellectual property. There are also worries that, in the wrong hands, AI tools can be used to breach security and access data which could be dangerous in the wrong hands. Issues related to disinformation and hate speech are also paramount and one stakeholder noted that media literacy programmes need to reflect the growing influence of AI enabled and created media messages. In general, stakeholders also noted the limited understanding amongst the media community of digital advancements and rights which needs to be addressed further as technological advancements become, in many ways, autonomous.

PROFESSIONAL WORKING CONDITIONS

A lack of security with contracts and unsafe and poor working conditions often mean that journalists are at times unable to exercise strong professional independence and high ethical standards. In the case of the newly flourishing digital media space, many journalists work without contracts, with low pay and long-term temporary internships defining their working conditions. Without a greater emphasis on employment rights, young entry level journalists can often find themselves exploited, working on minimum wage in dangerous conditions. Low salaries, contract insecurity and lack of editorial independence make journalists and the sector more easily susceptible to corruption, coaptation/containment and intimidation by unethical politicians and powerful elites. In February 2022, [protests by journalists](#) from the state-controlled Al Rai newspaper demanded improved working conditions, having not been paid for months, and calling out corruption within the management and board. Journalists blamed the government for a 'regression in press freedoms' through their continual interference in the work of the media.

Many journalists are leaving the profession to work in PR and communications, which is an increasing trend causing a brain drain in the profession. This is as an unintended consequence for training and capacity building efforts, where well trained journalists are exiting the profession to become communication and advocacy practitioners.

In principle, the Jordanian Press Association which is affiliated to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) should be providing support to journalists where professional working conditions are comprised. In reality, its members are the only people who are classified as journalists and therefore safeguarded by its statutes. Membership is restricted to editors and news presenters; [online and broadcast journalists are unable to join](#). Article 5 of the Jordan Press Association Law further restricts membership to Jordanian citizens and to those who hold a degree in the area of media or journalism and practice their profession on a full-time basis. Restrictive measures combine with compulsory membership to contravene international principles of freedom of expression and media.



FINDINGS

The following sections are informed by findings from the focus group discussions (FGDs), literature review and quantitative data outlined in the Methodology chapter earlier in this report. Overall, the findings reveal that Jordanian and information consumers are feeling the impact of an economic and political context that has been in flux for a few years in Jordan. Ongoing protests against fuel prices and rising unemployment provide the backdrop, and even act as triggers, for opinions and views about the national media scene, which is seen to be irrelevant and unprofessional. As such, engagement with the media is limited, and mainly found via social media. In keeping with global trends, social media platforms are becoming the main sources of information with a reliance on predetermined algorithms to provide news. Civic engagement and interest in national politics is low, likely as a result of the limited professional media reporting on key topics combined with a desire for fast easily digestible information on topics that affect their daily lives.

KEY POINTS

- The media environment in Jordan is considered by many to be unprofessional and unethical, driven in the main by money and therefore public commentary rather than public interest.
- There is an overriding perception that the mainstream media is controlled by elites and government. However, interventions into the media by the authorities are seen to be necessary for the benefit of the country's national security. This speaks to a public perception that the army and state provide Jordan with necessary protection in comparison with other countries in the region.
- The Jordanian media environment is now accessed largely through digital and mobile platforms with social media playing a considerable role in information consumption.
- Trust in the media appears to increase where the media has a strong relationship with official and government sources and actors. Trust in information from government officials and security forces is also high. However, the main factor behind consumption choices is not trust. Ease of access, speed, and amount of time for consumption are the main drivers of media consumption habits.

PLATFORM USAGE

OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF THE MEDIA SCENE



The most important thing to the media is that it makes money. They do not have awareness, principles, and ethics. What we need to work on is improving the ethics and values of the media.
FGD4 Positive Deviants.

There have clearly been a number of changes to the way Jordanian audiences are consuming media, driven by technological advancements, increased mobile and internet penetration, and the experiences of the pandemic. The Jordanian media environment is now accessed largely through digital and mobile platforms with social media playing a considerable role in information consumption.

AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION VIA DIFFERENT INFORMATION SOURCES	Source
	JMI
DATE	6.2022
Smart Phone	95.1%
Computer	34.1%
Internet at home	59.4%
TV Channel Decoder	9.0%
Subscription to daily newspaper	0.6%
Subscription to paid news or information services on the Internet	0.7%
Radio at home	4.7%
CRT Television	10.4%
Flat Screen TV (Digital HD)	86.0%

The increase to the number of media outlets in Jordan was seen as a positive development amongst Jordanian citizens, as was the number and diversity of journalists. However, these developments were overshadowed by negative public perceptions that the media's overriding concern is with views, clicks and revenue and that this is having an impact on the type and quality of content that the media produces. There was a general perception across the board that the media in Jordan is not concerned with providing information that is in the public interest. The prevailing view was the media is now dominated by a range of players – from mainstream media platforms to influencers – who are producing content that is at best entertaining but in the main 'useless' and trivial, and driven by public sentiment and mood, which ultimately leads to views and clicks, rather than public interest.



On many occasions we have seen public opinion criticize media outlets for specific coverage. It is really obvious that they go back and change the news in an indirect way as a result. This happened on more than one occasion. FGD4 Positive Deviants



There has been development in the media, but it is not very positive. Their focus is not on the things we need them to talk about. They are catching up with the trend more than the important issues. FGD7 South Urban Female 25-29

A prime example of this phenomenon, referenced by many of the participants across the groups, was a story about largest chair in Jordan which was viewed on a number of platforms. This example reflects both perceptions that content is trivial and irrelevant but also the concern about media being driven by money as many suggest the story was actually an ad for a furniture company. Regardless of whether this is indeed true, audiences are dissatisfied with both mainstream and online media's predilection for profit over professional content. The majority of participants said there was no media source that represents their views and needs.

Participants in the FGDs also discussed a perception that all of the media is controlled to some extent by the government and related authorities. The publication of trivial content was seen by some to be used by elites in order to distract from political and economic conditions. However, a key point that will be unpacked later in this report, many Jordanians do not consider this control to be troubling but as essential to maintaining security and stability in their country. Trust in the authorities and security services is high amongst Jordanians. This is reflected in their choice of trusted media: official media organisations who have access to official sources and data, namely Al Mamlaka and JRTV, are more likely to be trusted. However, it is important to note that trust is not necessarily driving media consumption choice. Convenience and accessibility are the main factors that compel audiences to access content, predominantly on their mobile phones. As a result, social media platforms are dominating information access and search is becoming redundant.



My point of view is that we are now in the age of social networking sites. FGD3 Central Urban Female 18-24



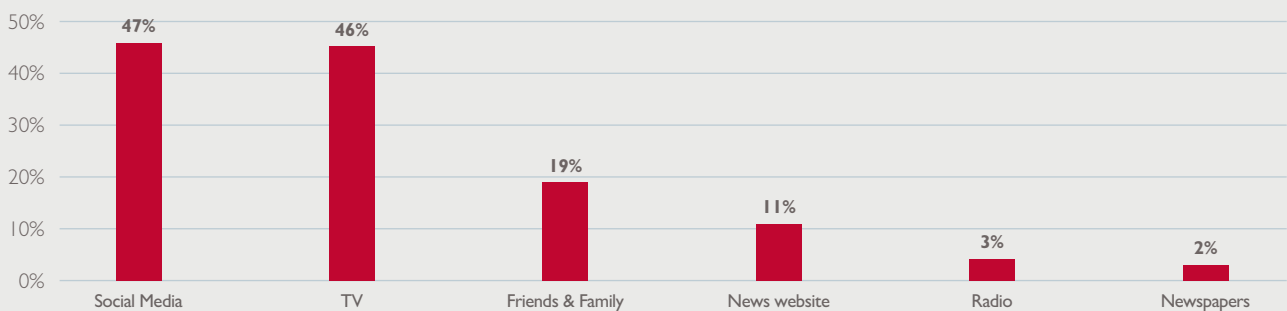
As long as I am holding my phone, I don't go looking for news. The news comes to me. FGD2 Central Urban Male 25-29

This is in-keeping with trends observed over the last five years in Jordan which clearly position social media as the leading news platforms with television platform consumption in decline. The literature review also highlights the dominance of social media in the media diaries of young people suggesting that these patterns are likely to become more entrenched over time.

JORDANIANS' SOURCE OF NEWS

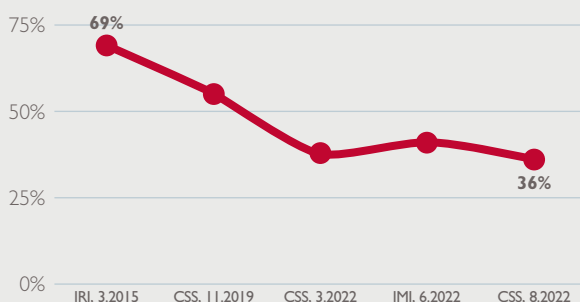
Findings from research conducted in Jordan (2018-2023) on Jordanians' interest in politics. All data extracted from published research reports.

NEWS SOURCE Source of 'News' & 'Local News' (Average Mean 2019-2020 - IRI, CSS, KAS & JMI)



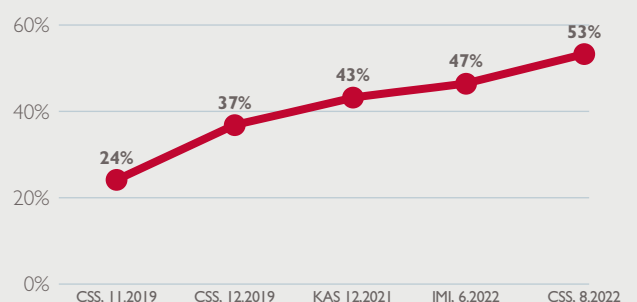
TV DECLINE

Decline in reliance on TV as a main source of 'Local News' & 'Political News'



SOCIAL MEDIA

Rise in reliance on Social Media as a main source of 'Local News'. (2019-2022)



JORDANIANS' USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Findings from research conducted in Jordan (2018-2023) on Jordanians' interest in politics. All data extracted from published research reports.

64%

YOUTH IN JORDAN USE SOCIAL MEDIA AS A NEWS SOURCE

Source: IRI, JMI 2021-2022

47%

PEOPLE IN JORDAN USE SOCIAL MEDIA AS A NEWS SOURCE

Source: IRI, JMI, KAS, CSS, 2019-2022

34%

PEOPLE IN JORDAN USE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR POLITICAL NEWS

Source: CSS, JMI 2022

JORDANIANS' USAGE OF INTERNET & FACEBOOK

Findings from research conducted in Jordan (2019-2023). All data extracted from published research reports.



FACEBOOK

80%

USE FACEBOOK
JMI 6.2022

76%

SOURCE OF NEWS
IRI.2021

46%

SOURCE OF NEWS
DURING CRISIS
JMI.2022

The percentage of Jordanians who report using the internet increased from 54.9% in 2019 (CSS.12.2019) to 84.5% in 2022 (JMI 6.2022)



INTERNET USE

2019



2022



95%

HAVE A SMART PHONE
JMI 6.2022

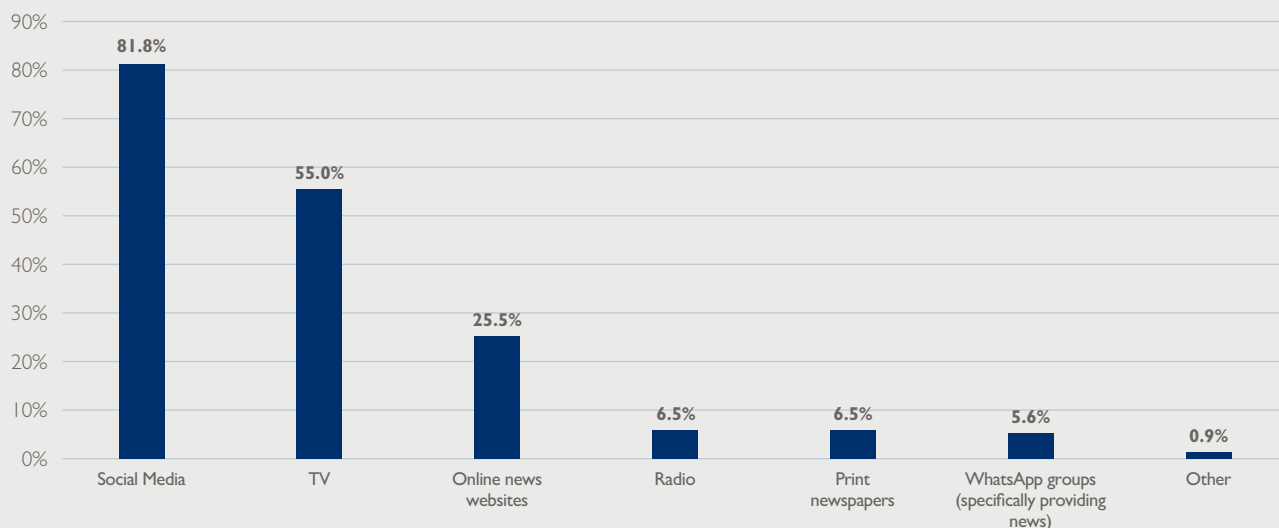


59%

HAVE INTERNET AT HOME
JMI 6.2022

SOCIAL MEDIA

Q6. WHICH JORDANIAN MEDIA SOURCE DO YOU ACCESS MOST REGULARLY FOR NEWS ABOUT JORDAN IN GENERAL?



The use of smartphones is closely associated with social media and with information consumption. This is changing the way that audiences are accessing news. Rather than following or searching for particular information, stories, or topics directly, audiences rely on automated feeds, reels and social media algorithms including trends and notifications, to provide them with easily accessible updates. Users' past behaviour, relevance of content, and the status of posts are some of the algorithm factors that are taken into account by social media platform. The quantitative data confirmed the findings from the FGDs that social media consumption occurs on a daily basis amongst the majority of Jordanians, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities. The FGDs revealed that men are more likely to be on social media throughout the day whereas younger women check social media at the end of the day before going to bed.

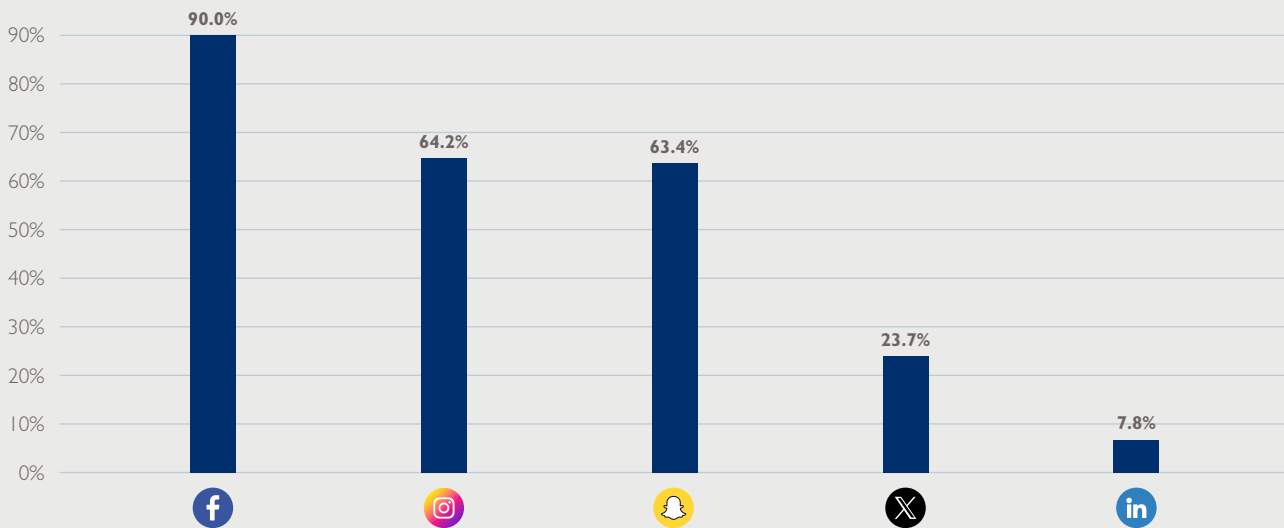


We switch channels, on Al-Jazeera, Roya, and Al Mamlaka, and so on, but if there is news that catches my eye, it will be on the phone. FGD7 South Urban Female 25-29

Facebook is still recalled as the leading social media provider amongst the groups. However, Instagram, TikTok, and to some extent Twitter, are also playing an important role in information provision revealing an increasingly fragmented social media landscape. The charts below demonstrate that although Facebook remains the leading social media platform, other platforms have been gaining audiences over the last couple of years. TikTok has been banned in Jordan, further to a move by the authorities who blocked the platform in December 2022 to stop the spreading of content from protests and strikes which took place in Maan. In Jordan, [4.3 million users](#) lost direct access to the platform. However, the FGDs revealed that many Jordanians are using VPNs to override the block and TikTok remains an increasingly popular choice.

Do you get your news from the following social media platforms? (% Yes)	Source
SOURCE OF NEWS- SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS	IRI
DATE	11.2021
Facebook	76.0%
Instagram	23.0%
TikTok	13.0%
Snapchat	13.0%
Twitter	13.0%

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS (YOUTH 18-34)- CSS 6.2022

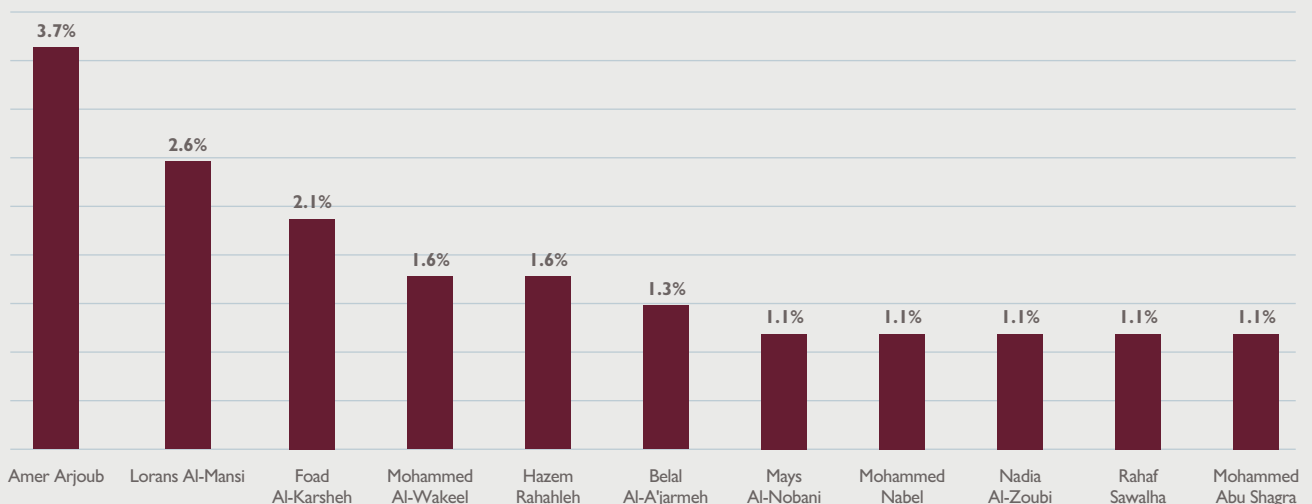


This speaks to the shifting role of social media [globally](#) where the use of more traditional players for example Facebook are being supplemented or even substituted for TikTok and other video- dominant networks. Younger audiences were more likely to view Facebook as a platform for older people. Amongst women in particular, older women found that Instagram was more aimed at younger audiences and that, on Facebook, comments were easier to read and there was more dialogue amongst people. Younger women felt that Facebook was aimed at older audiences and were therefore more likely to turn to Instagram. Again, these findings are in keeping with global trends. Younger generations have grown up with social media and are more likely to follow influencers or personalities than they are media organisations and journalists. In this regard it is worth noting that Snapchat is perceived as a platform for celebrities and was more cited in the younger women groups.

Threads, Trends, Notifications, Reels are well recognised features across social media platforms which Jordanian audiences see as shortcuts to accessing news and information with no need to search for content. Older groups were more likely to show awareness of the use of algorithms to select news and there was a suspicion of social media companies use of AI in that regard. However, this was not stopping audiences from consuming information in this way, as convenience and speed win over scepticism in terms of news access choice. It should also be noted that audiences are not differentiating between algorithmic news selection and their own news selection processes. One is not seen to be better than the other; but algorithmic news selection is preferred for its speed, access, and immediacy.

The role of influencers in the information selection cycle should also be considered, particularly as the Jordanian influencer scene is viewed as one of the most buoyant in the region. Influencers emerged as a large part of the social media information mix for information, entertainment, and inspiration amongst all of the groups. The quantitative data reflected the findings from the FGDs in terms of key influencers amongst Jordanian audiences.

Q8. WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS OR CONTENT CREATORS DO YOU FOLLOW FOR INFORMATION AND NEWS? (TOTAL YOUTH, WOMEN & PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES)



What is interesting is that among the most cited influencers are in fact some well-known media personalities/TV presenters, Amer Arjoub, Foad Al Karhseh and Belal Al-A'jarmeh, for example. This points further to the fact that the standard models for gatekeeping of news have changed. News and information providers are individuals as much as they are organisations and have a greater ability to engage in a more personal and direct way. Much has been written about the role of authenticity in building trust, in particular in relation to social media, and it is clear that authenticity is also critical for media. There is an important question then about the role of the [journo-influencer](#), in particular those who follow trends and engagement to develop their story-telling techniques, in co-existing with traditional media and acting as an alternative news source in particular among younger – the TikTok or Gen Z – generation.

Although attitudes towards influencers in the FGDs were mixed, over half of the respondents in the quantitative research said they did not follow any influencers. This likely reflects a general hesitancy and mistrust of influencers as a main news source. Feedback from the FGDs in the main suggests influencers

are followed because people are interested in their lives and perceived values rather than for any news, information, and analysis they might provide. There was on the one hand a sense of pride in the Jordanian influencer scene and their assumed contribution to Jordan's image abroad through content which presents Jordan's natural and historical attributes, food, and restaurant scene. Journo-influencers were viewed as contributing to awareness, raising around social issues and change. On the other hand, influencers were also seen to be driven by money and the content they produced was regarded by many as useless at best, harmful at worse.



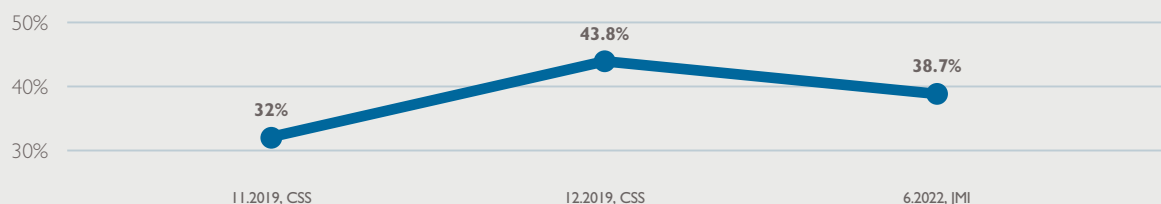
With all due respect, they are personalities, but what did they do with their lives to represent you?
FGD2 Central Urban Male 25-29



We call people influencers who are in fact not influencers. FGD4 Positive Deviants

The influencer environment contributes to the view that all types of media in Jordan, mainstream or social, is driven by views and money. Participants associated large amounts of money with high profile influencers and commented on the financial possibilities that are available to anyone if they choose to go down this route. Many of the more popular influencers – Omar Al Tarawneh and Belal Al-A'jarmeh for example – were seen to be moving in an adverse direction in terms of their ethics and moral character. Influencers specifically were seen to be damaging the mental health of women, young people, and children. This view was dominant in women's groups who also more likely to cite Ola Fares as an important journo-influencer. These findings are in keeping with those from the literature review which show trust in social media activists and influencers to be on the decline.

TRUST IN NEWS FROM SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISTS/ INFLUENCERS. (MEAN SCORE-2019-2022)



The JMI study also confirms that Facebook is the leading platform in terms of trust and credibility of social media activists i.e., influencers.

TRUST IN CREDIBILITY OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISTS	Source
	JMI
DATE	6.2022
Jordanian Activists on Facebook	43.6%
Activists on WhatsApp groups	42.0%
Jordanian Activists on Instagram	41.4%
Jordanian Activists on Twitter	37.2%



Photo by Ron Lach

What also comes across from the audiences' perceptions of the role of social media is that, in a context where media is driven by public commentary and therefore clicks and revenue, social media algorithms and content posted by influencers are what is driving mainstream media content.

This perception is articulated in a number of groups using the example of Roya's flagship Nabd Al Balad programme as the embodiment of social media leading the mainstream narrative. The programme is described as following social media trends and engagement in order to inform production and editorial decisions. That said, audiences were clear on the different roles that social media and mainstream media, in particular television, are playing their information consumption cycle. Social media is the first and main point of access to news content. However, much of the content that is consumed via social media comes from the leading mainstream media television brands, namely Roya and Al Mamlaka. This is hardly surprising as both of the media organisations have defined digital and social media strategies by platform. Participants did also express concerns that if social media was what was informing the mainstream narrative then the information sphere would be wholly driven by trend rather than the relevant necessary information they need.



I expect everyone agrees with me that social media is what leads television at this stage. This is very dangerous. If someone has 100,000 on Tik Tok, he will lead you like a media institution. Then what will happen? FGD5 South Rural Male 25-29

TELEVISION



We tuned into TV instead of our phones at times like the Turkish elections as all the channels were broadcasting live. Also, during the events in Sudan. Al Jazeera presents you with news from all of the states and all of the areas in a complete way. FGD5 South Rural Male 25-29

The findings from the literature review and from the quantitative data demonstrate that television is still playing a significant role in the daily information consumption cycle of most Jordanians. As noted above, television as a platform is less noteworthy; content by the leading television brands, however, is regularly consumed via social media. That being said, younger audiences who are more likely to be living at home, consumed the medium of television with their parents and on the weekend i.e., Friday. Television appears to play a particularly important role during Ramadan, public holidays and national events, for example the Royal Wedding in June 2023 as well as during the coronavirus pandemic. Television as a platform was seen to be more available when one had the luxury of time, for example at the weekends and holidays but also when unemployed. Again, and this finding is corroborated by the recent IPSOS survey 2022, the majority of Jordanians are most likely to be watching televised events such as the Royal Wedding via live feeds on social media platforms namely Facebook.

WHAT IS THE TV CHANNEL MOST WATCHED FOR LOCAL NEWS RELATED TO JORDAN	Source	
	CSS	CSS *
DATE	12.2019	8.2022
Ro'ya	33.9%	44.9%
Al Mamlaka	5.3%	24.5%
Jordan TV	25.0%	15.4%
Amman TV	1.6%	5.9%
Al Jazeera	2.5%	2.2%
Al Urdun Al Aan	4.6%	1.6%
Al Haqiqa Al Duwaliya	4.9%	1.5%
Yarmouk		1.0%
Sama Al Urdun	1.0%	0.9%
Al Arabiya		0.8%
Noor Al Urdun	2.4%	0.4%
Amen Al Aam (PSD)		0.4%
CNN		0.1%

The top three Jordanian television brands mentioned in the focus group discussions were Royya, Al Mamlaka and JRTV, as seen above in the two CSS studies from 2019 and 2022 and echoed in the latest IPSOS survey. The significant increase in audience interest in Al Mamlaka, which began broadcasting in 2018, is likely due to its further embedding in the information ecosystem in Jordan over the past 5 years,

*Filter question asked to only those who follow local news via TV. 36% were asked this question.

possibly to some extent replacing the state broadcasting apparatus, Jordan TV in many viewing schedules. *Al Mamlaka* is active online and social media, including TikTok. This is in contrast to JRTV which is still heavily reliant on its television content and daily news bulletin for viewership figures and reach.

It is important to note that audiences are not exclusively consuming either *Roya* or *Al Mamlaka*, suggesting that there is no particular loyalty for one over the other. In fact, some participants felt that the content across both channels was very similar if not identical. A number suggested that information was ‘copied and pasted’ across the different channels and their platforms. These types of behaviours, perceived or actual, are likely to be contributing to the lack of trust and limited active engagement in the media which will be discussed further in this report.

Al Mamlaka was more likely to be discussed positively however whereas *Roya* was more likely to generate more critical opinions. However, both *Roya* and *Al Mamlaka* appear to play an equal role in the information consumption cycle of Jordanians across all of the groups, regardless of whether they were viewed positively or negatively. This could be a reflection on the limited number of media brands in Jordan which are producing high-production value video content which is shareable via social media platforms. With audiences moving more towards the consumption of video-based content, the two leading broadcasters are more likely to play a role in the information ecosystem regardless of sentiment.

Participants in all of the FGDs recalled *Al Mamlaka* as a channel of significance in the Jordanian news information cycle as it provides accurate content from official sources and is ‘serious about the news.’ There is a lack of clarity around ownership, funding and governance of *Al Mamlaka* with a mixed perception of whether it is affiliated to the government or particular members of the royal family. Participants in the FGDs who viewed the Jordanian media scene negatively were likely to see *Al Mamlaka* as a non-independent channel. Participants who viewed restrictions on media by the authorities as a necessity for national security were more likely to view *Al Mamlaka* as independent.



Al Mamlaka channel is free. Everything is transparent and clear. FGD8 North Urban male 18-24

Sawt Al Mamlaka was cited by participants as a favoured programme, confirmed by findings in the IPSOS 2022 survey, which placed it as the third most watched television programme in Jordan. Amer Arjoub, the show’s presenter, was also referenced across many of the groups and as seen above is a leading social media figure and influencer. Participants referenced watching clips from Arjoub on Facebook and other social media platforms rather than the programme in its entirety. Participants in some of the groups highlighted the ethics and talent of *Al Mamlaka*’s presenters. The news delivered by *Al Mamlaka* was seen by many to be accurate and relevant, and its viewership was driven by strong reporting on local Jordanian news and events in combination with international coverage. Both men and women felt ‘confident’ in *Al Mamlaka* and this sentiment was echoed fairly widely across the groups.



Al Mamlaka is a political channel that is more political than actual politicians. It brings political analysts who discuss specific issues and talk about events that are happening in the world, Russia, Ukraine, China, America. Frankly, they are stronger than JRTV in this aspect. FGD6 South Rural Female 18-24



JRTV is the official channel but it only broadcasts local news whereas Al Mamlaka can talk about the political situation in Britain and the political situation in America from a regional perspective. This is what distinguishes them. FGD5 South Rural Male 25-29

There was some concern voiced that *Al Mamlaka* was beginning to chase and maximise views and, by proxy, revenue. This might be driven by dominant perceptions of the overall media scene being motivated by revenue. It could also be a reflection on possible changes in content which might be emerging on *Al Mamlaka*. Either way, this critical view needs to be recognised and addressed as it could serve to weaken independent media and media freedoms.

Roya was viewed by many in the FGDs as the first to publish news of the mainstream media brands, again offering both an international and local perspective. It was clear that Roya's online news site was differentiated from its television content and seen to cover news more comprehensively and with immediacy. Participants were likely to follow Roya News on Facebook and Instagram. *Nabd al Balad* is its most popular programme followed by *Caravan*. However, there was some concern that the content of *Nabd al Balad* is defined and developed off the back of trends and influencers. Some of the participants felt that this compromised the integrity of its content, with one example cited being a programme on electronic blackmail which did not get to the heart of the issues.

The 7.30 news programme on Roya News was also popular across the groups, in particular younger groups and women. Mohamed al Khalidi, Head of News, was referenced by some and equated to Amer Arjoub from *Al Mamlaka* in terms of quality of presenting. It is worth noting that Roya was commended in some of the FGDs for employing a blind presenter, Rashid Al Rabab'a. Roya News was seen as the first port of call in Jordan for news on Palestine. This might be as a result of its outpost bureau and location in Palestine. The events in Jenin were taking place at the time of the FGDs and Palestine was at the forefront of most of the participants' minds. This might have impacted on recall of Roya News which was high amongst the groups.



Roya is faster as they want to get more views. They are not about accuracy. They just want likes. FGD9 North Rural Female 18-24

Criticism of Roya revolved around a perception that it followed social media trends to inform its outputs and was concerned more with production values than substance. Outside of Roya News, it was viewed by many as an entertainment channel and content which appears on the entertainment side appears to tarnish its reputation as a serious news provider. There was a concern with accuracy of content on Roya, which was seen to be compromised due to their desire to be the first to report on news.



Jenin is obviously the most important news, but I also was interested in the piece of news about cooperation between Jordan and Syria to tackle drugs smuggling. This news does not appear anywhere, but I think it is a positive piece of news. It is a shame these issues are not published. Roya would never put out this kind of news because they are distracted by other things such as people getting fat and these things entertain people. FGD4 Positive Deviants



On Facebook or Instagram, for example, Roya publishes a headline, for example, a murder, and the details are in a link which then takes money from you. FGD2 Central Urban Male 25-29

As with *Al Mamlaka*, the accuracy of statements such as the above and reactions towards the media being financially motivated is irrelevant if large numbers of audiences consider such statements to be fact. Negative perceptions of media, whether founded or unfounded, which are unanimously shared serve to undermine the freedom and possibilities for a healthy functioning and representative public sphere.

JRTV was less cited amongst the groups and appears to be increasingly redundant as a news source. However, some participants, in particular older rural groups see JRTV as more accurate because they get

data from official sources, a point which will be returned to later in this report. It is also worth noting that Amman TV was more popular amongst the women FGDs although many reported accessing its content via its online presence.



If there are terrorist events in Jerash or the events at Karak castle etc I go to Al Jazeera because they are free FGD5 South Rural Male 25-29



Do you remember the events of Ma'an, I mean, the Jordanian television did not focus on this, while Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya were extremely focused on providing the whole picture. FGD10 North Rural Female 25-29

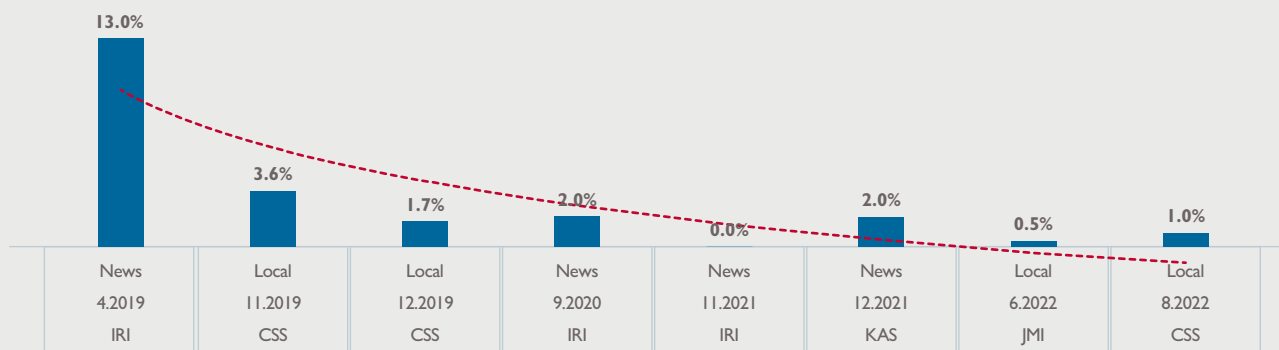
Al Jazeera, CNN, Sky and then BBC were the most cited international channels although Al Jazeera is clearly the most watched amongst Jordanian citizens. Participants who were mostly likely to say they rarely watched television cited Al Jazeera as their leading television channel and brand. Across all of the groups, Al Jazeera was seen to provide accurate and in-depth reporting on Jordanian events, a finding echoed by the JMI survey. There was no criticism of Al Jazeera in any of the groups, possibly due to the fact that it is not viewed as a product of the Jordanian media scene. The Al Jazeera website was cited as a source of news in many of the groups.

Outside of news, as Korean and Turkish soap operas remain popular, it is worth considering the growing audience for Netflix in the region and in Jordan. Netflix's first original Arabic language production, Al Rawabi School for Girls, despite receiving mixed reactions, dealt with issues such as so called honour-based violence and gender in Jordan. It has been commissioned for a second series reflecting Netflix strategy to grow their audience in the region. Netflix was more cited amongst the groups as a video on demand platform. MBC's streaming service Shahid was not as popular as Netflix. A [Northwestern University in Qatar survey of media usage in MENA conducted in 2019](#) found that usage of streaming services like Shahid and Netflix was much lower in Jordan than in other countries in the region.



RADIO

RADIO AS A SOURCE OF NEWS (AVERAGE MEAN 2019-2022)



Radio is playing a much smaller role in the Jordanian media consumption cycle. The quantitative data revealed that 6.5% of the total sample access radio regularly for news about Jordan compared to 81.8% for social media, 55% television and 25.5% online news websites. Participants in the FGDs indicated that radio has become relegated to listening in the car or on transportation services.

TRUST IN RADIO (MEAN SCORE- 2019-2022)



There is an appetite for talk shows which are seen to be reflective of people's needs and often solutions driven. However, there is little evidence that audiences are actively choosing to listen to the radio and once again its choice as a platform is driven by convenience, listening while in traffic and on long journeys, and access. When prompted to recall radio stations, local radio appears to play a larger role than national across many of the groups— Sawt Al Karak (FGD5, 7 and 10), Radio Tafilah, Sawt Al Janoub (FGD10) - were all mentioned across the groups. Hala FM was the only large national station mentioned but reference is minimal. Amen FM, Fenn and Mazaj FM were also referenced but again very limited.

Mohamed Al Wakeel, a prominent radio personality, was widely referenced across the groups and he scored highly on the quantitative data as a popular social media influencer. Participants were more likely to access his content via his personal website and social media platforms than listen to him on the radio. Al Wakeel was praised for his accurate content and professionalism.

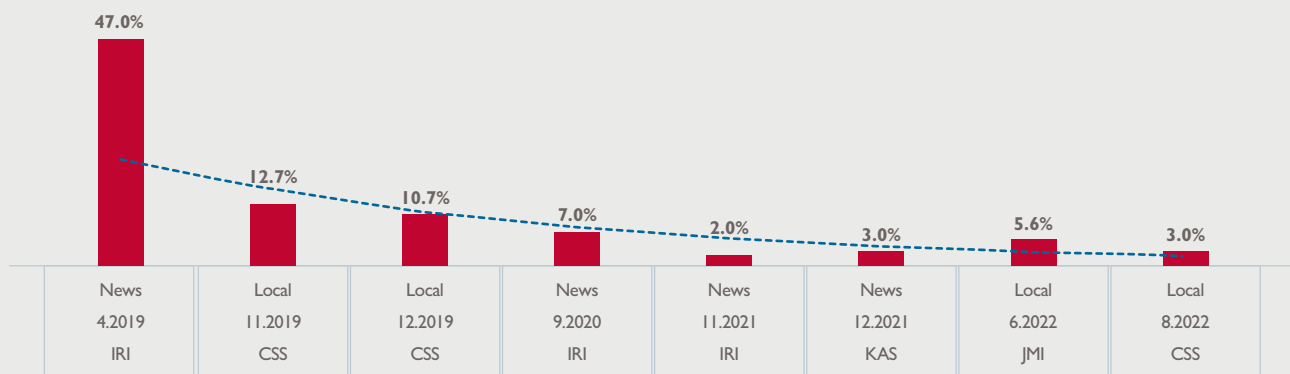


Podcasts were also referenced in three of the groups although the format did not stand out significantly as a platform. Two of the groups were rural young women and men. A discussion amongst younger rural women in the south (FGD6) revealed that popular podcasts in this groups came from the larger television brands: Khadija Bengana from an Al Jazeera podcast, and a Roya podcast were referenced, although no one mentioned listening to it, and there was little enthusiasm for a discussion about the positives of podcasting. Podcasts were merely referenced in the younger men's group. The positive deviants' group, which is comprised of community activists were more familiar with podcasts as a format, describing them as spaces where stories about sensitive topics can be told more freely. Local podcasting companies Sowt and Sada were mentioned. Again, although conversant about podcasts, they appear to play a very limited role in information consumption amongst the positive deviants.

ONLINE NEWS WEBSITES

The quantitative data revealed that online news websites were the third most popular platform for news after social media and television. This finding is somewhat corroborated in the literature review, although a mean score from 11 studies between 2019-2022 puts online news websites at 11.4% and fourth after social media, television and then 'friends and family' as sources of news. It should be noted that 'friends and family' as a news source has been rapidly declining over the last five years, although the same can be said of online news websites.

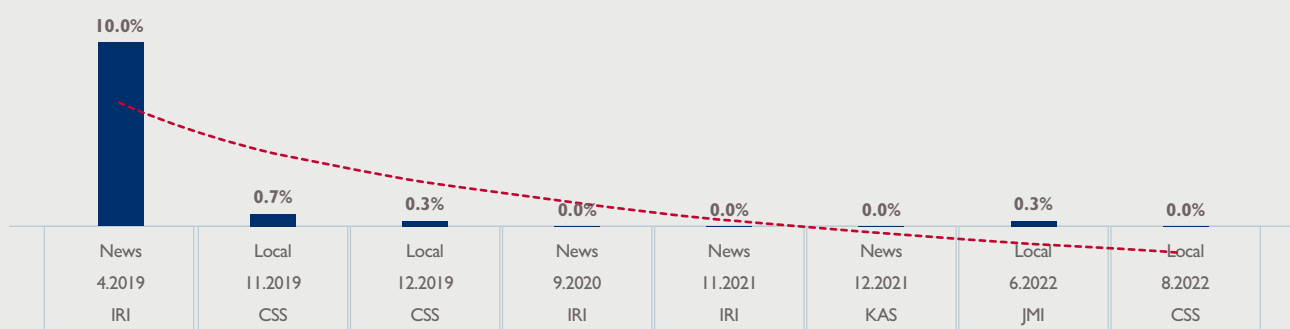
ONLINE NEWS WEBSITE AS A SOURCE OF NEWS (AVERAGE MEAN 2019-2022)



These figures are reflective of global trends in news consumption. The [Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2023](#) finds that less than 25% of people begin their news consumption with a website or application, down 10% in the last 5 years. This is particularly acute amongst younger groups who are more likely to access news using social media or algorithm-led aggregators. The larger percentage decrease in Jordan correlates with the Reuters Institute report's findings that European markets were more likely to access news via websites than in the Global South. In all of the FGDs, participants confirmed that they were more likely to access news via social media than go directly to websites. The quantitative data however puts over half, 58%, of the respondents to the survey, accessing online news websites at least three times a week or more. Young male respondents in the survey were also more likely to access online websites for news about their local area and nationally.

There was a consensus in the FGDs that printed newspapers were now redundant as they can now be 'followed' electronically – a comment that newspapers are used to clean windows is referenced in a few of the groups. This is confirmed in the literature review which puts newspapers at 0% penetration by 2022. The quantitative data puts print newspapers at 6.5% although it is important to leave some margin of error for respondents who may have equated online newspaper brands with their print editions when answering the survey questions.

NEWSPAPERS AS A SOURCE OF NEWS (AVERAGE MEAN 2019-2022)



Recall of online websites was mainly mainstream media brands for example *Roya*, *Al Mamlaka*, *Al Ghad*, and *Al Jazeera*. However, many participants commented on accessing the websites of *Roya* and *Al Mamlaka* via links from their social media feeds. In some cases, frustration with this as a mechanism to access news was voiced with a preference for information to be presented on the social media pages of the media organisations rather than being redirected to their websites. There was also a connection made between sending audiences to websites in order to generate revenue, via advertising or sponsored links, which was viewed negatively and seen as exploitative.



Mohamed Al Wakeel posts an interesting headline and then puts up a link about something about unemployment or taxes, something which affects most people. Then you open the link because you want to see what's on it and you get ads.
FGD8 North Urban Male 18-24

Al Ghad was referenced in three of the FGDs, 3, 6 and 7, which were all women groups. There was little conversation to differentiate it from other newspapers in Jordan such as *Al Rai* or *Al Dustour*. However, when discussed, all of the newspaper brands were accessed online rather than in print, and often via social media posts.

Online websites which provide specific news from Palestine were also recalled in many of the groups and were seen to provide accurate and in-depth information. This focus on Palestine is likely a reflection of the timing of the FGDs coinciding with events taking place in Jenin. It suggests that online news sites might be more popular when specific events are taking place which may not be fully covered by the Jordanian media. This is corroborated in the recent JMI study on media consumption in Jordan which puts news websites third after Facebook and television during disasters and emergencies.

YOUTH 18-34: WHAT SOURCE DO YOU RELY ON THE MOST FOR NEWS DURING DISASTER & EMERGENCIES	Source
	JMI
DATE	6.2022
Facebook	59.8%
TV	23.3%
News websites	5.6%
Friends, Family, Colleagues	1.7%
News Apps- Nabd, Google	2.4%
Twitter	3.3%
WhatsApp and other messaging apps	2.5%
Radio	0.3%
Newspapers	0.0%
I don't follow	0.9%

It should be noted that independent news website, *Khabimi*, was recalled positively by one participant in FGD8 North Urban Young Male.

As seen above, surprisingly WhatsApp is playing a less than significant role in media consumption habits. Although WhatsApp Groups are referenced in the FGDs, they are often associated with specific or specialist topics for example university, local news or sports. Participants were more likely to click on links shared in WhatsApp groups as they felt safer and more private than other social media applications.



CONTENT

The [IPSOS Consumer Sentiment Index](#) which was conducted in Jordan in December 2022 and based on a national survey revealed the top three concerns of Jordanians to be the high cost of living, 59%, unemployment, 54%, and poverty and social inequality, 42% and the majority of respondents rated their personal financial situation as weak. These concerns were very much reflected in the main topics of interest referenced by participants in the FGDs. Economic issues and development as well as job opportunities were recalled across most of the groups as important topics which drive their media consumption habits. Male groups showed some interest in alternative economic solutions for example Bitcoin and cryptocurrency as well as checking the price of gold and economic websites. This extended to following information on the Jordanian economic crisis and the rise in fuel prices.

Entrepreneurship and content which focuses on self-improvement as well as job opportunities was commonly desired across all groups. At the time of conducting the FGDs, the results of the *Tawjihi*, the General Secondary Education Certificate Examination in Jordan which is the final stage of tertiary education before deciding on entering higher education and which subjects to study, were being announced in the media. All of the groups discussed following the *Tawjihi* results and coverage in the media.





There was a programme on JRTV called Shabab Ala Al Tareeq about the success of young people. It is the only programme we watch (on JRTV) because it sheds light on successful people who are like us, creative people. FGD4 Positive Deviants

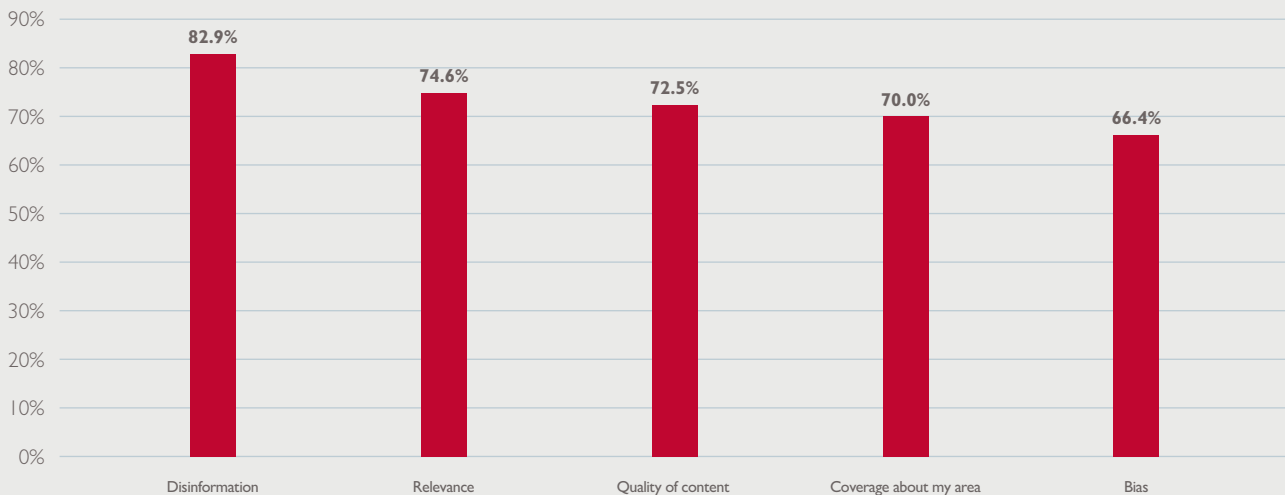


Joe Hattab shows us other cultures, so you really benefit from his work. I feel at times that influencers motivate and support. I love photography and I follow a lot of pages like Samar Barjous. There are times when I don't like their content much, but it helps me to learn how to shoot pictures. So, I go onto their pages to learn only. FGD3 Central Urban Female 18-24

The focus on economic issues reveals a concern with the immediate effects of the financial crisis on the daily lives of Jordanians. Other topics of interest which were commonly referenced in the groups were news of traffic updates and accidents, weather and in particular at the time the heatwave which had hit Jordan, and local crime and murder cases. This type of what is known as 'service news' are universal interests globally as is interest in natural disasters, local news, the economy, crime and foreign coverage. International news on events in Palestine, Sudan and Ukraine were all commonly sought after topics and although international, were also seen to have impact and be relevant to the lives of Jordanians.

This type of news consumption is also reflective of the sense of immediacy that is dominating media and news consumption. Young people globally are more likely to see news as 'what is happening right now' be it sports, entertainment or politics which is in keeping with the on-demand nature of media consumption. [Selective news avoidance remains high globally](#) and this is clearly a feature which is common amongst Jordanian audiences many of whom discussed switching off from the news that is not seen to be relevant to their daily lives. News avoidance is more common amongst younger lesser educated audiences from lower socio-economic backgrounds who are more likely to be less politically engaged. There are a number of reasons for selective news avoidance ranging from a negativity bias in the news cycle, news and media literacy, as well as feeling overwhelmed by the volume of content. For Jordanians all of these reasons were voiced by participants; however, relevance or lack thereof was the key determinate in media and news consumption, after disinformation, a point that will be examined further into the report.

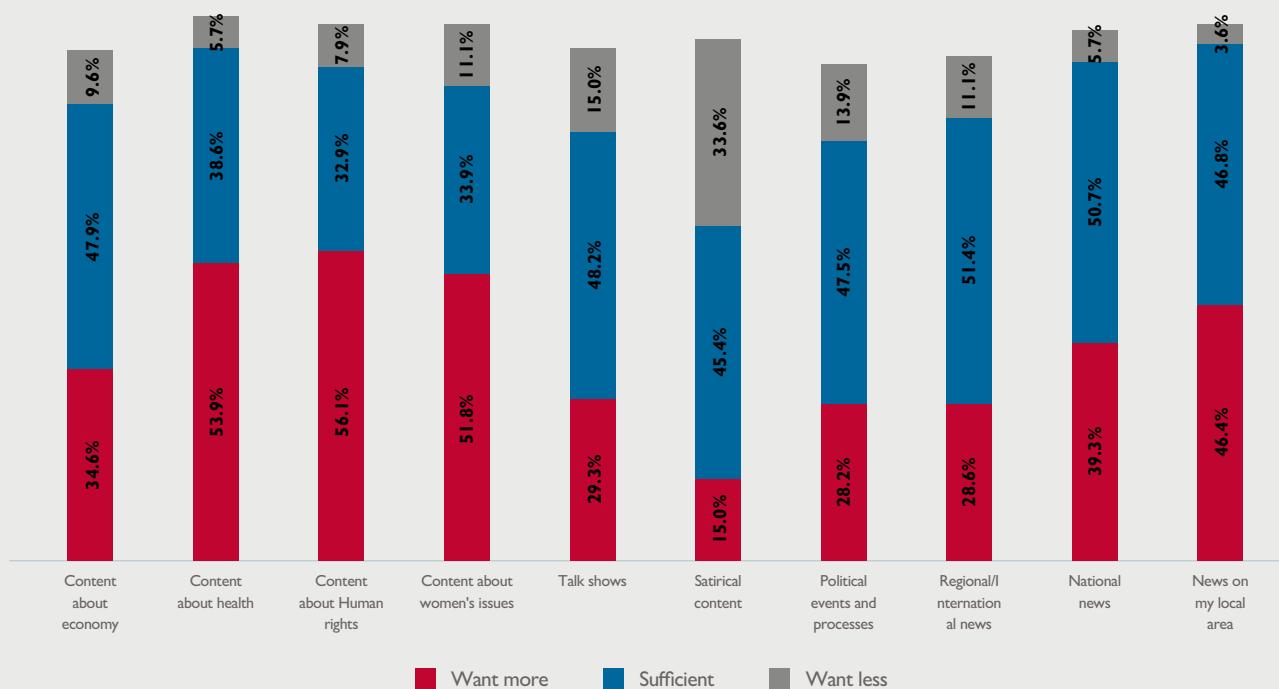
Q13. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING, IF ANY, AFFECTS YOUR ACCESS TO NEWS ABOUT JORDAN (YES RESPONSES)



These habits were reflected in the overall concern about travel and tourism content which participants noted was dominant in the Jordanian mainstream and social media, in particular from the influencers' scene. Travel and tourism content to encourage people to visit Jordan and particular places was viewed as both positive and negative. Some participants found the content to be useful and a good development for Jordan and its economy, speaking to overriding fear about the economic crisis, and the large contribution that tourism makes to Jordan's GDP. Others, however, described the content as trivial and used as a form of distraction from reality. News avoiders were more likely to be in the latter group, suggesting again that relevance is key to news consumption and engagement.

The quantitative data examined perceptions on the availability of different types of content in the Jordanian media. As visualised below, respondents wanted more content about health, human rights, and women's issues. These are all issues which impact on the daily lives of citizens and might therefore be considered relevant. It should be noted that women were more likely to want more content on women's issues, further confirming this point. Satirical content was the only form of content which had higher numbers of respondents wanting less of in the Jordanian media. This was confirmed in the FGDs with many participants finding comedy and satire to be 'useless'. Older males and urban groups were more likely to reference comedy as a positive way to present the news and reality.

Q11. FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING, DESCRIBE YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE AVAILABILITY OF CONTENT IN THE JORDANIAN MEDIA

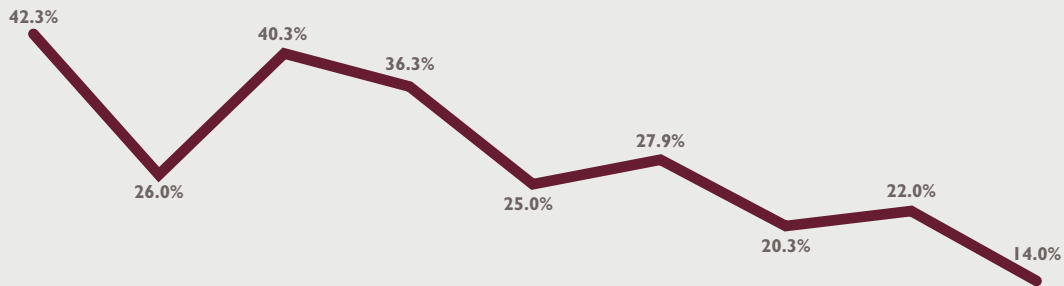


Political processes and events, perhaps due to the fact that they are seen as removed from or less relevant to the daily lives of Jordanians, with the exception of satirical content, scored the lowest in terms of wanting more coverage. Participants in the groups showed limited engagement with political news from Jordan in comparison to regional and international events, although all of the groups followed the events and analysis leading up to and during the Royal Wedding which was broadcast on Jordanian television and live streamed on social media. This evidences some interest in local politics and events but perhaps is indicative of the trend towards infotainment as a means of collecting information. Participants

in the groups were quick to recall news and information that was available around the royal wedding, for example which political figures were in attendance and rumours of a financial gift being made available to Jordanians. Again, news avoiders were more likely to express dissatisfaction with coverage of the royal wedding despite having apparently watched it.

The literature review revealed that interest in politics has declined significantly in the last 5 years in Jordan.

INTEREST IN POLITICS (MEAN SCORE 2018-2023)

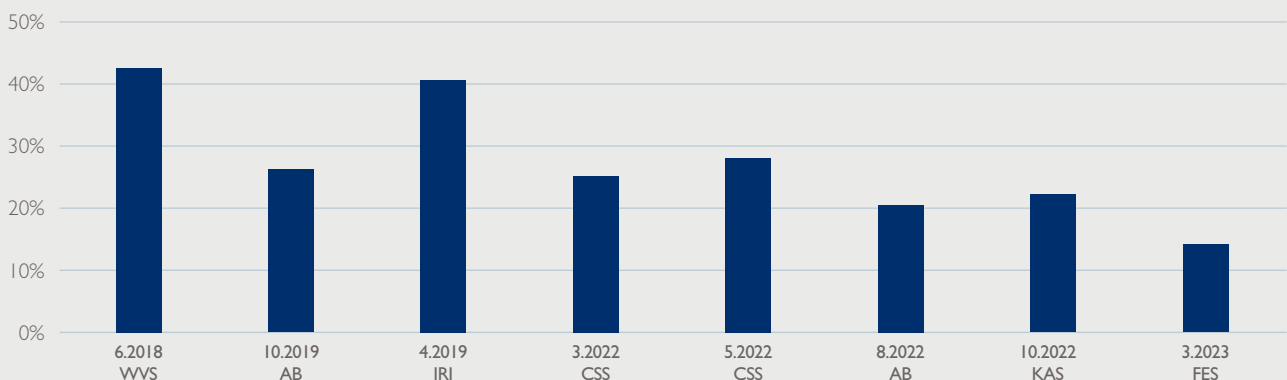


6.2018	10.2019	4.2019	2.2021	3.2022	5.2022	8.2022	10.2022	3.2023
WVS	AB	IRI	UNW	CSS	CSS	AB	KAS	FES

Although around 33.5% of Jordanians follow political news according to two studies (CSS 3.2022 & 5.2022), when looking in more detail, only 6% of Jordanians follow political news to a large degree, and 27% to a moderate degree. Most do not follow political news regularly: 30% only follow to a small degree and 37% do not follow at all (CSS. 5.2022).

JORDANIANS INTEREST IN POLITICS INTEREST IN POLITICS (MEAN SCORE %)

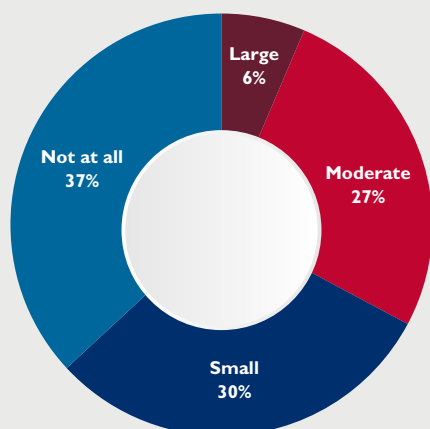
Findings from research conducted in Jordan (2018-2023) on Jordanians' interest in politics. All data extracted from published research reports.



28.2% Mean average of Jordanians' interest in politics between 2018-2023.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU FOLLOW POLITICAL NEWS IN JORDAN?

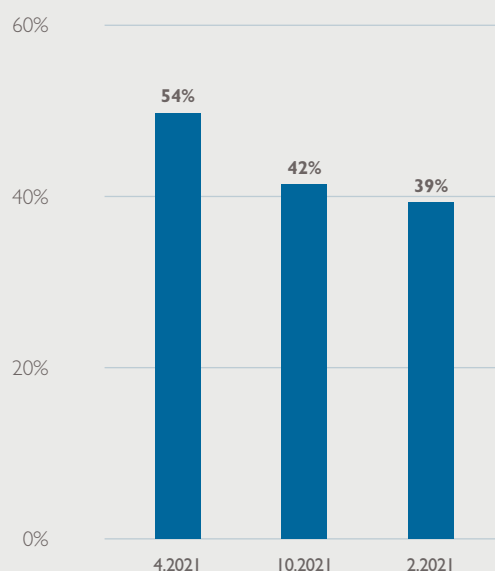
Source: CSS- 5.2022



Most Jordanians (**67%**) do not follow political news regularly (30% follow to a small degree, and 37% never).

DO YOU FOLLOW WHAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS DONE SINCE ITS FORMATION? (% YES)

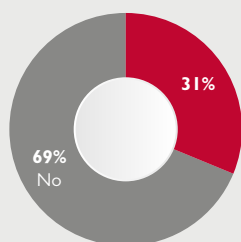
Source: CSS- 2021-2022



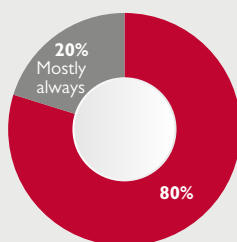
Participants in the FGDs revealed limited knowledge levels of electoral reform and political party legislative reform despite high profile changes to Jordan's electoral and political parties law and ratified constitutional amendments which took place last year. However, interest in political events such as the protest in Ma'an and teachers' strikes was high. These speaks to the importance of relevance in media consumption and news avoidance. The protests had an immediate impact on all Jordanians, and many participated, with discontent and anger at ongoing poor governance, corruption and the financial crisis. The [Gallup Global Emotions Poll 2022](#) put Jordan as the 4th most angry country globally suggesting that civic engagement levels are likely to be low. In all cases, the Jordanian media was seen to fail in the provision of quality and accurate information about political events.



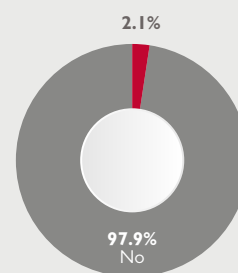
The Royal Committee to Modernize the Political System came out with very important decisions. Unfortunately, there was no media platform, whether official or unofficial, that presented what this committee came up with. FGD5 South Rural Male 25-29



Follow MP Discussions.
CSS 2.2021

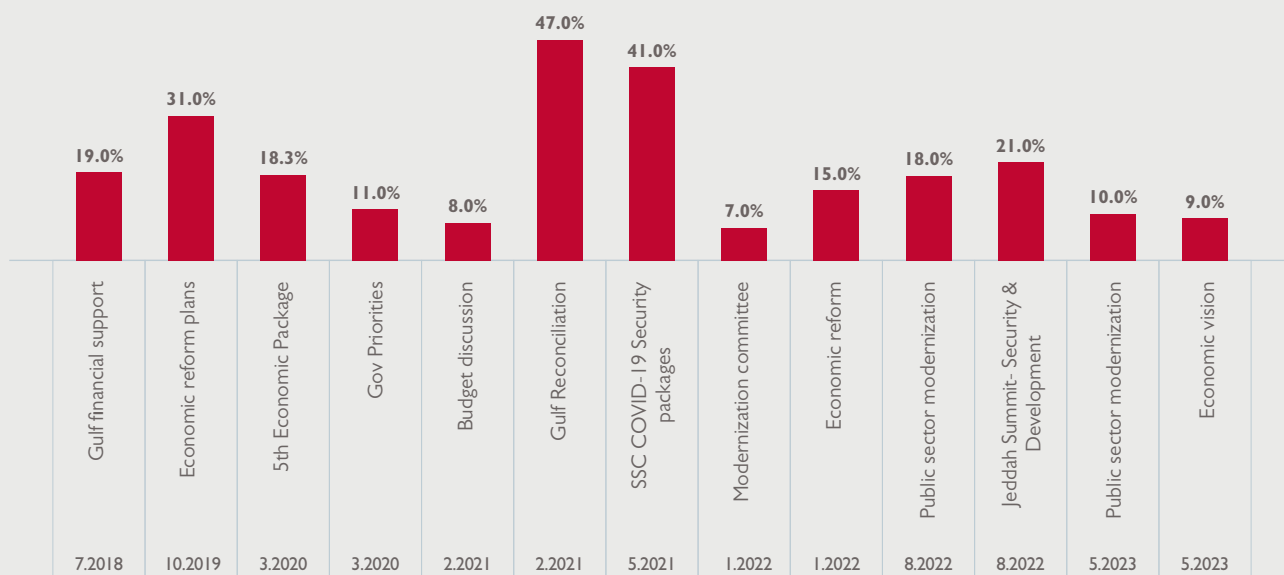


Follow news of parliament.
CSS 3.2021



Follow political party news.
CSS 8.2022

The literature review confirmed that knowledge and interest in local politics and government plans was low. Findings revealed that between 2018-2023 most Jordanians did not hear, watch, or read news related to various government initiatives, plans, and activities, 19.6% was the average score of awareness of the tested government initiatives, plans and activities (2018-2023). The Gulf reconciliation agreement and the Social Security Corporation's COVID-19 security packages were the two main political and economic topics which enjoyed relatively higher awareness with 47% and 41% respectively.



Knowledge of local priorities and government plans (2018-2023)

Most of those who indicated awareness had heard about government plans through television (average 55.7%), followed by Facebook (average 24.7%), news websites (average 8%) or friends/ acquaintances (8.7%) (Average CSS 10.2019- 3.2020).

Three CSS studies examined Jordanian citizens interest in the activities of the House of Parliament and political parties. The findings were 2% follow news related to Jordanian political parties (CSS 8.2022), 9% 'always' follow news related to House of Parliament activities, and 11% 'mostly' follow (CSS, 3.2021), 25% follow candidates from their electoral district on social media (CSS, 3.2020), and 69% did not follow the House of Parliament discussions on trust in government (CSS, 2.2021). Reasons for not following House of Parliament discussions included: Not interested in politics, 51%, Do not trust the role of parliament, 24%), Busy with work and life, 20% (CSS, 2.2021).

OFFICIAL & GOVERNMENT NEWS CONSUMPTION STATISTICS

2018-2023

2%

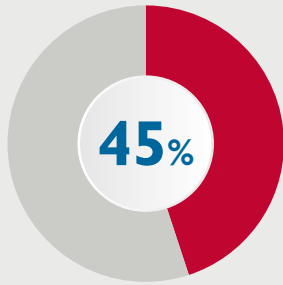
Follow news related to Jordanian Political Parties.
(CSS, 8.2022)

9%

Follow news related to the House of Parliament.
(CSS 3.2021)

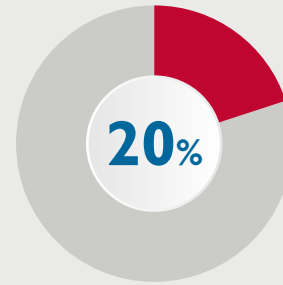


GOVERNMENT



Follow current government related news.

Average (CSS, 2.2021, 20.2021, 4.2022)



Heard of government activities, plans or initiatives.

Average (13 CSS studies on various activities between 20218-2023)

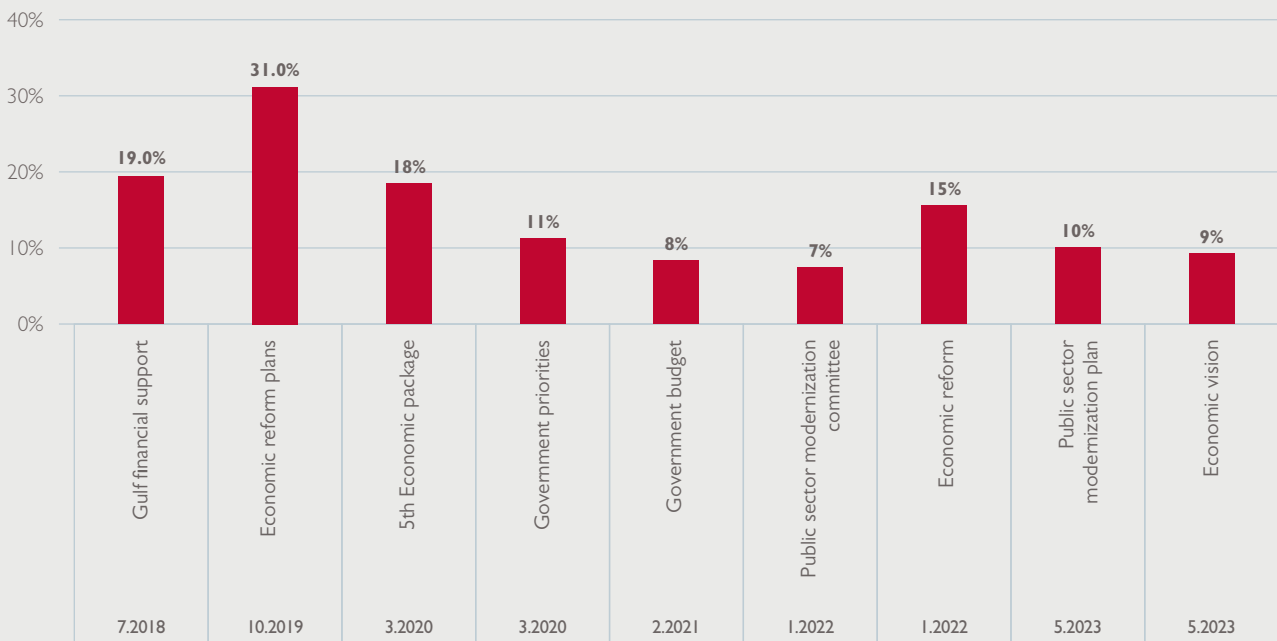


42%

Report that the Government does not provide adequate information regarding its policies. (Mean- IRI, 11.2021)

PERCENTAGE OF JORDANIANS AWARE OF GOVERNMENT PLANS, DECISIONS, INITIATIVES.

Source: CSS, 2018-2023



REFERENCES

All findings are extracted from published research reports by CSS and IRI.

PERCEPTIONS OF MEDIA PERFORMANCE AND PRACTICE

From the groups, it was clear that the media is not acting as the fourth estate with regard to political processes and reforms and political disinformation was seen to be a big issue. However, the quantitative data indicates that the majority of youth and women asked felt that there is sufficient content on political events and processes suggesting that there is limited desire to know more about national reform plans and political processes. It is unclear whether the lack of interest in politics is a result of poorly functioning media information ecosystem in Jordan. However, what is clear is that media are certainly not seen to be providing content on political processes and events that is appealing or engaging to young Jordanians.



The media is credible when it comes to, for example, reporting on car accidents. As for reporting on the political side, it is all biased and even the people they bring on are biased. FGD2 Central Urban Male 25-29

Overall, the groups revealed a concern with the lack of accuracy and credibility in the news media when reporting on political topics. Bias and a lack of objectivity were also clearly significant issues in the eyes of the participants. There was a common perception that this situation was worsening which is confirmed by the findings from the literature review below.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK THE MASS MEDIA IN JORDAN IS OBJECTIVE IN REPORTING NEWS?	Source	
	IRI	IRI
MEDIA IN JORDAN IS OBJECTIVE		
DATE	5.2021	10.2022
Very Objective	13.0%	5%
Somewhat Objective	49.0%	41%
Not Objective	27.0%	28%
Not Objective at All	10.0%	22%
Don't Know/ Refused to Answer	2.0%	4%
MEAN SCORE	55.2%	43%

Although the availability of news was seen to have increased in recent years, in particular as a result of social media, this was seen to have had a negative impact on the accuracy of news content. Television was perceived to be more reliable than social media which published more news but focuses on being entertaining/shocking. Editorial ethics and principles were seen to be compromised across all media, again in particular on social media and through influencers.



We got a lot of info from social media but 90% of it is not correct. FGD2 Central Urban Male 25-29



They use terminology that creates controversy. Instead of people focusing on the fact that a girl died of a stroke because the exam was shocking, or that the Tawjihi is too harsh for this age group, they focus on the teacher. They forget the main issue that you should care about and focus on blaming individuals. This is because of the way the news is narrated. FGD7 South Urban Female 25-29



A JMI survey which was published in 2022 reveals mixed attitudes towards media principles such as balance and accuracy. Interestingly, the media is largely seen to avoid hate speech and respect family values. However, there are also strong perceptions that the media reflects the government's point of view.

PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL COMMITMENT OF THE JORDANIAN MEDIA	JMI	DATE 6.2022		
SCALE	AGREE	DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	MEAN SCORE
Media coverage is generally closer to the government's point of view	76.6%	15.2%	8.2%	68.2%
The Jordanian media respects family values	79.9%	16.2%	3.9%	68.0%
The Jordanian media avoids hate speech and incitement	74.5%	18.0%	7.5%	67.2%
Jordanian media ignores coverage of certain issues	73.5%	18.8%	7.7%	66.1%
The Jordanian media adopts women's issues	75.8%	16.4%	7.7%	63.3%
The Jordanian media plays an oversight role	64.5%	27.7%	7.8%	58.9%
The news provided by Jordanian media is balanced	58.0%	35.2%	6.8%	54.6%
The news provided by the Jordanian media is accurate (i.e., avoids errors)	52.8%	40.4%	6.7%	53.3%
Jordanian media provides everyone with the right for all to reply and correct	49.9%	39.3%	10.8%	50.6%
The Jordanian media express the opinion of all segments of society	45.4%	47.9%	6.7%	46.2%
Jordanian media news affects the formation of my personal opinion	48.0%	45.7%	6.3%	46.1%
The Jordanian media acknowledges the mistakes they make and apologizes for them	44.7%	45.9%	9.4%	45.9%

DISINFORMATION AND FACT-CHECKING

As seen above, inaccurate information is one of the driving factors behind the lack of engagement in media content on political processes and reforms. Using the definition of disinformation highlighted earlier in this report, it was also clear that awareness of disinformation as a concept was high amongst participants in the groups although younger women were less likely to understand the meaning of the term of disinformation.² Political disinformation was the main form identified in the groups although economic and religious disinformation were also seen to be an issue. Disinformation was seen to be circulated by the authorities in order to control the population and quash public unrest.



It is not so much disinformation as directing people towards a specific idea and creating confusion to ultimately distract people from the reality on the ground. FGD4 Positive Deviants

Examples of disinformation referenced in more than one group included: the presence and capture of the Salt militant cell in 2018 which was allegedly fabricated in order to cover up a hike in petrol prices which could lead to an outbreak of protests; two stories were discussed regarding the Jordanian pilot, Muath Al Kasabeh, who was captured and burned alive by the Islamic State in 2015. One was that he had been seen and was still alive. Another was that Jordanian government had set him up to be killed to distract from issues at home.

Disinformation about Prince Hamza and royal wedding were also noted. Groups were most frustrated with apparent disinformation that there was a financial surprise planned for people in Jordan following the royal wedding which never manifested. There was discussion about news around the Trump administration's Deal of the Century as deliberately falsified. The Royal Court and government were seen to be disingenuous about apparently rejecting proposals while still maintaining dialogue with relevant parties.



I feel that what is misleading is that the news wants to serve a specific party. I mean, even sometimes the headlines are fabricated so that when you read it, you feel that the news is against a particular person. FG10 North Rural Female 25-29

Social media platforms were viewed as the worse culprits for spreading disinformation. Social media lagged behind television in terms of using clear and accurate language and in terms of being of consistently high quality across all of the groups. This finding is confirmed by the JMI media consumption study 2022 which put social media as most likely to spread false news, and television least likely.

It is also worth noting that news providers were also blamed for the lack of accuracy in media content. As mentioned previously, many were seen to take news from each other – copy paste – without fact checking or checking the accuracy. This sentiment was also echoed with regards to the social media platforms which were all seen to be publishing the same content with little regard for fact-checking or verification.

Amongst the FGD participants, verification habits appeared to be unsophisticated at best. The most commonly referenced verification techniques were cross-checking information on the international channels, mainly Al Jazeera and the BBC, and their websites, or visiting YouTube or Google to verify whether a piece of information is accurate. There was also a predilection towards checking the comments section on social media links for posts and comments from the public which referenced the accuracy of the link posted. A CSS study from 2019 revealed that 60% of respondents claim to verify the

² This report refers to the United Nation definitions of misinformation and disinformation which defines disinformation in the following sentence: 'While misinformation refers to the accidental spread of inaccurate information, disinformation is not only inaccurate, but intends to deceive and is spread in order to do serious harm.' Further detail is available at: <https://www.un.org/en/countering-disinformation>

news stories they hear. 32.7% verified news by reviewing multiple sources, 13.1% said news was verified if it's shared by multiple sources, and 12.9% ask family and friends. 9.5% verify by checking whether a news story has been shared by an official government source. Verification techniques appear not to have developed much since then suggesting that media literacy efforts could focus more on this aspect of combatting the spread of disinformation.

CONTRIBUTION OF MEDIA AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION IN SPREADING FALSE NEWS		Source
		JMI
	DATE	6.2022
	Social Media Networks	68.8%
	Mobile Chat Apps (WhatsApp)	61.1%
	Online News Websites	56.1%
	Daily Newspapers	41.1%
	Private Radio Stations	35.7%
	Private TV Channels	32.3%
	Official Radio Stations	30.8%
	Official TV Channels	26.9%



NEWS PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Participation in spaces where there are opportunities for dialogue and debate about political and social processes is seen as a critical element to civic engagement. Online and social media should be providing platforms where digital participation is encouraged and rewarded. The Reuters Digital News Report 2023 revealed that reactive news participation, i.e., through reading, liking, or sharing has risen, whereas active news participation, posting and commenting, has fallen significantly around the world. However, many of the participants in the FGDs appeared to be commenting on social media, in particular when a piece of news or a post provokes them to a reaction. Groups on Facebook were the more usual places for comments in particular amongst younger women. Commonly cited were university groups, Tawjihi groups, autism groups, local groups for news and events. Reactive news participation was more likely amongst younger rural groups and women.

Despite a likelihood to comment, very few participants felt that their engagement and comment would have any impact. Comment was largely seen as a mode of expressing opinion rather than as a catalyst for change. Men in particular felt that comments were ignored by those with authority. It was also clear that sharing political news or content via posts on social media was also less commonly used as means of engagement by participants. Content that was shared was mainly about sports, entertainment, memes, educational content, or content about the weather. References to sharing news or informative content was mainly with regards to local news via links to social media pages and posts which were seen to be more informative.

Surprisingly, WhatsApp groups scored low as sources of information with social media once again the dominant place to gather information. Content was predominantly shared on Instagram or Telegram according to FGD participants. WhatsApp generally seemed to play a lesser role in media and information consumption cycles.



We don't really communicate in WhatsApp groups unless there is local news, even sometimes international, or something in the country like increase in petrol prices. FGD5 South Rural Male 25-29

This was confirmed by data from the quantitative survey which revealed that over 2/3rds of respondents said they 'never' used WhatsApp Groups for news consumption. Young men were even more likely to use print newspapers than WhatsApp in this regard. The figure drops lower when asked about sources which are relevant to needs. Participants in the FGDs did comment positively on the safety aspect of WhatsApp groups, however.

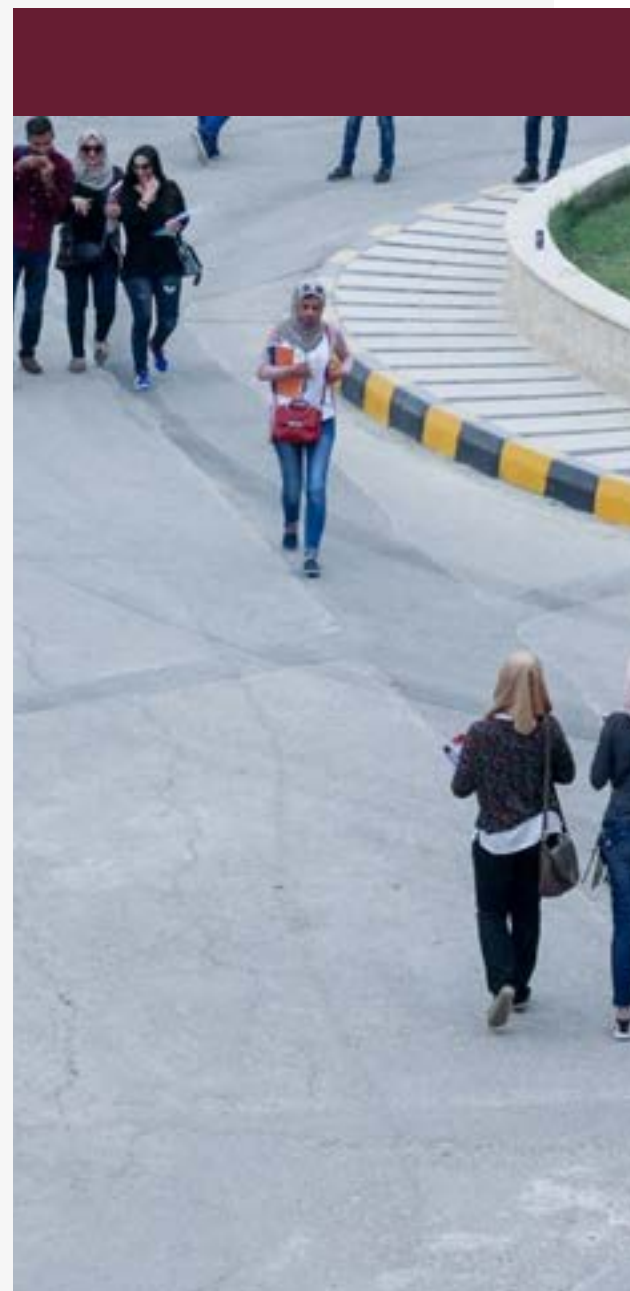
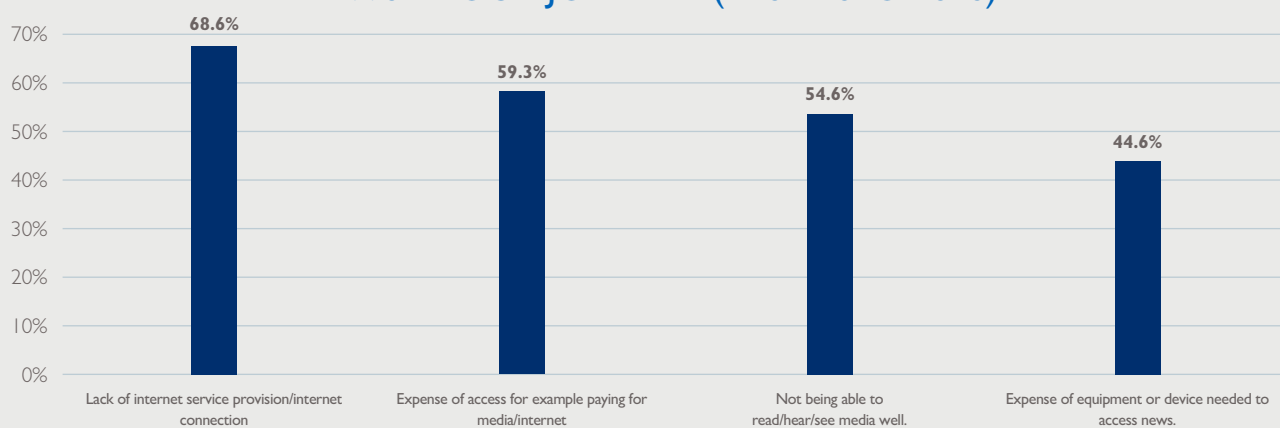


Photo by Ezzeldeen Alnatour.
Description: Jordanian University Students.

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

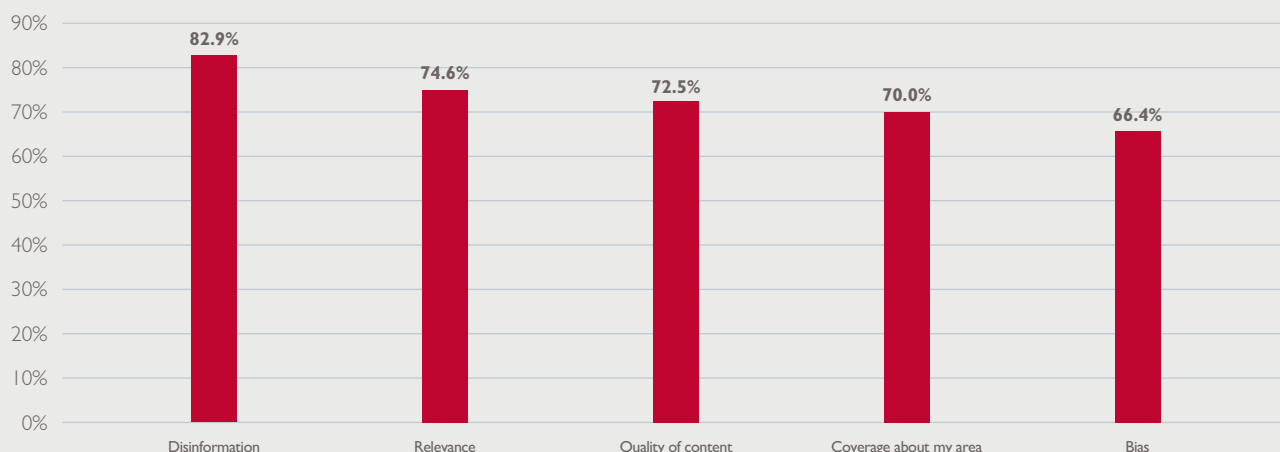
Across the FGDs, there were high levels of awareness and frustration regarding the cutting off of access to the internet during key political events and protests such as the events in Ma'an for example and this was the prevailing barrier to accessing news content about Jordan. TikTok also played a role in this regard. There are high levels of awareness about the banning of TikTok following the protests in Ma'an. Apart from the younger rural groups, Jordanians are using VPNs to overcome the ban. However, there is also a mixture of opinions related to the ban and in most cases, it is not limiting access. There are those who wish to access TikTok and are doing so regardless of the ban. There are also those people who believe that TikTok's content is meaningless and even incendiary. There is some support for the ban amongst citizens many of whom equate it to European measures to quell public unrest citing France and Macron's call to shut down social media during nationwide riots in July 2023. TikTok was also viewed suspiciously in terms of its algorithm and related commercial aspects.

Q12. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING, IF ANY, AFFECTS YOUR ACCESS TO NEWS ABOUT JORDAN (YES RESPONSES)



As noted previously in this report, disinformation and relevance were also key drivers of news media consumption.

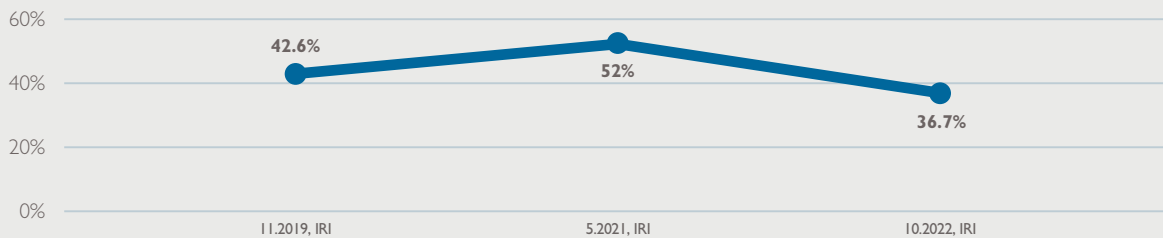
Q13. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING, IF ANY, AFFECTS YOUR ACCESS TO NEWS ABOUT JORDAN (YES RESPONSES)





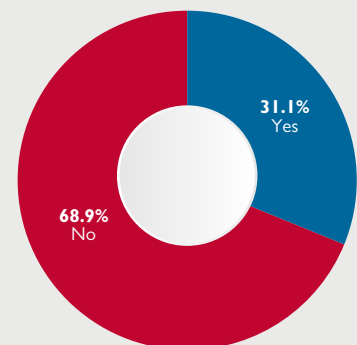
Internet shutdowns and disinformation are all key factors in perceptions of media freedoms and independence. The Jordanian media was not seen as independent although different opinions among the groups classified both Al Mamlaka and Roya as independent. Notions of independence were driven by media’s likelihood to report accurately and fairly rather than by financing or governance. Red lines were seen to sit at the king, his son, and his wife and news was seen to be monitored and censored by security forces/mukhabarat in order to maintain security and safety. This was not seen as a negative and in fact in some groups was viewed as a necessity for national security. Incidents where the internet has been cut, for example, the terrorist attack in Salt in 2018 and the accusations of plotting against the king and relinquishing of his royal title by Prince Hamzah, were seen to be justified in the name of national security. This differed from attitudes towards the internet shutdown following events in Ma’an which saw many participants turning to international channels and unverified social media accounts for news. A series of IRI surveys on media freedoms reflect the decline in public perceptions of media independence in Jordan.

IS JORDANIAN MASS MEDIA FREE TO EXPRESS VARIOUS POLITICAL VIEWS? (MEAN SCORE 2019-2022)



It is also worth noting that expense of internet and paying for media were a larger barrier to access than the cost of equipment. This likely ties into overwhelming concern about finances due to the economic climate. It is likely to also reflect current discontent with media content. When asked about paying for content, the majority of respondents in the survey said ‘no’.

Q15. WOULD YOU CONSIDER FOR CONTENT WHICH YOU CONSIDER TO BE TRUSTED AND RELEVANT TO YOUR NEEDS? (PROBED RESPONSE, ONLY 1 RESPONSE)



TRUST

In this environment, where news consumption largely happens via social media, where audiences doubt the accuracy and relevance of media content, and where economic and security pressures remain constant, what is happening to trust in media in Jordan? Although different audiences have different reasons for trusting or not trusting institutions including the media, there are some general trends that can be observed and indeed some common values which may or may not be driving trust in Jordan.

Overall, the key drivers of consumption and selective news avoidance, disinformation and relevance, while also having some impact on trust, are not the only factors which determine trust amongst Jordanian audiences. A significant determinate for trust in Jordan appears to be relationship with national bodies and institutions. The JMI 2022 survey revealed that the top five most trusted sources of information amongst Jordanians were, in descending order, the Jordanian Armed Forces (84%), Security Services (76.3% average from two surveys), Military and Security leaders (73%), Jordanian universities (70%), and the Jordanian Judiciary (67%). Interestingly the government of Jordan came in lower at 57% with journalists and media officials at 52.8% and only 38.7% of respondents saying they trusted online activists and social media influencers.



Photo by Ezzeldeen Alnatour.
Description: Jordanian University Students.

JORDANIAN'S TRUST IN MEDIA RESEARCH GROUPING 2018-2023

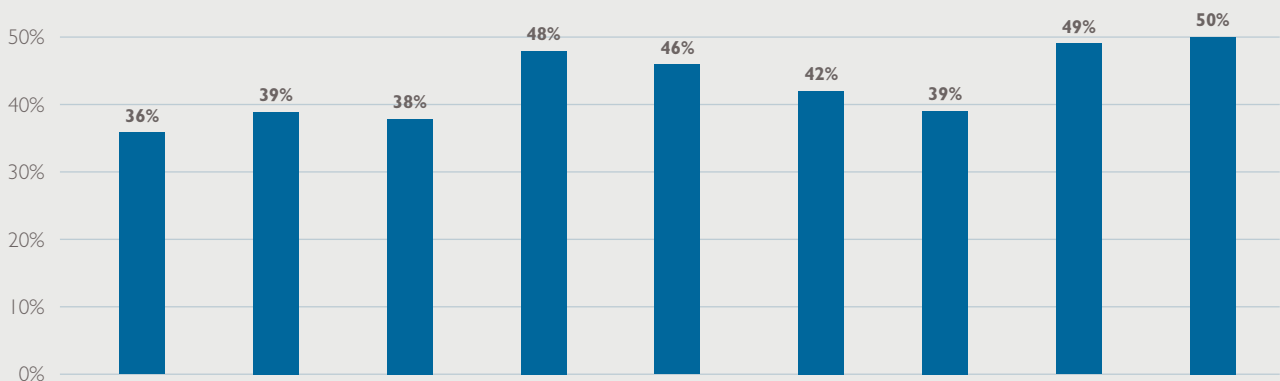


43%

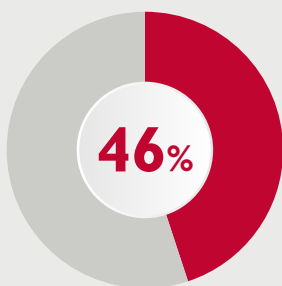
Mean average trust in Jordanian Media Channels.
Source: CSS, 9 studies (2018-2023)

TRUST IN MEDIA CHANNELS (2018-2023)

Source: CCS (Mean Score%)

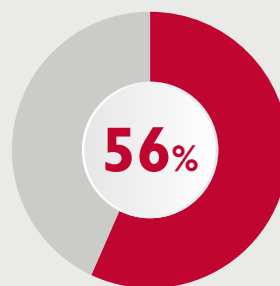


TRUST IN JOURNALISTS & MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES



Source: WVS, JMI (2018-2022)

FREEDOM OF PRESS IS GUARANTEED IN JPRDAN



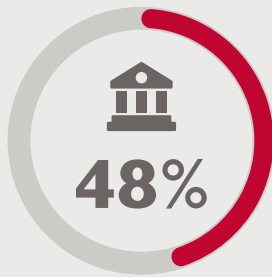
Source: IRI, CSS (2019-2021)

REFERENCES

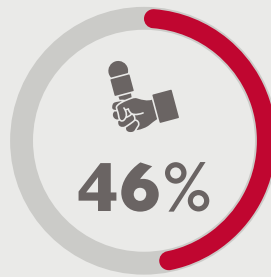
All findings are extracted from published research reports by CSS, IRI, JMI and WVS.



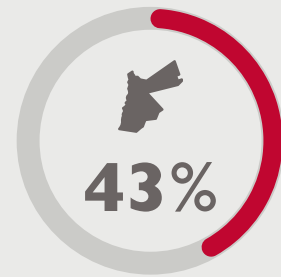
AVERAGE TRUST OF JORDANIAN'S (2018-2023)



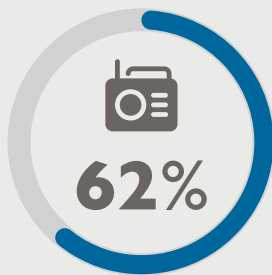
Ministry of State & Media Affairs



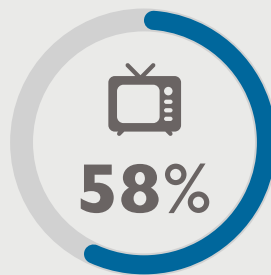
Journalists & Media Reps



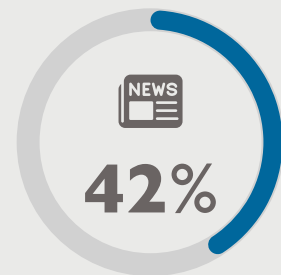
Jordanian Media Channels



Local Radio Stations



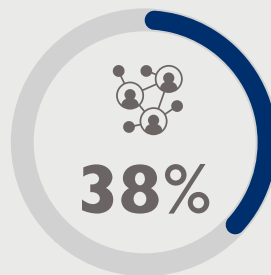
Local TV Channels



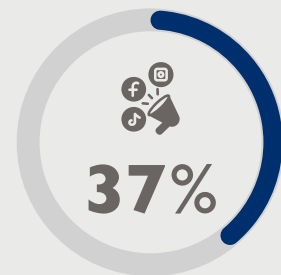
Local Daily Newspapers



Online News Websites

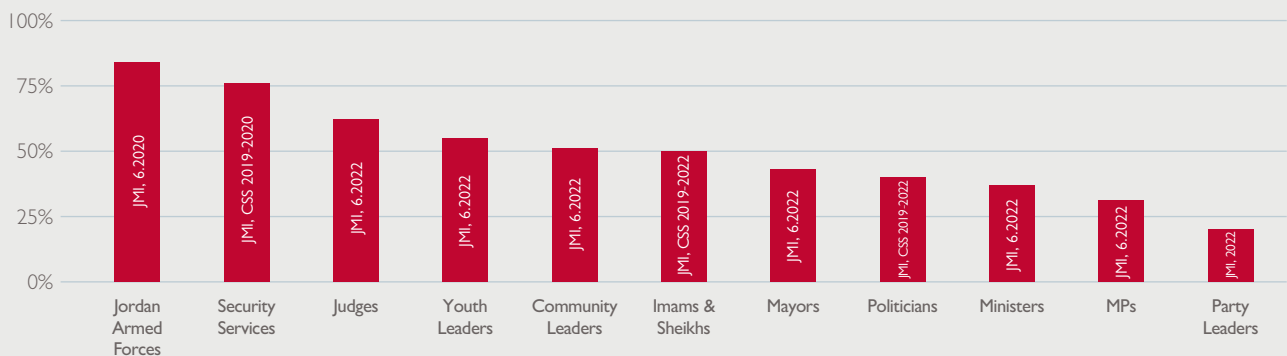


Social Media Activists



Social Media Platforms

TRUST IN NEWS & INFORMATION

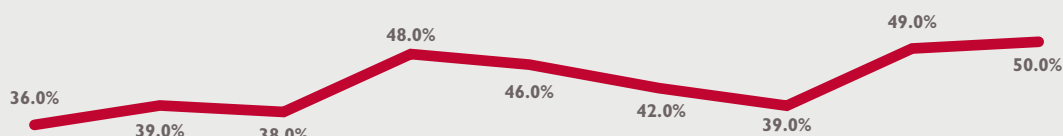


REFERENCES

The extracted findings originate from research reports published by AB, CSS, IRI JMI, and WVS during the period from 2018 to 2023. The calculations involved determining the Average Mean percentage for the outcomes observed over the span of five years.

The literature review, using bi-annual studies conducted by CSS, also revealed that trust in Jordanian media channels has increased in the last 5 years. Online websites and social media platforms/influencers however get significantly lower levels of trust than their mainstream media counterparts. This is in keeping with global trends. The Reuters 'Trust in the News' 2023 report revealed that there are trust gaps between information from the news media and news on social media, search engines and messaging apps. The study also revealed that despite lower trust levels in news on the platforms, people still regard them positively and continue to use them for their information needs. These behaviours are confirmed by both the quantitative and qualitative findings from Jordan.

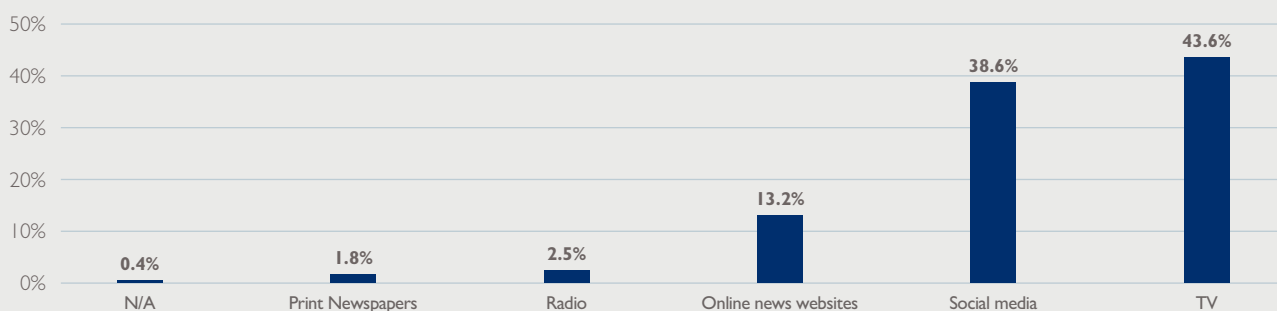
TRUST IN JORDANIAN MEDIA CHANNELS (MEAN SCORE- 2018-2023)



7.2018	6.2019	12.2019	10.2020	2.2021	5.2021	10.2021	4.2022	5.2023
CSS	CSS	CSS	CSS	CSS	CSS	CSS	CSS	CSS

The JMI survey also found that trust in Jordanian official television was higher than Jordanian private television. This was confirmed by the participants in the FGDs: when discussing the issues of trust JRTV and Al Mamlaka were the main channels recalled positively with regards to trust. Participants cited the channels use of official sources and data as a key reason for that trust. This was even more pronounced in the younger rural groups of both men and women. The quantitative survey revealed television to be the most trusted source of news amongst respondents despite it not being the most consumed, a finding also confirmed in the literature review.

Q9. WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE MOST TRUSTWORTHY SOURCE OF NEWS ABOUT YOUR SPECIFIC NEEDS?



It is possible that trust in Jordan, where economic and political uncertainty remains a shared experience amongst citizens, is measured by institutional ability to deliver security and stability or least appear to. However, trust in the media is low across the board. It is also clearly not a main factor that is informing media consumption habits. The social media platforms might receive lower trust ratings because they provide content which is more entertaining than informative. This is not preventing people from turning to social media platforms for their news provision, nonetheless. They are likely more popular as an information provider for other reasons: they provide platforms for people to connect with each other for example. They also, as noted earlier in this report, are seen as more convenient and efficient modes of accessing information. It is also worth bearing in mind that news avoiders are likely to have lower levels of trust in the media. So, those who are engaging with news content are the ones more likely to have higher levels of trust in the media. Different strategies will be required for the different groups.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

”

The media misunderstand people with disabilities. They either present the issue of people with disabilities as a story of success and excellence in their work or present the issue of people with disabilities as someone in need who needs money and therefore donate to me, oh good people. I gave a graduation speech and none of the media was interested in this... I'm not talking about putting the attention on me, I am talking about just including me and people like me. This is what concerns me. FGD6 South Rural Female 18-24

”

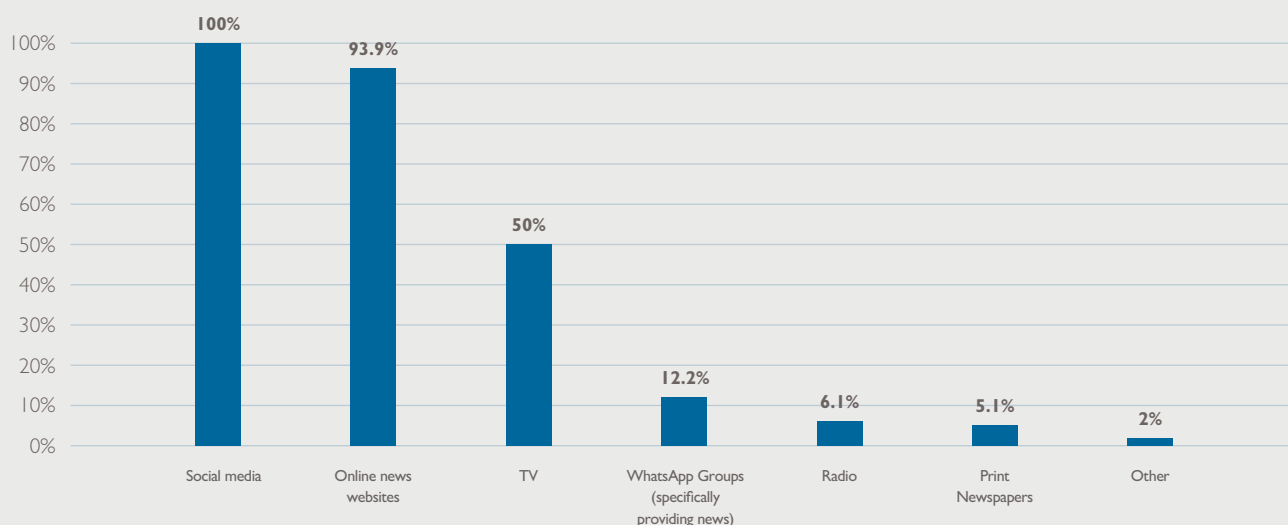
My interests are different from (the other participants in the group). My interests are about the reality of people with disabilities and entrepreneurship. How do we provide an opportunity for these people to get involved in society and play a role? FGD8 North Urban Male 18-24

According to Handicap International, persons with disabilities represent some of the most disadvantaged groups in Jordan. The Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities (HCD) in Jordan estimates between 11-15% of the Jordanian population are living with disabilities, more than 1 million people. In 2017, Jordan's parliament passed a law on the rights of persons with disabilities, which offers wide-ranging protections across many different groups and recognising that their needs are not only unique but disparate.



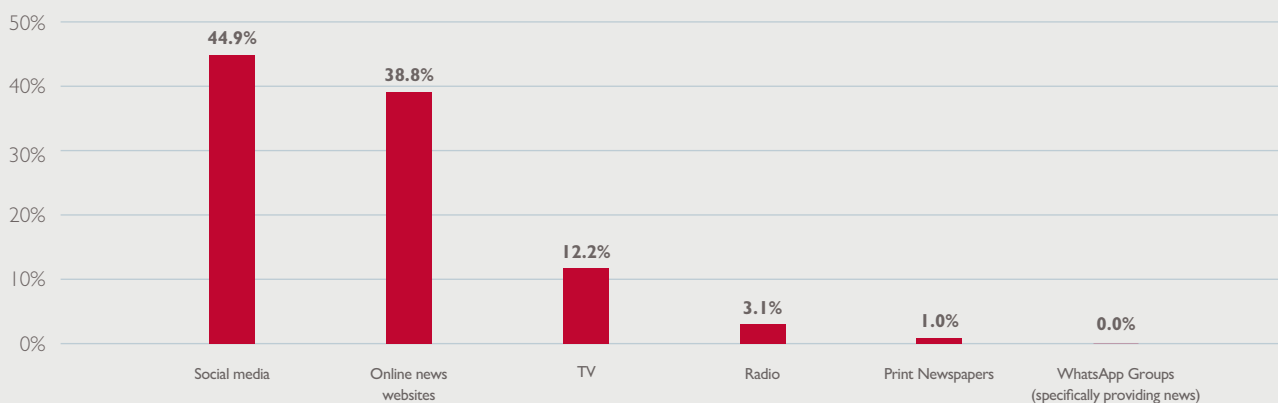
Photo by Politics and Society Institute (PSI). Description: Participant in an awareness session of Jordan Sustainability Lab Project by Politics and Society Institute in partnership with the US Embassy in Amman, which was held in the University of Jordan.

Q6. WHICH JORDANIAN MEDIA SOURCE, IF ANY, DO YOU ACCESS MOST REGULARLY FOR NEWS ABOUT JORDAN IN GENERAL?



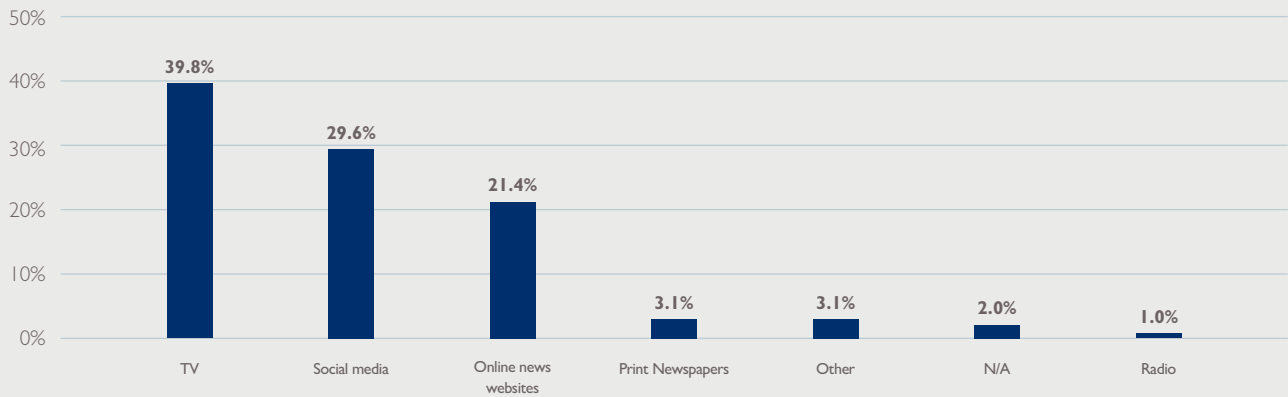
The quantitative survey found that persons with disabilities were mostly likely to consume social media on a daily basis, followed by online websites and then television. This differs from the total respondents who consumed more television than online news websites. Influencers are playing some role in the provision of information to persons with disabilities, and the main influencers are similar to the total respondents: Amer Arjoub, Mohammed Al Wakeel and Belal Al-A'jarmeh were all recalled.

Q7. WHICH JORDANIAN MEDIA SOURCE DO YOU ACCESS MOST REGULARLY FOR NEWS ABOUT YOUR SPECIFIC NEEDS?



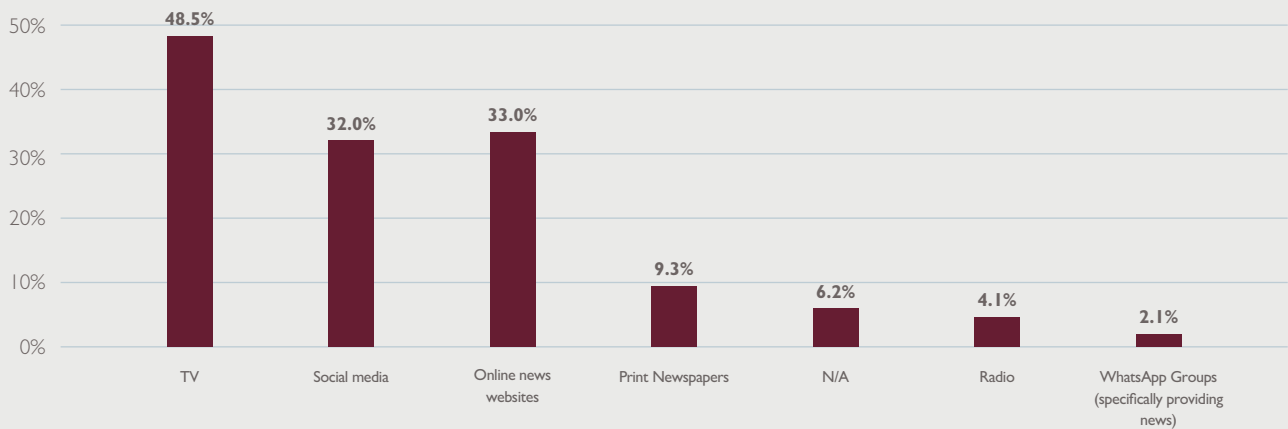
However, although persons with disabilities were mostly likely to turn to social media and then online websites for information about their specific needs, television was the most trusted platform in keeping with findings from the total respondents.

Q9. WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE MOST TRUSTWORTHY SOURCE OF NEWS ABOUT YOUR SPECIFIC NEEDS?

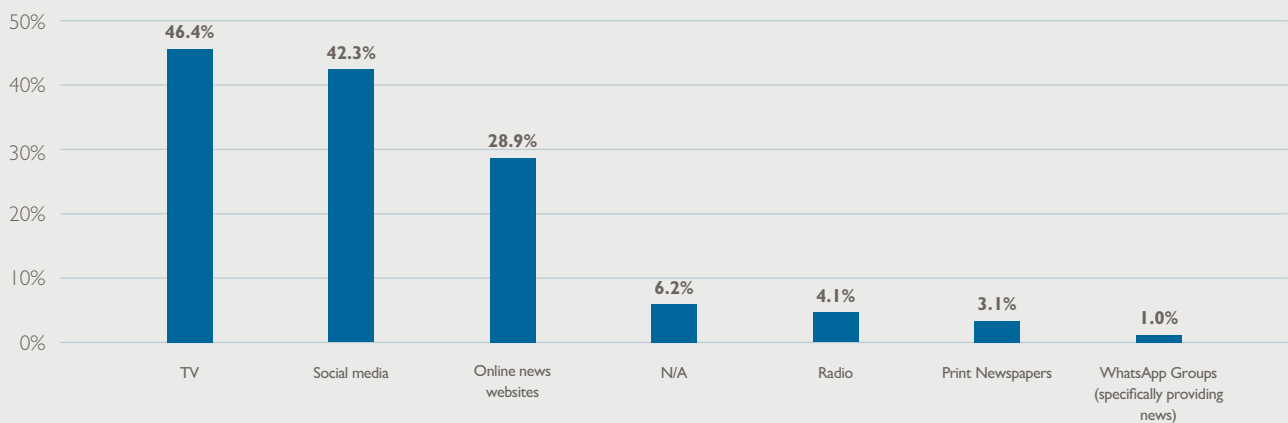


Television was seen more likely to use accurate clear language and more likely to be of consistently high quality.

Q10.6 WHICH MEDIA SOURCE: USES ACCURATE CLEAR LANGUAGE?

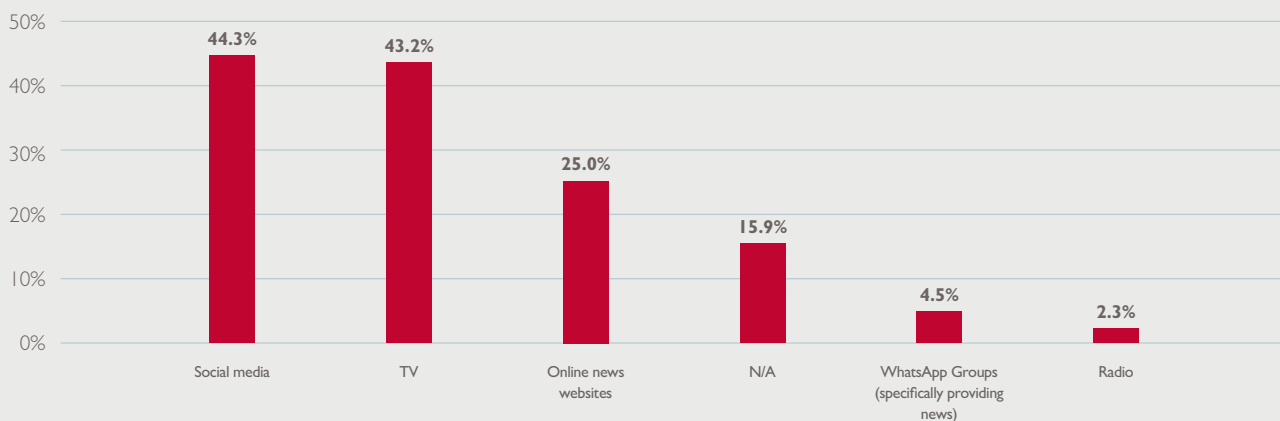


Q10.7 WHICH MEDIA SOURCE: IS CONSISTENTLY OF HIGH QUALITY?



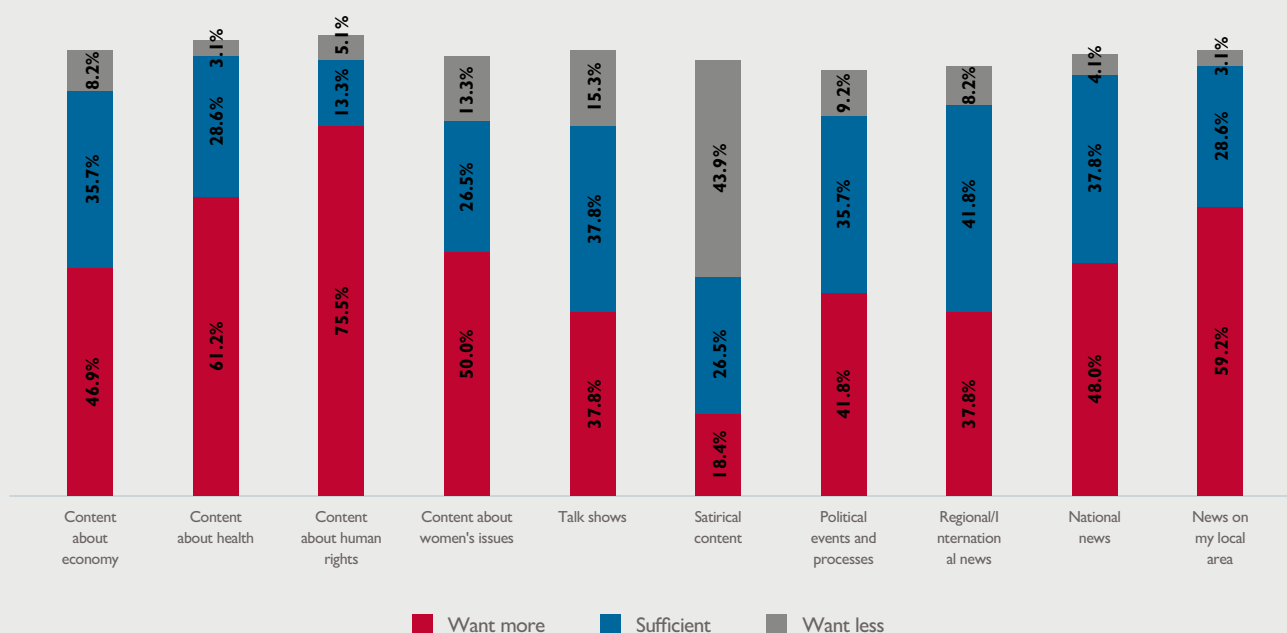
Social media followed by television then online news websites were the most likely to provide accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities.

Q10.8 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES PROVIDES ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO INFORMATION AND DATA (SIGNAL TRANSLATION, AUDIO DESCRIPTION ... ETC.)



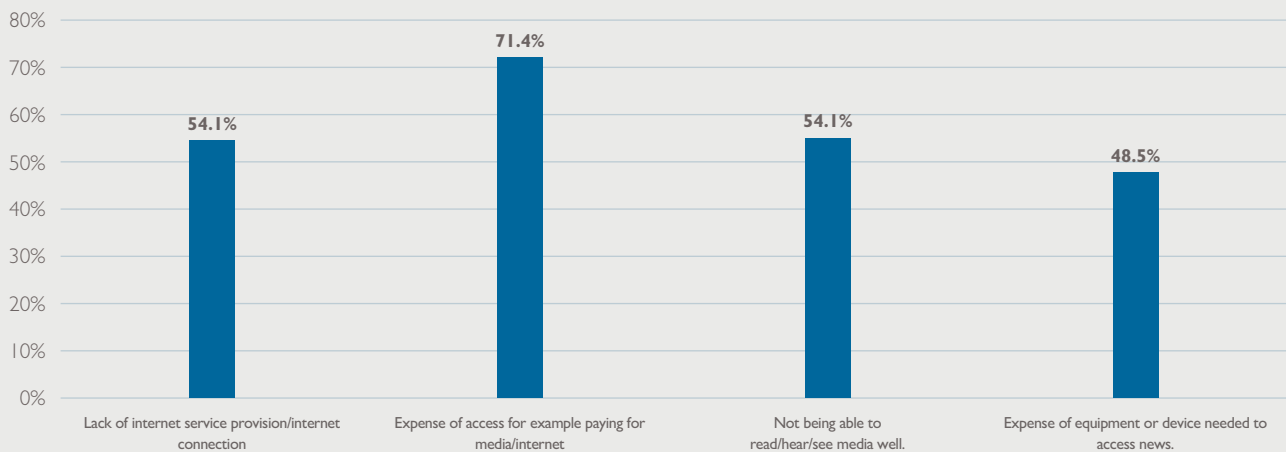
Persons with disabilities want access to more content across the board, likely a reflection of the lack of availability of accessible relevant content which addresses their needs. The persons with disabilities who were present in the FGDs discussed the need to normalise their situation in the media rather than misrepresent them either positively or negatively. Misrepresentation can undermine trust in the media and is common amongst marginalised groups in society who are more likely to have negative experiences as a result of misrepresentation. Human rights and health content stand out as significantly important to persons with disabilities, content which is likely to directly address their needs. They were more likely to want more news on their local area.

Q11. FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING, DESCRIBE YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE AVAILABILITY OF CONTENT IN THE JORDANIAN MEDIA. (PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES)



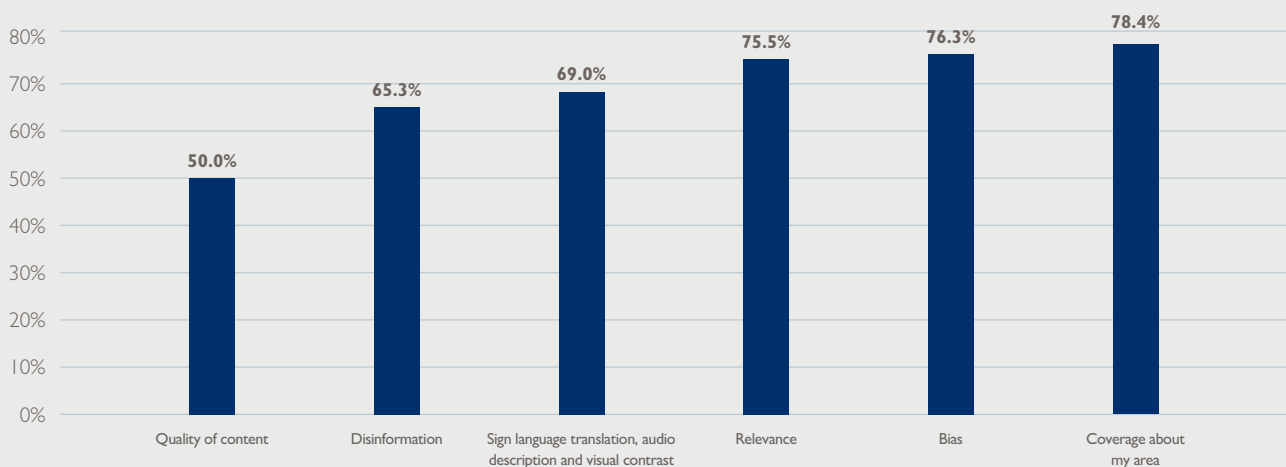
Expense of access to media/internet was also a dominant barrier to accessing content for persons with disabilities, higher than compared to other groups. This speaks to the situation of marginalised groups who are more likely to be financially disadvantaged, often an outcome of the lack of spaces and platforms which are available to them to advocate for their needs and be heard.

Q12. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING, IF ANY, AFFECTS YOUR ACCESS TO NEWS ABOUT JORDAN (YES RESPONSES)



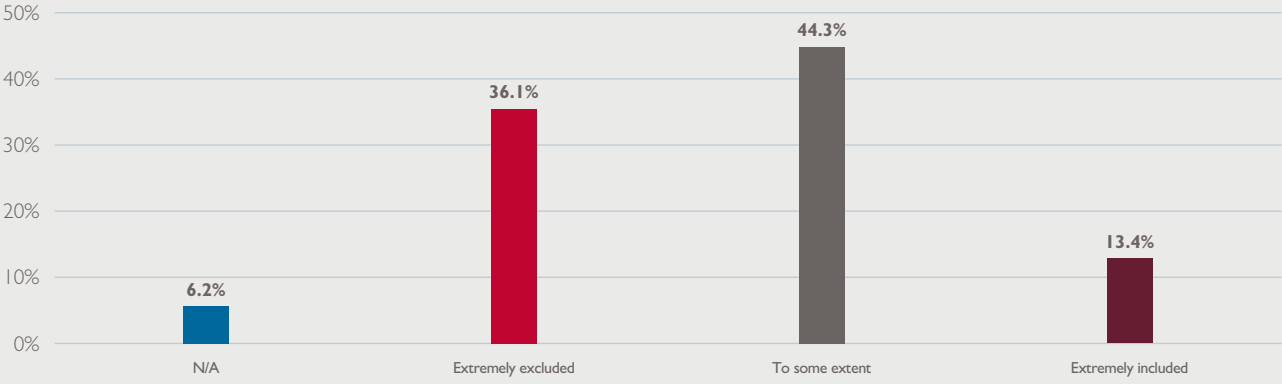
Sign language translation, audio description, and visual content were all significant factors in access to content. Again, the main barrier to access was lack of coverage about their area, suggesting that for persons with disabilities localised news and content is critical. With 71.4% of respondents saying 'no', persons with disabilities are even less likely to pay for content that they consider to be trusted and relevant to their needs.

Q13. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING, IF ANY, AFFECTS YOUR ACCESS TO NEWS ABOUT JORDAN. (PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES) (YES RESPONSES)



Persons with disabilities remain critical of the media's role in helping them feel more included and able to participate in Jordanian society. A concerning large number feel 'extremely excluded' as a result of media content suggesting the media has a long way to go to fulfil its role as information provider for persons with disabilities.

Q16. TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE MEDIA HELP YOU TO FEEL MORE INCLUDED AND ABLE TO PARTICIPATE AND BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN IN JORDANIAN SOCIETY? (PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES)



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report presents a complex picture of media consumption habits amongst audiences in Jordan. The media information ecosystem in Jordan is viewed by many as irrelevant and inaccurate, seemingly inspired by commercial motivations. Despite the many different media sources that are available, audiences are rarely seeking out content or particular media sources. They are instead relying on social media algorithms to make content choices and decisions on their behalf. Mainstream television brands are still playing a role, however social media platforms reign supreme in the media diet. Despite ongoing political fluidity, audiences are turning away from political news about their country, preferring to access content that they consider to be more relevant to their daily lives. Relevance is the leading factor behind information consumption choices. Self-improvement and education are seen to be more beneficial than engaging in political and civic processes.

These findings are in keeping with global trends which also show [participation and civic engagement, in particular amongst younger people and marginalized groups, to be declining](#). In the context of Jordan, where a general election planned for 2024 will take place with a new political parties' law and electoral law, the media needs to perform its public service role to inform, educate and entertain. Audiences in Jordan are clearly dissatisfied with the content that social media algorithms are choosing. Yet they show little inclination to seek out content for themselves meaning there are opportunities for content producers and media organisations to invest in innovative solutions which combine journalistic, and public interest, values with algorithms to make content more significant and valued to audiences.

It goes without saying that support to independent and emerging media should be ongoing and sustained in the long term. While Jordan has a diverse and plural public sphere, there are clearly some groups which feel unrepresented and excluded and the media is a key contributing factor. Work to address this will require creative thinking and sustained resources. With this in mind, this report makes the following recommendations.

FOR MEDIA:

- **Media organisations need to find a balance between creating relevant professional content and understanding how social media algorithms might best serve their purposes.** Testing different formats and content to see what performs well on different social media platforms can begin to help with this. Although this should not be the sole influence in editorial decision making, starting to understand where journalism and social media together can address the information needs of different groups is integral to developing informed citizens. More deep listening to different communities of audiences to understand what they want and need and where they are can complement better use of data and analytics to find out what is reaching and resonating with those audiences. Radio platforms, in particular, need to rethink how they might use social media and online platforms to engage with existing and potential audiences.
- **Constructive and solutions journalism focuses on providing possible responses to social problems.** Solutions journalism is a type of journalism which investigates and explains possible solutions to problems in addition to examining what has gone wrong. In doing so, it delivers options for greater agency amongst citizens and in particular marginalised groups to feel more enabled to tackle social exclusion. Training and capacity building on what **solutions journalism** can look like in the Jordanian media, in particular in the run up to the general election, could help newsrooms focus on delivering positive and relevant outputs which begin to unpack some of the issues related to political instability, economic uncertainty, and the frayed social contract between different sections of society.
- Mis- and disinformation are drivers of selective news avoidance. Newsrooms and content producers need to be more focused on ensuring that news is accurate by implementing **vigorous fact-checking processes** within their editorial processes. **In-house fact-checking positions should be created**, and training provided to ensure that specialist knowledge is updated and practical.
- **Engaging with audiences, understanding their needs and information gaps, helps to create loyal communities, build trust as well as providing public feedback on journalistic outputs.** Public service media, including Al Mamlaka, have the resources and legitimacy to create audience councils which allow them to listen to their audiences. Media with more limited resources can use their social media platforms as a space for engagement and dialogue rather than just content dissemination. It is critical to understand that different audiences will want different content to address their specific needs. While not every media platform should cater for all audiences, understanding who your specific audiences are will support the wider ecosystem in addressing diverse needs.
- **Media should also consider identifying and engaging with influencers where relevant and where journalism principles can still be upheld.** Time needs to be spent researching and understanding the different influencers who are active and around which topics. Media then need to build relationships with potential partners who can work with their organisation or on topics which are of mutual concern. This is an area which should not be taken lightly as the lines between professional journalism and citizen generated content should not be blurred. Thorough examination of influencers' narratives and previous collaborations should be fully investigated and due diligence performed.
- A lack of transparency in the media, for example around funding and decision-making processes, can lead to perceptions that media and journalists might have hidden agendas and motivations which are not in the public interest. Where possible and safe, **media should make available, and publish, information about their financial and governance structures as well as their editorial decision-making processes.** In an age where influencers and social media activists are becoming increasingly prominent as information providers, media organisations can think about developing secure policies to protect but also support their journalists who want to build their social media profiles.

- **Social media listening research will provide a more in-depth look at the most popular narratives which are being disseminated and by whom at any one given point in time.** It is recommended that a social media listening piece be conducted in order to begin to identify conversations and themes in relation to upcoming elections. This can be shared with the media to support them in developing content which can address the different needs of different groups, including citizens' demands, feedback, and grievances related to provision and quality of services which are often voiced through social media. There is also an argument for relevant media organisations, including Internews, Al Mamlaka and Roya for example, to continue to provide ongoing research and assessment of the media landscape through coordinated work that combines quantitative and qualitative data.
- AI is clearly playing a significant role in information and media consumption. It is important for **AI policies and newsroom guidelines to be developed within media organisations** to reflect content production and dissemination needs whilst also focusing on principles such as accuracy and accountability.

FOR CIVIL SOCIETY:

- **Media and information literacy (MIL) efforts** are ongoing in Jordan and audiences are able to identify disinformation as a reason for news avoidance. However, verification techniques were limited amongst Jordanian audiences. MIL should also start to focus on educating citizens to recognise where AI is being used to manipulate content.
- **Advocacy around the importance of having a free and independent media information ecosystem and freedom of expression** is integral in Jordan. Media freedom is a fundamental of democracy and it absolutely critical to raise awareness of the role of media acting as an educator and watchdog to ensure strong societies. Public recognition of the difference between independent and restricted media environments and the virtues of the former versus the latter must be enhanced. MIL efforts need to focus on developing the public's understanding of freedom of expression.
- **Monitoring and documenting disinformation narratives** is also key to determining how the media can respond to disinformation. Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) and AI tools can begin to track and record disinformation, while fact-checking organisations develop responses and capacity-building for journalists. Journalists can also report on the origins of disinformation narratives as part of wider MIL efforts.
- Persons with disabilities, women and young people all require distinct approaches to media engagement. **Identifying and working with relevant local CSOs** that have strong connections with these groups is integral. Ensuring that newsrooms employ representatives from these groups is also a must. More subject specialists who can cover topics which are relevant to persons with disabilities for example should be supported.
- Jordanian media outlets and platforms are sophisticated in their understanding of media development, in the main, as Jordan remains fundamentally a donor-dependent country with little opportunity to diversify revenue from independent sources. Jordan has benefitted from substantial donor assistance and many established actors are familiar with donor requirements having been the direct recipients of grants and participants in development projects, despite the fact that direct support to the media sector is limited. **Exploring new business models** as a means to develop longer-term, sustainable independent media platforms is critical for emerging and established platforms to develop and survive. Working with CSOs who are aware of the context and needs of different groups is integral to developing sustainable and effective business solutions.

ANNEX I: STUDIES USED IN THE LITERATURE REVIEW

#	STUDY NAME	ORGANIZATION	RESEARCH FIRM		DATE	SAMPLE SIZE
1	Two years and a half Khasawneh Gov	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	MAY.2023	1,200
2	Youth in Jordan	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung	NAMA	FES	MAR.2023	1,047
3	State of the state- Wave 3	IRI	NAMA	IRI	OCT.2022	1,500
4	نبض الشارع الأردني-المؤشر الأردني/قضايا وطنية وإقليمية Jordanian Index Poll Series, "Jordanian Street Pulse" regional and national issues	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	AUG.2022	N/A
5	مؤشر الثقة بوسائل الإعلام الأردنية Media Trust Index	Jordan Media Institute	CSS	JMI	JUN.2022	1,800
6	Arab Youth Survey- 14th edition	Asdaa BCW	N/A	AYS	JUN.2022	3,400
7	السياسة الخارجية الأردنية Jordan's Foreign Policy Poll	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	MAY.2022	N/A
8	السياسة الخارجية الأردنية Jordan's Foreign Policy Poll	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	MAR.2022	N/A
9	Municipal Elections- pre elections survey	Konrad Adenauer Stiftung- NAMA	NAMA	KAS	DEC.2021	2,365 (804 uni students)
10	Public Opinion Survey- State of Democracy in Jordan	International Republican Institute	NAMA	IRI	NOV.2021	3,010
11	Situation in Syria and scenarios for a future solution	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	NOV.2021	1,208
12	Public Opinion Survey- State of the State Wave 2	International Republican Institute	NAMA	IRI	MAY.2021	1,504
13	حكومة الدكتور بشر الخصاونة وبعض القضايا الراهنة ٢٠٠ يوم على التشكيل 200 Days Government Approval Ratings (PM Khasawneh) and other current issues	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	MAY.2021	1,350

14	Jordanian Index Poll Series	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	MAR.2021	N/A
15	بشر الخصالنة بعد مرور ١٠٠ يوم على تشكيلها 100 Days Government Approval Ratings (PM Khasawneh)	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	FEB.2021	1,656
16	Jordanian Index Poll Series	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	OCT.2020	N/A
17	Public Opinion Survey-State of Democracy in Jordan	International Republican Institute	NAMA	IRI	SEP.2020	3,000
18	Jordanian Index Poll Series, "Jordanian Street Pulse" regional and national issues	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	MAR.2020	N/A
19	Arab Opinion Index (2019-2020)	Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies	N/A	AOI	JAN.2020	N/A
20	حول حكومة الدكتور عمر الرزاز بعد مرور عام ونصف على تشكيلها 18 Months Government Approval Ratings (Al Razzaz Government)	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	DEC.2019	1,712
21	Jordanian Index Poll Series, "Jordanian Street Pulse" regional and national issues	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	DEC.2019	1,800
22	Jordanian Index Poll Series, "Jordanian Street Pulse" regional and national issues	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	NOV.2019	N/A
23	Public opinion Survey-State of the state Wave 1	International Republican Institute	NAMA	IRI	NOV.2019	1,502
24	Jordanian Index Poll Series, "Jordanian Street Pulse" regional and national issues	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	OCT.2019	N/A
25	1 Year Government Approval Ratings (Al Razzaz Government) and other current issues	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	JUN.2019	1,800
26	Public Opinion Survey-State of Democracy in Jordan	International Republican Institute	NAMA	IRI	APR.2019	3,020

27	Politics and Social Media in the Middle East & North Africa: Trends & Trust in Online Information	Arab Barometer	CSS	AB	NOV.2018	2,400
28	Youth in Middle East and North Africa	Arab Barometer	CSS	AB	NOV.2018	2,400
29	حول تشكيل حكومة الدكتور عمرالراز وبعض القضايا الراهنة Poll on the formation of Al Razzaz Government and other current affairs	Center for Strategic Studies	CSS	CSS	JUL.2018	1,823
30	World Value Survey (Wave 7)	N/A	WVS	WVS	JUN.2018	1,203

AUTHOR'S AFTERWORD

The field research conducted for this study was carried out in full recognition of the considerable debates surrounding the challenges and limitations of audience research, particularly in Global South contexts and restrictive environments. Whilst recognising the validity of these concerns and debates and the inherent limitations of audience research, the research findings and recommendations presented in this study are of real value for indicative purposes as they reveal distinct patterns of media consumption in Jordan which are worthy of taking into serious consideration by parties and individuals engaged in media and communication research, development, reform and education. Necessary mitigation measures were taken to identify situations where there may be risk of influenced opinions or opinions expressed based on fear of retribution. These are all outlined in the methodology section of the report. I welcome any feedback and critique of the methodology used for this report as well as suggestions for future iterations of much needed audience research in similar and challenging contexts.



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