

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan



Ministry of Digital Economy
and Entrepreneurship

Jordanian Policy for Electronic Participation 2021

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Preface

- [1] Proceeding from the visions and directives of His Majesty King Abdullah II, Ibn Al Hussein, in the fourth discussion paper, which revolves around democratic empowerment and effective citizenship, His Majesty directed that “the essential reform goal is to enhance citizens’ participation in decision making”. Accordingly, successive governments have developed an approach to transparency and community participation. Decision-making is among its priorities through deepening dialogue, communication and building consensus as the most important tools and pillars that the government should adopt in its openness and communication with different segments of society, including citizens, residents, private sector and civil society organizations, and to employ the results of dialogue and communication in crystallizing government procedures, legislation and decisions.
- [2] In line with Clause (16.7) of the Sustainable Development Goals, which states “ensure that decisions are taken in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the beneficiaries in a participatory and representative manner at all levels”, the government seeks to include Segments of society in decision making processes, designing of Government services, and provisioning of these services. This will lead to participatory and Comprehensive service and increase society trust in government performance. Beside to that this will open the possibility to benefit from skills and competencies that owns it Community members to produce public services and enable creativity and innovation.
- [3] Effective community participation is not limited to sharing government data and information that is not classified confidential only with segments of society, but extends to consulting segments of society and enabling them to contribute to decision-making processes about developments and issues that are being discussed at the governmental or national level.
- [4] Sharing data and information with segments of society is done either proactively through the open government data platform on the e-government portal and websites of government entities, or interactively through requests for the right to access information in tradition or electronic way, in addition to interacting through a platform called at your service (Bekhedmetkom platform) that enables citizens to communicate with the government by: ask The government, or raise their suggestion, compliment, compliant, and report
- [5] The accounts of government entities on social media, which verified /authenticated by the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, have an important role in enabling interactive participation with all segments of society, in addition to providing electronic services that enable beneficiaries to inquire about data, which is available with government entities.
- [6] In order to enable the beneficiaries to participate in government decision-making, whether legislation, strategies, or others, the government obligated government entities to participate and consult with stakeholders and interested parties through institutionalizing the consultation process by creating a memorandum of legislative and explanatory data and a form "issuing a decision from the Council of Ministers" that includes in some of its clauses a statement of the bodies Which was consulted in the stage of preparing the draft legislation, and the government is currently working on adopting the impact assessment policy issued by the Council of Ministers

and prepared by the Department of Institutional Performance and Policies Development in the Prime Ministry, which requires the need to conduct a prior assessment of the expected impact of the draft legislation by the government entities issuing the legislation, followed by a procedure Post-assessment to review the actual impact of the legislation

- [7] In addition, based on the definition of e-participation issued by the United Nations in the e-Government Survey 2020, which states that “e-participation is the process of engaging citizens through information and communication technology in politics, decision-making, and service design and delivery to make it participatory, inclusive and circulating”. And for the given development of electronic communication methods, which Due to the development of communications and information technology networks, and the government’s keenness to adopt international best practices, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship has prepared an e-participation policy (the “Policy”) to define the roles and responsibilities of government entities in enabling e-participation, whether sharing information, consultations or decisions

Policy objectives

- [8] The policy aims to:
- (A) Activating electronic tools to enhance the process of community participation.
 - (B) Activating community participation in preparing legislation and making decisions at the government level.
 - (C) Improving the quality of public services, government decisions and directions, to suit the needs of beneficiaries.
 - (D) Enhancing transparency and increasing confidence in the government apparatus.
 - (E) Improving the efficiency and quality of information and facilitating access to it.

Policy Scope

- [9] The application of this policy is to all legislation, plans, instructions and regulatory tools issued by government entities, institutions and bodies, including municipalities and provincial councils, to enable beneficiaries to contribute to making decisions that suit their needs.
- [10] The implementation of the provisions of this policy as clarified in this document, taking into account the Right to Access to Information law no. (47) of 2007 and its amendments, Data Classification and Management Policy 2020, Code of Governance of Policies and Legislative Tools in Government Departments for the year 2018, Personal Data Protection Law (when issued) and the regulations and instructions issued thereunder.

E-Participation Pillars

- [11] E-Participation consists of three main pillars:
- (A) Providing information in an understandable format to ensure ease of access and comprehensiveness of access, which is known as sharing information electronically. (E-Information)
 - (B) Conducting public consultations to obtain the opinions of stakeholders and interested parties about the business provided by the government, known as electronic consultations. (E-Consultation)

- (C) Involve the beneficiaries in the governmental decision-making process, and known as electronic decision-making. (E-Decision making)

Electronic sharing of information (E-Information)

- [12] For the purposes of achieving all standards of integrity and transparency and enabling citizens to obtain data and information in various ways, the government requires government entities to respond to the requests of the public under the Right to Access to Information Law No. (47) of 2007 and its amendments, and to institutionalize the procedures for the right to access to information in accordance with the protocol of enforcement procedures for the Law to Ensure the Right to access to Information, which was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2020, which provides a guide that helps various public institutions to institutionalize the required procedures and strengthen internal control to enforce the right to access to information.
- [13] The government is also aware of the importance of proactively making data and information available to the public. Therefore, government entities must continue to publish non-confidential data and information in their possession through electronic channels such as the e-participation portal, government entities websites, or the open government data platform in accordance with the Open Government Data Policy 2017 and based on practical classification outputs. in accordance to the requirements of the Data Classification and Management Policy 2020 issued by the Council of Ministers pursuant to Resolution No. (8158) dated 14/1/2020.

Electronic Consultation (E-Consultation)

- [14] The government is aware of the importance of the role played by society in developing the legislative and regulatory aspects, which is achieved by commenting on draft legislation with the aim of improving legislative tools. The council, according to the “issuing a decision from the Council of Ministers” model, requires public consultation at the stage of preparing the draft legislation.
- [15] The government requests the government entities to submit legislation, policies and plans for public consultation and to poll the segments of society in providing and structuring public services and other consultations and opinion polls that benefit the beneficiaries, by taking the following steps:

First: the preparatory stage

- [16] In the first stage, the government entity must cover the following data related to:
- (A) Subject and objectives.
 - (B) Possible reasons.
 - (C) Target groups
 - (D) The path plan and related matters such as the start and end date of the consultation, the date of publication of the results and the evaluation.
 - (E) Communication details.
 - (F) Related documents.
 - (G) Questionnaire to assess the beneficiaries' satisfaction with the proposals presented in the consultation.
 - (H) Participant's acknowledgment form of approval of the entity's response mechanism.

Second: Evaluation and dissemination of results

[17] Each government entity shall publish the e-consultation evaluation report within a period of no less than one month from the date of the end of the consultation, provided that the evaluation includes the following::

- (A) Statistical data on the number of participants in the electronic consultation.
- (B) Main topics or themes covered by the posts from the total themes presented for consultation
- (C) The results of the beneficiaries' satisfaction with the proposals presented in the consultation.

[18] Upon completion of the electronic consultation, the government entity must:

- (A) Prepare a document showing the difficulties encountered by the entity in achieving the objectives of the consultation and proposals to overcome them to improve the subsequent electronic consultations.
- (B) Prepare and publish a position paper, which is matrix showing the entity's position on the suggestions and comments submitted by the respondents, including the analyzes and the necessary obligations to take positions regarding the issues raised in the consultation, taking into consideration the respondents requests not to publish all or part of their responses based on the respondents request .

General provisions for electronic consultations:

[19] Each government entity is required to submit an annual report to the Department of Institutional Performance and Policies Development in the Prime Ministry on the electronic consultations it has undertaken and measure the extent of its effects and results.

[20] When needed, the government entity must take an acknowledgment from the provider of the response to the consultation agreeing to publish his response to the public in the e-consultation evaluation report so that the response can be taken and reflected on the draft consultation.

[21] The government requires government entities to abide by the following provisions in the context of sharing electronic consultations:

- (A) Publishing the consultations topic and its documents mainly in Arabic and then in English if available.
- (B) The consultation period shall not be less than one working month from the date of its submission.
- (C) The possibility of extending the consultation period based on the beneficiaries' desire.
- (D) Announcing the public consultation on social media to enable the largest possible segment of participation.

Electronic decision-making (E-Decision making)

[22] The government considers that the participation of segments of society who meet the legal age in government decisions about policies and public services and the ways in which they are provided by government entities effectively and positively affects the development of the government apparatus. Examples of this include decision-making related to the availability of public services, and decision-making at the political level. Presenting proposals to parliaments and the Council of Ministers for the government to study and share the results of the study with the community or include them according to government priorities.

[23] The government requires all government entities to commit enabling beneficiaries to participate in making relevant decisions in the public service and government projects so that the government's interests and orientations are focused according to the aspirations of the beneficiaries.

[24] The government is aware of the importance of the beneficiaries' suggestions to determine government decisions and priorities, so the government will work to enable voting on the beneficiaries' proposals listed by them in the electronic participation channels to be studied by the government.

Inclusiveness of e-participation:

[25] As the government will ensure that measures designed to activate dialogues in e-participation in a manner that achieves openness and inclusion automatically, the government will work for the purposes of promoting women's e-participation and through appropriate supervision of citizens' dialogues and their contributions to public consultations to reduce sexism and hate speech in all its forms, including gender-based. The government, in cooperation with the National Committee for Women's Affairs and relevant authorities, will also study mechanisms to empower women digitally to include them in the government's plans.

[26] In order to achieve the principles of fair and equal access for all individuals, the government will work through the ministry to provide the requirements of persons with disabilities to enhance their electronic participation in a fair and equal manner by providing sufficient accessible forms, including indicative images and necessary explanations in sign language, voice commands, etc., in cooperation with the Supreme Council for Persons with Disabilities Affairs.

[27] As part of the government's endeavor to provide accessible digital formats, the measures to be taken by the government in this regard will also ensure that individuals from the elderly have access to e-participation channels.

Governance Model

Tasks and responsibilities of the Department of Institutional Performance Development and Policies in the Prime Ministry

[28] The Department of Institutional Performance and Policies Development / the Prime Ministry manages the implementation of the e-participation policy in government entities. Therefore, the government requests the Department of Institutional Performance and Policies Development in the Prime Ministry to undertake the following tasks:

- (A) Training, qualifying and developing the skills of officials and leaders in managing the implementation of e-participation mechanisms in government entities.
- (B) Develop a series of performance indicators to measure the extent to which government Entities implement the provisions of the policy and its outcomes.
- (C) Submit an annual report to the Council of Ministers showing the extent to which government entities are committed to the provisions of this policy and what comes out of it.

- (D) Preparing the necessary legislation and guidelines for implementing the policy and facilitating its application to institutions in cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, the Legislation and Opinion Bureau and relevant partners.
- (E) Providing support to government entities on how to adhere to the guidelines, providing statistics and data on the volume and effectiveness of participation, and disseminating them to beneficiaries through the unified platform.
- (F) Contribute to the review and development of the e-participation policy in cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship and in accordance with the best international practices and in accordance with the requirements contained in this policy and in proportion to the needs of the beneficiaries.
- (G) Guide government entities on how to manage social networking sites and make optimal use of them in conducting public consultations.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship

[29] The government requests the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship to develop a unified interactive portal for e-participation, brings together all current government platforms related to e-participation, covers all possible requirements for e-participation pillars and continues to develop them according to what is agreed upon with the Development Department Institutional performance and policies in the prime minister's office.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Governmental Entity

[30] The government requests that the implementation of this policy in the government entity be entrusted to a specific organizational department in order to carry out the following tasks:

- (A) Implementation of the electronic participation policy and what comes out of it.
- (B) Follow up on the implementation of electronic participation mechanisms in their entity.
- (C) Raising awareness periodically among the employees of the government agency about the methods of electronic participation.