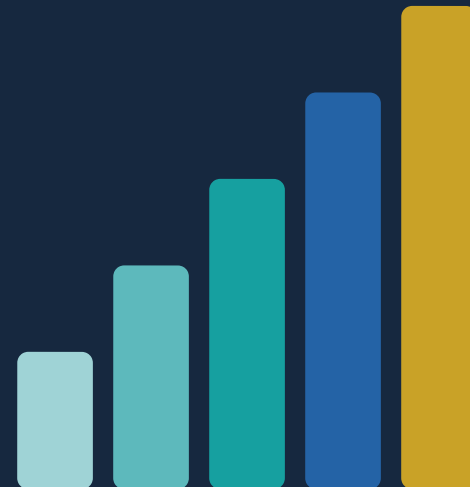


POLICY BRIEF · UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2026

Ana Usharek: Promoting Peace & Social Cohesion in Jordan

How a national civic-education programme gives young people a voice, a stake and a safe space to disagree

Independent Election Commission of Jordan



Four things to know about Ana Usharek

1

A programme of the constitutional body that runs elections

Delivered by the IEC since 2022 in universities, colleges, schools and youth centres across all 12 governorates.

2

Skills that protect against polarisation

Dialogue, critical thinking, media literacy and a shared civic identity, learned by doing.

3

Impact that is measured, not assumed

Among participants, trust in the electoral process rose from 63% to 82% and awareness of hate speech from 44% to 80%.

4

Young people already carry the vote

17–35-year-olds cast 43.7% of all votes in 2024. The next step is the cities, where youth turnout is lowest.

482,720

attendances and
participants, up to
September 2026

48,304

sessions delivered

12

governorates, in cities and
outlying areas

≈300

initiatives launched by
participants

Sources: programme data to September 2026; impact evaluation 2022–2025 (IEC pre/post tools); IEC data on young voters, 2024 parliamentary elections.

Extremism grows in a vacuum. The programme fills it.

“Extremism revives when a young person feels they have no voice, no opportunity for change, and no safe space for dialogue.”



A voice

Facilitated dialogue, election simulations, persuasion and oratory competitions where young people argue, listen and change their minds.



An opportunity

Credentials an employer can read, a portfolio of real civic acts, and about 300 youth-led initiatives in their communities.



A safe space

Year-round spaces on campuses and in youth centres to discuss identity, religion and politics without fear, and within the law.

45.18%

of registered voters were aged 18–35 in 2024 (2,295,706)

589,820

citizens were eligible to vote for the first time

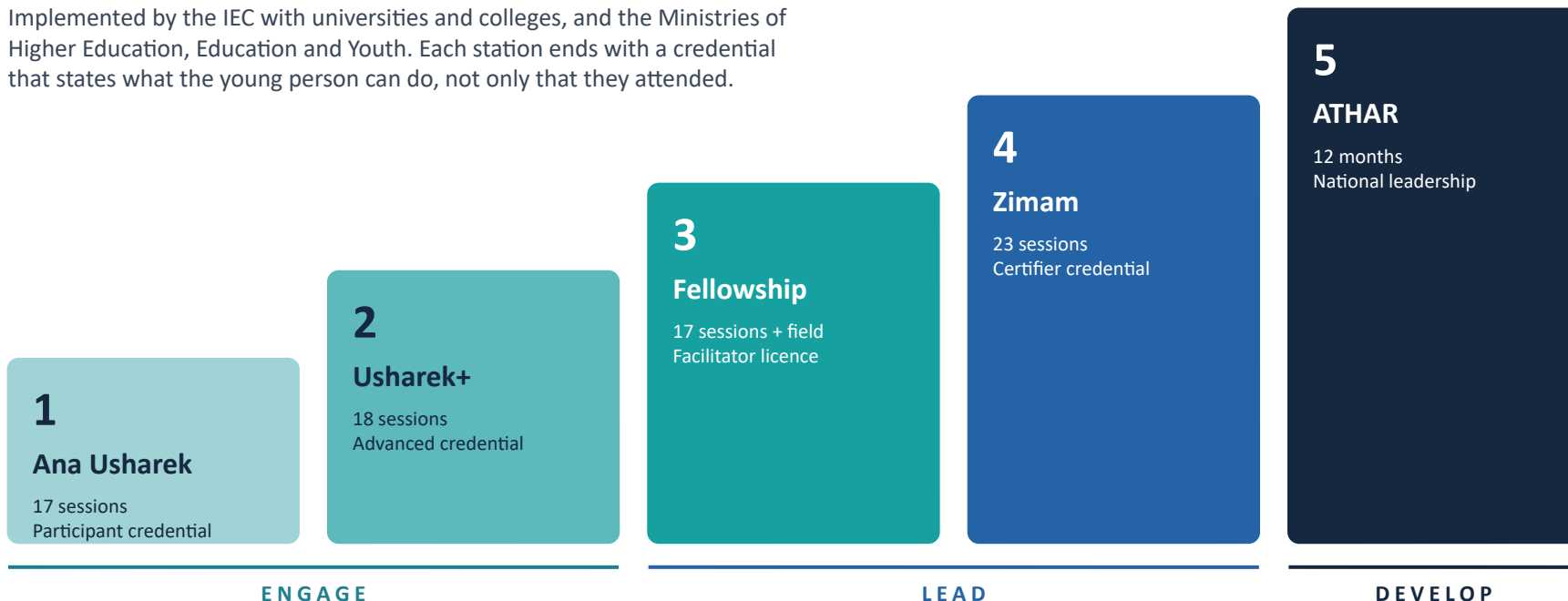
31.2%

youth turnout in 2024, against 33.1% for over-35s

Sources: IEC Detailed Report on the 2024 parliamentary elections (pp. 89, 91); IEC data on young voters by district, 2024.

Engage, lead, develop: a five-station ladder to leadership

Implemented by the IEC with universities and colleges, and the Ministries of Higher Education, Education and Youth. Each station ends with a credential that states what the young person can do, not only that they attended.



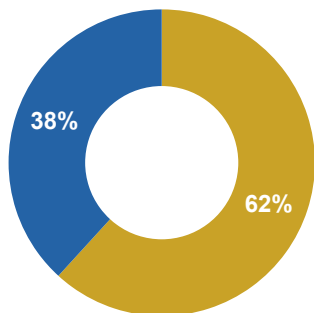
A national footprint, built session by session

482,720

attendances and participants up to
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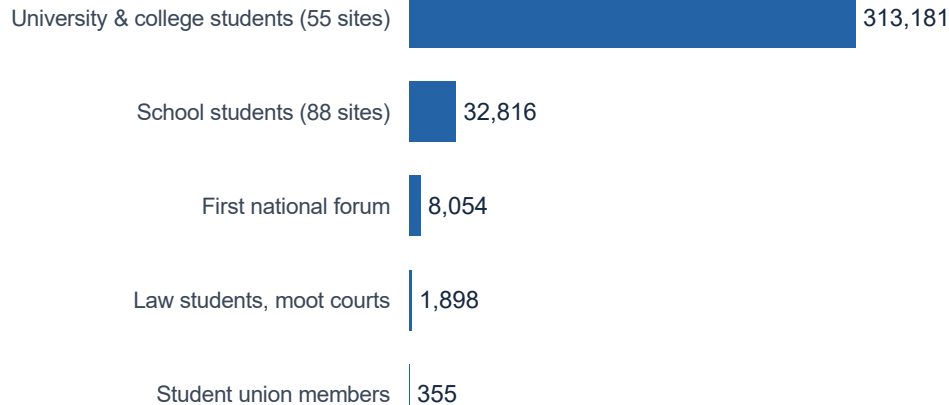


Female 298,267 (61.8%)

Male 184,453 (38.2%)

**Current delivery sites: 15 universities
· 15 youth centres · 89 schools
(Basma)**

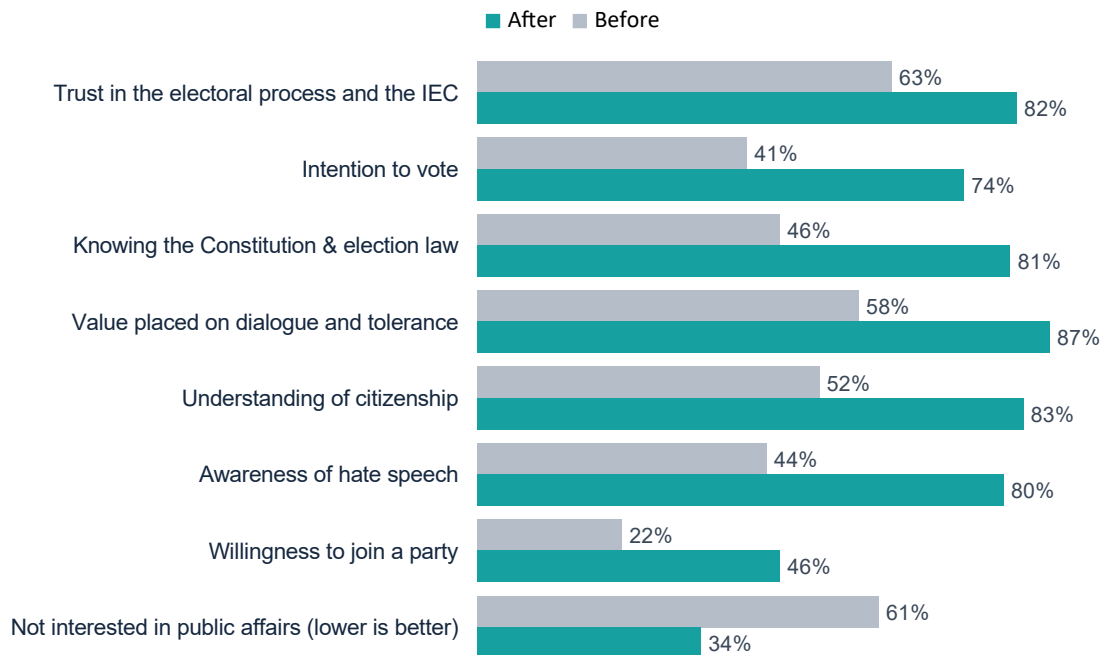
Reach by component, March 2022 – December 2024 (attendances)



Sessions in the same period: 36,057 in universities and colleges, 359 in schools, 311 at the forum, 58 for moot courts and 20 for student unions. An attendance is one person at one session.

Sources: programme data to September 2026; programme policy brief, March 2022 – December 2024.

Understanding the process builds trust and turnout



ATHAR leadership track

+93% self-confidence

+89% critical thinking

+29% tolerance

Independent study with Penn State

38.5% → 53.7%

believe they can influence public decisions
(2,973 responses from 45 higher-education institutions)

Sources: impact evaluation 2022–2025 (IEC pre/post assessment tools); ATHAR track presentation; Penn State study reported in the impact evaluation.

Four ways the programme builds cohesion



Dialogue and tolerance

Facilitated spaces to discuss identity, religion and politics with respect. Value placed on dialogue and tolerance rose from 58% to 87%.



Countering hate speech and misinformation

Media literacy, a fact-checking lab and digital protection units. Awareness of hate speech rose from 44% to 80%.



Bridging "us versus them"

Mixed groups across governorates, backgrounds, females and males, and inclusion initiatives such as disability rights.



A shared national identity

The Constitution, the rule of law and belonging to the state above sub-identities. Understanding of citizenship rose from 52% to 83%.

Source: impact evaluation 2022–2025 (IEC pre/post assessment tools).

Skills for citizenship are skills for work

Critical thinking

Persuasion

Leadership

Teamwork

Resilience

Negotiation



Public participation

187

participants and graduates stood in student council and club elections

Voting, standing, party and student work, and civic acts that reach an institution.



Employability

5

credentials an employer can read, one for each station

A professional thread in every station, a compulsory "From initiative to job" module, a portfolio of real acts and interview practice.



Initiatives

≈300

initiatives launched by participants

Community initiatives in Sawtak, digital projects in the Tech-Voices hackathon and a ten-week field initiative in the Fellowship.

Sources: impact evaluation 2022–2025; programme data to September 2026.

Where knowledge becomes practice

Practical election exercise A full simulation from registration and candidacy to campaigning, polling, counting and results: 3,156 students in 50 sessions, plus 177 in the Jordanian Parliament simulation at German Jordanian University (16 sessions). **Learn it... live it... and take part with awareness.**



Moot Court

Electoral justice through young eyes

4 editions · 1,898 law students · 22 law faculties



Convince Me (Iqna'ni)

Persuasion instead of point-scoring debate: the audience votes before and after

20 teams · 3 regions · 52 judges



Tech-Voices hackathon

Youth · technology · participation

11 universities, June 2026



Sawtak Mu'athir

Media students turn civic issues into content

5 themes · 5 entry formats



Raqeeq | Al-Bayan

National youth oratory competition

“Your word is a trace, and your trace is history”

Sources: official competition guides 2023–2026; programme data, cumulative to September 2026.

In 2024, our young people went to work

6,035

young volunteers from the programme in awareness campaigns and on polling day, 2024 elections

Polling day is the real test of what they learned: standing beside voters, seeing integrity from the inside, and going home as its witnesses.

11

national awareness campaigns with the programme's young people

2,070+

media pieces produced by young people: video, podcasts and posts

1 in 3

graduates joined an initiative or campaign after the programme

38% → 64%

share who volunteer regularly, before and after

Sources: programme data; impact evaluation 2022–2025.

Young people on polling day: who voted, and when

715,230

voters aged 17–35: 43.7% of all votes cast

31.2%

youth turnout, against 33.1% for over-35s (30.1% in 2020)

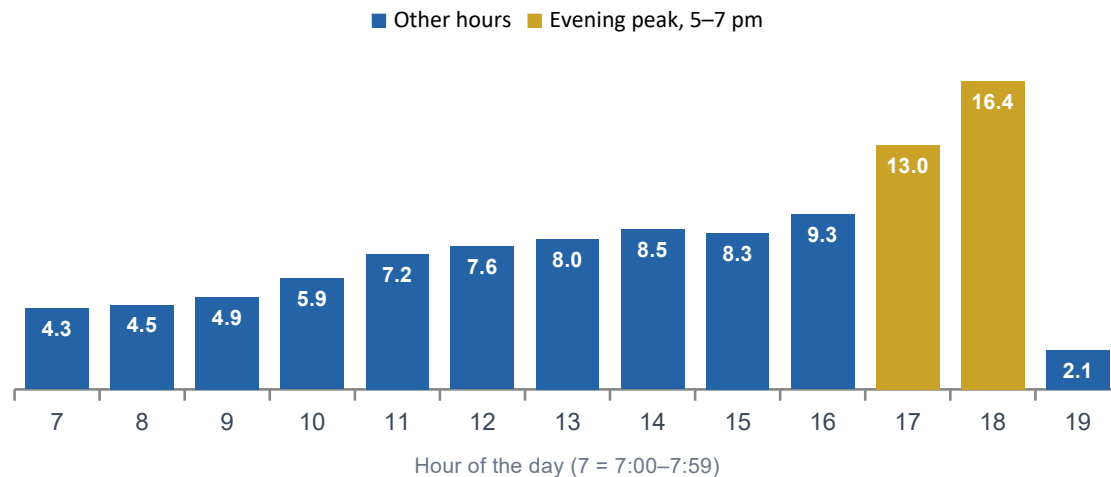
28.2% vs 34.5%

female vs male youth turnout

40.9%

of youth votes were cast after 4 pm

Share of youth votes by polling hour (%)

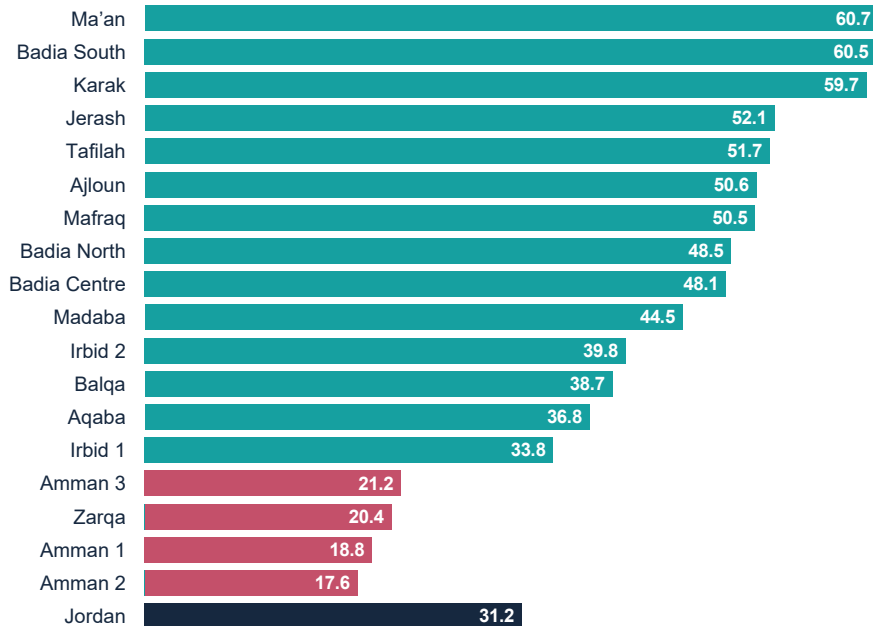


Young people decide late: 29.4% of their votes came between 5 and 7 pm. Males dominate the first hour (65% of young voters at 7 am); the female share peaks at 5 pm (53%).

Source: IEC data on young voters (17–35) by hour, district and sex, 2024 parliamentary elections; IEC Detailed Report 2024 (pp. 89, 101). Rates calculated from these data.

The gap is urban, not generational

Youth turnout by electoral district, 2024 (%)



19.3% vs 43.9%

youth turnout in the three Amman districts and Zarqa, against the rest of Jordan. They hold 51.8% of registered young voters but cast only 32.1% of youth votes.

- Zarqa is the second-largest pool of young voters (336,409), yet it sent only 323 of the programme's 2,844 applications this semester.
- Youth turnout was below over-35 turnout in 17 of 18 districts. Ma'an is the exception (60.7% vs 59.8%).
- The female gap is 6.3 points nationally and widens to 13–21 points in the three Badia districts.

Sources: IEC data on young voters (17–35), 2024; IEC Detailed Report 2024 (pp. 89, 101); programme applications, first semester 2026/27. Irbid 2 voter count calculated from its published turnout.

Four programmes that reach every group



Basma

School students, with the Ministry of Education

89

schools

668

sessions

39,270

students

87.6%

satisfaction



Sawtak

Young leaders in youth centres, with the Ministry of Youth

15

youth centres

317

participants

5

stations

53%

female



Student unions

Elected student councils

355

members

20

sessions

12

universities



Deans of student affairs

Staff who keep the impact inside institutions

293

staff

15

sessions

87%

satisfaction

Sources: Basma analytical report 2026; Sawtak records 2026; programme data.

Why the programme is changing, and where it is going

1

Knowing is not enough

Knowledge and intention to vote rose sharply, yet only about 14% of graduates went on to party work.

2

Attendance is not a skill

The old certificate said you were in the room, not what you can do.

3

Content had aged

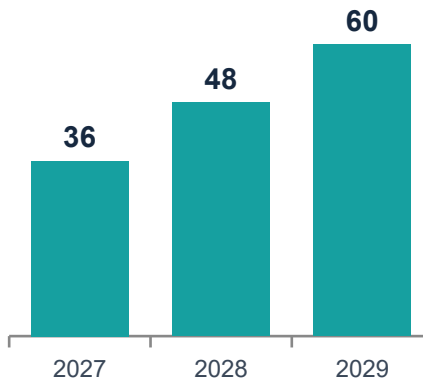
Repealed laws and lecture-shaped modules with little practice.

4

The road stopped short

No published path after the Fellowship to national leadership.

Delivery sites under the modernisation plan



29 universities, 10 public and 9 private colleges, and 12 off-campus hubs by 2029.

First semester 2026/27: registration opens for the renewed programme

15

universities

2,844

registrations

74.6%

female

8

governorates

Sources: online registration, first semester 2026/27, to 4 October 2026; modernisation plan 2027–2029.

What we ask of partners

1

Sustain it as a strategic investment

University presidents and deans of student affairs endorse the programme. Continuity is what turns sessions into a generation.

2

Go where turnout is lowest

Expand in the universities and youth centres of Amman and Zarqa, where youth turnout is 19.3%.

3

Time the message

Concentrate polling-day messages and volunteers in the afternoon and evening, and encourage young people to vote early.

4

Close the female gap

Use the female leadership track and Sawtak to reach young females, starting with the Badia districts.

5

Keep measuring

Pre/post tools, independent research and the new credential registry, so every claim can be checked.

Safe dialogue spaces prevent frustration and marginalisation from building up, and make difference a strength rather than a threat.

Promoting youth awareness is not an educational luxury. It is a national, security and societal necessity.

An aware young person can reject hate speech, resist attempts at recruitment, and build a future on pluralism, peace and shared responsibility.

Thank you

Independent Election Commission · Ana Usharek programme · www.iec.jo

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