



# JORDAN

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT  
DEVELOPMENTS 2016



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## KEY EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENTS IN JORDAN

2016 saw the organisation of the London Conference, which brought together world leaders from around the globe to rise to the challenge of raising the money needed to help millions of people whose lives have been torn apart by the devastating civil war in Syria. Jordan designed the Jordan Response Plan 2016–2018 in response to the Syrian refugee crisis.

At a political level, Jordan's King Abdullah dissolved parliament, dismissed the government and appointed a new caretaker Prime Minister on 29 May. General elections were held on 20 September. Although most of the 130 seats in the lower house of parliament were retained by pro-monarchy loyalists, the Islamic Action Front, the Muslim Brotherhood's political arm, and other Islamists not affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood won a total of 16 seats. The Muslim Brotherhood had boycotted the last two elections in protest at what it said were unfair practices in the electoral system that favoured pro-government candidates.

A National Committee for Human Resource Development was set up in January 2016. Its remit was to prepare a comprehensive strategy that could develop qualified human resources capable of competing in the labour market and to draft a 10-year plan to develop several sectors. The design of this new strategy and some proposals (not yet approved) for reforming governance of the sector are questioning the validity of the current Employment and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ETVET) Strategy and the role of the ETVET Council as an overall umbrella for TVET in Jordan.

### 1. Key demographic and economic characteristics

According to the population and housing census of 2015<sup>1</sup>, Jordan has a population of 9.5 million (Department of Statistics, 2016). This figure includes refugees and migrant workers. The population of Jordan has increased more than tenfold in the last 55 years. The population growth rate was rather high from 2004 to 2015, reaching 5.3%. It reflects the high migration rate but also the Jordanian population growth (3.1%). This has created a high demographic pressure with the under 15s forming 31.3% of the population, which in turn requires significant public investment in education, health, employment, housing and infrastructure.

For historic reasons, a large percentage of the population is of Palestinian descent. In addition, around 634 000 registered Palestinian refugees live in Jordan. Moreover, the political unrest in neighbouring countries has resulted in a high influx of refugees from other Arab countries such as Iraq, Syria and Libya. According to the 2015 census, 1 265 000 Syrian<sup>2</sup> refugees, 130 000 Iraqis, 636 000 Egyptians and around 200 000 people of various other nationalities live in Jordan. This large influx of refugees, especially from Syria, is imposing a heavy burden on public institutions, which are called upon to provide basic services as well as other services, such as education, jobs and health.

According to the World Bank income group classification, Jordan is an upper middle-income country and considered an emerging market with an open economy. It has scarce water supplies and limited other natural resources. The country is highly dependent on energy imports. Due to growing foreign direct investment and foreign trade, privatisation and deregulation, Jordan experienced strong economic growth in the last years before the crisis (an average of 8% in the period 2004–2008).

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<sup>1</sup> UNDP estimate: 7 595 000.

<sup>2</sup> A total of 629 627 refugees were registered with the UNHCR as of 19 October 2015.

However, the GDP growth rate has suffered greatly from the recent economic crisis, ranging from 2.6% in 2011 to 2.4% in 2015<sup>3</sup>.

In terms of economic sectors, Jordan is now largely a service economy. In 2015, services constituted 66.2% of GDP, industry accounted for 29.6% and agriculture accounted for just 4.2%<sup>4</sup>. Consequently, the vast majority of jobs were in services (80.6% in 2015), followed by industry and agriculture (17.8% and 1.7% respectively in 2015)<sup>5</sup>. In recent years, the government has been promoting investment and innovation in sectors that have the potential for growth through exports and that are likely to reduce overall unemployment due to their skill intensity: information and communications technology (ICT), pharmaceuticals, business services, financial services and education and health services.

The private sector is dominated by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which represent around 94% of existing companies. SMEs account for more than 60% of economic output and employ around 31% of the labour force. They face several constraints in their development and growth such as labour market rigidities and poor access to finance<sup>6</sup>. Following the global economic crisis, the country's ranking in doing business deteriorated (from 80th out of 183 countries in 2008 to 113th out of 189 countries in 2016)<sup>7</sup>.

## 2. Education and training

### 2.1 Trends and challenges

As a nation with an exploding youth population and a lack of natural resources, Jordan considers well-educated human resources to be one of its major priorities. Jordan's education system performs relatively better compared to its neighbours: the adult literacy rate is the highest in the region, standing at 93% in 2013. Jordan has high gross enrolment rates. In 2015, it had a 95% enrolment rate at basic education level (6 to 15 years) (90% when Syrian refugees and others were included), 84.3% at secondary education level (16 to 18 years) (61% when Syrian refugees and others were included) and 35% at tertiary level<sup>8</sup> (31% when Syrian refugees and others were included) (Department of Statistics, 2016).

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO)<sup>9</sup>, the vast majority of Syrians have lower education compared to Jordanians: 60% of Syrian refugees above the age of 15 have never completed basic schooling, and only about 15% have completed secondary education, compared to 42% of Jordanians above the age of 15 (ILO, 2015).

Slightly more girls than boys enrol at all education levels (the opposite is the case if Syrian refugees and others are included) but the gender-biased subject choices lead women to work mainly in the education, health and social sectors (three-quarters of all employed women) and in the public sector (more than half of all employed women are government employees) (Department of Statistics, 2010)<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, the preference for single-sex schooling for boys and girls in some segments of society limit

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<sup>3</sup> World Bank, World Development Indicators database, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/variableSelection/selectvariables.aspx?source=world-development-indicators>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Department of Statistics.

<sup>6</sup> National Employment Strategy, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Doing Business surveys, [www.doingbusiness.org/](http://www.doingbusiness.org/)

<sup>8</sup> Population and housing census, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Impact of Syrian refugees on the Jordanian labour market – findings from the governorates of Amman, Irbid and Mafraq.

<sup>10</sup> Annual report of employment and unemployment survey, 2010.

the educational choices of females (for example, tourism). Despite the positive quantitative results, there are indications showing quality problems in Jordan's education system. The country scores less than average in international tests: both OECD PISA 2012 and TIMMS 2011 results were quite disappointing, with declining trends compared to the past<sup>11</sup>.

In 2012, 24.6% of young people aged between 15 and 24 were not in employment, education or training (NEETs). The ratio is higher for women (34.8%)<sup>12</sup>.

Total participation in TVET has declined as a percentage of all enrolment in education and training (World Bank, 2013). In 2012, students in vocational programmes represented 12.3% of all upper secondary students. Every year, around 125 000 students complete tenth grade, but a small number (around 15 000) is streamed to vocational education. A total of 197 vocational schools, accommodating 29 150 students, were operating in Jordan during the 2014/2015 school year.

Students do not find the vocational education stream particularly attractive, mainly because of the low quality of training delivered in these schools (outdated curricula and equipment, very weak links with companies and the labour market).

Education and training needs are not regularly assessed, as neither the Ministry of Labour nor other public bodies regularly conduct tracer studies or labour market needs assessments. Ad hoc exercises are conducted with the support of donors or international organisations, but are not embedded in the national system.

## 2.2 Education and training policy and institutional setting

Various ministries and agencies have legally defined management roles and responsibilities in ETVET: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Labour; the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC); Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU), the National Employment and Training Company (NET); the National Centre for Human Resources Development (NCHRD); the Civil Service Bureau; and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC). Each is governed by different laws, with a high degree of overlap in their mandates. Accordingly, each of these entities sets its own strategy. Activities are coordinated by means of ad hoc mechanisms, in which non-state providers and stakeholders have no legally defined roles or responsibilities.

Higher education in Jordan is offered in 33 universities (10 public and 23 private). Some 300 000 students are enrolled in the higher education sector (51% are women). Employment prospects are rather limited, particularly for women, as most of the jobs created by the economy do not require highly skilled workers. Moreover, women represent almost 70% of the students enrolled in humanities, arts and literature and 63% of the students enrolled in health and social services while only 35% of the female students enrolled study engineering, manufacturing and construction (NCHRD, 2013).

TVET is delivered mainly in the initial education system and most training provision is public. Three types of education coexist.

- The Ministry of Education provides the bulk of vocational education through its vocational stream in grades 11 and 12, currently enrolling around 29 000 students each year (approximately 13% of high school students) (Ministry of Education, 2013). This provision is part of the Ministry of Education's comprehensive secondary school education, accommodating both academic and vocational education in the same school. A total of 190 secondary schools offer vocational education (World Bank, 2013). It should be noted, however, that many secondary schools offer

<sup>11</sup> See TIMMS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) at: <http://timss.bc.edu/> and OECD PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) at: [www.oecd.org/pisa/](http://www.oecd.org/pisa/).

<sup>12</sup> Source: ILOSTAT, YouthSTATS.

only academic streams. Students can specialise within four main educational fields. The vocational part comprises 30% of the taught curriculum, while the rest comprises general requirements and subjects to sit the 'Tawjihi' (upper secondary school final exam). The applied or practical training hours in the vocational stream are limited, and work-based learning or internships outside school are not part of the educational programme. The Ministry of Education is currently reforming this stream to reduce the number of specialisations (many of them are of limited relevance to labour market needs). This might be an opportunity to revise the curricula and better equip the schools. Moreover, some schools may operate under the responsibility of the VTC, which offers much more relevant training courses to the labour market.

- The VTC (a semi-autonomous agency) owns and operates a network of 10 specialised institutes and 35 training institutes (VTIs), with about 10 000 enrolments per year, targeting young people aged 16 and above. Eleven of these VTIs are specialised centres of excellence (in the tourism sector) and 31 are multidisciplinary training institutes. The VTC offers vocational training and apprenticeship programmes at semi-skilled, skilled and craftsman levels. Some upgrading programmes are also organised for in-service workers based on employers' clearly defined needs, and other training programmes are offered on an ad hoc basis (World Bank, 2013). The VTC is the only TVET institution that has a 'dual system' of training. In addition, the introduction of model centres of excellence has been a benchmark in the transformation of the VTC's service delivery model to one that can respond better to local market needs.
- Technical education is provided by 42<sup>13</sup> public and private community colleges offering two-year programmes (grades 13 and 14) leading to a diploma. A total of 22 529 students were registered in these colleges in the 2015/2016 academic year<sup>14</sup>. A year ago, Al Balqa Applied University started reforming the courses offered in the college by cancelling all those related to humanities. As a result, technical courses now represent 70% of all courses while the others are administrative courses. This seems to be a decision that can favour the reorientation of the training provision offered by the community colleges to better meet the needs of the economy, which was their original objective. When established in the late 1990s, the main mission of the colleges was to provide the Jordanian economy with well-trained and qualified technicians but over the years, they tended to act more as bridges to higher education.

In addition, a semi-public body, the National Employment and Training Company (NET), established in 2007, provides a one-year vocational training programme. This initially focused on the construction sector, but then expanded to other sectors, sometimes competing with private training providers<sup>15</sup>.

Clearly, one of the major issues facing the TVET sector is its fragmentation. Many of its players operate in isolation, although legislation and agreements among stakeholders exist to promote coordination. This includes both at the policy making and policy delivery levels.

The ETVET Council, which was set up several years ago to ensure coordination, has failed to play this role. It is currently undergoing major reform to improve its effectiveness. A new law has been prepared and should be adopted by the Council before the end of 2016. ETVET is covered by the Jordanian ETVET Strategy 2014–2020, which was adopted in 2014.

In parallel, a National Committee for Human Resource Development was set up in January 2016 to lead the development of the new Human Resource Development Strategy for the period 2016 to

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<sup>13</sup> There are 12 public colleges under the direct responsibility of BAU, 5 operating under other ministries, 2 UNRWA colleges, 6 military colleges and 16 private colleges.

<sup>14</sup> Note prepared by the National Committee for Human Resource Development but not published.

<sup>15</sup> NET is managed by the Jordanian Armed Forces in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and the private sector. Its mandate is to train and employ (in the Armed Forces) 30 000 Jordanians over five to six years. In 2013, 800 students graduated from NET.

2025<sup>16</sup>, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 6 September 2016. The strategy covers pre-primary to higher education and is much more comprehensive than the ETVET Strategy, providing clear interactions between the education and training sub-sectors. However, its status is not clear, and it is not known whether it is a binding or guidance document for the different ministries and agencies.

### 3. Labour market and employment

#### 3.1 Trends and challenges

The working age population in Jordan is currently above 4 million (Department of Statistics, 2016)<sup>17</sup>. However, economically active people represented only around 36.7% of this population in 2015<sup>18</sup>. The country also faces one of the lowest female participation rates in the world, with merely 13.3% of women participating in the labour force, compared to 60% of men. Along with very low economic activity rates, Jordan has high levels of unemployment. The unemployment rate has been varying over the past decade between 12% and 14% (13% in 2015). Unemployment is particularly high for women (22.5%) and young people aged 15 to 24 years (30.8%). Within this age group, the youth female unemployment rate was as high as 53.3% in 2015<sup>19</sup>.

The labour market in Jordan faces important structural problems. It does not create a sufficient number of jobs to absorb the increasing influx of jobseekers. There are also weak linkages between education outputs and labour market needs, as well as mismatch in terms of quality and expectations. Around 15 000<sup>20</sup> new university graduates enter the ranks of the unemployed or economically inactive every year. The Jordanian labour market is also characterised by a very high percentage of people employed by the public sector (in the second quarter of 2016, 39.3% of Jordanian employees were government employees)<sup>21</sup>, as many young people prefer public jobs for job security, shorter working hours and non-wage benefits. In recent years, the government has started to reduce the share of public jobs by freezing the number of new recruits in the public sector except in health and education.

Another important labour market trend relates to the migration that is changing the composition of the labour force in Jordan. The lack of well-remunerated employment at home has led many highly skilled Jordanians to seek employment abroad. Although this emigration of highly skilled workers eases some of the pressure on the local labour market, the long-term developmental implications for the country are problematic. At the same time, Jordan faces high levels of migrant labour inflows. The economy creates many low-skilled jobs, which are mostly taken by migrant workers, at wages and conditions incompatible with the rather high expectations of the Jordanian workers. The main characteristics of foreign workers are that they are low skilled (62% have less than secondary education), mostly men (60%) and employed mainly in manufacturing, construction, services (households) and agriculture (Department of Statistics, 2012).

The labour market is also negatively affected by the large size of the informal sector: according to government research, it represents 44% of total employment in the Jordanian economy (UNDP, 2013)<sup>22</sup>. The geographical mismatch is also a problem, as jobs are mainly created in the capital and the main cities while the majority of unemployed people are located outside of these areas. The lack and poor quality of public transport further contributes to the already low mobility of the workforce.

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<sup>16</sup> National Strategy for Human Resource Development 2016–2025, Education for prosperity: delivering results.

<sup>17</sup> Population and housing census, 2015.

<sup>18</sup> Source: Department of Statistics (online database of employment and unemployment).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Note prepared by the National Committee for Human Resource Development, not published.

<sup>21</sup> Department of Statistics, online database.

<sup>22</sup> The informal sector in the Jordanian economy.

The labour market and human resource information sources are fragmented, preventing education and training from becoming more demand-driven and meeting labour market needs. The Department of Statistics collects labour market data by conducting different surveys, such as unemployment surveys; surveys of employment in companies and businesses; and household expenditure and income surveys. In addition, various European Union (EU) projects have supported the National Centre for Human Resources Development in undertaking several sectoral studies to analyse skill requirements in the main economic sectors.

Several databases exist, but they are not interconnected. Various institutions are involved in labour market data production, but there is little cooperation between them. Jordan still lacks an understanding of a labour market information system (LMIS).

The influx of Syrian refugees seems to have affected the Jordanian labour market. At least this is the conclusion of a study on the impact of Syrian refugees on the Jordanian labour market carried out by the ILO. It found that the majority of Syrian refugees who have obtained work in Jordan seem to occupy jobs that have emerged during the arrival of refugees from Syria, that is, primarily low-skilled, lower-wage jobs in an expanded informal sector. According to this study, some argue that many of these jobs could have been available to Jordanians, particularly young people, if they were not occupied by Syrian refugees, and that a prime cause of this is that Jordanians are out-competed by the refugees who are willing to accept considerably lower wages and poorer working conditions than Jordanians.

The low participation rate and high unemployment rate of Syrian refugees might pose a serious threat to the labour market in the future. It is reasonable to assume that access to humanitarian aid and other types of support prevent many Syrian refugees from entering the labour market today. If no measures are taken, a large number of these refugees will potentially enter the labour market once the humanitarian aid is scaled down. At the same time, it is likely that many Syrians will remain in Jordan for years to come.

A further impact of the refugee crisis on the labour market might be an overall deterioration in working conditions, leading to increased decent work deficits in Jordan. The increase in the informalisation of the Jordanian labour market makes compliance with labour standards a serious threat for all workers alike. Deteriorating labour standards also put a greater strain on the Jordanian authorities in terms of their ability to enforce existing labour laws, such as compliance with the minimum wage.

### 3.2 Employment policy and institutional setting

The Ministry of Labour operates 21 public employment offices staffed by a total of 85 employees. Three of these offices (Amma, Irbid, Zarqa) were recently transformed into 'one-stop-shop' services. In addition, around 40 private employment agencies exist.

The Ministry of Labour operates and maintains a National Electronic Employment System (NEES)<sup>23</sup>: an online platform to match jobseekers and employers<sup>24</sup>. The main purpose of the NEES is to foster matching between jobseekers and companies. Its current version fulfils this function. It has three access points: for jobseekers, companies and the staff. Jobseekers can register in three ways: online, in the employment office and in the municipality (still paper-based). The NEES also has a section for online career guidance which is not operational yet.

For the time being, the NEES is used to register job offers (for companies willing to provide jobs) and jobseekers (for those who are aware of the system). As such, it provides an overview of the skills

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<sup>23</sup> See <http://nees.jo/>.

<sup>24</sup> On 10 June 2016, the platform included 335 job offers.

needed and those that are available, but it is still very limited. Additional services, such as an online career guidance system (initially planned in the NEES but not yet effective) or sectoral information or tools, could improve the attractiveness and effectiveness of the system and make it more widely used. However, providing additional services requires qualified staff both at central and local levels, and the municipalities may not be well equipped to play a new role.

Alongside the clear need to set up an integrated labour market information system, capable of connecting all the sources of information, the country needs to take steps to use available data for policy making. In particular, it is important that there is transparency with regard to labour market needs and the consequent adaptation of education and training paths, especially in times of economic pressure and the arrival of new entrants to the labour market (refugees).

In recent years, the Jordanian government has developed ambitious new strategies, action plans and projects to increase employment and reduce unemployment. Among the notable ones are the National Employment Strategy, the Career Guidance Strategy, the ETVET Sector Strategy and various public initiatives and international projects that are implemented or supported by different donors to increase employability. The National Employment Strategy was adopted in 2012 and covers the years 2011 to 2020. Its particular remit is to promote the gradual replacement of foreign workers by (skilled) Jordanians, tackle structural unemployment and upgrade the ETVET system. However, implementation of the strategy has proved problematic as resources were not allocated for some of the actions. Moreover, the engagement of different ministry representatives in the National Executive Council that follows the strategy's progress has been weak and there is a lack of experience among government officials in implementing cross-sectoral programmes that require close coordination and collaboration between several ministries.

The Jordanian government did not provide employment services in the past, and until recently its role in this area has been limited to the basic regulation of working conditions (e.g. establishing minimum wages and occupational health and safety regulations) and the provision of public sector employment. However, the Ministry of Labour has recently started to play an increasingly significant role in the provision of active labour market policies (ALMPs).

The Ministry of Labour implements ALMPs focusing on young people and women. Such programmes involve cooperation with the private sector, armed forces and non-governmental organisations. They include training and retraining (both on-the-job and dual system training), internships, employment subsidies paid to employers for the wages and social contributions of interns, self-employment and entrepreneurship measures. Most of the programmes are supported by the ETVET Fund (and/or by donor projects).

The impact of ALMPs on skills acquisition and employability is questionable. The extensive provision of wage subsidies in ETVET-funded training programmes has been subject to considerable criticism for distorting the training process and for attracting companies that are primarily seeking subsidised labour. To attract young people, most programmes use financial incentives. These can have a negative side effect as they often attract employed people who prefer the high incentives they can obtain from training courses to the low wages that are offered in the private sector and leave before completing the first three months, having no real desire to enter wage employment in their field of training (ETF, 2012).

Furthermore, the majority of employers are not involved at the design stage of the programmes, their role being reduced to delivering on-the-job training that consists merely of exposing trainees whom they have not selected to real work experience in their companies. Successful completion of all programmes is determined only by the trainees' attendance in the programme for its entire duration, rather than by demonstrating the skills they have acquired. While tracking graduates' outcomes is impossible due to the lack of tracer studies of ETVET-funded programmes, an evaluation conducted

by the World Bank in 2012 suggests that wage subsidies and soft skills training do not seem to have had a major impact on youth employment, especially in the case of young women. Short-term wage subsidies generated large and significant increases in employment while the subsidies were in effect, but most of these jobs disappeared when the subsidies expired (World Bank, 2012).

# ANNEXES

## Statistical annex

This annex reports annual data from 2011 and 2015 or the last available year.

Indicator		2011	2015
1	Total population (000)	a	6 760 <sup>e</sup>
		b Census data (2004)	7 595 <sup>e</sup>
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15–24) (%)	32.3 <sup>e</sup>	31.3 <sup>e</sup>
3	Youth dependency ratio (%)	61.1	58.5
4	Old-age dependency ratio (%)	6.3	6.2
5	Global Competitiveness Index	Rank	71
		Score	4.2
6	GDP growth rate (%)	2.6	2.4
7	GDP per capita (PPP) (current international \$)	10 324.4	10 880.3
8	GDP by sector (%)	Agriculture added value	3.3
		Industry added value	31.1
		Services added value	65.6
9	Poverty headcount ratio at \$2 a day (PPP) (%)	M.D.	M.D.
10	Gini index (%)	M.D.	M.D.
11	Educational attainment of adult population (aged 15+) (%)	Low <sup>*</sup>	58.8
		Medium	26.2
		High	14.8
12	Gross enrolment rates in secondary education (%)	86.6	84.3 (2012)
13	Share of VET students in secondary education (%)	3.5	M.D.
14	Gross enrolment rates in upper secondary education (%)**	a	76.9
		b Census data (2004)	77.9 (2012) 84.3
15	Share of VET students in upper secondary education (%)	12.3	M.D.
16	Low achievement in reading, mathematics and science – PISA (%)	Reading	48.1 (2009)
		Mathematics	50.7 (2012) 65.3 (2009)
		Science	68.0 (2012) 45.6 (2009)
17	Participation in training/lifelong learning (age group 25–64) by sex (%)	Total	49.6 (2012) M.D.
		Male	M.D.
		Female	M.D.
18	Early leavers from education and training (age group 18–24) by sex (%)	Total	M.D.
		Male	M.D.
		Female	M.D.

Indicator		2011	2015	
19	Activity rates (aged 15+) by sex (%)	Total	39.0	36.7
		Male	62.8	60.0
		Female	14.7	13.3
20	Employment rates (aged 15+) by sex (%)	Total	34	31.9
		Male	55.9	53.4
		Female	11.6	10.3
21	Unemployment rates (aged 15+) by sex (%)	Total	12.9	13
		Male	11.0	11
		Female	21.2	22.5
22	Unemployment rates (aged 15+) by educational attainment (%)	Low	12.0	11.1 (2012)
		Medium	11.0	9.7 (2012)
		High	15.9	15.8 (2012)
23	Youth unemployment rates (aged 15–24) by sex (%)	Total	29.9	30.8
		Male	26.3	26.7
		Female	47.0	53.3
24	Proportion of long-term unemployed out of the total unemployed (aged 15+) (%)	41.7	37.2	
25	Long-term unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%)	M.D.	M.D.	
26	Incidence of self-employment (%)	15.6	12.4	
27	Share of the employed in the public sector (%)	38.7	39.6	
28	Employment by sector (%)	Agriculture	1.9	1.7
		Industry	18.5	17.8
		Services	79.6	80.6
29	Employment in the informal sector (%)	M.D.	M.D.	
30	Proportion of people aged 15–24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) by sex (%)	Total	24.6 (2012)	M.D.
		Male	15.2 (2012)	M.D.
		Female	34.8 (2012)	M.D.
31	Public expenditure on education (as % of GDP)	M.D.	M.D.	
32	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure)	M.D.	M.D.	
33	Skill gaps (%)	N.A.	9.5 (2013)	
34	Contribution of SMEs to GDP (%)	M.D.	M.D.	
35	Share of SMEs in employment (%) <sup>(4)</sup>	N.A.	31 (2014)	

**Sources:** *Indicators 1a, 2* – UNDP\_WPP15; *1b, 14b* – Department of Statistics of Jordan (census data); *3, 4, 6, 7, 8* – World Bank, World Development Indicators database; *5* – World Economic Forum; *11, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28* – Department of Statistics of Jordan; *12, 13, 14a, 15* – UNESCO Institute for Statistics; *22, 30, 33* – OECD statistical database; *35* – International Finance Corporation, MSME country indicators

**Legend:** N.A. = not applicable; M.D. = missing data

**Notes:** Indicator *1a* excludes Syrian refugees. Indicator *1b* includes Syrian refugees. <sup>(e)</sup> Estimate. <sup>(\*)</sup> Includes illiterate people. <sup>(\*\*)</sup> Data from census (*14b*) refer to the Jordanian population.

## Definition of indicators

	Description	Definition
1	Total population (000)	The total population is estimated as the number of persons having their usual residence in a country on 1 January of the respective year. When information on the usually resident population is not available, legal or registered residents can be considered.
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15–24) (%)	The ratio of the youth population (aged 15–24) to the working-age population (usually aged 15–64 or 15–74).
3	Youth dependency ratio (%)	The ratio of younger dependents (people younger than 15) to the working-age population (those in the 15–64 age group).
4	Old-age dependency ratio (%)	The ratio of older dependents (people older than 64) to the working-age population (those in the 15–64 age group).
5	Global Competitiveness Index	The Global Competitiveness Index assesses the competitiveness landscape, providing insight into the drivers of countries' productivity and prosperity. It is expressed as a score on a 1 to 7 scale, with 7 being the most desirable outcome.
6	GDP growth rate (%)	The annual percentage growth rate of GDP at market prices based on constant local currency.
7	GDP per capita (PPP) (current international \$)	The market value of all final goods and services produced within a country in a given period of time (GDP), divided by the total population and converted into international dollars using purchasing power parity (PPP) rates.
8	GDP by sector (%)	The share of value added from agriculture, industry and services.
9	Poverty headcount ratio at \$2 a day (PPP) (%)	The percentage of the population living on less than \$2.00 a day at 2005 international prices.
10	Gini index (%)	A Gini index measures the extent to which the distribution of income (or, in some cases, consumption expenditure) among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution. A Gini index of 0 represents perfect equality, while an index of 100 implies perfect inequality.
11	Educational attainment of adult population (aged 25–64 or 15+) (%)	Educational attainment refers to the highest educational level achieved by individuals expressed as a percentage of all persons in that age group.
12	Gross enrolment rates in secondary education (%)	The number of students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education.
13	Share of VET students in secondary education (%)	The proportion of VET students in secondary education out of the total number of pupils and students in secondary education (general + VET).
14	Gross enrolment rates in upper secondary education (%)	The number of students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education.
15	Share of VET students in upper secondary education (%)	The proportion of VET students in upper secondary education out of the total number of pupils and students in upper secondary education (general education + VET).
16	Low achievement in reading, mathematics and science – PISA (%)	The share of 15-year-olds failing to reach level 2 in reading, mathematics and science.
17	Participation in training/lifelong learning (age group 25–64) by sex (%)	The share of persons aged 25–64 who stated that they had received education or training in the four weeks preceding the (LFS) survey.

	Description	Definition
18	Early leavers from education and training (age group 18–24) by sex (%)	The percentage of the population aged 18–24 with at most lower secondary education who were not in further education or training during the four weeks preceding the (LFS) survey. Lower secondary education refers to ISCED 1997 levels 0–3C short for data up to 2013 and to ISCED 2011 levels 0–2 for data from 2014 onwards.
19	Activity rates (aged 15+) by sex (%)	Activity rates represent the labour force as a percentage of the working-age population.
20	Employment rates (aged 15+) by sex (%)	Employment rates represent persons in employment as a percentage of the working-age population.
21	Unemployment rates (aged 15+) by sex (%)	Unemployment rates represent unemployed persons as a percentage of the labour force.
22	Unemployment rates (aged 15+) by educational attainment (%)	Educational levels refer to the highest educational level successfully completed. Three levels are considered: low (ISCED levels 0–2); medium (ISCED levels 3–4); and high (ISCED 1997 levels 5–6 and ISCED 2011 levels 5–8).
23	Youth unemployment rates (aged 15–24) by sex (%)	Youth unemployment rates represent young unemployed persons (aged 15–24) as a percentage of the labour force (15–24).
24	Proportion of long-term unemployed out of the total unemployed (aged 15+) (%)	The number of unemployed persons aged 15+ who are long-term unemployed (12 months or more) as a percentage of unemployed persons aged 15+.
25	Long-term unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The number of unemployed persons aged 15+ who are long-term unemployed (12 months or more) as a percentage of the labour force aged 15+.
26	Incidence of self-employment (%)	The share of self-employed as a proportion of the total employed. Self-employment includes employers, own-account workers, members of producers' cooperatives and contributing family workers.
27	Share of the employed in the public sector (%)	The share of those employed in the public sector as a proportion of the total employed.
28	Employment by sector (%)	The share of those employed in agriculture, industry and services.
29	Employment in the informal sector	The share of persons employed in the informal sector in total non-agricultural employment.
30	Proportion of people aged 15–24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%)	The percentage of the population of a given age group who are not employed and not involved in further education or training.
31	Public expenditure on education (as % of GDP)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of GDP. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions, or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans, as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations. Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
32	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of total public expenditure. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions, or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations. Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
33	Skill gaps (%)	The percentage of firms identifying an inadequately educated workforce as a major constraint.
34	Contribution of SMEs to GDP (%)	The share of value added from small and medium-sized businesses.
35	Share of SMEs in employment (%)	The share of persons employed in small and medium-sized businesses.



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