

Final Report of the National Team
Observing the 2013 17th Parliamentary Elections

Prepared under the supervision of
The National Center for Human Rights

Amman
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
April2013

Acknowledgements

The Board of Trustees of the National Center for Human Rights (NCHR) would like to sincerely thank all authorities and commissions, whose names are listed in Annex (1), for partnering with our Center in observing the 2013 17th parliamentary elections. This partnership has played an important role in the success of the observation and evaluation process. To all of them, we express our deep appreciation. The NCHR would also like to express its thanks and gratitude to the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) for its support to this observation process.

Introduction

In response to states' obligations to ensure human rights, competent bodies in various countries around the world have observed electoral processes. International, regional organizations, governmental, as well as, nongovernmental organizations have contributed to these efforts. According to international standards and practices, allowing election observation have considered the observation of the electoral processes as an indicator of basic political human rights guarantees. This comes as a response to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Article No. 21, third paragraph which stipulates that "The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by an equivalent free voting procedures".

The essential reason behind observing election is to ensure the guarantee of a number of rights as stipulated in the international conventions, practices and the opinions of the constitutional law scholars, namely:

1. Respect the right of movement, assembly, association and the right to form political parties during the election period.
2. Ensure that associations and political parties have exercised their activity without breaching the law.
3. Ensure that societies, political parties and candidates have been given access to the media and were able to present their views without being subjected to any arbitrary restrictions.
4. Ensure equal security conditions for all parties and candidates.
5. Ensure that voters have been able to cast their ballots without being subjected to any threat or fear.
6. Ensure that the ballot was conducted within the conditions of secrecy.
7. Ensure that all procedures in the various election phases were taken according to the law and that there were no acts of fraud.

The observation of elections' process achieves many objectives related

to the development of the democratic process through:

- A. Providing objective and independent assessment of the ruling authority's administration of the electoral process.
- B. Objective observation makes parties involved in the electoral process more inclined to accept the election results.
- C. The various studies indicate that there is a relation between convincing the public of objective observation and the degree of people's involvement in the electoral process. The more the observation is convincing to the public, the more it participates in the elections, and vice versa. This means that there is relationship between the rate of political participation and the observation of elections.
- D. Sparing the society conflicts that may arise as a result of disagreements regarding the elections' results. Moreover, observation bodies, especially non-governmental ones, are considered an asset for bodies tasked with settling disputes arising from elections and their results.
- E. Promoting national education in the society through expanding the circle of civil society and strengthening trust between the different sectors of the society.
- F. Observing the election process and ensuring its integrity promotes a positive image of the state among the international community.

The legal framework for conducting parliamentary elections in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Article (34/1) of the Jordanian Constitution stipulates that «The King issues orders for the holding of elections to the Chamber of Deputies in accordance with the provisions of the law.» According to article (67/1) of the Constitution “The Chamber of Deputies shall consist of members elected by secret ballot in general direct elections and in accordance with the provisions of an Electoral Law which shall ensure the following principles:

- A. The right of candidates to observe the electoral process.

B. The punishment of those adversely influencing the voters will.

C. The integrity of the electoral process in all of its stages.

While Paragraph (2) of the same article stipulates that «An independent commission shall be established by a law to supervise the parliamentary electoral process and administer all its phases...»

The 2011 constitutional amendments have provided for the establishment of such an independent body to observe and administer all phases of the parliamentary elections in order to ensure voters' rights to choose their representative for the House of Representatives and to prevent any interference or violation of the law.

A Royal Decree approving the law establishing the Independent Election Commission was issued on 4 April 2012. This was followed by the appointment of the head of the commission and its commissioners on May 6th 2012.

Accordingly, the Independent Election Commission (IEC) law number (11) of the year 2012 was passed. The law stipulates that IEC is an independent body, which enjoys a legal personality with financial and administrative independence. The election law number (25) of the year 2012 has granted the Commissioners Council the authority to issue executive instructions for the administration of elections in accordance with standards that ensure their integrity.

A Royal Decree to dissolve the 16th parliament was issued on 4 October 2012 and it called for conducting parliamentary elections based on the new election law number (25) of the year 2012, amended by Law number (28) of the year 2012.

The new election law, similar to the old one, gave the voter the right to choose one single candidate in the local electoral district, regardless of the number of seats of that district (one-man-one-vote). However, unlike the old law, it has given the voter the right to choose one of the general lists and has allocated 27 seats for these lists.

On October 16th 2012, IEC issued a decision setting Wednesday, 23 January 2013 as the day for holding the 17th parliamentary elections.

The legal framework for NCHR's role in observing elections

Within the framework of the above-mentioned constitutional provisions, NCHR has consistently observed the integrity of parliamentary elections in Jordan and their fairness on the basis that the elections are considered one of the major human rights as stipulated in international and regional conventions.

The NCHR law, in its articles (4 - C, 5 - A, 10 - B), states that among its objectives are the "promotion of the democratic approach ... ensuring the observance of human rights ... observing human rights and public freedoms' violations... requesting any information, data or statistics it deems necessary to achieve its objectives from the relevant authorities ...visiting any place where human rights violations have been committed or are being committed." Thus, observing the parliamentary elections fall within these objectives - as stipulated in the articles referred to above.

Since the election law has specified in its texts those who are authorized to be present at the polling and counting stations, the NCHR, on 27 August, 2013, submitted an application for the participation of a national team in observing elections at the polling and counting centers during the election period. NCHR obtained the necessary approvals and a national team was formed of (55) civil society organizations and commissions for this purpose.

Monitoring political forces' stances regarding elections

Jordanian political parties and streams have had different stances regarding the above-mentioned election law and with regard to reform initiatives and the political transformations of the country. Their stances also varied especially with regard to the constitutional amendments that were introduced by the Kingdom during the period that followed the outbreak of popular movements and the Arab Spring in 2011. Some political forces, such as the Islamic Action Front Party and the National Reform Front, have called for boycotting the elections because they considered that the reform demands that

they were calling for, as listed below, haven't been met:

1. The need to adopt an electoral system other than the one-man-one vote system that does not meet the democratic process requirements.
2. Government response to the demands raised by these forces by raising the number of seats allocated for the general electoral district (national lists) to a minimum of 50% of the total House of Representatives seats.
3. The constitutional amendments that have been introduced were considered Insufficient and need to be completed; particularly those related to articles 34, 35 and 36 of the Constitution¹.
4. Emphasis on the need to broaden the base of reform in the political, economic and social fields and the need to seriously fight corruption in its various forms.

Other parties, however, have chosen to participate in the elections but in their electoral programs they have stressed the need for amending the election law.

The announcement by the king that the government, which will be formed after the parliamentary elections will be a parliamentary government - formed upon consultations between the designated Prime Minister and the different parliamentary blocs, was of particular importance for the 17th parliamentary elections.

(1) These constitutional articles read as follows:

Article 34:

1. The King issues orders for the holding of elections to the House of Representatives in accordance with the provisions of the law.
2. The King convenes the Parliament, inaugurates, adjourns, and prorogues it in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.
3. The King may dissolve the House of Representatives.
4. The King may dissolve the Senate or relieve one of its members of the membership.

Article 35:

The King appoints the Prime Minister, dismisses him and accepts his resignation, and appoints the Ministers, dismisses them and accepts their resignation upon the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

Article 36:

The King appoints the members of the Senate and appoints the Speaker of the Senate from amongst them and accepts their resignation.

NCHR Action Plan for observing elections

Most of the bodies tasked with following up on the election processes at their different levels (local, parliamentary or presidential) acknowledge that it is important to have a set of standards that achieve a sufficient level that would ensure fair and balanced reports for assessing the various 3 election phases: pre-elections, the election processes and the post elections phase.

The number of those eligible to observe elections should be proportional to the number of voters in the district and the number of ballot boxes to ensure objective judgment in all the elections phases. The security of observers should be guaranteed and they should have access to all facilities related to the election phases. In addition, the observation team members should possess certain personal traits such as expertise in observing elections and independence from any commissions or affiliations that may affect the integrity of the observation process.

NCHR has formed a specialized team to observe the various phases of the parliamentary elections. The team has followed the following steps:

First: Observing the registration of voters phase

Sixty observers, representing civil society organizations from the Kingdom's different governorates, have been chosen and trained on the standard procedures for voter registration, to serve as a base in following up on the registration process and monitoring any possible violations at this phase, which is not less important than any other phase of the electoral process because of its impact on the fairness of the elections and the fair representation of the different segments of the society. During this phase too, the objections submitted to the Civil Status and Passports Department on the voters lists and the judicial appeals submitted by the voters were monitored.

Second: Observing the 17th parliamentary elections' candidate registration process

The national team has observed the 17th parliamentary elections' candidate registration process. Members of the team visited the body responsible for receiving those who wish to submit their nomination applications, filled out the observation forms designed for this phase, as well as questionnaires targeting who wish to nominate themselves on the progress of the candidate registration process to assess the level of their satisfaction. The team also observed judicial contestations regarding the decisions of the Central Committee submitted by those who want to nominate themselves, those whose nominations have been rejected as well as those submitted by voters and the mechanisms of dealing with these objections and the decision taken with their regard.

Third: Observing the election campaign phase

The national team has observed the election campaigns conducted by the candidates to assess the extent of candidates' commitment to preserve national unity, protect the security and stability of the nation, respect other candidates, use the places allocated for the election campaigns and explore how these candidates used their financial resources during the campaigns. In general, the team observed the extent of candidates' abidance by the election law.

Fourth: Observing the polling and counting day phase

A. The distribution of the team members on the electoral centers, taking into account the proportionality between the number of observers and the number of electoral districts in each governorate. NCHR calculated the percentage of ballot boxes in each local electoral district of the total number of boxes in the Kingdom. Observers were distributed through multiplying the number of ballot boxes allocated for the district by the total number of observers then dividing the result on the total number of ballot

boxes. By doing so, NCHR was able to observe 1 ballot box out of 3 ballot boxes based on the following mathematical order box 1, 4, 7, 10, etc...

The total number of observers distributed in the electoral district was 1110 observer and 45 coordinators who have assumed the task of coordinating the work of the observation teams. Observers have been distributed in the governorates and the Badiya according to the numbers shown in Table number (1).

Table (1)	
Distribution of observers among governorates	
Governorate	No. of observers
Amman	316
Irbid	247
Al-Zarqa	136
Al-Balqaa	104
Al-Badiya	83
Al-Karak	73
Madaba	42
Jarash	38
Al-Mafraq	33
Ajloun	30
Maan	22
Al-Tafileh	22
Al-Aqaba	18

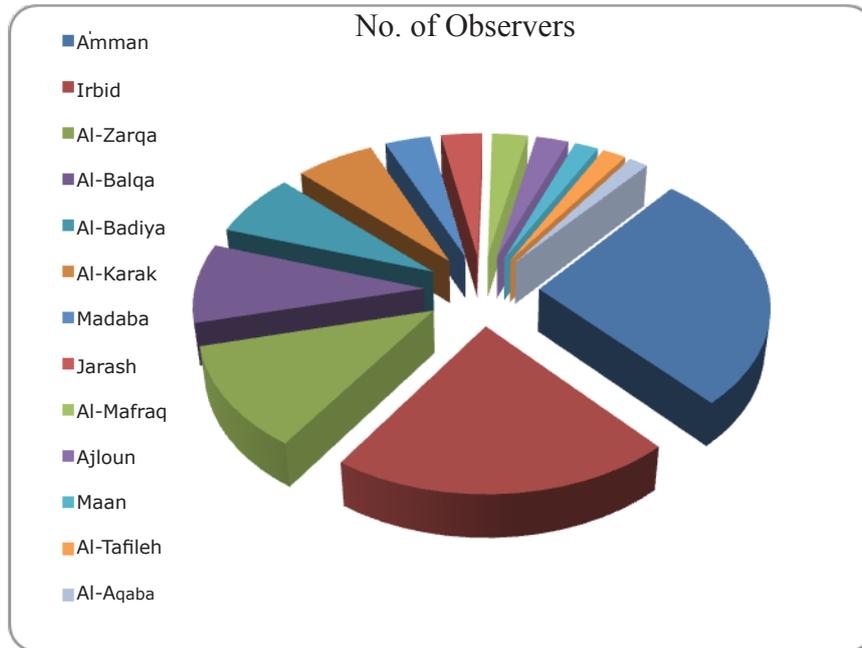


Figure (1): The distribution of observers in the different governorates

The total number of polling centers in all governorates and the Badiya was 1484 with a total number of 4069 ballot boxes. 1055 ballot boxes were observed, i.e., a percentage of 25.92% of the total number of ballot boxes.

- B. Districts' observers were provided with the numbers of the ballot boxes and the names of the polling centers that they should observe according to the plan prepared by the team administration 72 hours before the balloting day. Each observer, in coordination with the district's coordinator, made a visit to the ballot box he was assigned to observe a day before the election day to become familiar with its location. All observers were required to be present at the polling centers they were assigned to observe at exactly 6:30 a.m. on the Election Day (i.e., half an hour before the start of the balloting process).
- C. Each observer observed one ballot box only during the election day.
- D. Each observer, during the opening of the ballot box procedures,

filled the special form for this procedure and sent all his answers to the question in this form through an SMS message to the number he was provided with. The observer repeated this process with all other forms related to the start of the election day procedures and the end of this day procedures with the close of the ballot box procedures, the counting of results, the registration of the candidates names, the votes won by each candidate and the special form on violations that may occur during the polling day. All this has been fully documented.

- E. Each observer digitally videotaped the counting and balloting minutes of the ballot box he was assigned to observe.
- F. The coordinators of the districts, accompanied by the observer of each district, filled the special form of the voting results of each candidate and sent these results to NCHR.
- G. The duties of the coordinators and the observers were defined and the means of communications between them were agreed upon in order to ensure precise observation and good communication between the observers and the coordinators during the observation process.
- H. The paragraphs of the forms distributed to observers, which they were required to fill out, contained specific questions and each question covered aspects of all procedures in each phase of the elections.
- I. The percentages on each paragraph in each governorate, as well as in the Badiya, were reached based on the filled forms received from observers deployed in the different districts.

Fifth: Observing the objections on the election results phase

The observation team followed-up on objections and appeals submitted by citizens as well as by candidates to the competent courts on the elections results and it also followed-up on the objections results.

Results of observing the different phases of the elections

Observers' reports covered the electoral process phases as follows:

First: The pre-election phase

This phase includes the registration of voters and candidates and election campaigns. The overall results were as follows:

1. Preparation of voters lists:

This phase started with the identification and registration of those who are eligible to vote in special records called voters register during a specified period of time. After this period, the voters register is issued and published for a specified period of time (at the headquarters of the election committees), in a way that allows those who are concerned to have access to them and to contest their correctness. In this phase, the registration of voters phase, is considered an optional one and must be carried out by a completely independent body. However, any person who does not register during the specified period loses his right to vote. This phase started on 7/8/2012 and continued until 15/10/2012.

The number of registered voters for the 2013 parliamentary elections has reached a total of 2,272,182 voters, i.e., 63.7% of the 3,565,139 male and female voters who are eligible to vote, according to the records of the Civil Status and Passports Departments at that time.

The number of registered male voters was 1,178,864 voters, i.e., 51.88%, while the number of registered female voters was 1,093,318, i.e., 48.12% of the total.

The data on the number of registered voters compared to those who are eligible to vote indicates that the highest rates of registration was in the Ajloun governorate (90.5%), followed by al-Karak (89%), Jerash (81.1%) and al-Tafleh (80.5%). The lowest turnout rates were in the al-Mafraq Governorate (39.1%), followed by al-Aqaba

(46.2%) and the capital city (49.8%). The other governorates fell between the above-mentioned percentages.

In the Bedouin districts, the total number of registered male and female voters was 143,178 distributed as follows: the North Badia 58,867, Central Badia 41,790 and the South Badia 42,521 female and male voters.

Staff at voter registration centers have shown good cooperation with the national team and have facilitated its work. However, the team has observed the following:

- A. Some Civil Status and Passports Department offices, which functioned as voter registration centers, were open on daily basis without officially announcing the location of these centers¹.
- B. The election card, in most cases, was given on the day following the submission of the application day. IEC justified this delay by saying that there wasn't enough staff and computers at the registration centers. This resulted in overcrowding in some places especially in the mornings and there was a certain degree of chaos.
- C. There was frequent confirmed reports about the registration of voters who did not personally come to the registration centers and / or without them asking to be registered.
- D. Citizens did not actually receive their election cards when they signed that they have received them. The election card application form contained a box which citizens are required to put their signatures in indicating that they have received their election cards while actually they didn't because the cards were delivered at a later stage in the same day or even in the next day.
This means that the citizens should sign when they actually receive the election card and not when they fill out the application form to obtain the card.
- E. The lack of registration centers in some residential areas such

(1) Article 3 paragraph E of the executive instructions No. 1 of the year 2012, issued by IEC stipulates that centers responsible for issuing election cards and those responsible for the preparation of voters lists should be announced.

as the case of DeirAlla.

- F. Some of the registration centers such as the Sama al-Sarhan and al-Salihiyeh centers were distant from populated areas.
- G. The application forms used for obtaining election cards did not have serial numbers. This made it more difficult for citizens to receive their election cards with ease.
- H. The observation team observed that there were election cards issued for members of the security services in two centers: al-Mashareq and al-Husun. The justification given was that the Civil Status Department was only recently informed of their employment status.
- I. The IEC, in its executive instructions, confined voluntary work in the electoral process in the «receiving voters and assisting them in filling out forms» only. However, volunteers from the «We Are All Jordan Youth Commission » took the task of the civil status employees of issuing election cards in some centers such as the Jordan Valley, al-Ramtha, al-Kura, BaniUbeid and BaniKanana.
- J. The size of work and the piling files in the electoral center of Jarash city has led to a delay in the preparation of the election cards and in delivering them on time. The delivery of the cards was done days after the submission of the applications because it was difficult to find the cards and to deliver them on the scheduled time.
- K. In Irbid governorate centers, the special forms for the registration of voters were not available. Privately owned bookshops were selling these forms to citizens.
- L. The centers which were opened in the different governorates to facilitate the registration process and encourage people to register – other than those of the civil status directorates – did not achieve their purpose because of the small number of staff and the absence of an adequate number of computers to carry out the registration process.
- M. The observation team noted that the Civil Status and Passports

Department did not coordinate with it in order to verify compliance with the executive instructions on the voter registration process developed by the IEC.

- N. The national observation team noted that there were instructions issued by official bodies asking their employees to register for the elections. This has prompted some employees to register because they were afraid of the consequences of not registering.
- O. One of al-Tafileh governorate employees registered a number of citizens and took their election cards from the Civil Status and Passports Department. These citizens were going to the governorate to receive humanitarian aid (such as Hashemite charity parcels).
- P. Some of the card-issuing centers did not commit to organizing queues in an automated or manual manner, which led some citizens to complain against this as being as discriminatory treatment against them.
- Q. IEC referred to the attorney general irregularities such as the registration of more than 100 male and female voters, issuing their election cards and transferring them to Jarash electoral district by some persons.
- R. The observation team has noted frequent irregularities at the al-Karimah center (in the northern Jordan Valley), such as the issuance of election cards for persons who did not request these cards. The Assistant Director of the Civil Status Department in al-Karimah center was arrested for irregularities in the registration process in favour of one of the persons who intend to run for the elections.

The reports of the national team indicate that there were gaps in the registration process, to varying degrees. These gaps could be summarized by the following quantitative indicators:

- A. 67% of the registration centers that have been observed were not equipped to receive people with disabilities.
- B. 55% of the registration centers did not put the special

Observing the 2013 17th Parliamentary Elections

- instructions on registration steps in an accessible manner.
- C. 36% of the registration centers were not well introduced as polling and counting centers and this has made it more difficult for people to know and to choose the polling centers close to their places of residence.
- D. 22.9% of the registration centers have had very limited space.
- E. 4.9% of the registration centers were not known to the people or were not easy to reach.

The above indicators and information contained in Table (2) regarding the number of eligible voters and those who actually registered reveal the following:

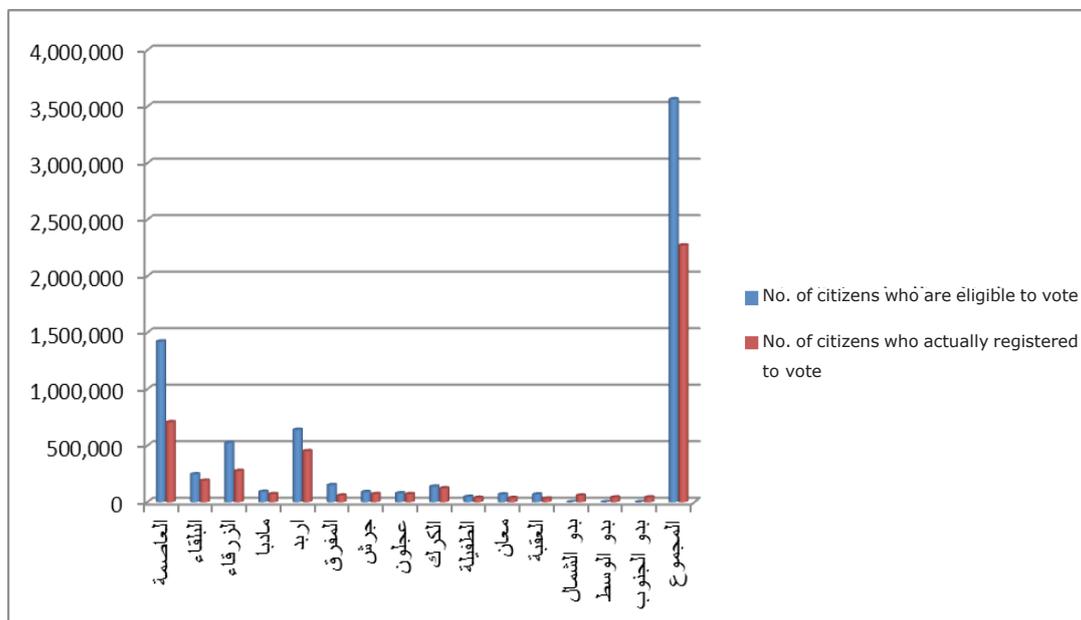
Governorates	No. of eligible voters	No. of citizens who actually registered for elections	% of registered voters Those who have the right to vote
Capital city	1,422,056	707,977	49,8
Al-Balqa	246,484	190,106	77,1
Al-Zarqa	524,767	276,444	52,9
Madaba	91,542	71,731	78,4
Irbid	640,352	451,360	70,5
Al-Mafraq	150,619	58,817	39,1
Jarash	89,059	72,265	81,1
Ajloun	78,491	71,048	90,5
Al-Karak	138,079	122,907	89
Al-Tafileh	47,147	38,115	80,5
Maan	68,046	36,593	53,8
Al-Aqaba	68,497	31,641	46,2
The Bedouin of the North	**	58,867	*
The Bedouin of the center	*	41,790	*
The Bedouin of the south	*	42,521	*
Total	3,565,139	2,272,182	63,7

*Information of the number of citizens who are eligible to vote and the percentages are not available.

- A. The percentage of those who have registered for the 17th parliamentary elections was 63.7% out of the total number of citizens who are eligible to vote.
- B. Ajloun governorate ranked first with regard to the registration rate for the election with a percentage of (90.5%) out of the total number of eligible voters, followed by al-Karak Governorate with (89%).
- C. Al-Mafraq Governorate ranked last in the percentage of those who have registered for the elections, with a percentage of (39.1%) out of the total number of citizens who are eligible to vote. Al-Aqaba governorate ranked second to the last with (46.2%).

D.Registration of candidates

The candidate registration phase started with the finalization of the voter registration phase because any candidate who wishes to nominate himself should be registered in the voters lists. The law specified the nomination period after which candidates lists are issued and published in the electoral districts in order to allow citizens to access them and to appeal and correct the names before publishing the final lists. The candidate, according to the law, has the opportunity to withdraw his nomination within a certain period of time after the publishing of the lists. The law has given the candidate 10 days to withdraw his nomination.



The national team assigned 60 of its members to observe the candidate registration process at the IEC headquarters and the headquarters of the election committees during the period extending from 22 – 24 December 2012. The process of submitting nomination applications started in all districts with the start of the official working hours and until the end of official working hours during the period extending from 22 to 24 December 2012. No applications were accepted after this date. The total number of female and male candidates competing over the parliament seats was (1528): (699) female and male candidates were competing over the local districts and individual seats, (829) female and male candidates were distributed on (61) lists and were competing over the general national district. The number of female candidates was (203), (88) of them were competing in the general electoral district, and (115) in the local districts. Candidates were distributed among districts and governorates as detailed in Table No. (3):

Table No. (3): Distribution of candidates among the local electoral districts											
Governorate	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	Total	%
The capital city	15	27	26	22	20	13	8			131	18.8
Al-Balqaa	26	4	8	11						49	7.1
Ajloun	28	8								36	5.2
Al-Karak	31	12	23	10	13	12				101	14.5
Jarash										26	3.8
The Bedouin of the Center										17	2.5
Maan	10	8	8							26	3.8
Al-Aqaba										24	3.5
Irbid	27	17	13	10	12	8	6	8	6	107	15.3
Al-Mafraq										18	2.6
The Bedouin of the North										19	2.8
Al-Zarqa	27	12	6	22						67	9.6
Madaba	24	6								30	4.3
Al-Tafileh	15	15								30	4.3
The Bedouin of the South										18	2.6
Total										699	100

The formation of the lists at the general electoral district level (national lists) in terms of the number of candidates in each list and the participation of women was as follows:

- A. Three lists, each composed of a number of candidates equal to the total number of seats allocated for the general electoral list, i.e., 27 seats.
- B. 14 of the general electoral districts lists were composed of 9 candidates, which is the minimum number of candidates allowed.
- C. The number of candidates in 44 lists ranged between 10 - 22 candidates.
- D. 13 lists did not contain the names of any female candidates.
- E. Two women headed two of the general electoral districts lists. The names of these two lists are: Progress and Democracy list and the Stronger Jordan list.
- F. The names of women candidates, in most of the general electoral list that contained women candidates, were at the bottom of the lists.
- G. The tendency among a big number of candidates to nominate themselves in the general electoral district led to the decline in the number of the local electoral districts candidates compared to their number in the 2003, 2007 and 2010 elections.

The distribution of candidates among the general electoral districts lists was as shown in Table (4).

Table (4): Number of candidates in each of the general electoral district's lists

No.	List Name	No. of Candidates	No.	List Name	No. of Candidates
	Justice and Development	9	32	National Consensus Youth	23
	Sawt al-Watan	12	33	Al-Waad al-Sadeq	9
	The Dawn (al-Fajr)	9	34	Al-Bayareq	19
	Al-Karamah Bloc	11	35	At-Taawun (Cooperation)	11
	Future Now	10	36	Al-Muwaten (The Citizen)	9
	Al-Hilal (The Crescent)	9	37	Al-Amal al-Watani (National Action)	22
	Justice and Freedom	9	38	Al-Aqsa	15
	The National Stream Party	22	39	Nashama al-Watan	12
	Al-AmalWalAmal	12	40	National Union	27
	Nidaa al-Watan	9	41	Al-RafahAhl al-Azm	13
	Ahl al-Himmah	12	42	UrdunAqwa (A Stronger Jordan)	11
	National Unity	22	43	Professional Sectors	9
	Al-Binaa	12	44	AlTaghyeer	11
	Al-Sawt al-Hurr (Free Voice)	25	45	Al-Haq	11
	Workers and Professionals	20	46	Al-Mustaqbal (The Future)	9
	Ahl al-Kayr (People of Charity)	16	47	FazaatWatan	11
	Al-Shaab	15	48	Justice and Equality	10
	Tajdeed (Renewal)	12	49	Al-Nour Bloc	12
	The Coalition of the Disabled	10	50	Citizenship	20
	Ahl al-Taqwa	9	51	National Reform	11
	Duaa al-Urduni	9	52	Abnaa al-Watan	10
	Justice	13	53	Al-Fuqaraa	10
	Islamic Centrists	23	54	National Authority	9
	Al-WataniyahliIslah	10	55	Justice and Reform	11
	United Front	27	56	Justice	10
	The Sons of Hayeh	11	57	Salvation	21
	Al-Bayan al-Hurr	13	58	Al-Quds al-Sharif	15
	Sharaf al-Umman (the Dignity of the Nation)	9	59	Al-Rafah	15
	Al-Nuhud al- Dimocrati	14	60	Abnaa al-Harrathin	10
	Unity	13	61	Rayat al-Haq	9
	Watan	27			

IEC formed 5 committees to receive the general electoral lists nomination applications and this made it easier for the persons authorized by the lists to follow-up on the nomination process and to submit their lists applications¹.

Most of the persons authorized by the lists arrived to the premises of committees tasked with receiving the candidacy registration applications at the same time. Thus, there was a need to arrange the applications according to their precedence. For this reason, a manual draw was used to determine the precedence of the applications. During the first day, 19 applications, which fulfilled the conditions, were received and 4 lists were asked to submit the needed documentation.

The nomination process was characterized by a number of features:

- A. Easy access to all of the electoral committees' premises.
- B. The presence of guiding signs to facilitate access to the premises

(1) The elections executive instructions stipulate the formation of only 1 committee to receive the nomination applications.

of the election committees, with the exception of the premises of the capital city's first district election committee because of the overcrowding of the population in this district.

- C. The candidate registration was put in accessible places and were clearly written. These instructions were explained to candidates when they inquired about any related aspect.
- D. The ease of receiving the nomination applications and their availability at the election committees premises.
- E. The registration procedures and verification of candidacy conditions have reflected the election committees familiarity with the steps to be taken in terms of receiving applications and related supporting documents and carefully checking them against the local and general districts' nomination conditions. The committees smoothly directed the candidates and helped them in completing the nomination procedures when there were missing documents.
- F. There was one exception to this rule in the Theban district. One of the female candidates expressed her dissatisfaction with the drawing process used for organizing the submission of applications. The candidate submitted a written memo in the electoral center saying «the committee did not respond to her when she asked to keep her turn. Instead, another female candidate was given the priority to register.» The candidate asked the committee to listen to some of the testimonies that proved that she had arrived before the other candidate. However, the election committee insisted on the use of drawing a lottery to organize the submission of applications. The national team did not observe any discrimination in dealing with the local electoral districts candidates based on social considerations. The team did not observe any acts that could be considered as acts of discrimination by the committees with the applications of the general lists. The team has also observed that 4 of the general lists used the same (Libra) sign when they submitted their nomination applications.
- G. The election committees delivered the nomination applications to

IEC on the same day of the completion of the applications.

- H. The heads of the election committees gave each candidate a written notice acknowledging the receipt of the application with the exception of one candidate in Amman's first district. The candidate's application was accepted but he did not receive a written notice because he did not submit all the needed documents.
- I. While in previous elections the Interior Ministry objected to the nomination of some candidates, IEC has accepted all nomination applications. IEC did not have any objections on the applications received for the local and general electoral districts. However, IEC has asked one of the lists to change its name because the list was given the name of a certain person. The person authorized by the list appealed IEC's decision at Amman court of appeal but the court issued a decision supporting IEC's decision and asked the list to change its name. Accordingly, the list did so and changed its name.

In contrast, the national team has observed a number of remarks on the candidate registration process summarized as follows:

1. The submission of nomination applications started before the publishing of the final voters lists by IEC¹. Thus, those who wish to nominate themselves submitted their applications before knowing whether their names are listed in the final voters' lists. IEC published the final voters' lists on Saturday, 22 December 2012 at 10:00 a.m. and did not provide the election committees with these to enable them to verify if the candidates' names were listed or not.
2. Some persons in the city of al-Ramtha submitted candidacy papers with the aim of influencing other candidates to get money from them in order to withdraw their nomination applications.
3. The polling centers allocated for people with disabilities were not ready to receive them, which is a violation of the convention

(1) Article 6/B of the election law states that IEC should publish the final voters lists on its website and by any other mean to be specified by the electoral instructions. It also states that IEC should provide the heads of the election committees with these lists in their districts.

relating to persons with disabilities.

4. The election committees did not enter the data of candidates on time. The committees only copied the nomination applications and kept these copies at their premises until they received a response from IEC's special committee accepting the applications.
5. The election committees did not abide by the executive instructions issued by IEC with regard to the personal photos of candidates. The committees asked candidates to bring their photos on CDs and they considered it as one of the candidate nomination application procedures. This request was not mentioned in the instructions.
6. Some of the committees (first, second and third districts in al-Zarqa governorate) refused to provide observers with the names of candidates claiming that they do not have instructions from IEC to do so.
7. The national team observed the presence of «security men» inside the premises of the election committees in the second district of Madaba governorate.
8. The national team observed that there were some individuals who were not carrying IEC's tags in the capital city's first district. This has made it difficult to easily identify the members of the election committee from among those who were present.

Appeals against the candidate nomination process

Competent courts looked into a limited number of appeals related to the candidate nomination process and issued rulings in these cases as follows:

- A. Irbid Appeal Court issued a ruling to reject an appeal against the two of the first district's candidates in the Ajloun governorates, namely: Kamal al-Zaghoul and Ali BunniAtta. The court issued its ruling on the basis of insufficient evidence presented by the two agents of the objectors.
- B. Amman Court of Appeal issued a ruling to reject the appeal filed by the person authorized by list No. 28 on the name of the list. The

list name was «Saddam Hussein» and IEC Commissioners Council objected to the list name and asked list to change its name. The court supported IEC demand being the «regulatory authority of the electoral process».

The withdrawal of candidates

103 of the local and general list electoral districts candidates withdrew. This has decreased the number of the local districts candidate to 606 (among them are 105 female candidates), and the general electoral districts candidates to 819 (among them are 86 female candidates). This means that the total number of women who withdrew is 12. i.e. 5.91% of the female candidates, while the total number of men who withdrew is 91, i.e., 6.86% of the male candidates.

Election campaigning

Election campaigns began with the start of accepting the candidate's nomination applications. Candidates started to introduce their election programs using the established advertising methods such as festivals and audio-visual media within the regulations set by the law, notably: national unity should not be impinged upon, rights and freedoms of others should not be violated, constitutional and legal texts should not be breached and material and moral temptations of voters should not be offered, etc....

The 17th parliamentary elections' propaganda phase began on 22 December 2012 and continued until 22 January 2013 in accordance to articles 14 and 21 of the election law No. 25 of the year 2012.

With respect to the election campaigns, the national team documented the following observations:

A. The use of political money:

The provisions of the election law, especially in its articles 63/1 and 25, do not allow candidates to give material gifts, in-kind donations or to directly or indirectly promise to do so to any natural or legal

person. His Majesty the King stressed in his meeting with IEC on 9 January 2013 this issue and the importance of firmly confronting any such practices. The Prime Minister, on 6 January 2013, has stressed the same issue as well.

Field reports prepared by the national team and other observation teams, as well as various media outlets have revealed that there were clear violations of the law that bans the use of political money. This has been further supported by statements made by a number of officials, such as:

- A. The statement made by the chairman of IEC on 27 December 2012 in which he said that IEC has received information on the use of political money and it will follow-up on this issue with the concerned security authorities. He also said that the judiciary will look into these crimes and the necessary legal action shall be taken against them.
- B. The statement made by IEC spokesman on 30 December 2013 when he said that «there is corrupt money and those who claim that this money does not exist have illusions and are lying to the people.»

The irregularities observed by the team in this regard can be summarized as follows:

1. Some of the general electoral districts' lists completed the number of their candidates through pledges made by some of the lists> candidates to other candidates that they will not let them bear any expenses, including the nomination fees and the election campaigns> costs.
2. Some candidates, especially those whose names were on the top of the lists, announced that they will cover the election campaigns cost of their lists.
3. Some candidates have assigned certain people for a specific period of time to follow-up on a group of voters and to hold back their election cards until the polling day to ensure that they vote for a particular candidate or a specific list or to prevent them from

voting for other competing candidates.

4. Vote-buying in return for amounts of money to be paid directly by the person managing the campaign or through brokers who collect election cards and offer them to candidates to see who will pay more money. The candidate pays half of the amount when he receives the election cards and the rest of the amount on the polling day. There were some specific cases observed such as:
 - A. Collecting election cards in some districts for an amount of money to be paid directly.
 - B. Collecting election cards in return for in-kind support (such as providing heaters, cell phones, parcels, blankets and the like) or a promise to provide employment opportunities especially for the unemployed young male and female university graduates.
 - C. Collecting voters' elections cards in return for paying the voters' Umrah or Hajj costs by the candidate. In some cases, the election cards were collected to gain the votes of those voters and in other cases to prevent voters from giving their votes to other competing candidates.
 - D. Collecting the election cards of university students in return for paying their tuition fees.
 - E. Collecting election cards in return for recruitment promises made by candidates in new positions that will be created in private schools in the coming semester.
 - F. Collecting election cards with the aim of «destroying them» in order to deprive competing candidates of the votes of the election cards owners in return for amounts of money paid directly.
 - G. Some candidates paid large sums of money to mosques, clubs and schools located in the poling centers where these candidates are registered.

The reports of the national team were further supported by reports published by the media on January 15th and 16th 2013 on the activities

of the preventive security services in this regard, evident in the following:

1. The preventive security was able to arrest two persons in the capital city of Amman, who confessed that they partnered with others in holding back election cards and they agreed with some candidates to give them these cards in return for certain amounts of money. One of the candidates received 793 election cards in exchange for bank checks." They also confessed that they agreed to deliver another quantity of election cards to other candidates.
2. The preventive security services arrested a previously convicted person accompanied by another person holder of an Arab nationality while promoting forged election cards in the al-Mafraq governorate. The two admitted that they have sold 48 election cards that belong to citizens for a price of 50 JDs per card.

The observers reports were further support by news published by local newspapers during the period 16 – 21 January 2013 on judicial proceedings that have been taken against a number of candidates who were accused of using political money during the election campaign, as shown in the following facts:

1. The general prosecutor of southern Amman arrested one of the second district's candidates in Amman for a period of 15 days pending investigation on charges of "offering voters money to influence them on the Election Day."
2. The general prosecutor of the al-Mafraq court of first instance arrested a female candidate and six others for 15 days pending investigation on charges of «offering sums of money to voters to influence them on the Election Day.»
3. Amman prosecutor arrested the head of one of the national lists for 15 days pending investigation on charges of «offering money to influence voters.»
4. Amman prosecutor arrested three persons: an independent candidate for the second district in Amman, a director of

- a bookshop and a lady for 15 days pending investigation on charges of «offering sums of money to influence voters.»
5. Amman general prosecutor charged one of Amman third districts candidates of «donating and the promising to donate money and aid offense.»
 6. The general prosecutor of the South Amman arrested a person for 15 days pending investigation on charges of “vote-buying” in favour of one of the candidates in the second district in Amman.
 7. The general prosecutor of the southern al-Shuna arrested the campaign manager of the third district candidate in al-Balqa Governorate on charges of «offering voters money.»
 8. The general prosecutor in Madaba governorate investigated a case related to the use of political money to collect election cards in order to ensure that the owners of these cards will vote for certain candidates.

B–Non-compliance with the timelines of the election campaigns

The law has specified the start and end date of the election campaigns, but there were a number of candidates who did not abide by the deadlines when they started their campaigns and when they ended them. This is illustrated by observing the following practices that have occurred before the start date of the election campaigns and after the end date. The national team has observed these practices and documented the following:

1. Some candidates invited voters to register for elections before the start date of the election campaigns.
2. Some candidates announced themselves as «candidates» of a tribe that they belong to before the scheduled day.
3. In relation to direct advertising through different media channels, the follow-up team documented that some satellite channels and websites displayed electoral advertisements for some candidates, although IEC has sent letters to the Press and

Publications Department and the department asking them to stop publishing any electoral campaign materials ahead of the legal date for doing so.

4. Hanging banners and pictures before the start date.
5. The observation team documented that some of the candidates sent emails and contacted voters after the end date of the election campaign.
6. The team observed that some candidates used a number of children to promote their campaigns at their electoral premises or in front of worship houses after the dates specified for the election campaigns.

C-Non-compliance with the legal requirements of the election campaigns procedures

The election law has specified procedural requirements that the candidate should adhere to during his campaigning. However, there were certain practices that had constituted a violation of this commitment, such as:

1. Some candidates have put their election campaign materials in places other than those allocated for this purpose such as posting pictures and banners on traffic pillars, main road junctions and telephone and electricity poles.
2. Non-compliance with the height of the cloth-made banners, which is considered a violation of a number of laws, such as the election law, the traffic law and laws issued by the ministries of municipalities and public works, not to mention the impact of these violations on public safety.
3. The election law and the executive instructions on the rules of the election campaigns issued by IEC state that candidates should submit a financial disclosure containing the source of funding and how the funds were spent on the election campaign. Some candidates and some of those who were responsible for some of the lists did not submit the disclosure on the date specified

by IEC for this purpose. The announcement by IEC on January 16th 2013 has revealed that 10 general lists and 17 candidates did not submit their disclosure until the date of the announcement. This has hindered IEC follow-up and monitoring of candidates and general lists' abidance by the laws and the elections' executive instructions work.

4. Some candidates did not abide by the rule that there are certain places that should not be used for the election campaign as stipulated in article 22 / b / 4 of the election law. It was observed that some candidates posted election campaign materials on the walls of the al-Tafileh governorate building, the Directorate of Social Development and the National Aid Fund buildings. In Irbid too, there were frequent violations in the form of pictures and banners being hanged on government buildings and worship places in the first and 5th districts. The government buildings where these pictures and banners were posted are: al-Hussein Secondary School for Boys, the Yarmouk government hospital, the eastern gate of the University of Yarmouk, the western gate of the city of Hassan sports. In the capital city, some electoral campaign materials were glued on one of the "booths" of the general security forces in the center of the capital citymarket. The national team observed that some candidates used the buildings of charities as election premises. One of the candidates used one of the public schools for the opening ceremony of his campaign premises.
5. Some candidates did not respect the rules related to the display of pictures and banners as specified by the law and related regulations, such as the large number of banners and pictures, displaying them in an unorganized manner, displaying the banners and pictures of a certain candidate in an exaggerated manner and in crowded places thus constraining the ability of others to use these places for the same purpose.
6. In some cases, there was a sharp disparity between the financial

capacities of candidates in the electoral campaigns. The law should take this issue into consideration by setting a ceiling for the amounts of money to be spent on campaigning.

7. Some candidates complained about the high fees imposed to ensure that there are no violations of the electoral propaganda provisions. Some complained that the fees were very high (according to one of those complaints). Some other candidates complained about inequality among candidates in the value of the fees paid. Amman Municipality charges four thousand dinars while some municipalities do not charge any amount and this violates the principle of equality and justice among the candidates.
8. Assaults by those in charge of the election campaigns on the pictures and posters of other candidates who attempted to destroy or remove these pictures and posters from their places. In a number of attacks, the electoral headquarters and vehicles of some candidates were burnt.
9. Physical assault on some of the candidates by «unknown» persons because of the activities of these candidates in areas believed to be under the influence of candidates supported by persons who carried out the attack.

The Polling Phase

This phase consists of the following key steps:

1. The opening of the polling stations.

This step consists of a number of procedures, it notably shows: the extent of the committees abidance by the start of balloting time in each of the polling centers, if there are separate polling stations for males and females, if the ballot boxes are completely empty when the balloting starts, the easiness of accessing the polling centers, the absence of any persons other than the members of the polling and counting committee members inside the polling centers and the extent to which the polling form/protocol were counted in front of the attendees.

It is necessary at this stage to prepare the start of balloting minutes that should contain the following important information: the number of polling form/protocol and the signing of the minutes. There should also be paper and electronic voters lists. Equally important is the availability of objection forms at the centers and that the boxes should be placed in a way that allows the observer to observe the balloting process. There should also be booths for voters to ensure privacy during the balloting process.

Table (5) shows the observation results at this stage

Table(5): The opening of ballot boxes and the start of balloting for the observed boxes		
No.	Observation Topic	Percentage
1	Start of balloting time	7 am: 71, 37 Between 7-9: 28, 63
2	Allowing observers to observe the start of balloting process	98.20
3	Allocating separate polling stations for males and for females	96.85
4	The average number of observed polling stations by the observer	4.47
5	Easy access to the polling centers	95.89
6	The presence of persons other than the members of the polling and counting committee members at the center	26.47
7	The counting of ballots in front of the attendees	75.40
8	The number of ballots counted in front of the attendees/ observer	635.77
9	The preparation of the start of ballot minutes	97.38
10	Writing down the number of ballot papers in the start of the balloting process minutes	88.30
11	The signing of the start of balloting minutes	94.60
12	The number of registered voters of the polling stations	529.36
13	The availability of paper and electronic voters' lists at the center	97.16
14	The presence of balloting guidelines	95.86
15	The availability of complaint forms	88.41
16	The ballot box is in a place which allows observers to observe the process of putting the ballot paper inside the box	98.79
17	The boxes are empty at the start of polling	99.40
18	The presence of a booth to give voters the feeling of privacy	98.09

It is worthwhile noting that there were several gaps observed at the

opening of ballot boxes phase and the start of balloting summarized as follows:

1. The balloting was scheduled to start at 7:00 a.m., however in 28.63% of the district's the balloting started after 7:00 a.m. and between 7:00 – 9:00 a.m.
2. The observation team observed the presence of persons other than the members of the polling and counting committees inside the polling centers with a rate of 26.47%.
3. The observation team observed that 11.59% of the centers did not have objection forms.

2. The balloting process:

The most prominent steps that should be observed at this stage are: the verification of the voters' identity and making sure that his name is listed in the voters' lists. The voter's identity papers (election card and the civil status card) should also be checked. Equally important is the verification of the veiled women's identity (those wearing the Niqab). The name of the voter in paper as well as electronic records should be marked and the election card should be signed by the head of the election committee who should also keep the card after cutting it. Table (6) shows the team's observation results at this stage.

Table(6):Verification procedures of progress in the balloting process of observed ballot boxes

Number	Observation topic	Percentage
1	Verifying the identity of the voter	99.53
2	Accepting supporting documents other than the civil status card and the election card	5.88
3	Checking if the name of the voter is listed in the voters' list.	98, 98
4	The number of persons who were allowed to vote and whose names were not listed in the voters' list.	731
5	The marking of the voters name in the paper and electronic records	97.41
6	The number of persons who were not allowed to vote	508
7	Attempts to influence voters	3.82
8	Practices which violate secrecy of the balloting(vote buying through disclosure or writing the name of the candidate outside the booth)	9.78
9	Stamping and signing the election card by the head of the committee	97.63
10	The entry of unauthorized persons to the polling room during the balloting process	3.94
11	Attempts to obstruct the conduct of the elections	1.82
12	The number of attacks on the polling and counting committees	2.96
13	The percentage of illiterate voters	12.36
14	Verification of veiled women's identities	88.11
15	The head of the committee kept the voter's election card and cut it	97.47
16	The number of objections against voters and the committee	296
17	The number of objections which the committee did not respond to	87
18	Changing the head of the polling and counting committee or any of its members	2.34

- A. The rate of those who voted using supporting documents other than the civil status card or election card was around 5.88%.
- B. The total number of individuals, whose names were not listed in

- the voters' lists, and who were allowed to vote was 731.
- C. The rate of attempts to influence voters during the balloting process was around 3.82%.
- D. The rate of practices, which are considered as violations to the secrecy of the ballot principle was around 9.78%.
- E. The rate of the presence of unauthorized persons inside the polling room during the balloting process was around 3.94%.
- F. The rate of attempts to obstruct the voting process was around 1.82%.
- G. The rate of offenses against polling committees was 2.96%.
- H. The rate of veiled women whose identities were not checked was 11.89%.
- I. The rate of change of the head of the polling and counting committee or any committee member was 2.34%.

Elections until 12:00 p.m

Observing some of the election process indicators, the team has recorded the results of its observation as shown in Table No. (7). Among the most important observations are the following:

1. 2335 persons were allowed to cast their votes although their names were not listed in the voters' lists.
2. The number of registered complaints on committees and voters reached 255. The committees responded to 139 of these objections.
3. The frequency of the committees' work interruption was 676 times.

Table (7): Monitoring the balloting process of the observed ballot boxes until 12:00 p.m.

	Subject	No.
1	Voters until 12:00 p.m.	247260
2	Persons not listed in the voters' lists and were allowed to cast their votes	2335
3	Those who were not allowed to cast their votes	326
4	Illiterate voters	14892
5	Appeals, if any, submitted against the work of the committee or the behavior of voters during the balloting process	255
6	Unanswered appeals by the committee	139
7	The frequency of interruption in the work of the voting and balloting committees	676

However, the team recorded some observations on the conduct of the voting process until 12:00 p.m., as shown in Table (8). The following are most important observations:

- A. The polling committees accepted a percentage of 3.77% of identification papers other than the Civil Status identity cards and election cards.
- B. Attempts to influence voters' choices reached 4.48%.
- C. The rate of practices that violate the secrecy of balloting reached around 9.72%.
- D. The rate of the presence of unauthorized persons inside the balloting rooms during elections was around 3.46%.
- E. The rate of harassment practiced against the election committee reached around 3.71%.
- F. The rate of veiled women (those wearing the Niqab) whose identity was not checked reached around 10% of the cases.

Table(8): Observation of the balloting process of the observed ballot boxes until 12:00 p.m.

No.	Subject	Percentage
1	Verifying the identity of the voter by the polling and counting committee	98.64
2	The election committee acceptance of identification papers other than the civil status identity cards and the election cards	3.77
3	Verifying if the voter's name is listed in the voters' lists of the ballot box	99.11
4	Electronically marking the voters name in the voters' list of the ballot box	98.48
5	Attempts to influence voters	4.48
6	Practices which violate the secrecy of balloting (vote buying through disclosure or writing the name of the candidate outside the booth)	9.72
7	The chairman of the polling committee signs and stamps the ballot paper in front of voters and attendees	98.59
8	The entry of unauthorized persons to the balling room during the balloting	3.46
9	Attempts to obstruct the balloting process	2.10
10	Persons attacking the polling committees	3.71
11	Verifying veiled (those wearing the Niqab) women's identities	90.06
12	The head of the committee retains the election card of the voter after cutting it from the lower-left corner	97.25
13	The polling and counting committee changes its chairman or any of its members during the balloting process.	2.46

Table (9) shows the results of the observation until 19:00 p.m.:

- A. The number of ballot papers received by the election committees for the local electoral districts exceeded the number of ballot papers for the general electoral district.

Table(9): The balloting process until seven o'clock in the evening of observed boxes			
	Subject	Number	
1	Voters inside the polling center at 19:00 p.m.	217 925	
2	Voters who exercised their right to vote according to the voters' register	323 704	
		Local district	General electoral district
4	Ballot papers received by the committees, which were observed by the team	600 821	582 009
5	Ballot papers that have been used by the committees, which were observed by the team	327 980	322 796
6	Ballot papers that were not used by the committees which were observed by the team	258 198	249 499
7	Ballot papers that had been cancelled or destroyed by the committees which were observed by the team	5381	8894

- B. The number of ballot papers used in the balloting of the local electoral districts exceeded the number of ballot papers of the general electoral district.
- C. The number of ballot papers not used in the elections of the local districts was higher than those used in the general district.
- D. The number of cancelled ballot papers for the general electoral district was higher than the number of cancelled ballot papers for the local electoral district.
- E. The number of objections on the ballot papers of the general electoral district was higher than the number of objections on the ballot papers of the local electoral district.

- F. The number of ballot papers received by the election committees in the general electoral district exceeded the number of ballot papers for the local electoral district with a ratio of more than 2:1.
- G. The number of voters who have exercised the right to vote in the voters register of the general electoral district and the local electoral district was almost the same.
- H. The number of ballot papers inside the general electoral districts' ballot boxes was higher than the number of ballot papers inside the ballot boxes of the local electoral districts by around (60 882).
- I. The number of invalid and cancelled ballot papers in the general electoral district was higher than the number of invalid and cancelled ballot papers in the local electoral districts.

C–The closing of the ballot boxes, the counting of ballots and the announcement of results:

The closing of the ballot boxes, then opening and emptying them, the starting of ballot counting and the announcement of results are all considered as the last phase of the election process. In this phase, a number of conditions should be observed, most importantly the close of the ballot box time, allowing observers to observe the counting process and to verify a number of procedures as listed below:

- A. Opening of the ballot boxes in the presence of the candidate or his representative agent.
- B. The presence of no persons other than the members of the polling and counting committee.
- C. Emptying all ballot papers in the ballot boxes in an empty place devoid of any papers.
- D. Registering complaints and delivering copies of the special committee's decisions to the objector.
- E. Ensuring the preparation of end of counting form/protocol and entering the content of this form/protocol in the electronic elections information system.
- F. Announcement of the results.

G. Delivering all election documents to the chairman of the election committee.

H. Putting a copy of the counting minutes at the entrance of the posting and counting room.

The observers' reports contained a number of noteworthy observations as listed in Tables (10, 11, 12 and 13), namely:

1. Most of the ballot boxes (92.98%) were closed during the period between the 19:00 p.m. and 21:00 p.m.
2. The rate of allowing observation of the general electoral district elections was (99, 81%) compared to (99, 97%) for the local electoral district.
3. Observers have noted the presence of persons other than the members of the polling and counting committees inside the polling and counting rooms at a rate of (20.11%) in the general electoral district and (18.90%) in the local electoral district.
4. The number of objections in the general electoral district was 1444 while the number of objections in the local electoral districts was 852.
5. The election committee was informed about the presence of an increase or decrease in the number of ballot papers or voters at a rate of (78.19%) in the general district and (74.07%) in the local district.
6. Objectors were given the decisions of the election committees at a rate of 62.53% in the general electoral district elections and at rate of (65.69%) in the local electoral districts elections.
7. The percentage of voters who were not allowed to vote after the end of the time specified for balloting was around 16.64%.

Table(10): Ballot boxes closure time			
Before 19:00 p.m.	At 19:00 p.m.	Between 19:00 - 21:00 p.m.	After 21:00 p.m.
0.32	6.41	92.98	0.29

Table (11): End of the ballot and the closure of ballot boxes		
No.	Observation topic	Percentage
1	Allowing the observation of the ballot box closure procedures	99.46
2	Not allowing voters who are present inside the polling center at the end of the balloting to cast their ballots	16.64
3	The presence of persons other than the members of the polling and counting committee when the ballot box was closed	19, 23
4	Preparation of the local electoral district close of ballot box minutes by the polling and counting committee	99.12
5	The number of local electoral district's used ballot papers match the number of voters according to the paper record	96.41
6	Preparation of the general electoral district close of ballot box minutes by the polling and counting committee	99.39
7	The number of the general electoral district's used ballot papers match the number of voters according to the paper record	97.74
8	The signing of the end of balloting minutes by the attendees and the election committee	98.55

Table (12): Observing the counting of ballots process

Number	Observation topic	% in the general electoral district	% in the local electoral district
1	Allowing observers to observe the counting process	99.81	99.97
2	The opening of the ballot boxes in the presence of candidates or their representatives	96.48	98.35
3	The presence of persons other than the members of the polling and counting committees when counting process started	20.11	18.90
4	Prohibiting some of the unauthorized persons from being present when the boxes were opened and counted	15.70	15.05
5	Emptying all the content of the ballot box in front of the attendees	99.94	99.97
6	The place where the boxes were emptied was empty of any papers	99.63	99.07
7	The number of objections on the ballot papers	1444	852
8	The election committee respond directly to the objection and take a decision with its regard	55.21	54.86
9	The election committee document the objection in a special log	65.50	68.55
10	The objector received a copy of the election committee's decision	62.53	65.69
11	The preparation of the end of counting minutes	98.71	98.03
12	Informing the election committee of cases when there is 2% increase or decrease in the number of ballot papers or the number of voters.	78.19	74.07
13	Entering the counting minutes in the electronic election information system under the supervision of the head of the polling committee	94.68	95.52
14	Announcing the results of the ballot counting immediately upon the completion of the counting process	97.32	97.61
15	Delivering all election documents immediately to the competent head of the election committee	98.34	-
16	Putting a copy of the ballot box counting minutes at the entrance of the polling and counting room.	95.22	96.44

**Table (13): Number of candidates' representatives,
voters and ballot papers**

Number	Subject	The general electoral district	The local electoral district
1	Number of lists' representatives (and candidates at the local district level)	3165	5134
2	Number of objections on the balloting papers	1444	852
3	Number of ballot papers received by the election committee	1258823	547 446
4	The number of voters who have exercised their right to vote according to the voters' register	326 418	325 060
5	Number of ballot papers in the ballot box	376 553	315 671
6	Number of the ballot box voters	314 893	312 250
7	Number of invalid ballot papers	40 217	31904
8	Number of invalid papers due to mistakes made by voters	14090	8122

Appealing the Results Phase

The legal framework of appeals:

Article 71, paragraph (1) of the Constitution states that: "The Judiciary shall have the competence to determine the validity of the election of the members of the House of Representatives. Every voter from the constituency shall have the right to file a petition to the Court of Appeal which has jurisdiction over the constituency of the representative the validity of whose election is contested from his constituency within fifteen days from the date of the publication of the elections results in the Official Gazette indicating there in the reasons of his petition; its decisions shall be final and not subject to anyway of challenge; its judgments shall be issued within thirty days from the date of the registration of the petition thereat."

The second paragraph of the same article states "The Court shall resolve either to reject the petition or to accept it in terms of subject; in which case it shall announce the name of the successful representative effective from the date of the issuance of the judgment."

Accordingly, the House of Deputies - Pursuant to paragraph 3- shall be informed of the invalidity of the presentation of the representative whose represent at was voided by the court, and the name of the winner effective of the date of the issuance of the judgment.

In its fifth paragraph, it states that "Should it be evident to the Court -as a result of its consideration of the petition filed thereto-that the election procedures in the constituency to which the petition relates are not consistent with the provisions of the law, it shall issue its decision for the invalidation of the election in that constituency."

Submission of appeals:

When the election results were announced, the competent judicial authorities received a total of 31 appeals. 29 were rejected and 1 appeal was accepted. This appeal was related to the results of the 6th district in al-Karak and the results were cancelled in this district. The second appeal was dropped at the request of the appellant's agent.

Table(14)Distribution of appeals according to governorates	
Governorate	Number of appeals
Al-Zarqa	7
Amman	5
Irbid	4
Karak	3
Al-Balqaa	2
Al-Mafraq	2
Al-Tafileh	2
Madaba	1
Jarash	1
Maan	0
Al-Aqaba	0
Ajloun	0
Total	27

Appeals were distributed among local electoral districts and the general electoral district at a rate of 3 appeals on the results of the general district and 28 appeals on the results of the local electoral districts¹. 19 appeals were filed against IEC and 12 appeals were filed against individuals (candidates and others).

The geographical distribution of the 27 appeals, after excluding three appeals on the results of the general electoral district, is shown in table (14).

Structural comparison between 2010 and 2013 elections

The period separating the 2010 parliamentary elections and the 2013 elections has witnessed a number of internal, regional and international transformations namely the so-called "Arab Spring". Moreover, the news on constitutional amendments also played a role

(1) When Amman Court of Appeal annulled the election results of the 6th district in Karak, Al-Faqou, IEC announced that the ballot for re-elections of the 6th district in Karak will begin at eight in the morning on Saturday, 04/13/2012, and it will continue until 7:00 o'clock in the evening of the same day. After the withdrawal of candidates who were competing over this seat: Bassam Khalil Eid al-Khamayseh, Dr. Nayef Abdul Jalil al-Hamayda, lawyer Hussam Mubarak al-Lasasmeh, and who submitted their withdrawal applications to IEC Chairman on 04.12.2013; IEC Commissioners' Council decided in its meeting held on Sunday, 04.14.2013 to consider the candidate Nayef Abdul Salam al-Laymoun winner by acclamation.

in strengthening the role of the legislative authority.

During this period, Jordan has witnessed two important election-related changes; namely the establishment of IEC and the amendment of the electoral system retaining the right of citizens to choose one candidate in the local electoral district regardless of the number of seats allocated to that district, and the right of the voter to choose one of general lists to which 27 seats were allocated out of parliament of 150 seats.

Comparing the voter turnout in the 2010 and the 2013 elections reveals some of the indicators as shown in the table (15).

The highest turnout of decrease was in al-Tafilaeh governorate reaching up to 12.5% followed by the capital city with 9.3% and al-Zarqa with 7.3%.

Al-Aqaba recorded a remarkable increase in the number of registered voters compared to 2010, reaching 18.4%.

Given the amendments of the election law on the one hand, and the creation of IEC on the other, the large difference in the appeals' number between 2010 and 2013 reveals a more disciplined electoral environment in 2013 compared to the 2010 environment. While the number of appeals in the 2010 16th parliamentary elections was 443, this number witnessed a huge decline in the 2013 17th parliamentary elections to reach only 31 appeals, i.e. 7% of the total appeals of the 16th parliamentary elections. All appeals were submitted to the IEC- the mandated body at that time - which is a positive development.

It is clear from table (15) that the percentage of registration has dropped by 4.3% in the 2013 elections compared to 2010 elections. The drop was in 6 governorates and there was an increase in the other 6 governorates in addition to an increase in the number of registered voters in the Bedouin districts.

Table(15): Rate of increase or decrease in the number of registered voters in 2010 and 2013 elections	
Governorate	% of increase or decrease
Amman	-9.3
Al-Balqa	+ 1.0
Al-Zarqa	-7.3
Madaba	+ 3.6
Irbid	-4.5
Mafrq	+ 3.7
Jerash	+ 5.0
Ajloun	- 3.6
Al-Karak	+ 2.2
Al-Tafileh	-12.5
Maan	-3.50
Aqaba	+ 18.4
Bedouin districts	+ 4.9
Average	-4.3

Conclusions:

1. The electoral process, as a whole, came during a very delicate political, economic and social phase. The main theme of this phase is reform and change. It also came on the backdrop of previous elections characterized by the lack of integrity and transparency .All these factors have put the 2013 elections in a very sensitive, volatile and polarized national context.
2. IEC supervision and administration of the election process contributed to the strengthening of hope among citizens of free, fair and transparent elections.
3. IEC has made lots of efforts to achieve this goal and it was successful to a large extent in its endeavors. However, the electoral process as a whole has faced disruptions on more than one level. The registration process and the issuance of election cards continued to be influenced by the previous records' shortcomings and the easiness of family registration which has made it easy to register some individuals without their knowledge, as well as holding back the election cards of voters by candidates, election agents and candidates' supporters and thus influencing the freedom of voters and manipulating their will to a large extent, despite the keenness of IEC and civil society forces on the integrity of the electoral process.
4. Moreover, the boycott of certain political powers of the elections has overshadowed the administration and the conduct of the electoral process.
5. Money and political influence were among the main challenges faced by the voters. IEC has put lots of effort to implement the law and to put an end to political and financial influence. In this regard, the need for the implementation of firmer and faster judicial mechanisms against committed and alleged electoral crimes became clear.
6. In addition to the use of political money, there were other gaps

and shortcomings discovered in the legislation, regulations, instructions and practices related to the electoral process. These shortcomings include the design of the general electoral list, the calculation of the lists' results, securing easy voting, the safety and freedom of voters and preventing financial, social and logistic implications on voters. There were many shortcomings such as the lack of expertise and experience and the inadequate preparations. In terms of determination, IEC has expressed interest in protecting the integrity of the electoral process despite the fact that there was a need for more rigorous measures and decisiveness especially in some of the critical and sensitive sides of the process.

7. These elections formed an advance of advanced step compared to the previous elections in terms of taking into account the international standards governing the integrity and transparency of elections. However, shortcomings in topics such as the active fight against political money and influence. The problems that were created with the extension of elections and the counting of ballots phase in a number of districts, and the announcement of results as well as the indecisive method of dealing with complaints, were all factors that have compromised these standards.
8. It was observed that IEC did not clearly and publicly announce its position to the public opinion and the complainants when dealing with some of the complaints.

Recommendations

1. There is a need to amend the election law to reinforce the democratization process, political pluralism, popular participation and just parliamentary representation in accordance with the Constitution and in line with the relevant international standards.
2. The importance of activating the role of law enforcement agencies tasked with investigating electoral crimes and bringing perpetrators of these crimes to justice in order to ensure the proper conduct of the electoral process.
3. The election law should contain provisions that ensure follow-up and prosecution of electoral crimes' perpetrators by giving the punishment of electoral crimes urgency and the establishment of a specialized court to adjudicate these crimes and punish the perpetrators before the polling date.
4. The IEC should prepare, train and qualify the cadres involved in the implementation of all the electoral process's phases, including the development of information systems and the training of staff on how to use these systems properly in order to ensure the security of the voting and counting procedures.
5. The foundations related to the delimitation of electoral districts should be clear.
6. The law should include provisions that require bodies tasked with the preparation of the voters' list to abide by the internationally accepted standards with this regard.
7. Updating voters' lists according to the law and in coordination with IEC. All voter's information should be correctly and properly known and in a clear and transparent manner. The information should be carefully organized in a way that allows easy access by the citizens, and those who have interest in accessing the information, in a timely manner.
8. There should be provisions that assist IEC to establish appropriate financial ceilings for election campaigns' expenditures.

9. Regulating the use of money in the electoral process and the development of necessary legal restrictions to ensure that equal opportunities principles among all candidates are respected, the will of the voter is not compromised, information related to the sources of funding, the ceiling of amounts to be spent and the means of spending is transparent and election campaigns and propaganda stop and all banners and pictures are removed (48) hours before the Election day.
10. The use of strong and transparent ballot boxes that meet international standards and which are not easy to open. The slot in the top should be sufficient to accept a ballot paper.
11. Creating an adequate environment for the Election Day procedures such as providing balloting places that would allow voters to cast their votes in an easy manner and in a way that guarantees the secrecy of balloting. Moreover, adequate conditions should be provided for people with disabilities and this could be done by improving the polling and counting environment. The representatives of candidates should be able to fully and properly observe the balloting procedures as of the minute the voter enters into the balloting center and until the ballots are counted.
12. An adequate booth that meets international standards should be provided in order to ensure the secrecy of the balloting process.
13. Activation of the legal texts regarding public voting.
14. The mechanism for counting the votes won by each candidate, calculating them in an accurate and quick manner and allowing the representatives of candidates as well as local and international observers to observe the process should be developed.
15. The representatives of candidates should sign the polling and counting minutes. In case this was difficult and in case they refuse to do so the minutes should document why they didn't.
16. The law should determine the minimum percentage that qualifies the list to compete when the seats are distributed.

17. Failure to achieve equality among female candidates in the various districts because the formula used to determine the female winners was based on the number of votes obtained by each female candidate divided by the number of voters in the local electoral district rather than the number of voters in the governorate which achieves justice and equality among them, especially since the allocation of seats for women has been done on the basis of the number of governorates rather than the number of districts.

Annex (1)

A list of NCHR's partner agencies and organizations in the observation of the 2013 17th parliamentary elections:

1. Arab Organization for Human Rights
2. Bar Association
3. Assembly of Women's Committees, Irbid
4. Assembly of Women's Committees, Karak
5. The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development
6. Hayat Dabouq Charitable Association
7. Vision Center for Community Development
8. Al-Sarhan Association for Special Education, Mafrag
9. Al-Mashqar Charitable Association
10. Al-Uqhuwan Center for Studies, Irbid
11. Friends of the Parliament Society
12. Tafila Charity for the Advancement of Children
13. Bayt al-Liqaa Center, Madaba
14. Malih Charitable Association
15. Amman Forum for Human Rights
16. Democratic Development Association
17. Salt Cultural Club for Information Technology
18. Jordanian Society for the Fight against Corruption
19. Jordanian Forum for Leadership Development
20. Al-Arida District Women Association
21. Musa Al Saket Cultural Center
22. Jordanian Association for Child's Rights»Haq»
23. Citizenship Center for the Promotion of Political Participation
24. Justice and Law Association
25. Jadara Jordanian Center for Human Rights (Majal)
26. International Organization for Peace and Mediation
27. Al-Wadi Youth Charitable Association
28. Jordanian Society for the Care of Juveniles and Orphans
29. Family Affairs Care Charitable Association
30. The National Society for the Enhancement of Freedom and Democracy (JUND)

31. Az-Zahra Association for Family and Child Welfare Charity
32. Jordan Youth Scout Group
33. Rural Development Cooperative Society
34. The people of the Mountain Charity
35. Seer Charity
36. Al-Mahaba Charity
37. Eye on Democracy Association
38. Zay Charity
39. Mahes Charity
40. Athman Charity
41. Citizenship and Civil Thought Association
42. Al-Muhamadiya Women Charitable Association
43. Jafeen Cultural Forum
44. Nusseibeh Union for Orphans car
45. Halima al-Saadiya Orphans Charitable Association
46. Nashimat Maan Movement Forum
47. The Jordanian National Association
48. Arnoun Center for Studies and Research
49. Bedouin of the South Cooperative Society
50. Al-Nattaqeen Charity Association
51. The New Growth Center
52. Al-Wahadneh Charity Association
53. North of Ajloun Villages Cooperative Association
54. The General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW)
55. We are All Jordan Youth Commission
56. The staff of the National Center for Human Rights

Annex (2)

The election process observation tables of observed ballot boxes.