

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.63332/joph.v5i2.417>

## The Right to Engage in Political Party Activities among University Students (A Jurisprudential, Legislative, and Analytical Study)

Abdalelah Smairan<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*The right to participate in public and political life, including party affiliation and joining existing parties in accordance with the law on an equal basis among all members of society, is a fundamental characteristic of the concept of comprehensive democracy. The international community has called on countries to respect this right and not exclude anyone from it. Considering that university students are among the main segments of society and the backbone of the nation's future, it is essential for them to engage with active political parties in their countries and gain experience so that they can play an effective role in political development, especially in light of directives calling for comprehensive reforms, including political reform. Since political participation is a key element in empowering individuals, it is crucial to ensure the participation of all groups and to remove obstacles that hinder the involvement of university students.*

**Keywords:** Political Party Legislation, Higher Education Institutions, Royal Directives, University Students.

### Introduction

Political parties are considered the primary entity in determining parliamentary candidates in many countries around the world, thus wielding significant influence, particularly over the political agenda and decision-making processes. Additionally, they function as intermediary institutions that connect the state and civil society, translating citizens' political orientations into political action (<https://www.undp.org>). Political parties play significant roles in political life by representing the positions and interests of various segments of society, including university students. The Jordanian Constitution has affirmed the right to form and join political parties (Article 16 of the Jordanian Constitution and its amendments of 1952).

It is worth noting that the Jordanian legislator has enacted a special law for political parties, starting from the year 1954, under the Political Parties Regulation Law No. 3 of 1954. This law addressed the instructions related to the formation of political parties and the authorities responsible for registering these parties.

In line with political and legislative developments, it became necessary to amend these laws and add what could be added, provided that it does not conflict with the provisions of the constitution. Among these amendments was the enactment of the Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015, whose articles addressed the definition of political parties, the right to form them, and the official authorities responsible for accepting or rejecting the registration of these parties.

Despite all these amendments, university students have not been mentioned as a category within

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<sup>1</sup> Lecture of Administrative Law, Faculty of Law, Al-Albait University, Al-Mafraq – The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Email: [abdalelahsmairan@aabu.edu.jo](mailto:abdalelahsmairan@aabu.edu.jo)



society entitled to engage in partisan life, neither in the legislation regulating partisan work nor in higher education laws and regulations. In recognition of the rightful role of university students in affiliating with political parties, His Majesty King Abdullah II has directed the Royal Committee to Modernize the Political System to emphasize the importance of involving all segments of society in the political modernization process, particularly youth and women.

In line with this, His Majesty the King has shown great interest in the university student community by meeting with the heads of public universities. The meeting addressed a number of royal messages, the most important of which was the emphasis on removing any barriers to the participation of youth in political life. This approach aims to nurture a conscious and capable young generation that is ready to engage in political and partisan life, especially after the reduction of the minimum age for membership in the House of Representatives from thirty solar years to twenty-five solar years (Article 70 of the Jordanian Constitution). Consequently, the age for candidacy in the House of Representatives was also lowered to twenty-five years (Article 10/C of the House of Representatives Election Law No. 4 of 2022). This amendment was made to enhance the participation of youth in political life.

### **The Problem of the Study**

University students are considered one of the most important segments of society, as they are the builders of the future. It is essential to focus on their future role in light of legislative developments, royal decrees, and messages. Given these advancements and royal messages, will university students achieve their aspirations? Do the regulations governing political party work, by addressing the involvement of university students in partisan life, meet the ambitions of the youth? Have universities taken into account the royal messages and incorporated into their regulations the importance and right of university youth to engage in partisan life? What should university administrations do to translate these royal messages into reality?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study aims to explore the legislation regulating political party life in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and the extent to which these legislations incorporate the right of university students as a segment of society to form political parties and engage in university political life. Additionally, it seeks to analyze the contents of the royal meeting and the messages issued by the King to the administrations of public universities, along with their implications.

### **Methodology of the Study**

The researcher employed the analytical approach by analyzing the legislation regulating the topic of political parties and the extent of university students' involvement in them. Additionally, the researcher analyzed royal letters addressed to university presidents. The descriptive approach was also used to describe the legislation governing political life.

The researcher deals with this topic in two sections: The first section deals with The Jordanian legislation regulating party work, represented by the Political Parties Laws of 2015 and 2022, and the second section deals with the contents of the royal messages addressed during the royal meeting with the presidents of public.

### **Legislation Regulating Party Work**

The Jordanian legislator has regulated party and political work since the early days of the establishment of the Jordanian state. Among the first laws in this regard was the Political Parties

Regulation Law No. 3 of 1954, which defined a political party as "any organization consisting of ten or more persons, aiming to organize and unify their efforts in the political arena in accordance with this law." (Article 2/A of the Political Parties Regulation Law No. 3 of 1954).

In the same context, the law outlined the framework for regulating political parties, particularly regarding their registration. The Ministry of Interior was designated as the competent authority responsible for receiving party registration applications. The law also detailed the procedures for forming parties, their organizational structure, and how they conduct their activities. Simultaneously, it prohibited any party from operating if it engaged in actions that violate the constitution, if its objectives were deemed illegitimate, or if its methods were found to be improper. Among the judicial rulings in this regard is the one that upheld the following principle:

" The application for a license to form a political party must be submitted by those with an interest in it, namely the founding members. Any application for a license not submitted by these individuals is not considered lawful in the sense stipulated in Article 4 of the Political Parties Regulation Law, An application submitted by one of the members to form a political party, if not signed by the founding members, cannot be considered a lawful application and, therefore, cannot be used as a basis for calculating the period specified in Article 5 of the Political Parties Regulation Law, The Cabinet's reliance on the rejection of the license application on the grounds that the party's bylaws do not include a statement of the ages of the founding members is not based on a valid foundation

If the internal regulations of a party stipulate that members' contributions are determined as a percentage of their income on a progressive basis, and the amount of the monthly contribution is decided each year, this provision would not be in violation of the provisions of Paragraph 4 of Article 6 of the Political Parties Law ,which addresses member contributions. The Political Parties Law does not require that the system of governance outlined in the Jordanian Constitution be specified in the party's foundational regulations." (Amended by High Court Decision 45/1954).

It is noted from the aforementioned ruling that although the legislature granted the Ministry of Interior the authority to accept or reject requests submitted by parties in the process of formation, it did not give it free rein. The decisions issued by the Ministry were subject to appeal before the Supreme Court of Justice.

Continuing on the path of development and modernization, the Political Parties Law No. 32 of 1992 was enacted. Notably, this law raised the number of individuals required to establish a party to fifty. At the same time, it prohibited members of the armed forces, security agencies, and judges from joining political parties. The law also expanded the regulation of administrative matters for parties, including financial affairs, annual budgets, bylaws, records, dissolution, merger, or changes, in addition to penalties.

Until the year 2007, when the Political Parties Law No. 19 of 2007 was issued, which thereby repealed the Political Parties Law No. 32 of 1992. It is notable that this law made only minor amendments to the 1992 law. Among the issues that drew criticism was the number of founding members, as the new law stipulated that the number of founding members of a party should not be less than five hundred individuals (Article 5/A of the Political Parties Law No. 19 of 2007).

The new law also stipulates that a citizen affiliated with a political party shall not be subjected to any form of harassment, interrogation, accountability, or infringement upon their constitutional rights due to their party affiliation (Article 20/A of the Political Parties Law No. 19 of 2007).

This is considered an indication by the Jordanian legislator that the Kingdom is moving towards a democratic path for political parties and ensuring that their members are not targeted because of their party affiliations. However, despite these guarantees for party members, the law does not explicitly affirm the right of university students to join political parties or address the organization and practice of partisan activities within university campuses. This remains unchanged even with the issuance of Law No. 16 of 2012, which did not introduce any substantive amendments in this regard.

### **Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015**

Political parties have played significant roles in the process of political reform in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Therefore, it is essential to focus on their modernization and development. The Jordanian legislator recognized the need to revise and update the Political Parties Law to integrate all segments of society into partisan work.

The Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015 was issued, attempting to address and rectify issues present in the 2012 law. It introduced a series of reforms, the most notable of which was changing the authority and the institution responsible for receiving applications to form political parties. The Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs was designated as the legally competent body for all matters related to political parties (Article 2 of the Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015).

Based on this, the law considers a political party as "any political organization composed of a group of Jordanians, established in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and this law, with the aim of participating in political life and achieving specific goals related to political, economic, and social affairs, and operates through legitimate and peaceful means." (Article 3 of the Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015).

A committee called the Political Parties Affairs Committee is formed within the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs. Its role is to receive applications for the establishment of political parties that meet all the required conditions, signed by the founders (Article 9 of the Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015).

The law included numerous guarantees and facilitations, such as reducing the number of individuals required to establish a party from 500, as stipulated in the repealed 2007 law, to 150 individuals (Article 6 of the Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015). This is considered an advantage of the law and an invitation to all segments of society to engage in party life and move towards the establishment of parties.

Among the guarantees provided by the law for those seeking to establish political parties is that any of the founders has the right to challenge the decision of the Political Parties Affairs Committee to reject the declaration of the party's establishment. This challenge can be made before the Administrative Court within sixty days from the day following the date of notification of the rejection decision to the representative of the founders. If the Administrative Court rules to annul the administrative decision issued by the Political Parties Affairs Committee (the rejection decision), the party is considered registered from the date of the court's ruling (Article 15 of the Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015).

Here, the researcher argues that while the legislator has established this safeguard for party founders, it does not constitute an adequate guarantee against potential overreach by the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs through the Committee of Party Affairs. It would have been preferable for every final administrative decision issued against a party by the Committee

of Party Affairs to be appealable before the Administrative Court. An example of this is the following ruling:

"Our court finds that jurisdiction is a matter of public order, and the court may raise it sua sponte. It takes precedence over all other defenses. Referring to the provisions of Article 15 of the Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015, the said article clarified that the decisions issued by the Committee for Party Affairs, which are appealable before our court, are exclusively limited to those specified in the article, pertaining only to the Committee's decision to reject the declaration of a party's establishment. Had the legislator intended for the Committee to issue other decisions within its jurisdiction, the legislator would have explicitly stated so without ambiguity, as the legislator does not act in vain. Moreover, the Political Party Support System No. 53 of 2016 does not contain any indication, directly or indirectly, that the decisions of the Committee for Party Affairs are appealable before our court, except for what is mentioned in Article 15 of the aforementioned Political Parties Law. Additionally, Article 32 of the Political Parties Law designated the Court of First Instance as the competent authority for final decisions of the party regarding the resolution of violations and disputes among its members and bodies in accordance with the provisions of its bylaws. Since the jurisdiction of our court is limited to reviewing appeals submitted by concerned parties against final administrative decisions, which are explicitly listed in Article (5) of the Administrative Judiciary Law, and given that the subject of the lawsuit is the appeal against the decision issued by the second respondent No. 1/57/78 dated 4/1/2018, which included the non-disbursement of financial contribution installments to the appellant for the second installment of 2017 and the first installment of 2018 due to the appellant's inability to rectify the situation and remove the violation, and since the contested decision is not among those listed and there is no indication in the Political Parties Law or the system confirming the jurisdiction of our court in light of the aforementioned, the lawsuit is therefore subject to dismissal in form due to lack of jurisdiction." (Administrative Case No. 111/2018).

The legislator in the aforementioned law did not address the practice of partisan activities by university students or the youth, nor the conduct of partisan work within higher education institutions. It only mentioned the right of a political party to use public cultural and social facilities, as well as the centers of unions, associations, and clubs, provided that prior approval is obtained from those in charge of such facilities and centers in accordance with the provisions of the applicable legislation (Article 24 of the Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015). This implies the legislator's reluctance to allow political parties to carry out their activities within university facilities or by university students.

### **Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022**

Based on the above, and as part of the ongoing journey of development and modernization, with the Kingdom entering its second centenary, His Majesty the King has decided to launch a comprehensive political reform revolution. The responsibilities for this revolution have been assigned to the Royal Committee for Modernizing the Political System. Among the main issues highlighted in the Royal Letter to the Chairman of the Royal Committee for Modernizing the Political System is the focus on involving youth and women in political life under a modern electoral law and political parties law. To quote from the Royal Letter to the Chairman of the Royal Committee for Modernizing the Political System:

"What matters to us in this regard is to ensure that your esteemed committee pays attention to the role of youth and explores ways to encourage their participation in partisan and parliamentary life, empower Jordanian women to actively participate, promote the values of citizenship—rights,

duties, and freedoms guaranteed by legislation—and fully adhere to the principle of the rule of law." (Document of the Royal Committee for Modernizing the Political System, 2021, p. 6).

The amendments to the aforementioned laws, as outlined in the Royal Letter, have been made to the required standard. Of particular importance to us is the Political Parties Law, which was amended by the Political Parties Law Committee. This committee comprised 19 members and was tasked with reviewing the Political Parties Law and drafting a new proposed law that establishes a programmatic and effective political party life capable of convincing voters of its proposals and gaining representation in parliament (Royal Committee for Modernizing the Political System Document, 2021, p. 27). This amendment took into account all the provisions of the Royal Letter and the seven Royal Discussion Papers, which the committee adopted as a guiding document for its work, drawing on the contents of these papers.

After the completion of the proposed legislation by the Royal Committee for Modernizing the Political System, and following all the constitutional channels required for enacting legislation and issuing laws, His Majesty the King has approved the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022. This law will be added to the state's legislation and will come into effect thirty days after its publication in the Official Gazette.

An observer of the new law will notice that it represents a qualitative leap in the world of Jordanian political parties, as it contains fundamental amendments within its texts that serve the rule of law and lay the foundation for a democratic political life. This life involves the participation of all segments of society, particularly university youth.

Initially, the new law addressed the abolition of the subordination of political parties to the umbrella of the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs, transferring them under the umbrella of the Independent Election Commission. Applicants for establishment are entitled to submit the required documents to the Commission's Board of Commissioners, which, in turn, is responsible for maintaining and updating the registry of political parties and receiving applications for the establishment of political parties (Article 9/a, b of the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022).

In addition to incorporating terms that are mentioned for the first time across all amendments to the laws governing political parties, this law has placed a particular emphasis on the youth, especially university students. It stipulates that students in higher education institutions should not face any repercussions due to their political affiliations or activities (Article 4/c of the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022).

This addition is considered the first fruit of the political reform advocated by His Majesty the King, who addressed the presidents of public universities and emphasized the right of university students to engage in partisan and political activities. It has been translated into a provision that prohibits targeting students of higher education institutions due to partisan affiliation and political activity. Additionally, it grants them the right to resort to the competent courts in case of being targeted or restricted, where the competent court will then lift such targeting and rule in their favor for compensation for both material and moral damages.

This, in turn, aims to encourage students of higher education institutions to engage in party and political life, and to participate actively, especially in light of lowering the age of membership in the House of Representatives from thirty solar years to twenty-five solar years (Article 70 of the Jordanian Constitution). Consequently, the age for candidacy for the House of Representatives was also reduced to twenty-five years for candidates (Article 10/C of the Election Law for the

House of Representatives No. 4 of 2022). This amendment is intended to enhance youth participation in political life.

This guarantee provided by the legislator to students of higher education institutions, ensuring they are not targeted due to their party affiliations or political activities, reflects the messages of the King to the heads of public universities. These messages have consistently emphasized the importance of fostering active youth political participation that serves the public interest of the state.

In this context, the law introduced another guarantee that was not present in previous legislation, which is the necessity of involving young people aged between 18 and 35 in the establishment of a political party, ensuring that they constitute no less than 20% of the founding members (Article 11/A/3 of the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022).

Based on this, it is an indication from the legislator of the importance of paying attention to the youth demographic and the necessity of including them among the founding members at a rate of no less than 20%. Failure to meet this condition, along with the other requirements, could result in the party's registration being revoked. This underscores the positive role of this demographic in the political reform process that parties generally undertake.

Moreover, to engage the largest number of youth as founding members of political parties, the law introduced a set of general rules and principles that parties must adhere to in the course of their activities. Among these is the right of young members of the party to assume leadership positions within it (Article 15/Y of the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022).

In addition, the law granted students of higher education institutions the right to engage in their partisan activities within the premises of those institutions without restriction or infringement on their rights (Article 20/A of the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022).

In detail, a specific system has been established to govern the political party activities conducted by students in higher education institutions, regulating these activities and affirming the active role of university students. To this end, the **Regulation on the Organization of Student Political Party Activities in Higher Education Institutions No. 68 of 2022** has been enacted.

In addition, the law emphasized the necessity of enabling the youth category to benefit from the party's available resources in a fair and equitable manner, especially during electoral campaigns (Article 25/e of the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022).

This is a legislative indication to pay attention to the youth category and to provide them with material support from the party's resources, especially since they are among the rising groups who are about to engage in party life. This is to encourage them to continue the journey without material obstacles standing in their way.

### **The Contents of the Royal Letters during the Meeting with Heads of Public Universities**

His Majesty King Abdullah II has consistently underscored the significance of political parties in state-building and the political reform process, as well as the active role they play. In this regard, I quote an excerpt from His Majesty's speech in the Royal Mandate Letter to Mr. Ali Abu Al-Ragheb's government, dated June 19, 2000, where he stated:

"Democracy cannot be complete without political pluralism, and therefore, we support the establishment of national political parties and encourage participation in them..."

His Majesty the King, in all the meetings he holds with various segments of society, emphasizes the active role of the youth and the necessity of involving them in the decision-making process. Among these periodic meetings is His Majesty's meeting with the presidents of public universities at Al-Husseiniya Palace on Tuesday, July 26, 2022. During the meeting, His Majesty outlined the general framework for university administrations to address legislative developments, particularly those that have contributed to the engagement of higher education students in partisan activities and political life.

He pointed to the active role played by university youth in the modernization process that the Kingdom is undergoing, and the necessity of equipping them programmatically to harness their scientific and cognitive capabilities in shaping the general policies of political parties, and making their impactful mark through their participation in these parties.

His Majesty the King pointed out that university administrations are required to remove all obstacles that hinder students' participation in partisan activities, emphasizing the students' right to engage in such activities within the university campus. This is provided that they adhere to all conditions set by higher education institutions, which aim to regulate the conduct of these activities, ensure compliance with laws, regulations, and instructions, and prevent any deviation from their intended and proper path.

In addition to working on removing obstacles faced by students and incorporating scientific research to develop the skills of youth and enhance the excellence of students to prepare a generation capable of keeping pace with the political modernization system and actively participating in the work of political parties, universities bear the responsibility of providing a positive university environment to contribute to the desired student participation. (<https://www.talabanews.net>)

In this context, the university carries out a distinctive mission that sets it apart from other institutions in society, which is shaping the intellectual and political reference within it. The university, with its qualified academic leadership, is required to continue providing opinions and advice on all emerging issues in the country, in addition to its effective role in developing awareness and political participation. This is because university students are important elements in the political movement within society (Al-Ghoneimiyyin et al, 2018).

### **Obstacles Facing University Students in Joining Political Parties**

There are significant obstacles hindering youth political participation at the three levels of capacities: At the individual level, the obstacles consist of a lack of technical skills and weak motivation, particularly for participating in formal processes led by older individuals, a lack of economic resources, and a lack of awareness and knowledge (<https://www.undp.org> ).

As for the obstacles at the institutional level, the internal systems of political parties, along with their rules and procedures, do not support the inclusion of youth. For example, they are not placed in leadership positions, not to mention the lack of processes that attract young people. Additionally, there are structural and cultural constraints that may hinder youth participation, As for the enabling environment level (<https://www.undp.org>).

The university age is considered the appropriate time for young people to engage in party life, as it is a relatively early stage that results in an active citizen. In this regard, researcher Golombek presents a similar point, stating: "Active citizenship cannot become a reality overnight once a person reaches voting age. It must be learned through practice in daily life experiences: from

opportunities to participate in shared decision-making, to listening to different opinions, and weighing options and their consequences. These are individual skills that help build commitment within civil society and among youth toward the democratic process." (Golombek, 2002 ).

University students, like other segments of society, face certain obstacles that hinder their ability to join political parties and participate in political life. It is essential to identify these barriers that prevent them from engaging in and continuing their partisan activities, so as not to stall the wheel of political reform. University students are among the societal groups that His Majesty the King has shown great interest in, praising them on numerous official and public occasions. Therefore, it is imperative that they leave their mark amidst the legislative developments aimed at achieving comprehensive reform.

Considering the amendments made to the legislation related to partisan and political work in Jordan, we find that they have involved the youth in many aspects, given the ambition and aspirations characteristic of this age group. However, as mentioned, the problem lies in some obstacles that hinder their engagement in partisan life, represented by economic, political, and social conditions. If these conditions are favorable, the ambitions and aspirations of the youth can be translated into reality, allowing them to excel in their partisan affiliations. Conversely, if these conditions are unfavorable, they become a barrier to their participation (Shaban, Khaled, & Hijazi, 2008).

On the other hand, a group of higher education students considered the fear of jeopardizing their future as one of the most significant obstacles facing young people, particularly university students, in engaging in political party life (Khataybeh, 2009).

And this fear prevalent among young people in general, and university students in particular, stems from the high unemployment rates among young university graduates. They believe that joining political parties may hinder their chances of working in certain sectors, such as security and military fields, and view it as their only refuge given the scarcity of civil job opportunities. As a result, we see a reluctance among them to join political parties.

In addition to the lack of a prominent role for political parties on the political stage, and the failure to translate party systems into reality, university students have become unconvinced of the effectiveness of these parties, believing that they have not brought about any positive change or impact on the ground (Najadat, 2015). They view this as an obstacle and a reason for their reluctance to join parties or engage in political life.

On another level, university students believe that there are legislative obstacles in addition to social, political, and economic barriers. These obstacles are represented by the absence of regulations governing partisan work in Jordan, which fail to protect members of these parties from forms of official and security overreach (Najadat, 2015).

Here, we see that the Jordanian legislator has addressed this obstacle through recent amendments to the Political Parties Law, working to remove these barriers. The amendments emphasize the importance of not targeting university students due to their party affiliations or political participation, and affirm their right to resort to the competent courts in the event of such harassment. This amendment reflects the seriousness of the Jordanian legislator in safeguarding the rights of university students and their right to engage in party activities with complete ease.

The philosophy behind these amendments by the legislator lies in affirming the active role of higher education students in the political reform process, crystallizing His Majesty the King's

supportive orientations towards university youth in all forums, and reassuring them that they will not be targeted due to their political affiliations.

In addition to a set of other obstacles, such as the economic barrier for university students and their low standard of living, especially since political party participation requires undertaking social roles that do not yield specific financial returns. This makes it difficult for university students to fulfill these roles due to the high associated costs (Khataybeh, 2009).

In summary, there are a number of obstacles that hinder university students from joining political parties and engaging in political life, including social, legislative, and political barriers. We have observed that Jordanian legislation has addressed the legislative obstacles, reflecting a step towards affirming the role of youth in the political reform process.

Here, the role falls upon the parties themselves to conduct field tours to clarify their concepts, aspirations, and visions, and present them to university students to convince them of their ideas. They should also emphasize the prominent role of youth and involve them in the leadership tasks of the parties, believing in the importance of the role that university students play in the political modernization process championed by His Majesty the King in all national and international forums.

### **The role of higher education institutions in regulating partisan activities.**

Higher education institutions are seen as the nurturing grounds for the educational journey of their students. The educational process lies at the heart of these institutions' mission and is the ultimate objective behind their establishment. A university cannot be envisioned without a well-rounded educational process supported by structured curricula for its diverse college specializations. Consequently, university administrations must prioritize the quality of the educational process within their academic environments.

The importance of universities and their role in developing and empowering political awareness among students is further emphasized by a study conducted by a researcher named Reischl. His aim was to explore the role universities play in empowering students politically and contributing to shaping public policy, as well as the mechanisms for integrating and engaging youth in community development. His study involved a sample of 160 male and female students from an American university, divided into a control group and an experimental group. The study concluded that the experimental group, which was exposed to a university training program covering various topics such as political culture and political parties (Reischl, 2002), outperformed the control group. This highlights the active and fundamental role of universities in developing students' political capacities and underscores their role as educational incubators for political awareness.

At the same time, the relevant legislations have emphasized the involvement of higher education institution students in the core of political party life. For students of higher education institutions to engage in political party life, it is essential to practice the activities of these parties. Since higher education institutions are the primary environment for students, it is their responsibility to facilitate the practice of these activities and to ensure that student party members are not subjected to any restrictions. This is what the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022 has affirmed, as it stipulates the right of students to practice their party activities within the premises of higher education institutions without any constraints or infringement on their rights.

To ensure that the educational process within higher education institutions is not affected by

partisan activities held on their campuses, it was necessary for the legislator to regulate these partisan practices within higher education institutions. Accordingly, the Regulation on Organizing Student Partisan Activities in Higher Education Institutions No. 68 of 2022 was issued. This regulation outlines all the partisan activities that students are permitted to engage in within the premises of these institutions, as well as the role required of higher education institutions to ensure the success of these activities and those who organize them.

In a study conducted by the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan on a large segment of university students, the results showed that more than two-thirds of the students (78%) believe that the practice of political work by political parties in Jordan has not been successful so far. Additionally, the vast majority of students (97%) have never joined any political party at any point, while only 1% have joined political parties (<https://www.jcss.org>).

From here emerged the role of higher education institutions in regulating partisan practices by students. The system granted the Deanship of Student Affairs in these institutions the authority to organize these practices and ensure they do not contradict regulations and instructions. The Dean of Student Affairs has the right to review requests for partisan activities submitted by students and may approve or deny them. The Dean is required to issue a decision of approval or denial within a period not exceeding five days from the date of submitting the request (Article 6/A of the System for Regulating Student Partisan Activities in Higher Education Institutions No. 68 of 2022).

Accordingly, the Dean of Student Affairs has the right to modify the time, place, and program of a partisan activity after its approval, with a justification for this decision. Additionally, the Dean has the authority to suspend the partisan activity during its session if actions violating the applicable legislation or public order are committed (Article 6/d, e of the Regulation on Organizing the Practice of Partisan Activities by Students in Higher Education Institutions No. 68 of 2022).

It is worth noting that the decision issued by the Dean of Student Affairs to reject an event or deny approval for a partisan activity request is subject to appeal to the head of the higher education institution. The applicants have the right to appeal within three working days from the date of being notified of the rejection decision. The decision issued by the head of the higher education institution shall be final (Article 6/C of the Regulation on Organizing the Practice of Partisan Student Activities in Higher Education Institutions No. 68 of 2022).

In this context, considering the decision issued by the Dean of Student Affairs as subject to appeal before the head of the higher education institution is nothing but a safeguard for applicants against any potential abuse of power by the Dean of Student Affairs, and a measure to ensure the issuance of an appropriate decision free from any flaws.

In addition, if no decision is issued regarding the request to establish a party activity by the Dean of Student Affairs within the legally specified period, which is five days from the date of submitting the request, the request is considered approved by default (Article 6/b of the Regulation on Organizing the Practice of Student Party Activities in Higher Education Institutions No. 68 of 2022). This serves as another guarantee for applicants, ensuring that the request is not left unresolved under the pretext of a decision not being issued.

Moreover, the legislation provided a set of additional guarantees for student party members within higher education institutions, indicating its encouragement of activities that comply with the law and public order, and do not oppose them. It prohibited higher education institutions from

questioning or targeting a student due to their engagement in legally approved party activities, as stipulated in Article (7/A/1) of the Regulation on Organizing Student Party Activities in Higher Education Institutions No. 68 of 2022. This is under the condition that the student may resort to the competent courts to claim compensation for any material or moral damages incurred.

These legislative texts are nothing but a translation of His Majesty the King's speech during his meeting with the heads of public universities, where His Majesty emphasized the importance of not targeting student party members due to their party affiliations or their party activities conducted within the university campus, as long as they have obtained all the required approvals and do not violate the prevailing legislation or public order.

Among the other guarantees emphasized by the legislation is the obligation to avoid bias towards any political party or influencing students affiliated with any party in any form by higher education institutions. In line with this, participation in partisan activities carried out by students within the university campus has been prohibited for members of the teaching staff and all employees of the higher education institution (Article 7/B/1 of the Regulation on Organizing the Practice of Student Partisan Activities in Higher Education Institutions No. 68 of 2022).

In addition, it is imperative not to promote any party by any means, including electronic means, and not to allow the use of any place on campus as a headquarters or office for a party, as stated in Article (6/A) of the Regulation on Organizing the Practice of Student Party Activities in Higher Education Institutions No. 68 of 2022). This serves as a directive to higher education institutions to maintain an equal distance from all parties within the university campus. This ensures reassurance among students that the university administration views all student party members equally, without discrimination or favoritism.

In return for all these guarantees provided by the legislation to the partisan university student, they are required to adhere to a set of obligations when engaging in student party activities within the university campus. This is to ensure that higher education institutions can organize these events positively and portray the image of the cultured and conscientious university student who safeguards the nation's public university facilities. This completes the picture envisioned by His Majesty the King for the university environment as a nurturing space for partisan activities, showcasing party democracy in its most splendid form.

## **Conclusion**

The Jordanian legislator has progressively outlined the concept of political party life in Jordan, culminating in the latest amendment to the Political Parties Law under Law No. 7 of 2022. This amendment addressed all the gaps that hindered the establishment of capable political parties able to lead the current phase and advance the desired political reform process envisioned by His Majesty King Abdullah II.

The recent amendment to the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022 addressed, for the first time in the history of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the concepts of involving university students in political party life. It emphasized the necessity of engaging this youth demographic in the political reform process by encouraging their participation in party activities and removing all obstacles to their partisan involvement.

In turn, the system regulating the practice of student party activities in higher education institutions, No. 68 of 2022, was approved. This system emphasized the general guidelines that highlighted the participation of students from higher education institutions in the parties mentioned in the Political Parties Law No. 7 of 2022. This is a translation of the royal messages

addressed to the presidents of public universities, in which His Majesty the King emphasized providing university students with the opportunity to engage in party life, given the scientific qualifications this group possesses that enable them to lead the wheel of reform.

From here, the legislative obstacles facing students in higher education institutions were dismantled, allowing them to conduct their partisan activities within university campuses. The system also provided a set of guarantees for university students while engaging in partisan activities within higher education institutions, emphasizing the importance of holding these events and activities without compromising the core educational mission of higher education institutions.

In summary, universities have embraced the contents of the royal letters following His Majesty the King's meeting with the presidents of official universities. These letters have been translated into reality by organizing partisan activities within university campuses, while maintaining an equal distance from all political parties and activities held on campus, provided they obtain the necessary approval from the Dean of Student Affairs.

The responsibility here lies with the parties themselves to promote these parties and to involve students of higher education institutions in the contents, visions, and aspirations of these parties. This is to benefit from the university student demographic, given their ambition and passion for political reform, especially in light of His Majesty the King's particular interest in this group.

## **Results**

1. Translating the words of His Majesty the King into reality through legislative amendments to the Political Parties Law.
2. Ensuring the participation of higher education students in the political modernization process.
3. Removing legislative obstacles facing students and allowing them to engage in partisan activities within university campuses.
4. Implementing the contents of the royal meeting by higher education institutions, and organizing partisan activities within the university campus.
5. Allowing higher education institution students to conduct their partisan activities within the university campus.
6. Universities maintain an equal distance from all political parties and activities held within the campus, provided they obtain the necessary approval from the Dean of Student Affairs.

## **Recommendations**

1. The necessity of establishing a Political Parties Circle within the Deanship of Student Affairs in higher education institutions.
2. The study on political parties recommends conducting field tours to translate the words of His Majesty the King by involving youth in partisan life, in order to promote their parties.
3. The necessity of involving students in partisan leadership positions, so that they can be practically engaged in the process of political modernization.

4. Working on amending university legislation regarding student union council elections, so that partisan students have seats in them.
5. Adding an "Introduction to Political Parties" course as a university requirement in the academic plans of higher education institutions.

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