

Symposium

“Modern Public Opinion: Transformations & Influencers”

Amman – Jordan

16 of April 2018

Background

How is public opinion formed today? And what are the forces that influence it? Has technology, along with digital and social media, changed what the democratic world traditionally called public opinion?

Public opinion was a vital achievement of the post-enlightenment era and the birth of human rights and modern democracy systems. The independent press contributed to what became known as the public domain or public sphere in which public discourse is held and ideas compete on public affairs and policies. This process produces public opinion, which is the backbone of democracy.

Today, the world is undergoing an uncertain transitional phase as a result of the new influence of technology. Digital media and social media networks affect politics, most importantly, the way public opinion is formed. These transformations coincide with new political and economic phenomena, with the populism trend heading the list.

There are those who believe that these changes resulted in institutions and the elite gaining control of media and communications platforms, thus giving individuals greater power and practically leading to a stronger and more representative public opinion. Meanwhile, others believe that this transition has caused chaos and led to unprofessional practices, such as the spread of false news, political exploitation of these platforms, and privacy violations. This raises the question: is the concept of public opinion today the same as we knew it before?

Time and Place

The symposium will be held on Monday, 16 April 2018, from 10:30 until 13:30 at the Jordanian Media Institute, behind the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates – Airport Road.