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## Countries at the Crossroads 2012 - Jordan

### 2012 Scores

Accountability and Public Voice Score: 2.19

Civil Liberties Score: 3.18

Rule of Law Score: 3.16

Anti-Corruption and Transparency Score: 2.75

### Introduction

Despite having no oil, indefensible borders, and a small, fragmented population, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has, since its birth from British colonialism in 1921, managed to preserve its sovereignty from all threats. The current ruler, King Abdullah II, assumed the throne in 1999 following the half-century tenure of his father, King Hussein; he is the third from his dynasty to reign over this mostly desert land on the east bank of the Jordan River. As titular monarch, Abdullah possesses near-absolute powers. He appoints and dismisses governments, can suspend parliament and rule by decree, and controls the military and General Intelligence Directorate (GID), the powerful agency that monitors public life and disrupts perceived regime threats. The king's royal court and personal advisers often exercise more power than the official cabinet, and act as the ultimate authority on core issues like foreign relations, economic policy, and internal security.

Three facts greet political tourists to this Sunni Muslim country. The first is its demographic divide. Up to two-thirds of the national population claims Palestinian origin, while the rest are East Bankers – members of Bedouin and settled tribal communities, as well as minorities like Christians and Circassians.