



منتدى الاستراتيجيات الأردني  
JORDAN STRATEGY FORUM

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## Where does Jordan Stand in the 2022 Rule of Law Index?



## 1. Background

Established in Washington in 2006, the World Justice Project became an independent, none profit organization in 2009. With a foundational focus on the rule of law, this multidisciplinary organization works on creating knowledge, building awareness, and initiate action for further advancement in this field on a global scale. According to the Foundation, "Effective rule of law reduces corruption, combats poverty and disease, and protects people from injustices large and small". The vision, mission, and objectives of the World Justice Project are stated as follows:

- A. **The Vision:** A world comprised of rule of law communities delivering justice, opportunity, and peace.
- B. **The Mission:** Create knowledge, build awareness, and stimulate action to advance the rule of law worldwide.
- C. **Objectives:** The World Justice Project has three primary goals:
  - 1. Increased understanding of the rule of law and its foundational importance.
  - 2. Greater rule of law adherence by governments.
  - 3. Multidisciplinary, home-grown cultures of the rule of law.

**On Wednesday, the 26<sup>th</sup> of October 2022, the WJP launched its "Rule of Law Index 2022".**

This Index ranks 140 countries and jurisdictions based on the four universal principles of the rule of law and these are **"Accountability", "Just Law", "Open Government", and "Accessible and Impartial Justice"**.

- 1. The objective of this Policy Brief, issued by the Jordan Strategy Forum (JSF), is to shed some light on Jordan's rank on the Rule of Law Index. Naturally, the implicit objective of this effort is to outline some recommendations whose objective is to improve Jordan's rank on the index. Indeed, this is important for several reasons:

No matter who we are or where we live, the rule of law affects us all.

- 2. The rule of law is the foundation of justice, opportunity, and peace.
- 3. The rule of law is a prerequisite for development, accountable government, and respect for fundamental rights.
- 4. Research shows that rule of law "correlates to higher economic growth, greater peace, less inequality, improved health outcomes, and more education" (WJP).

## 2. The Rule of Law: The Framework and Methodology

The World Justice Project's Rule of law Index is a reliable system of "laws, institutions, norms, and community commitment". The Index is comprised of eight factors further disaggregated into 44 sub-factors. The factors are presented below and described in detail.

### Constraints on Government Powers



1. Government powers are effectively limited by the legislature.
2. Government powers are effectively limited by the judiciary.
3. Government powers are effectively limited by independent auditing and review.
4. Government officials are sanctioned for misconduct.
5. Government powers are subject to non-governmental checks.
6. Transition of power is subject to the law.

### Absence of Corruption



1. Government officials in the executive branch do not use public office for private gain.
2. Government officials in the judicial branch do not use public office for private gain.
3. Government officials in the police and the military do not use public office for private gain.
4. Government officials in the legislative branch do not use public office for private gain.

### Open Government



1. Publicized laws and government data.
2. Right to information.
3. Civic participation.
4. Complaint mechanisms.

### Fundamental Rights



1. Equal treatment and absence of discrimination.
2. The right to life and security of the person is effectively guaranteed.
3. Due process of the law and rights of the accused.
4. Freedom of opinion and expression is effectively guaranteed.
5. Freedom of belief and religion is effectively guaranteed.
6. Freedom from arbitrary interference with privacy is effectively guaranteed.
7. Freedom of assembly and association is effectively guaranteed.
8. Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed.

### Order and Security



1. Crime is effectively controlled.
2. Civil conflict is effectively limited.
3. People do not resort to violence to redress personal grievances.

### Regulatory Enforcement



1. Government regulations are effectively enforced.
2. Government regulations are applied and enforced without improper influence.
3. Administrative proceedings are conducted without unreasonable delay.
4. Due process is respected in administrative proceedings.
5. The government does not expropriate without lawful process and adequate compensation.

### Civil Justice



1. People can access and afford civil justice.
2. Civil justice is free of discrimination.
3. Civil justice is free of corruption.
4. Civil justice is free of improper government influence.
5. Civil justice is not subject to unreasonable delay.
6. Civil justice is effectively enforced.
7. Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms are accessible, impartial, and effective.

### Criminal Justice

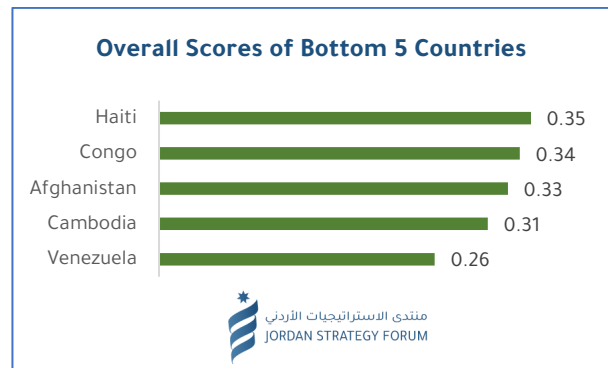
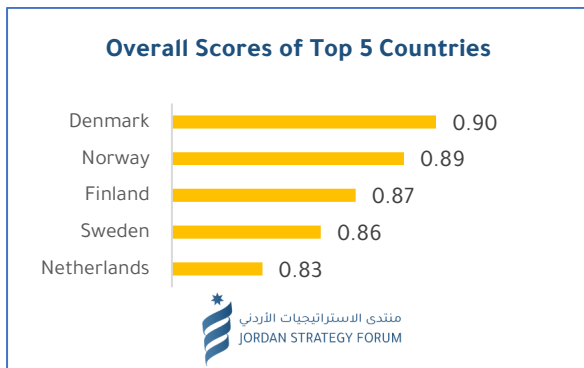


1. Criminal investigative system is effective.
2. Criminal adjudication system is timely and effective.
3. Correctional system is effective in reducing criminal behavior.
4. Criminal justice is impartial.
5. Criminal justice is free of corruption.
6. Criminal justice is free of improper government influence.
7. Due process of the law and rights of the accused.

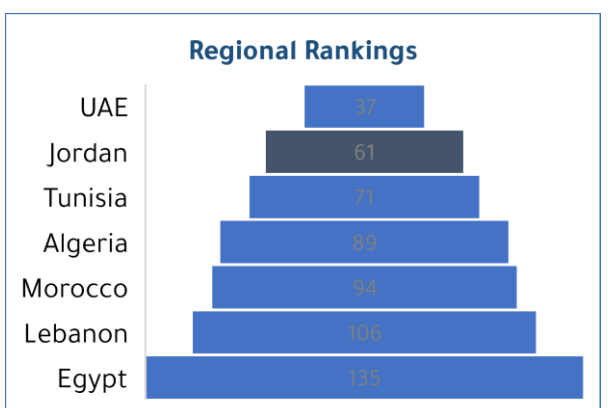
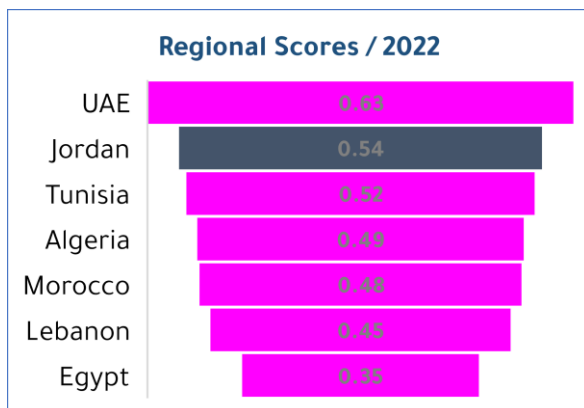
To score and rank the 140 countries and jurisdictions, the Index relies on / surveys of more than 154,000 individuals and 3,600 legal practitioner and experts. The surveys “measure how the rule of law is experienced and perceived worldwide”.

### 3. The 2022 Rule of Law Index: Some Observations

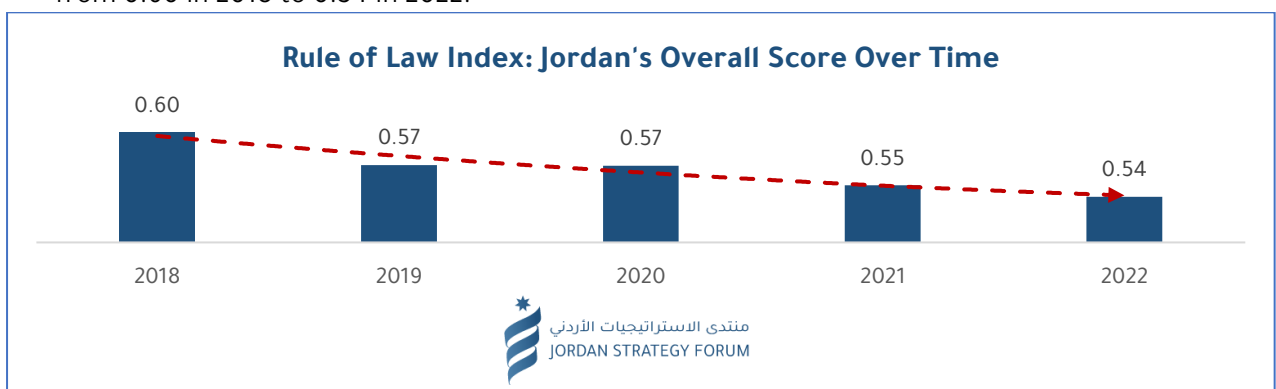
A. With a score of 0.90, Denmark tops the world on the index. With a score of 0.26, Venezuela comes in last (140<sup>th</sup>) in the world.



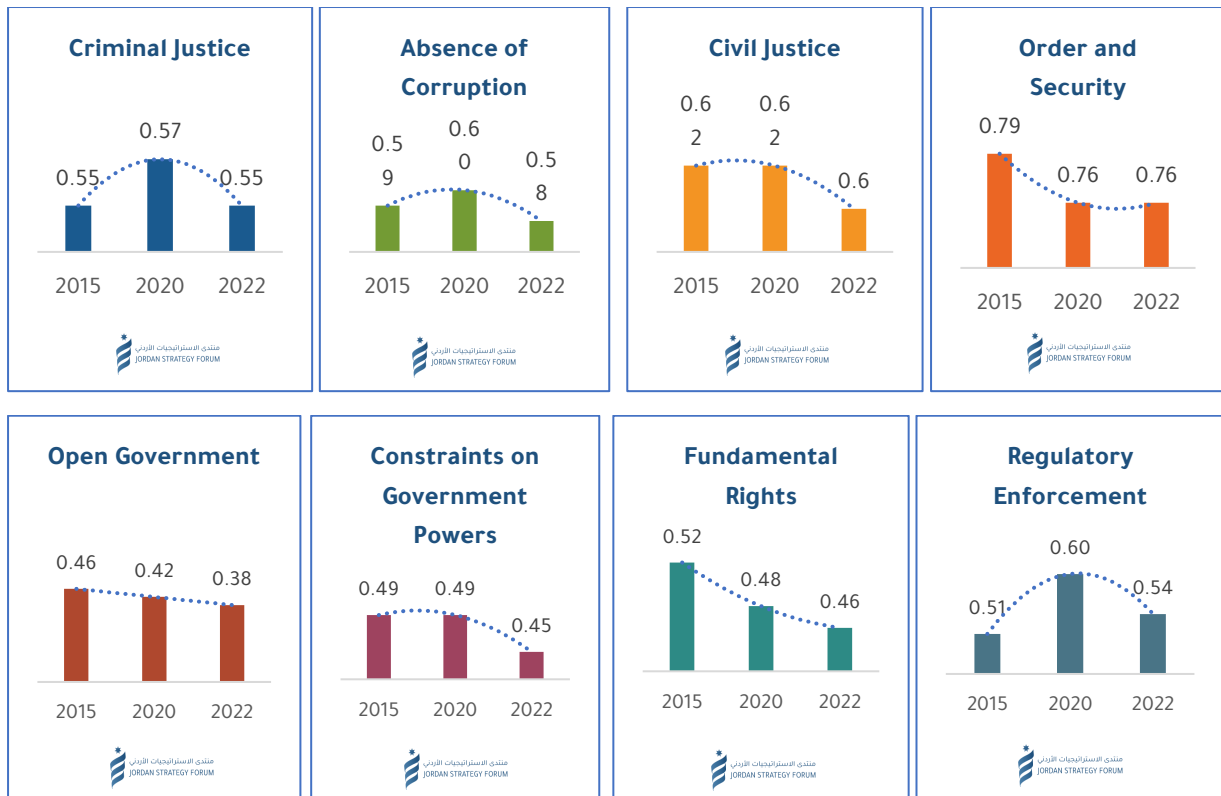
B. Seven Arab countries are included in the index. With a score of 0.63, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) tops the seven countries. With a score of 0.54, Jordan comes in 2<sup>nd</sup> regionally, and 61<sup>st</sup> globally.



C. Over time, it is unfortunate to note that Jordan’s overall score on the Rule of Law has decreased from 0.60 in 2018 to 0.54 in 2022.

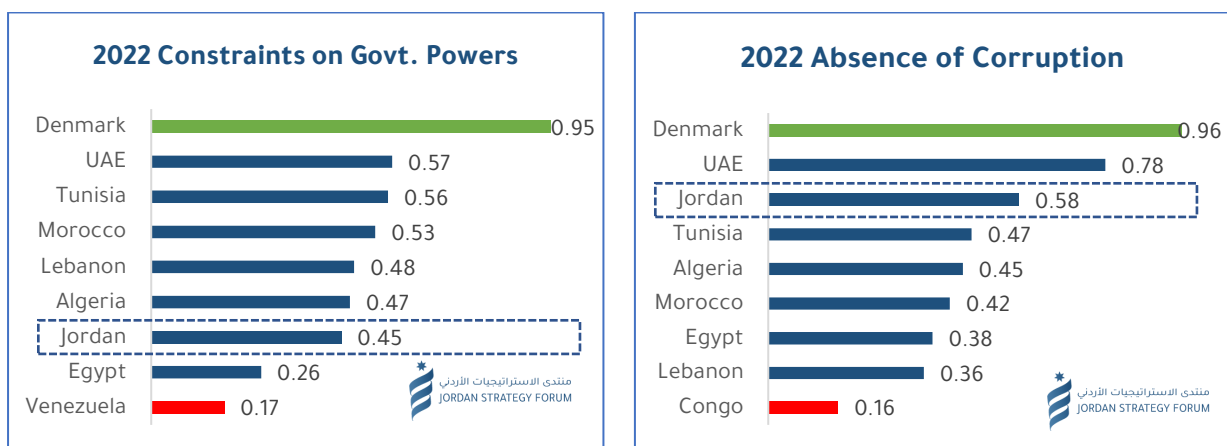


D. In 2022, Jordan’s score in “order and security” (0.76) is the highest. The score in “open government” (0.38) is the lowest. In addition, it is worth noting that “open government” has experienced the largest decrease in its score (from 0.46 in 2015 to 0.38 in 2022).

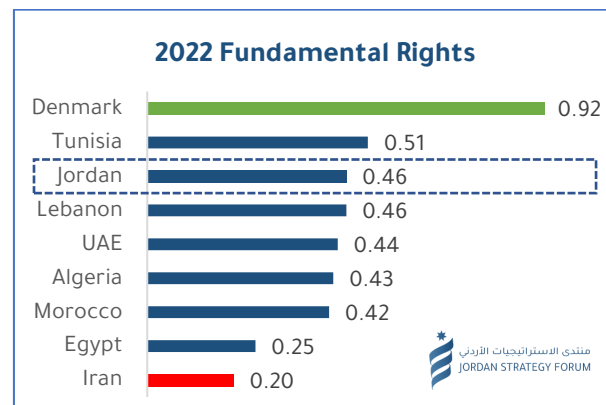
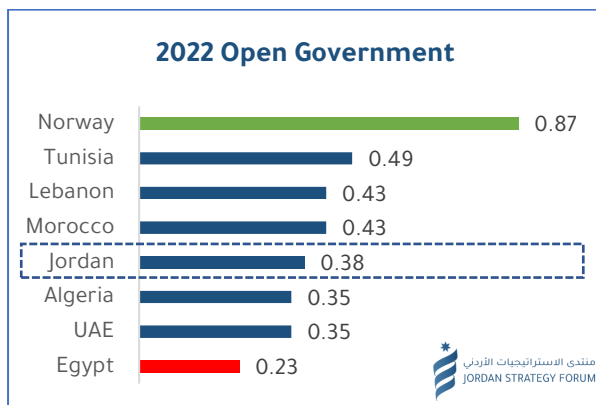


Relative to all the above-mentioned observations, it is useful to compare the performance of Jordan with all the Arab countries included in the index along with the top and bottom countries on each factor.

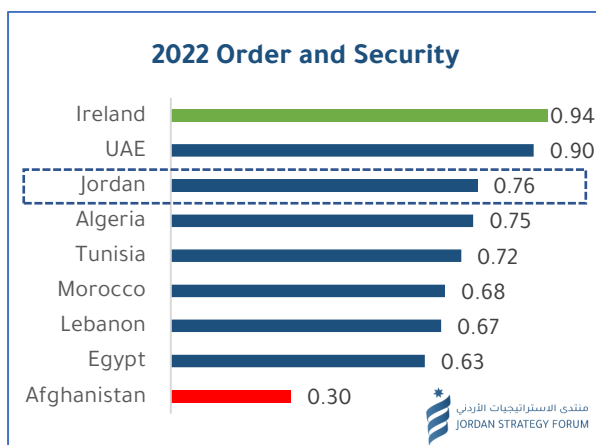
A. In “constraints on government power”, Jordan ranks 6<sup>th</sup> out of 7 Arab countries. In “absence of corruption”, Jordan ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 7 Arab countries.



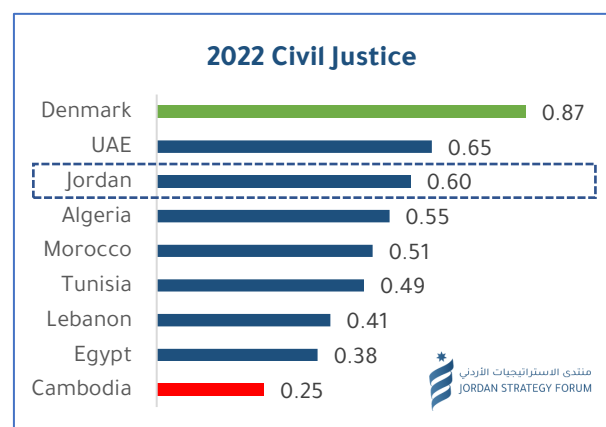
**B.** In “open government”, Jordan ranks 4th out of 7 Arab countries. In “fundamental rights”, Jordan ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 7 Arab countries.



**C.** In “order and security”, Jordan ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 7 Arab countries. In “regulatory enforcement”, Jordan ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 7 Arab countries.



**D.** In “civil justice”, Jordan ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 7 Arab countries. In “criminal justice”, Jordan ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 7 Arab countries.



**In a Nutshell**, and relative to the Arab countries which are included in the Rule of Law Index 2022, it is clear that Jordan's scores and ranks are satisfactory in "absence of corruption", "fundamental rights", "order and security", "regulatory enforcement", "civil justice", and in "criminal justice". In all of these factors, Jordan ranks 2<sup>nd</sup>. **However**, in "constraints on government powers" and "open government", Jordan ranks 6<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> respectively. Indeed, the scores in these factors are also low. In constraints on government power, the score is 0.45. In open government, the score is 0.38. Within this context, it is also interesting to note that most of the Arab countries included in the index are weak in "constraints on government power", "fundamental rights", and "open government". On the other hand, the majority of these Arab countries are strong in "order and security".

Constraints on government power, measure the **"extent to which those who govern are bound by law. It comprises the means, both constitutional and institutional, by which the powers of the government and its officials and agents are limited and held accountable under the law. It also includes non-governmental checks on the government's power, such as a free and independent press"**.

Open government measures the **"extent to which a government shares information, empowers people with tools to hold the government accountable, and fosters citizen participation in public policy deliberations. This factor measures whether basic laws and information on legal rights are publicized and evaluates the quality of information published by the government"**.

Within this context, relevant stakeholders should increase information availability and foster citizen participation in setting public policies. In addition, the government should also look more into cooperating with different oversight bodies. If relevant Jordanian stakeholders succeed in improving the two mentioned sub-indicators, Jordan's overall standing on the Rule of Law Index should improve, and in turn this should enhance the rule of law effectiveness in Jordan.



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