

National youth strategy, decentralisation and open government: What role for youth in moving forward Jordan's democratisation process?

G7 Deauville Partnership "Strengthening Youth Engagement in Public Life" project

Government of Jordan and OECD: Partnering for youth engagement in public life

The project "Youth in Public Life: Towards open and inclusive youth engagement", implemented by the [MENA-OECD Governance Programme](#), supports Jordan in strengthening public governance arrangements for young men and women to engage in public life.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, line ministries, parliament, local governments, royal NGOs and foundations, universities, civil society and youth associations, the OECD supports strengthening legal, institutional and policy frameworks for new opportunities for young men and women to engage in public life, improve cross-sectorial and vertical coordination and mainstream youth concerns for better tailored public policies and services. The project will support Jordan in translating country-specific policy recommendations into practice at both national and sub-national level.

How to engage youth in Jordan's National Youth Strategy 2017-25?



H.E. Minister Hadeetha Khreshah and OECD DSG Mari Kiviniemi

The event was jointly opened by H.E. Hadeetha Khresha, Minister of Youth, and Mari Kiviniemi OECD Deputy Secretary-General. With more than 80 participants from the Ministry of Youth, line ministries, NGOs and foundations, youth associations, universities as well as international and bilateral partners including representative from the Embassies of Germany, Italy and the UK along with UNDP, the high-level conference was held at Al Hussein Youth City in Amman.

H.E. Hadeetha Khresha: *"Young people must be active partners in building political, social and economic life. By delegating authorities to the directors of youth, my ministry is implementing decentralisation.*

In the first working session, with the participation of Dr. Yassein Halyal, Ministry of Youth, Dr. Sami Hourani, Advisor to the National Youth Strategy, and Mr. Emad Al-Zeadeen, volunteer from the youth centre in Tafileh, the participants discussed the current status of the drafting process, the main challenges and opportunities for including young Jordanian men and women in the strategy. Ms. Tina Hočevár, Board Member of the European Youth Forum presented standards to ensure the inclusive formulation of national youth strategies.

She also outlined examples from Portugal, Finland and Slovenia to establish a structured dialogue between government and youth across the different levels of government.

How to leverage Jordan’s open government agenda and decentralisation reform?

During the second session, Mr. Nasser Al-Zou’bi from the Ministry of Planning and International Co-operation highlighted the constructive role youth played in the formulation of the 3rd National Action Plan for the Open Government Partnership (OGP). He emphasised that their participation was a priority also in the implementation of the OGP commitments. The panel with Mr. Muhammad Al-Awamreh, Ministry of Interior, Mr. Rakez Al-Kalaelah, Ministry of Municipality Affairs and Dr. Ali Al-Kawaldah, political advisor to the Minister of Political Development and Parliamentary Affairs, stressed the importance of encouraging young people to participate in the local elections on 15 August 2017 and to leverage the momentum provided by the decentralisation reform to establish a more regular dialogue with youth at subnational level.



Ms. Tina Hočevár, Board Member, European Youth Forum

OECD DSG Mari Kiviniemi: *“Let’s think of our young generation as problem solvers, young decision-makers, business men and women, and social workers – not as a separate group in society!”*



Panel 1 discussing how to engage youth in the National Youth Strategy 2017-25



Mr. Nasser Al Zou’bi, OGP National Co-ordinator, MoPIC

Nasser Al Zou’bi, Ministry of Planning and International Co-operation: *“ Youth have played a role in formulating the 3rd OGP Action Plan and will increasingly do so in its implementation ”*



Ms. Sanna Hansson, Youth Coordinator, Karlstad Municipality, Sweden

Ms. Maram Ali, volunteer at the youth centre in Amman, emphasised that youth in Jordan are ready to be active partners of government which should reach out to them through young public officials. Ms. Sanna Hansson, Student and Youth coordinator at Karlstad Municipality in Sweden, presented different forms of engagement (e.g. municipal youth council, web survey) to involve youth in the development of student plans, city planning and decisions affecting public transportation.

Key outcome

- The representative from the Ministry of Municipality Affairs announced to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Youth to join efforts in raising awareness among youth for the local elections and decentralisation reform

3rd fact-finding mission: Going local!

With the support of the peer from Sweden, the OECD conducted a fact-finding mission on 2-6 March 2017 to interview over 25 public officials (i.e. governors, directors of youth, and representatives from municipalities) and member of youth centres in 6 of the 12 governorates of Jordan: **Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), Karak, Aqaba, Tafileh, Irbid, and Mafraq.**

The collected evidence will feed into the forthcoming OECD Review which will present policy recommendations to support the implementation of the National Youth Strategy 2017-25 and foster a culture of youth engagement in the run up to the 2017 local elections and beyond. The OECD will support the implementation of these recommendations through a series of capacity building activities and regional conferences in 2017-2019.



Members of the women youth centre in Tafileh



Governor of Aqaba



Women youth centre in Karak



Governor of Irbid



Governor of Mafraq

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