



Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Center



The Jordanian Civil Team for Observing the 2007 Parliamentary Elections

Amman, 20/11/2007, 12:00

The press spokesman of the Jordanian Civil Team for Observing the 2007 Parliamentary Elections, released the following statement on the opening of the polling centers on 20/11/2007:

The vast majority of the Jordanian Civil Team for Observing the 2007 Parliamentary Elections (JOCTOPE), reported that 90% of the polling centers were opened at the set time, namely at 7.00 am, without any notable delay. 10% of the polling centers experienced a delay in their opening between half hour and 1 hour. Reported cases of delayed opening were in the 4th district of Amman (Sahab), Zarqa, 3 districts of Balqa (Balawneh, Eastern Bayuda, Amer ben Jarah, Joufa, Shouna, and Rmemin). In Jarash the delay was minimal and ranged from 5 to 10 minutes.

According to JOCTOPE observers, computer breakdowns were detected in numerous polling centers, which caused delays in the starting of voting procedures in these centers. This was mostly noted in Balqa'a, where Baq'a Boys School started its voting procedures at 7.30 am, and Rmemin school started at 8.15.

These computer breakdowns caused intensive chaos and disorder in these centers. This prevented the ability of electronically detecting the voters ID's and also prevented any electronic coordination and connection between the higher election committee and the polling centers. Computer malfunctions were detected in tens of polling centers in different governorates, namely in Karak (Thalaja, Faqou', Mazar), Mafraq (Edon/ Bani Hassan area), and in the fourth district of Irbid (Ramtha). Officials were obliged to resort to manual voting procedures in other centers. Interestingly, the official bodies had stated that computerized networking between the Higher Election Committee and the polling centers will be the distinctive aspect of the 2007 elections and will preserve the integrity of the voting progress and prevent dual voting. They also had stated that electronic networking will not be a substitute of conventional voting procedures.



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Several voters in Zarqa districts complained about their names not being registered in the polling centers' computer systems, which prevented them from being able to vote. 37 cases were detected in Zarqa first district until 7:45am. Other complaints were about allowing voters to vote, regardless of their districts not being stated on their IDs. This was reported in Irbid fourth district.

JOCTOPE observers reported that the voting procedures ran smoothly in the vast majority of the polling centers. Moreover, the centers' officials allowed notable numbers of these observers to enter inside the polling centers to observe the opening procedures and the commencement of voting. Indeed, a number of JOCTOPE observers are currently present inside the polling centers. Yet in Zarqa, for instance, officials prevented JOCTOPE observers from entering the polling centers or asked them to leave.

On the other hand, observers reported numerous busses carrying voters and moving between Zarqa to Amman. Observers at Tafela first district noted public voting taking place in some of its centers; two former ministers were seen voting publicly in those centers.

Observers perceived that cutting the voters' ID card after their voting is an effective way to preserve the integrity and transparency of elections. Yet, other noted that it might have some negative effects, such as citizens abstaining from participating in the elections, to avoid having to issue new ID cards.

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Briefing

The Jordanian Civil Team for Observing the 2007 Parliamentary Elections observers reported that the voting process in the vast majority of the polling center, commenced at exactly 7 o'clock in the morning. 11% of the polling centers experienced delays in their opening, ranging between a few minutes and one hour. They also reported that 90% of the polling centers opened at exactly 7.00am.

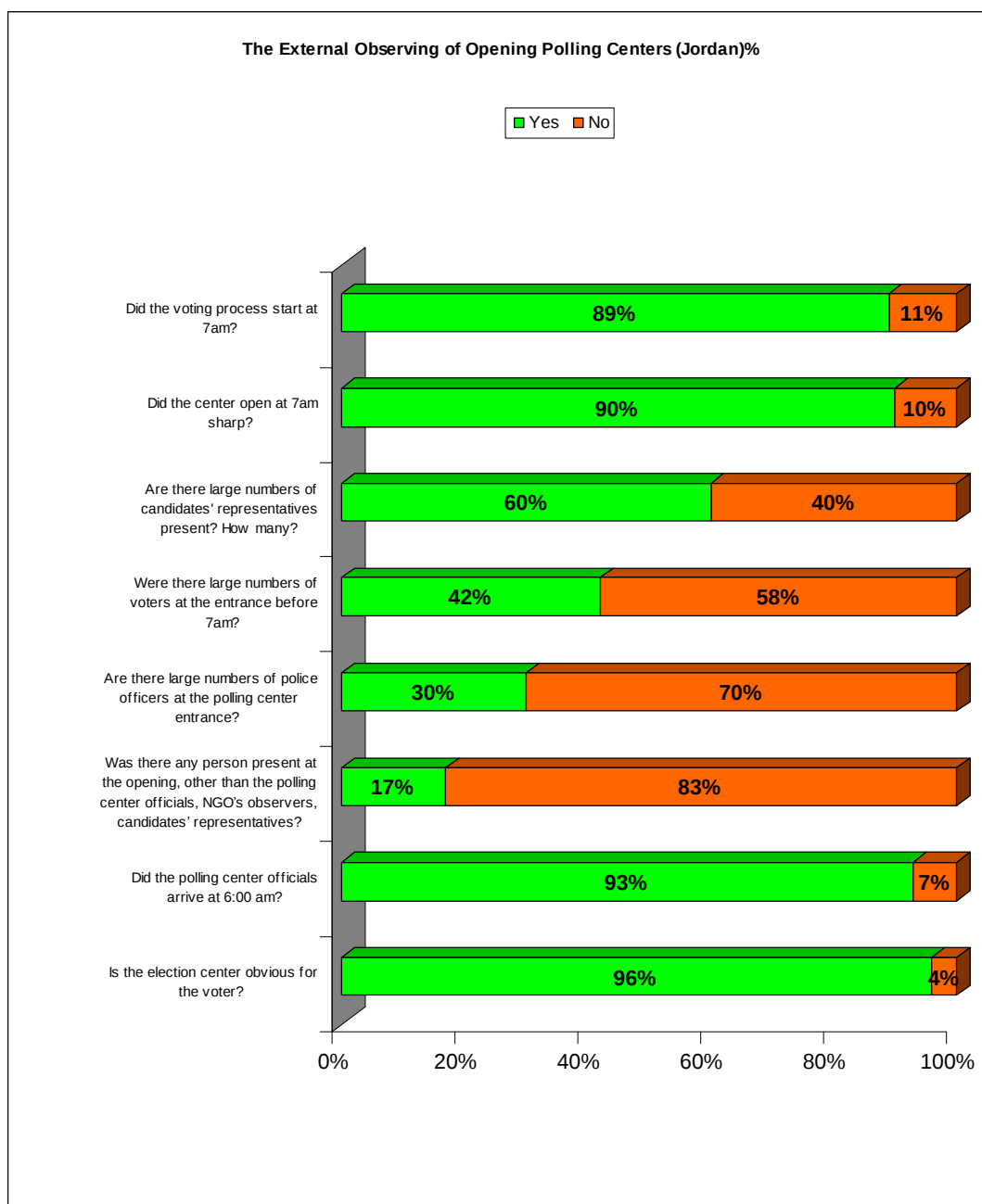
Our observer team reported that the voters' presence at the opening of the centers was normal in size. They noted large number of voters waiting outside the polling centers prior to their official opening. This was noted in 43% of those centers.

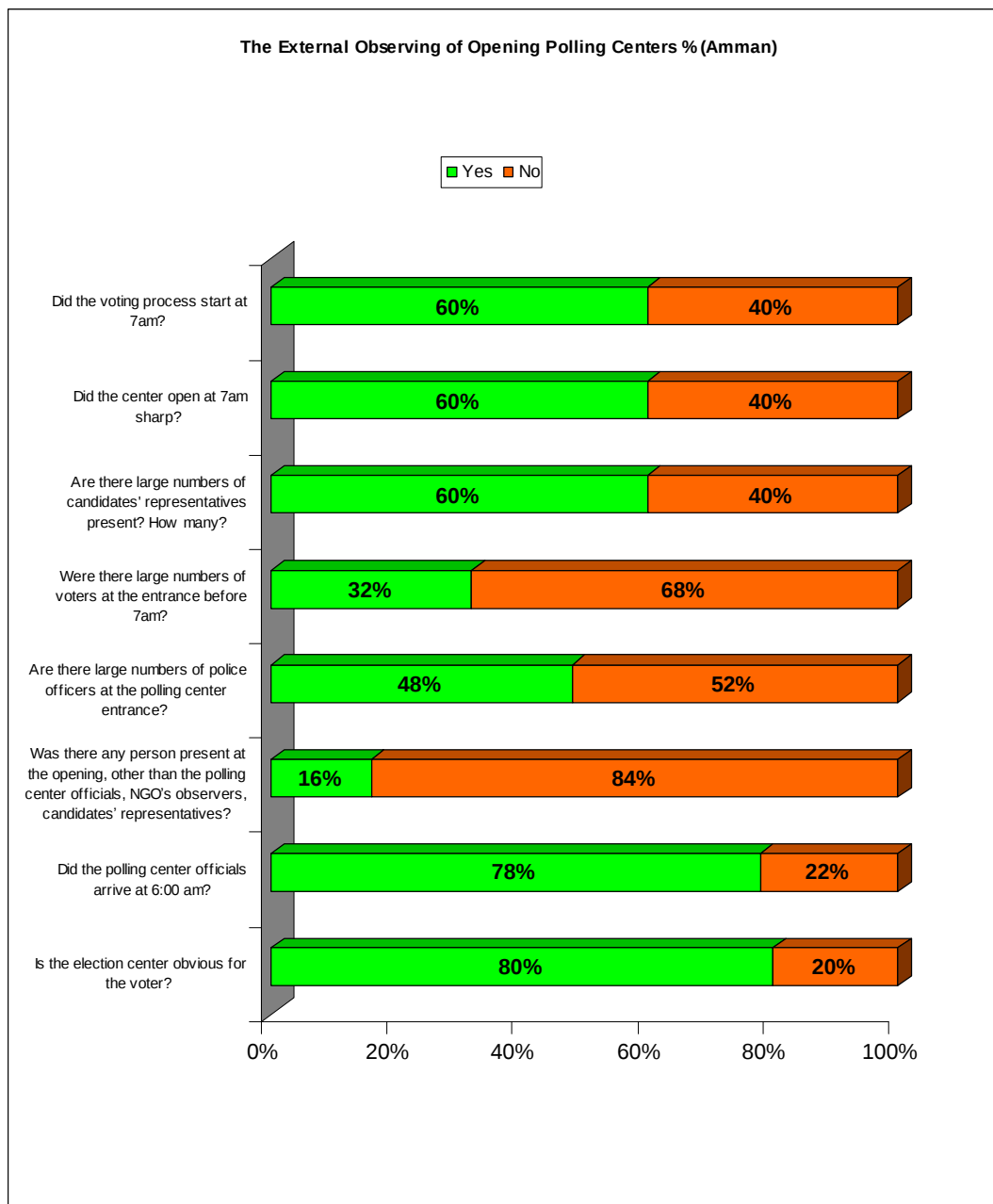
The police and security presence was not sizable at 70% of the polling centers' entrances, as observed by the JOCTOPE observers, who reported high numbers of police officials at the entrances of only 30% of the polling centers.

On the other hand, JOCTOPE observers recorded high presence of candidates' representatives at 60% of the polling centers. Lower presence was reported at 40% of the centers.

Regarding the clarity of the polling centers premises, our observers reported that 96% of the visited centers were clearly marked and easily identified by the voters. This was not the case in only 4% of the polling centers.

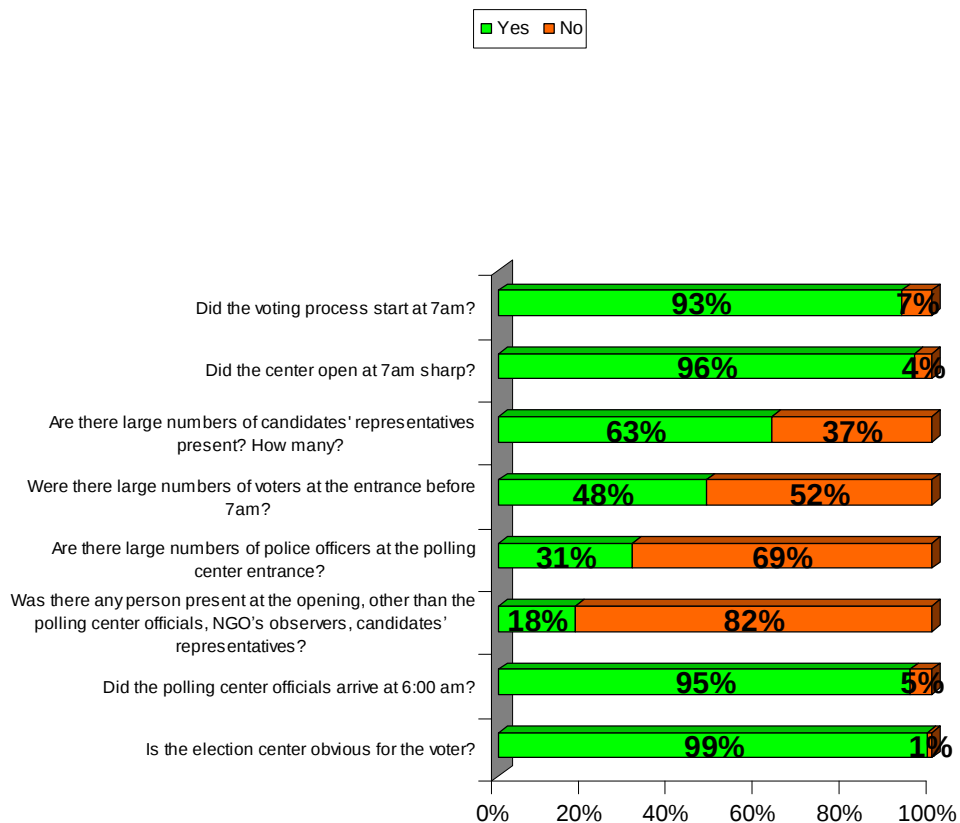
The following diagrams illustrate the outcomes of the external observation of the opening of the polling centers in the different districts across the kingdom. These are categorized into northern, central, southern, and Amman regions:







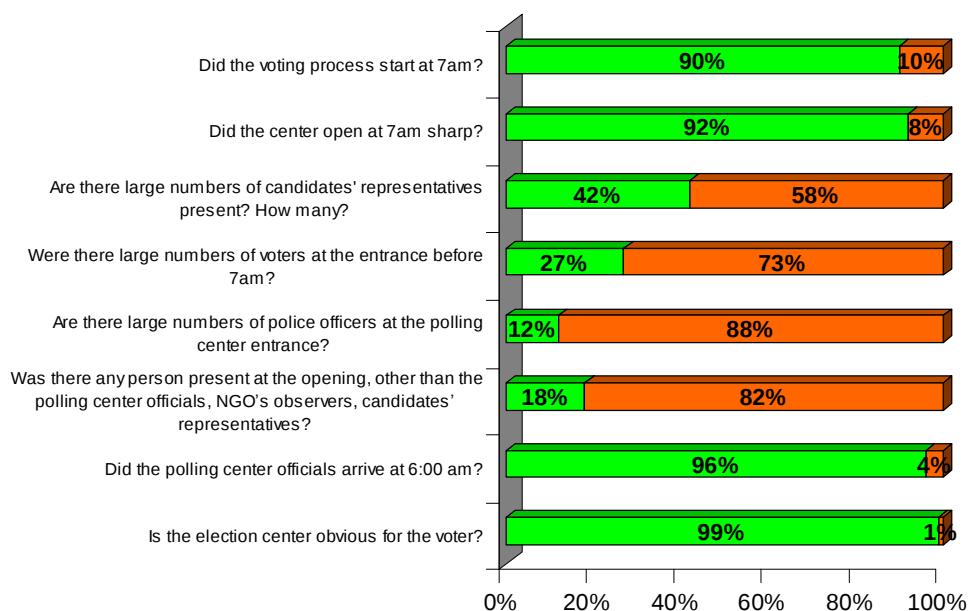
The External Observing of Polling Centers % (North)





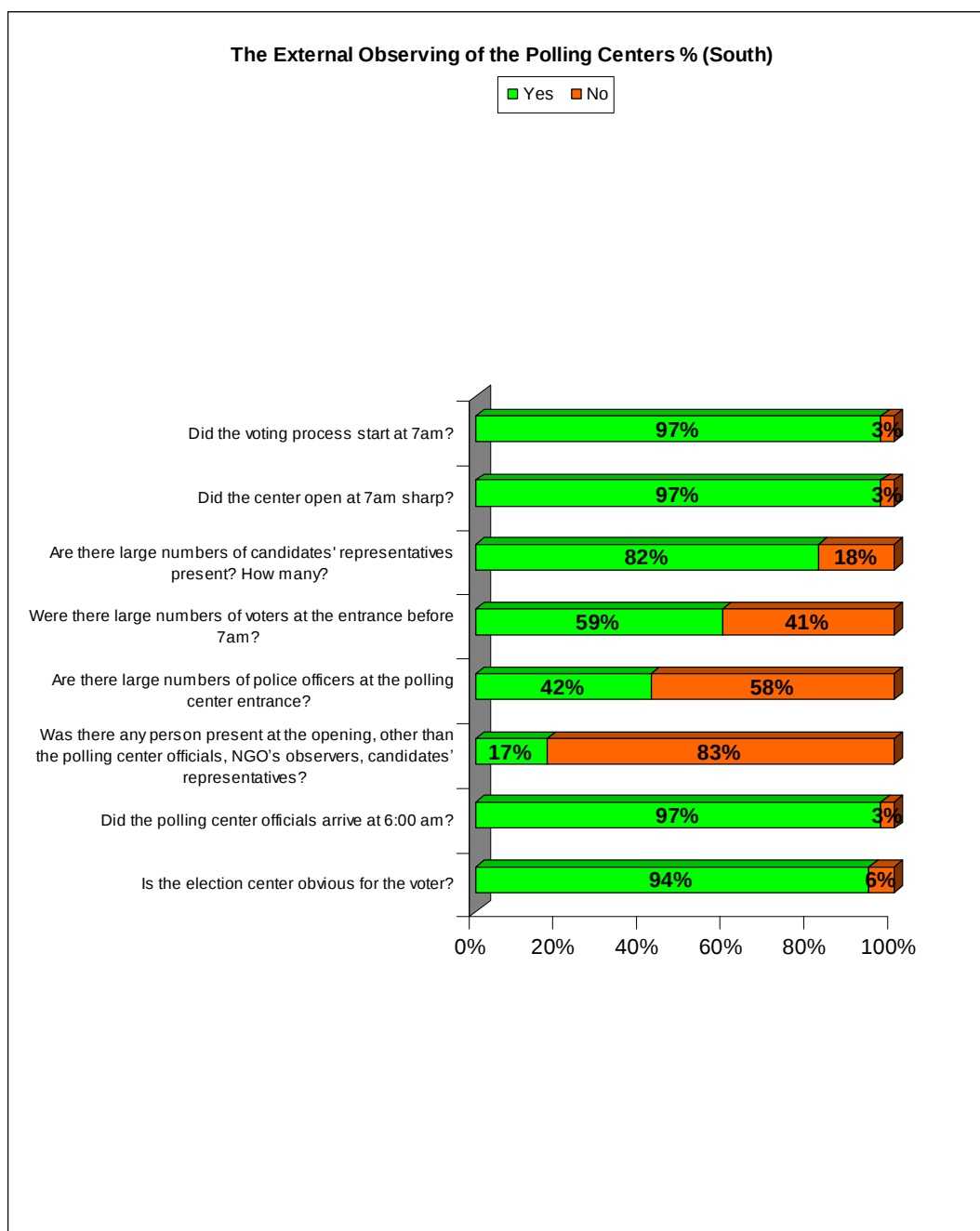
The External Observing of the Polling Centers % (Center)

Yes
No





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