



WOMEN AND WORK: ACCESS, LIMITATIONS AND POTENTIAL IN TOURISM AND ICT

EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA

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November, 2010

PREFACE

Promoting women's rights figures high on the external policy agenda of the European Union. Gender equality is one of the five key principles of EU development policy. This is not only because the EU acknowledges that gender equality has an intrinsic value in its own right and is a question of social justice but because it is instrumental in achieving a wide range of goals from economic growth to poverty reduction.

On International Women's Day 2010, the European Commission reaffirmed its commitment to the vigorous pursuit of gender equality in its relations with third countries: *"Our ambition is not limited to the borders of the Union. Gender equality must be fully incorporated into our external policies too so as to foster the social and economic independence and advancement of women and men throughout the world"* (Communication from the Commission, *A strengthened commitment to equality between women and men: A Women's Charter*, 2010)

As part of its contribution to this effort and in line with EU strategic guidelines for promoting gender equality in external relations, the European Training Foundation (ETF) is committed to building on the experience gained so far and to continue to work in analysing the outcomes of education, training and employment policies and practices on women and men and the overall development of its partner countries. The ETF, an agency of the European Union, provides advice and assistance to its 29 partner countries in the development of their human capital through the reform of education, training and labour market systems in the context of the EU's external relations policy.

Gender has an influence on every aspect of the lives of individuals and societies. It determines men's and women's position in society, not as an immutable reflection of some natural order but as a socially constructed pattern of behaviour — the social construction of gender. Precisely because gender is social, its features vary across time and space and from one culture to another and can be changed if so desired. Gender also determines access to material and immaterial resources such as land, credit and education. Reflecting the norms and social values of society, it is hardly surprising that the differences in the status of men and women in general have profound implications for how they participate in the labour market.

This study investigates women's opportunities in accessing education, training and employment from a gender perspective in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia. It was undertaken as part of the ETF's Women and Work (WOW) project (2008-10), the objective of which is to contribute to the promotion of gender equality policies and to provide recommendations and policy advice to both the national authorities as well as the European Commission in order to strengthen the role of women in the areas of education, training and employment.

The ETF wishes to thank the national authorities and the consultative group members in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia for their support and advice for the successful implementation of the project and their contribution to the lively discussions and reflections on the subject. The ETF would also like to thank the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs which co-funded the project and the Delegations of the European Union in the three countries. Finally, the ETF would like to thank ETF Editorial Board members Ibrahim El Nur of the American University of Cairo in Egypt and Jason Laker of the San José State University in the United States for their invaluable comments and help with finalising this report.



Madlen Serban
Director
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Women around the world are less present than men in formal labour markets. In 2007 the proportion of women active in the global labour market was 53% compared to 78% of men, according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2010). This state of affairs comes at a time when women have greater access to education and are achieving far more once they get there than ever before.

There is a positive link between education and employment; the more educated you are, the better are your chances on the labour market. However for many women, this has not proved to be the case and around the world women are still struggling to translate their progress in the sphere of education into tangible benefits on the labour market. Nowhere is this more true than in the countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean region where female labour force participation rates – 23% on average – are the lowest in the world. In Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia, the three countries studied in this report, the gender gap in education has been reduced or even, in the case of Tunisia, reversed but female activity rates remain stubbornly low at 22%, 23% and 26% respectively (ILO, 2010).

The ETF believes that this lesser presence of women in formal employment has disadvantages all round. In purely economic terms, if women do not get the opportunity to use their skills, this means a lower return on investment in education and training. It also means that productive capacity is being underused and human resources wasted. In social terms, the fact that fewer women than men earn a formal wage undermines efforts to reduce poverty. And, for the individual women concerned, this situation is clearly unjust and works against their chances of leading fulfilling, productive lives.

It is the desire to help to solve this riddle – why women's greater educational achievement has not translated into proportionally greater employment – that has motivated the ETF to undertake this project on women and work. This main aim of the project, and this report, is to promote greater gender equality in education, training and employment in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia in line with the commitments made by the European Union (EU) and the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the Union for the Mediterranean and, in particular, the Istanbul Framework for Action for strengthening the role of women in society. In order to do so, the study investigates women's opportunities in education, training and employment from a gender perspective in the three countries. The project strives to increase awareness of the advantages for all concerned if women have more opportunities for decent, formal employment. It addresses

national policy makers and the various social partners in the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries. It is also aimed at the European Commission and other donors who may wish to use the report for planning future interventions.

This ETF report is based on three country analyses prepared by the ETF in consultation with the main institutional stakeholders in each country.

Study design and methodology

The study concentrates on formal employment in the private sector – formal as this offers opportunities for decent work that the informal sector does not – private as public sector cuts in the countries studied mean it is this part of the economy that has the potential for creating jobs. Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia were selected as case studies in the region as they are among the priority countries of Italian Cooperation (that co-financed the project) and the European Union. The study concentrates on two sectors – tourism and information and communication technology or ICT – chosen due to their priority status within national development strategies and for their potential to generate employment. Given that youth unemployment is a serious problem in the region, indicating problems of transition from education to work, it was decided the study should focus on young women between 15 and 29 years of age.

The research questions that underpinned this study are:

- What impact does education have on women's employment in general and in the tourism and ICT sectors in particular? How can women's education be made more relevant and profitable?
- What is the potential of tourism and ICT for creating jobs for women? If it is true that ICT and tourism do not employ many women, is this caused by problems in the demand for or the supply of female labour?
- How gender neutral are the labour markets of the two sectors? Why do young women who have trained in occupations related to the two sectors not go on to work in them?
- Which kinds of problem hinder women's access to employment and integration in the work place in the two sectors?
- What incentives are needed in order to increase female labour market participation?

The study is based on a mixed methodology using both quantitative and qualitative data. It has three main components: desk research, a survey and focus groups. On the demand side, a survey with employers in tourism and ICT was conducted to find out about female work in these case study sectors, explore employers' attitudes, skill requirements and recruitment policies. On the supply

side, focus group discussions were organised with young women in order to understand how the transition from education to work takes place, how education and career choices are made, how young women seek work, what their initial work and unemployment experiences are like and what they perceive as major obstacles and opportunities for joining the labour force.

Findings

High potential but low demand for female labour

An initial, significant conclusion is that both sectors in all three countries do have the potential to employ women, although tourism less so than ICT. The service sectors are creating jobs and, in spite of the economic crisis, employers surveyed in both sectors are reasonably optimistic about their companies' prospects. The proportion of women employed in ICT is increasing as is shown by current patterns of recruitment. This is not currently the case for tourism, but the sector – which is labour intensive providing a wide range of jobs and impossible to outsource – clearly deserves attention.

Comparing the share of female employees of the total of employees in the surveyed companies shows that ICT is currently providing proportionally more employment opportunities for women than tourism. Also, comparing the ratio of active women on the labour market to the total active population at national level shows that the tourism companies surveyed are employing proportionally fewer women than the share of potential female workers available on the labour market in all three countries while ICT companies are employing more in Egypt and Tunisia and slightly fewer in Jordan (see **TABLE 1**).

The presence of women in the two sectors does not correspond to their general education levels in the three countries. In the case of tourism and in particular for the category of skilled workers, there is a scarcity of suitably qualified women as many are discouraged from choosing this training path due to society's negative image of the sector and resistance from family members and partners. However this does not explain the low presence of women in the ICT sector at a time when more and more young women are choosing to study the subject.

In the southern and eastern Mediterranean region, education and training have a positive effect on the activity rates of both men and women but there is a stronger impact on women, particularly in the case of higher education. Men seem to decide to enter the labour market and find work more easily than women regardless of their education level. This matches society's expectations that men will be the sole or at least the main breadwinners regardless of the investment made in their human capital by education and training. Women instead need education, and in particular higher education, to encourage them to become active in the labour market, which results in the active female population being more educated than the active male population.

The lower presence of women in the two sectors can partly be explained by the overall difficulties for women to find work. Women's unemployment rates are always higher than men's regardless of their education level. Being educated – while having a greater effect on the activity rates of women than men – does not facilitate women's actual access to jobs to the same extent as it does for men. It seems that women are doubly penalised by the weak relevance of the education system and discrimination based on gender on the labour market. A significant minority of employers, ranging from 11% of tourism companies in Egypt and Tunisia to 20% in Jordan, and from 7% of ICT companies in Tunisia, 9% in Jordan to 11% in Egypt, think that it is not appropriate for women to work in a company such as theirs.

Strong horizontal and vertical segregation

Patterns of employment in these two sectors in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia display a marked degree of horizontal and vertical segregation by gender. Women find it hard to reach managerial positions and tend to be clustered in specific functions and departments such as room service, administration, finance and sales and marketing. In ICT, women complain that stereotyping, such as women not being suited to work with hardware, limits the kinds of job they are offered. In tourism, while jobs in certain departments such as bars and restaurants remain almost inaccessible to women, in Tunisia for instance 70% of women work in either reception or room service.

TABLE 1: SHARE OF FEMALES IN THE ACTIVE POPULATION AND SHARE OF FEMALE EMPLOYMENT IN THE SURVEYED COMPANIES IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA

	Egypt	Jordan	Tunisia
Share of females in the active population (Egypt, Tunisia 2007, Jordan 2008)	23%	26%	26%
Proportion of female employment in the surveyed tourism companies	10%	20%	23%
Proportion of female employment in the surveyed ICT companies	27%	23%	41%

Source: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection, ETF employers' survey, 2009

Separating groups into different places and roles facilitates unequal treatment. Confining people to certain occupations according to their gender reinforces stereotypes. This makes women more vulnerable to job shortages and can make them miss out on chances of promotion. It also limits their opportunities to use their education and training in getting jobs which correspond to their level of qualifications.

This pattern is changing very slowly, if at all. Only very minor changes were noticed in the horizontal and vertical concentration of new female recruits which indicates that female employment is mainly limited to certain jobs. The lack of female role models in non-traditional jobs makes it hard for the situation to change.

A complex transition from school to work

While young women are active and use various methods for looking for work, personal contacts and recommendations are still the most important channels for recruitment. Less present in the public domain, women often have more limited social networks and this can work against them.

When it comes to the criteria employers use when recruiting women rather than men, the differences are slight but significant. Employers give less importance to language skills for women, possibly a sign that women are expected to have less direct dealings with customers. Similarly employers in both sectors do not generally expect women to do night shifts or overtime either due to the legal provisions prohibiting this or in tacit recognition of women's extra responsibilities once they leave work or the possible limitations on their mobility. This may work to women's advantage in the short term but in the long term it is one more obstacle to a stronger female presence in the labour market. Interestingly, neither do employers say they attach much more importance to a woman's marital status or whether she has children. This maybe because most female applicants are single women or because women are in any case expected to stop working once they marry.

Employers in both sectors say that both male and female job applicants lack both job related and so-called soft skills such as discipline, commitment, language skills and the ability to work in a team. Fewer women than men apply for jobs in the two sectors in all three countries and it is hard to find suitably qualified female candidates, say employers. The findings of this study confirm there is a shortage of skilled female workers, particularly those willing to work in the tourism sector. However this is not the full story. The study also indicates that employers have preconceived ideas about which jobs are suitable for women – a significant minority routinely express a gender preference when advertising jobs for instance. Therefore it is not clear whether this scarcity of skills reported by employers concerns women's qualifications overall or whether there is a skills mismatch in terms of what kinds of job women are expected to do.

Family members usually play a decisive role in encouraging girls to choose an education path;

sometimes, interestingly, the encouragement comes from mothers or older sisters, friends or cousins already working in the sector. This points to the importance of appropriate role models. Young women feel the need for more professional advice when making education choices. This is true not only when choosing the field of study but also during their time as students as many say they would like to gain more knowledge of the industry, its various subsectors and what it is really like to work there.

Lack of equal opportunities in the workplace

Balancing work and family life seems to be one of the biggest challenges facing working women. Work places are rarely female-friendly environments and employers associate employing women with additional costs and organisational problems due to legal requirements on firms over a certain size to provide childcare facilities and transport for female employees. Private sector employers are left alone to cope with the financial burdens. Many working women drop out of the labour market when they get married. Those that continue report that shouldering the double burden of doing their jobs and caring for children and a home is their biggest challenge.

Employers believe that women perform worse than men do at work, an impression that is particularly strong in Egypt where 66% of tourism employers surveyed and 58% of those in ICT hold this view. It is not clear whether this is due to prejudice and double standards being applied - whereby women have to perform better than men in order to be treated as equal - or whether there really are problems with the productivity of female workers in certain areas.

Women report instances of discrimination such as being asked to do tasks which have nothing to do with their training, being passed over for promotion or training or being sidelined for being veiled. Another major challenge working women face is sexual harassment both in the workplace and on their way to work when transport is not provided. In all three countries, there is no official data to indicate how prevalent this problem is but anecdotal evidence from focus group discussions appear to show it is definitely an issue, especially in tourist areas where women may be working far from home.

However while women already working are convinced that employers do tend to consider them for some jobs but not others, the young students interviewed felt confident that they are capable of taking on any job within these two sectors. Another hopeful sign is the fact that employers do see advantages to employing women. These include giving the company a better image and that women are more customer-service orientated and can establish better relations with clients. This positive attitude of employers is an asset that should benefit women's employment. The incentives that employers believe could encourage them to employ more women mainly concern ways of reducing the related costs by fiscal incentives for childcare facilities, maternity leave and transport.

Recommendations

Governments have invested substantially in facilitating girls' and women's access to education in recent years but if something is not done to facilitate their access to work, this investment will be wasted. Legal provisions and formal equality of access to education have not produced equality of outcomes in terms of employment. Specific action is needed if women are to benefit more from their studies and society is to benefit from women's capabilities. Education and training must be made more relevant taking into consideration the specific obstacles for women's access to employment, women's integration into the workplace should be supported and employers encouraged to employ women while still respecting labour laws.

The recommendations of the study on how to improve the situation, call for cooperative action between educators, employers, governments and donors. Although specific to Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia, many of these recommendations may be relevant for other countries of the region.

First, it is necessary to address the negative image of women's work, in particular in the tourism sector, by awareness raising campaigns. The media should be used extensively to promote positive images or success stories of women in non-traditional fields, for instance in television series, broadcasting and social media. Mentalities should also be influenced within education by revising curricula and teaching methods and ensuring that textbooks do not use gender stereotypes but rather include positive images of women working in non-traditional fields. Attitudes that leave women working a double shift at home and work should be addressed.

Second, career guidance should be used to tackle the horizontal and vertical segregation on the labour market. Career guidance needs to start early and it should provide information in equal measure to male and female students on the full range of occupations available. It should also encourage girls and women to consider what are seen as less traditionally female fields of study where the number of female students is currently low. Taking into account the potential of ICT and tourism to provide jobs for women, women should be encouraged to study specialities relevant to these two sectors. Men's education and career choices also contribute to gender balances and therefore career guidance should also aim at encouraging male employment in sectors traditionally seen as female as a means of raising the pay and status of these occupations.

Third, to facilitate women's transition from education to work, the curricula and teaching methods should be revised to equip students, both female and male, with soft skills and competences, thus preparing young people better for job-related challenges. Schools and businesses should work together to provide work placements and female students should be given preference for these placements in order to give women

more opportunities. The study shows that women are often at a disadvantage when it comes to taking up opportunities for practical training for social and cultural reasons. Practical training should be provided wherever possible in a gender-mixed working environment in order to prepare women and men to work together. In order to prepare young women for the world of work, career guidance could also include raising awareness on the rights of women and men at work and ways of dealing with problems they may encounter such as sexual harassment or discrimination.

Fourth, to improve equal opportunities and make workplaces more female-friendly, there is a need to provide specific support to working, such as mentoring schemes for new recruits, using online platforms, workshops, conferences as needed. Networking between students, graduates, new recruits and established working women could be facilitated. Fiscal incentives could be used to encourage employers to invest in training their female employees, technical issues and on topics such as assertiveness training, management and leadership skills thereby showing women the opportunities to aspire to higher technical and managerial levels.

However, it is not enough to support women. Smart modern reconciliation policies are needed that can help women to combine work and family responsibilities without putting all of the burden on employers. Without this, we may either see a growing reluctance of women to join and stay in the labour market or, in the case of growing unemployment, increasing discrimination against women by employers. If the private sector is not able to ensure equal opportunities, the state must play a bigger role, something which can be justified in economic terms by the positive effect of gender equality on employment and economic growth. Companies could be encouraged to recruit more women by means of tax incentives. Governments should share the costs of maternity leave, childcare, breastfeeding breaks, transport, and other measures required by law. In particular, the government should create appropriate facilities for women in tourist establishments in remote areas such as transport, housing and schools for their children.

The effective implementation of labour laws and respect of principles of non-discrimination at work can be monitored by the relevant authorities and social partners. Governments and legislators should ensure that the provisions covering maternity leave, company obligations to provide childcare facilities and the outlawing of specifying a gender preference when advertising job vacancies are duly enforced. There is evidence that an increased participation of women in trade unions and employers' organisations has increased the attention given to gender equality in employment within social dialogue (ILO, 2008). Social partners and especially trade unions must become more active in defending the rights of working women and should strive to attract more female members.

Donors can also make a difference. All sector programmes on education, training and employment should include a gender component and look to promote social partnership and sensitivity to gender issues. Projects should also be designed for those sectors

where women are currently under-represented. Last but not least, donors should help partner countries to collect and use data which is disaggregated by gender so as to have informed evidence for policy initiatives to promote more equality between women and men.

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 RATIONALE

Women around the world are less present than men in formal labour markets. In 2008 the proportion of women active in the global labour market was 52% compared to 78% of men (ILO, 2010)

In macroeconomic terms, this lower presence of women in the labour market leads to low returns on investment in education and training and underutilisation of productive capacity, and as a result, less economic growth¹. In social terms, the fact that there are fewer women earning a formal wage undermines efforts to reduce poverty. And for the individual women concerned, this state of affairs works against their economic and social empowerment and signals their lack of freedom to fulfil their full potential².

Education, skills and access to work are intimately related; in order to be employed, women need qualifications and skills which are in demand on the labour market. Rising levels of education and skills are to boost labour force participation rates by improving people's productivity and giving them better opportunities for paid employment in the formal sector. Furthermore, according to human capital theory the more educated people are, the greater their potential for earning money. Various studies on the impact of education on GDP have found a positive correlation between the two around the world.

However, in practice, in many countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean region³, this happy relationship between education, employment and economic well-being is not happening to the extent expected, at least not for the female half of the population. There has been significant progress in providing education for both boys and girls in recent decades in the region. However, when it comes to translating those achievements in education into gains on the labour market, women lag far behind men. Female labour force participation rates in the region – 23% on average (ILO 2010) - are the lowest in the world.

Why is this the case? The proportion of females enrolled in education is still lower than that of males, but this education gender gap is too small to explain the disparity in labour force participation rates. Does the problem lie with the quality or relevance of the education provided for women? Does education not equip young women – to the

same extent as men – with the qualifications they need to enter the labour market? Are there other social and economic factors which have more of an impact? What do women have to say about this state of affairs? What do employers think? What can be done to increase female employment?

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this project is to help to promote gender equality policies in Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan in the areas of education, training and employment. More specifically the project aims to increase the knowledge of, and interest in, the benefits and opportunities for women's employment in line with the commitments made by the European Union (EU) and the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the Union for the Mediterranean and, in particular, the Istanbul Framework for Action to strengthen women's status in society in the region (see Chapter 3).

This report is based on three case study reports in the region on Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia (ETF, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c) prepared by the ETF with the support of local service providers and in cooperation with the main institutional national stakeholders within the ETF Women and Work (WOW) project 2009-10.

Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia were selected to serve as case studies because they are among the priority countries of both the Italian Cooperation, which co-funded the WOW project, and the European Union. In all three countries, the gender gap in education has been reduced or even, in the case of Tunisia, reversed. However these countries still register stubbornly low female activity rates of 22%, 23% and 26% respectively (KILM, 2009).

The report is addressed to national policy makers in the region - ministries in charge of employment, education, training and gender equality - and the various social partners - employers' organisations, trade unions, professional associations, education institutions - to inform and support them in promoting gender equality in education and employment. It is also addressed to the EU institutions and any other donors who may wish to use

¹ Human capital theory is an economic concept based on the underlying assumption that development is essentially about economic growth and that investment in education increases workers' productivity and earnings. The rate of return is measured for the individual in terms of better earnings (private rate of return) and for the society in terms of increased productivity and growth (social rate of return).

² The capability approach defines development in terms of people's capacities to function and their opportunities to undertake the actions and activities that they wish to engage in. Assessing gender equality in education implies assessing whether fundamental freedoms and choice are equally available to men and women.

³ In the context of this publication, southern and eastern Mediterranean refers to eight Mediterranean partners - Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria and Tunisia. Libya and Israel are not included.

the report for planning future projects and providing support to countries. Finally, the report aims to raise the awareness of the general public on gender issues in education, training and employment in the region and on the aims of the Istanbul Framework for Action.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study concentrates on formal employment in the private sector. This is because, although the economies of the region have very large informal sectors, they usually only provide low-skilled and low-paid jobs or consist of unpaid household work which does not count in official statistics. As workers in the informal economy do not enjoy basic rights such as social protection, this sector cannot be seen as a source of decent work⁴. Widening access to labour markets is not the same thing as providing access to decent jobs. For all of these reasons, the formal sector is the preferred option for increasing women's opportunities for employment. Furthermore, due to public sector cuts in all the countries studied, it is the private sector that has the real potential for providing more jobs for women.

The service sector was chosen due to its potential for economic growth, job creation and development as well as the fact that it is seen by governments as a priority sector for economic development. Services are the fastest growing sector in the economies of the region compared to industry and, in particular, agriculture. Tourism and information and communication technologies (ICT) are identified by governments in all three countries as priority sectors for economic development. If they continue to develop, these sectors have the potential to create decent work by offering formal employment and relatively good salaries.

Given that youth unemployment is a serious problem in the region, indicating problems of transition from education to work, it was decided that the study should focus on young females between 15 and 29 years of age.

The research questions that underpinned this study are:

- What impact does education have on women's employment in general and in the tourism and ICT sectors in particular? How can women's education be made more relevant and profitable?
- What is the potential of tourism and ICT for creating jobs for women? If it is true that ICT and tourism do not employ many women, is this caused by problems in the demand for or the supply of female labour?
- How gender neutral are the labour markets of the two sectors? Why do young women who have trained in

occupations related to the two sectors not go on to work in them?

- Which kinds of problems hinder women's access to employment and integration in the work place in the two sectors?
- What incentives are needed in order to increase female labour market participation?

Secondly, the project seeks to provide conclusions and recommendations for the government and other stakeholders in these sectors and beyond in answer to the following questions:

- What can be done to ensure more women are employed in these sectors? Is there evidence from the case study sectors that could help to promote female employment in the private sector in general? What could be done to support greater gender equality either through gender-mainstreaming or interventions specifically targeting women?
- How could donors, in particular the European Union, support these initiatives?

1.4 EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION

The ETF, an agency of the European Union, provides advice and assistance to its 29 non-EU partner countries in the development of their human capital through the reform of education, training and labour market systems in the context of the EU's external relations policy. The ETF's partner countries receive assistance via the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)⁵ or via the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)⁶. The ETF also works with a number of countries in Central Asia⁷.

The cooperation instrument for the southern and eastern Mediterranean region, the ENPI, identifies gender equality as one of the common values shared by the EU and the Mediterranean countries, and a possible area for further subregional cooperation. ENPI country action plans for the region include promoting the participation of women in economic, political and social life.

In line with EU strategic guidelines for promoting gender equality in external relations, the Istanbul Framework for Action (see Chapter 3) and the ENPI, the ETF is committed to promoting gender equality in its activities and projects and has included a gender component in its work programme since 2005. Building on the experience gained so far, the ETF is determined to continue to work on analysing the impact of education, training and employment policies and practices on women and men and the overall development of its partner countries.

⁴ The concept of decent work encapsulates fundamental principles and rights at work, international labour standards, employment and opportunities for generating income, social protection and social security as well as social dialogue and tripartism. The ILO's primary goal is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work.

⁵ The IPA is an instrument of EU external relations which provides targeted assistance to countries which are candidate countries or potential candidates for joining the EU.

⁶ The ENPI, another instrument of EU external relations, was developed in 2004 with the aim of avoiding creating new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and neighbouring countries and instead increasing the prosperity, stability and security of all concerned.

⁷ Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The second chapter of this report provides a more detailed description of the design of the study and the methodology used. The third chapter summarises the desk research undertaken within the study and discusses women's presence in labour markets and the impact of education on women's employment in the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries. The chapter then goes on to analyse the specific contexts of Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia and describes the framework through which the EU and the countries of the region promote gender equality in

their cooperation. The fourth chapter highlights the main findings of the research, including results of the employers' survey and focus group discussions with young women. Chapter five analyses the findings in comparison to the main research questions to provide some conclusions (see point 1.3 above) and contains recommendations both for stakeholders in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia and for donors, in particular, the European Commission, as well as for further research.

Annexes which include the employers' survey questionnaire, guidelines for focus groups, survey statistics, and profiles of the focus group participants, are available upon request.

2. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

2.1 APPROACH AND CONCEPTS

This study investigates women's opportunities in education, training and employment from a gender perspective in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia in the ICT and tourism sectors. While many attributes such as race, ethnicity, social class and age may influence individual opportunities, this study focuses on the gender dimension. Education and employment are not seen as an end in themselves but as a means for women to achieve economic independence as well as a way of enhancing the well being of families, fighting poverty and contributing to economic growth.

The study encompasses research and active components in that it aims not only to increase knowledge but also to help to change the situation; namely low female labour force participation rates in the three countries concerned. For this reason, the project has made efforts to actively involve different stakeholders such as local authorities, education providers and especially employers with the implicit aim of engaging them in the process as promoters of greater equality between women and men. This has been done by setting up national consultative groups in all three countries to follow up on the implementation of the study and allow the representatives of national social partners to meet and discuss the national reports.

The research questions are closely related to the concept of employability. By employability this study means the ability to obtain and retain decent work (ILO, 2005). Employability is enhanced by qualifications and competences. Individuals also need relevant information to help them make informed decisions about the education choices and labour market options available to them.

Both the supply and demand of labour need to be taken into account when defining employability, something which is often dependent on factors outside an individual's control. A prime example of this is gender. Employers may prefer to recruit men or women for certain jobs. Men and women may choose different education pathways or be guided towards specific sectors according to accepted gender roles. Gender roles are learned expectations and behaviour in a given society, community or social group that determine the type of activities that are seen as male or female (ILO, 2005).

Therefore gender can have an impact on men's and women's employability. Gender refers to the social differences, rather than the biological ones, between

women and men that have been learned, are changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures (ILO, 2005). Given that women experience greater difficulty in employment than men in spite of increasing equality in terms of rights to education, training and employment, it is justified to focus on analysing the specific obstacles and opportunities that women face in education, training and employment and that may explain part of the gap.

Gender equality implies appreciating the similarities and the differences between men and women and ensuring equal conditions and opportunities for their full participation in society. This does not always mean treating men and women in the same way and therefore a strict comparison between men's and women's obstacles and opportunities in education, training and employment would not serve the final purpose of providing them with equal opportunities; there is no standard way to provide equal opportunities for both sexes due to their biological and gender related differences that have an impact on their access to education and integration into working life.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

The study is based on a mixed methodology using both quantitative and qualitative data. It has three main components: desk research, a survey and focus groups.

The transition from school to work and women's initial experiences in the labour market appear to be crucial factors in ensuring that they first enter and second stay in the labour market. Therefore it was decided to take a look at employers' opinions and practices for employing young women and to listen to young women's experiences when looking for work and during the first years of their working life as well as to female students' expectations of their future jobs. Both the surveys and focus groups were conducted by local service providers in each of the three countries (North South Consultants in Egypt, Jordan Centre for Social Research in Jordan and Comete Engineering in Tunisia). The data was analysed by the ETF.

2.2.1 Desk research and analysis of data

The field study was preceded and supplemented by desk research which consisted of a literature review and an analysis of official data, national sectoral strategies and reforms and donor and NGO initiatives.

Much has already been written on the trends of women's economic activity and education and training in the region, either for southern and eastern Mediterranean countries or for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) as a whole. Two main arguments dominate in current debates on women and economic empowerment. The rights-based argument focuses on increasing women's job opportunities and their freedom to choose to work safely and with dignity. The economic argument emphasises women's economic capacities and potential contribution to economic growth.

The desk study provided useful information and helped to design the field work. It revealed there is little research focusing on women's employment solely in the private sector and the service sector. The Women and Work study is pioneering in using a survey of employers and focus groups involving young women to examine how young women make the transition from education to work in the private sector.

There are several limitations in terms of the availability of data. First, gender-disaggregated data in education, training and employment is not always available or may only be available for different years for different countries. Second, there are differences in the data depending on the source (national statistical institutions, ILO, World Bank, UNESCO or Unicef). It was decided to rely as much as possible on ILO data to ensure some comparability. Third, data on education enrolment broken down by gender and subject choices in general education and particularly in VET is often lacking. This is also true for women's employment in different sectors although there is more information available on women in the public sector.

2.2.2 Survey of employers in tourism and ICT: demand for labour

On the demand side, a survey with employers in tourism and ICT was conducted to find out how and where women work in these case study sectors, explore employers' attitudes, skills requirements and recruitment policies regarding women and determine what are the obstacles and opportunities for women joining the labour market.

Two surveys with a similar questionnaire (Annex A) were conducted, one with companies in tourism and one with companies in ICT. The questionnaire included general questions including the year of creation of the company, its financial status and the number of employees broken down by category, department and gender. It then looked at recent trends in recruitment, the channels used for recruitment and training provided for new recruits. It asked questions about the importance of different characteristics in recruitment and skills needs and

matching when recruiting young people in general. The final part focused specifically on women with questions regarding the skills needs, competences, importance of characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of employing women.

The questionnaire was written in English by the ETF and translated into Arabic. It was road tested in all three countries and subsequently adapted to fit the local context.

Definitions of which companies belong to the tourism and ICT sectors differ from one country to the next, and even within the same country different categorisations are sometimes used. In Egypt, for example, the definition of tourism companies also includes the transport companies tourists use. A mapping of each sector was conducted in each country based on different national sources available (ETF, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). Of these, different subsectors - those with the highest concentration of employment - were chosen.

The survey targeted medium-sized and large companies. Those with less than 25 employees were excluded from the survey for several reasons. Although they are an important part of the economy, these types of businesses, especially family ones, do not usually have systematic human resources policies in place. Second, in absolute terms they employ fewer people than medium-sized and larger companies.

In Egypt the survey covered 50 hotels, 50 tourism companies⁸ in the tourism sector and 100 ICT companies. Only three- to five-star hotels were included in the sample (35% of all the hotels) since they provide most of the job opportunities (CAPMAS, 2007). The survey covered Cairo and Giza, South Sinai and Upper Egypt with a certain over-representation of hotels in Cairo and Giza. The 50 tourism companies surveyed were all located in Cairo and Giza⁹. In ICT, the survey covered only Cairo and Giza since 97% of the target group companies were located there¹⁰. They were represented in the sample in proportion to their share in the sector, i.e. software development (65%), IT services (18%), telecommunications (12%) and hardware (5%).

In Jordan the survey covered 86 hotels, 80 tourism restaurants and 68 travel agencies in the tourism sector and 100 ICT companies¹¹. As in Egypt, from the hotel sub-sector only the three- to five-star hotels, the biggest employers of tourism sector, were included in the sample. The companies surveyed in the tourism sector were located in Amman, Aqaba, Dead Sea, Petra, Irbid, Jerash, Karak and Madaba governorates, with a slight over-representation of Amman. All the 100 ICT companies surveyed were in Amman. A total of 69 of these were

⁸ Tourism companies in Egypt are defined by Law no. 38 of 1977. They include companies that: a) organise collective or individual tourist journeys inside or outside Egypt including transport, accommodation, and related services, b) sell tickets, facilitate luggage transport, book different means of transport, represent airlines, shipping lines and other transportation companies, and c) run means of land, sea, air and river transport for the tourists conveyance.

⁹ The list of the Egyptian Tourism Federation 2008 was used as a basis for the survey. It included 1,524 tourism companies out of which only 155 had over 25 employees. The vast majority of tourism companies are located in Cairo and Giza.

¹⁰ The 2008 database of the Information Technology Industry Development Agency (ITIDA) was used as a basis. It included 399 and 211 companies with more than 25 employees. 205 of these were located in Cairo and Giza.

¹¹ The mapping of the tourism sector in Jordan was based on data from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and some sectoral professional associations. The mapping of the ICT sector was based on information from the Information Technology Association of Jordan.

classified as IT companies and 31 as telecommunications ones. Due to the relatively small size of companies in Jordan and in order to make up the sample, the threshold had to be lowered to 20 employees for ICT companies and tourism restaurants and to 10 employees for travel agencies.

In Tunisia, 287 hotels¹² in the tourism sector and 95 ICT companies were surveyed. Since one-star hotels provide only 0.6% of the total of employment in the hotel sector (ONEQ, 2008) this category was excluded from the survey. The hotels were located in all major tourist locations while the ICT companies were mainly located in Tunis. In order to make up the sample, in the case of the ICT companies the threshold for the number of employees had to be lowered to 15.

Assuming a simple random sampling, for the confidence level of 95% and $p=q=0.5$, the margins of error are as specified in **TABLE 2**.

The targets set for the surveys were at least 100 companies per sector. Conducting the survey turned out to be more complicated in Egypt which explains the smaller sample size. All interviews were carried out face-to-face either with the director of human resources or the head of the company.

Although the different definitions of the sectors in each country affects the comparability of the survey results, they provide an indication of the female employment situation in larger companies in those geographical areas where most of the ICT and tourism industries are concentrated.

2.2.3 Focus groups with young women: supply of labour

On the supply side, focus group discussions were organised with young women in order to understand how

the transition from education to work takes place. These discussions were also used to gather information on education and career choices, the quality and relevance of education received, job search and unemployment experiences, initial experiences at work and perceived difficulties and opportunities for joining the labour force.

Qualitative focus group discussions were conducted with young women of between 15 and 29 years of age living in both rural and urban areas in the three countries. The discussions were conducted in Arabic on the basis of focus group discussion guidelines (Annex B) that focused on issues including the reasons for selecting a specific education pathway, the relevance of education, matching of education and skills with the current job, job search practices, reasons for being inactive or without a job and the advantages and disadvantages of working.

The following groups were involved in the research:

1. Students studying tourism or ICT at university
2. Students studying tourism or ICT at a vocational school
3. Women employed in tourism or ICT
4. Unemployed women looking for a job in tourism or ICT
5. Inactive women who have received education or training and/or have worked in either sector.

The focus group discussions gathered a total of 91 young women in Egypt, 108 in Jordan and 42 in Tunisia. In Tunisia it was not possible to find enough inactive women under 30 years old and that focus group had to be cancelled. 29% of the focus group participants were students either in tourism or ICT, 27% employed, 35% unemployed and looking for a job in either tourism or ICT and 9% inactive. It should also be noted that the boundaries between being unemployed and inactive were blurred; some women claimed they were unemployed when they were not actively seeking work and had actually dropped out of the labour market. The profiles of the focus group participants are listed in Annex D.

TABLE 2: SURVEY UNIVERSES, SAMPLES, MARGINS OF ERROR AND RESPONSE RATE BY COUNTRY AND SECTOR

		Margins of error at a confidence level of 95%				Response rate	
		Tourism	ICT	Tourism	ICT	Tourism	ICT
Egypt	Universe	506	205	8.79	7.03	100	100
	Sample	100	100				
Jordan	Universe	272	141	2.4	5.3	94.40	100
	Sample	234	100				
Tunisia	Universe	609	150	4.21	6.11	95.67	95
	Sample	287	95				

¹² Only hotels were included in the survey since travel agencies in Tunisia are micro enterprises and restaurants have little potential for employing women. Hotels are by far the most important employer in the tourism sector. The mapping of the hotel sector in Tunisia was based on data from ONEQ (2008) and ONTT (2007).

The findings cannot be said to be representative of young women as a whole but they do add a valuable qualitative dimension to the study and provide useful insight into young women's views on the opportunities and obstacles

in entering the labour market. Data collected during the discussions was analysed by identifying common topics and patterns. Unusual observations were also highlighted and expressions or narratives were used as illustrations.

3. THE BROADER CONTEXT

This chapter describes the background to the study and reflects part of the desk research undertaken within the study. It has three parts. The first one discusses women's presence in the labour markets and the impact of education on women's employment in the southern and eastern Mediterranean region. The second part describes the Egyptian, Jordanian and Tunisian local contexts and women's education and employment. Finally, the third part portrays the framework of cooperation for the European Union and the Mediterranean countries where gender equality issues can be addressed.

3.1 FEMALE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN THE REGION

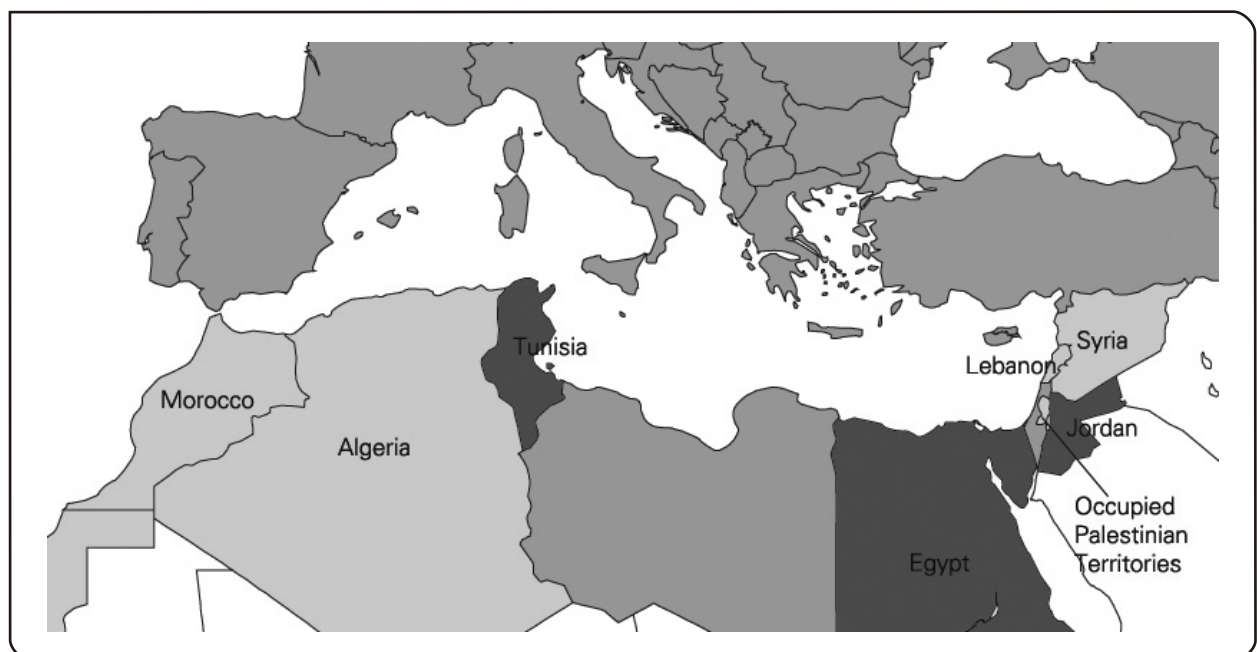
The activity rates of the population aged 15-64 in the eight countries vary between 41% (occupied Palestinian Territory) and 57% (Algeria) (ETF, 2009a). These low rates can mainly be explained by extremely low female participation in the labour market throughout the region (on average 23%). These low female activity rates cannot however be explained by women's lack of participation in education as women are often as present, and sometimes even more present, than men at the different stages of the education system.

There is a growing body of evidence that there is a relationship between narrowing the gender gap in education around the world and economic growth (World Bank, 2004, World Bank, 2007, World Economic Forum,

2010, Shafik, 2001, Moghadam 1995). Studies have shown that countries with smaller gender gaps tend to grow faster, to a large extent because they take more effective advantage of their human capital.

When the rate of female labour force participation is low, a country forgoes much of the potential return on its investment in women's education. The World Bank estimates that if the female labour force participation rate in the Middle East and North Africa region had reached predicted levels (based on the existing levels of female education, fertility and age structure), per capita GDP growth during the 1990s would have been 2.6% per year instead of 1.9% (World Bank, 2004).

Different arguments have been developed to explain these phenomena. Moghadam argues that oil, gas and technology centred heavily capital-intensive industrialisation has inhibited female employment since it minimises the use of labour and favours male labour (Moghadam 1995). Massive investment in the oil-producing countries in the 1960s and 1970s led to an expansion of non-agricultural employment. This affected the structure of the labour force not only in oil rich countries but throughout the region as a result of labour migration. In countries with large oil and gas reserves in particular, the kind of export oriented manufacturing sector that contributed to the expansion of female labour force participation in east and south east Asia did not grow. This could partly explain the slightly higher female labour force participation rates in Tunisia, one of our case study countries; with limited natural resources Tunisia was forced to invest in human capital and concentrate on exporting skill-intensive manufactured goods. However,



Jordan also lacks natural resources and relies heavily on its human capital but it has one of the lowest female labour force participation rates in the region.

During the oil boom years of the 1970s, rapidly increasing real wages allowed a small number of working people to support a large number of non-working dependents. Karshenas and Moghadam argue that increasing women's labour force participation may be key to the successful structural adjustment that boosts the international competitiveness of the region. Preserving patriarchal family structures in the region was possible during the transition from agricultural to non-agricultural market activities because economies boosted by oil and other mineral revenues could keep real wages high. This in turn made the model of a single breadwinner affordable. In societies where population pressure on the land was higher and wages in the non-agricultural sector lower during the transition period, the absence of women from market activities and paid employment is less easily affordable and results in higher female labour force participation rates in the non-agricultural sector (Karshenas and Moghadam, 2001). Increasing the rate of female labour force participation and moving from the single breadwinner patriarchal model to two income households could make the decrease of real wages socially acceptable and contribute to the competitiveness and economic adjustment of the region's economies.

During the early 1990s the economies of the region experienced economic reforms and structural adjustment. The public sector, which had traditionally absorbed large numbers of job entrants, underwent downsizing and privatisation, while the private sector was not yet sufficiently developed to absorb the excess supply of labour (ETF, 2009a). The high rate of growth of the labour force and its shift away from agriculture resulted in high unemployment. Currently unemployment rates in the region are among the highest in the world. Given such conditions, increasing female employment has not been a policy priority.

Working in the public sector has been a more attractive option for the women of the region. This is due to perceptions that public sector professions such as teaching and nursing are more appropriate for women and to the fact that the public sector has tended to be more egalitarian and provide favourable conditions of work including generous maternity leave. Just as the post oil boom structural adjustment programmes reduced women's possibilities of working in the public sector, women's workload at home increased as social and community services were cut back (Karshenas, 1997). Furthermore, women do not appear to be motivated to seek jobs in the private sector and will wait for years for the chance of a public sector job. However, jobs in the government ranks have become almost inaccessible for all new entrants to the labour market, regardless of their gender (RWELP, 2008).

Because of insufficient job opportunities for both men and women, there is a widespread belief that encouraging women to participate in the labour force will inevitably lead to more unemployment for men, who are traditionally seen as the breadwinners of the family. However, data from the

region show a negative correlation between unemployment and female participation in the labour force (World Bank, 2007). Some of the countries with low female labour force participation are those with relatively high unemployment. Although this could mean that women may be discouraged by high unemployment during recessions and withdraw completely from the labour market, it may also suggest that a greater participation of women in the labour force generates demand for more goods and services in the economy and this could stimulate demand for new jobs. The sudden entry of women to the labour force may occasionally push up the short-term unemployment rate, but this is not common (World Bank, 2007). Furthermore, the higher unemployment rates of women than men in the region indicate that the employment of women does not displace male employment.

In addition to economic explanations, the gender biases in education choice, whether individually made or socially influenced, have been pointed to as contributing factors in the low female labour force participation rates in the region. Strong gender stereotyping of occupational choices does exist. Young women especially in higher education tend to opt for humanities and the arts in accordance with their traditional role in society rather than those subjects that could maximise their job opportunities (Bardak, 2005, World Bank, 2007). The Arab Human Development Reports 2005 states that "discrepancies in the gender dimension of education become wider in vocational and technical education, where the rate of female enrolment is less than half that of male enrolment in the region" (UNDP, 2005). Women are socialised to study vocations deemed more appropriate for them such as extending their reproductive role at home, thus decreasing their chances to be employed in formal labour markets. Training for women in non-marketable areas such as embroidery also significantly reduces the impact of vocational programmes (Bardak, 2005). In addition, most vocational training systems in the region are outdated and have weak links to local and regional labour markets. Not only does VET traditionally cater for low achievers in the region but women also usually face less choices and opportunities when acquiring technical training that prepares them for the working world (Akeel, 2005, ETF 2008). Furthermore, the economies of the Mediterranean countries are still home to sizeable rural populations, often poor, where access to education is still limited, especially for girls (ETF, 2007).

Some studies argue that the real problem is socio-cultural. Gender roles and dynamics within the households are shaped by a traditional gender paradigm which is based on the centrality of the family over the individual. Factors such as seeing the man as sole breadwinner, restrictions on interaction between men and women to safeguard family honour and an unequal balance of power in the private sphere all affect women's access to the public sphere (World Bank, 2007). Even large numbers of well-educated women remain at home when they get married.

With the exception of the occupied Palestinian Territory, gross enrolment in primary education is reaching close to 100% for both sexes in the southern and eastern

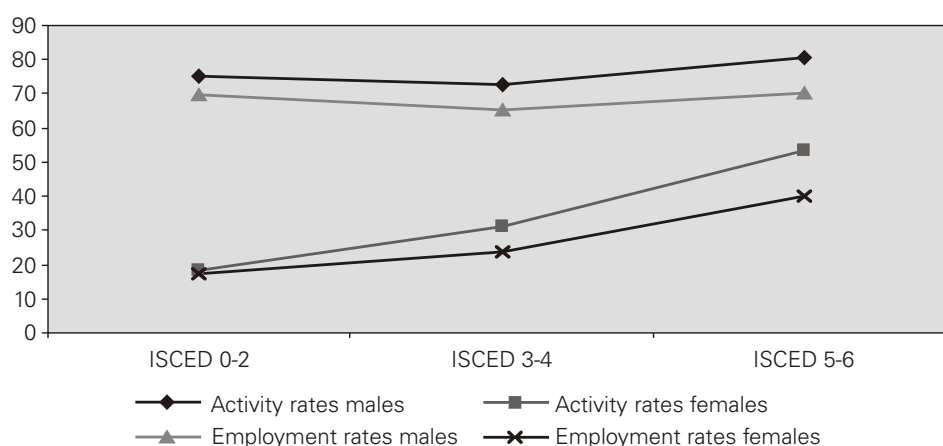
Mediterranean countries and, in secondary education, an average of almost 80% has been achieved. In several countries there are more females than males enrolled in secondary and tertiary education. While education levels cannot explain the gender gap in labour force participation, some general observations can be made on the impact of primary, secondary, tertiary education levels¹³ on the activity, employment and unemployment rates of women.

Female activity rates start from a much lower level than those of men without education (see **GRAPH 1**). Education has a stronger effect on women's than men's activity rates: while men's activity rates even decrease with upper secondary education, women's activity rates increase continuously with education levels. Most importantly it is higher education that substantially boosts women's activity rates. Unemployment increases both for

men and women with higher education in the region, but even more so for women, which can be seen in the widening gap between the activity and employment rates of women compared to men. Education seems to have less of an impact on the actual employment of women, in particular at higher levels of education.

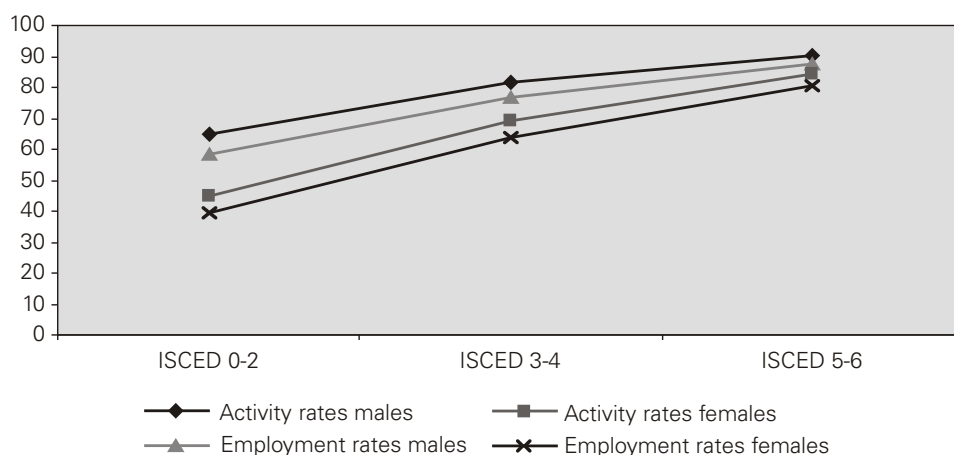
In the EU Member States, it is clear that while women's activity and employment rates remain lower than men's for all education levels, education seems to have a more equal impact on men's and women's activity in the labour market and employment. Furthermore, education seems to have a positive impact for both sexes much earlier and the impact of higher education is not so sudden. The gap between activity and employment rates does not increase with higher education which indicates a better relevance of higher education for labour market needs (see **GRAPH 2**).

GRAPH 1: ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION IN THE REGION, 2007



Source: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-EET data collection (excluding Syria and Jordan due to lack of complete data)

GRAPH 2: ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION IN THE EU, 2007



Source: Eurostat

¹³ International Standard Classification of Education (UNESCO) levels are the following: Level 0 - pre-primary education, Level 1 - primary education or first stage of basic education, Level 2 - lower secondary or second stage of basic education, Level 3 - (upper) secondary education, Level 4 - post-secondary non-tertiary education, Level 5 - first stage of tertiary education, Level 6 - second stage of tertiary education.

3.2 COUNTRY CONTEXTS

Egypt ranks 123rd, Tunisia 98th and Jordan 96th of the 182 countries ranked in the UNDP's human development index (HDI) (UNDP, 2009), grouping all three in the medium HDI category. The HDI provides a composite measure of three dimensions of human development; living a long and healthy life, being educated and having a decent standard of living. The Gender-related Development Index (GDI) measures achievement in the same basic areas as the HDI, but takes note of inequality between women and men. The greater the gender disparity in basic areas, the lower a country's GDI compared with its HDI. All three countries rank less well for GDI; Egypt 126th, Jordan 120th and Tunisia 107th of the same 182 countries (UNDP, 2009).

However, all three countries are committed to promoting women's rights and economic and social status both through national legislation and by signing up to international conventions. Furthermore, all three have made considerable efforts to facilitate girls' and women's access to education.

In all three countries services provide the largest share of employment (see **TABLE 3**). Agriculture still provides a relatively large share of employment in Egypt but very little in Jordan.

The contribution of tourism and ICT to the GDP is relevant in all three countries. In 2007, tourism contributed 11.3% to GDP (EU TVET, 2010) in Egypt and ICT 4% in 2009 (MCIT, 2010a). In Jordan, tourism accounted for 10.5% of GDP in 2008 (Fischer, 2010) and ICT for 14.3% in 2008 making it one of the largest contributors to the economy (Inta@j, 2010). In Tunisia, tourism represented 6.5% of GDP in 2007 (ONTT, 2008) while the ICT sector accounted for 10% of GDP in 2008 (UTICA, 2010).

What follows is a summary of the status of women in education, training and employment in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia. More detailed information can be found in the national reports which form the basis of this report.

3.2.1 Women in education, training and employment in Egypt

Legislation

Egypt has undertaken substantial legal reforms concerning the status of women over the last fifty years.

The 1956 constitution acknowledged the right of women to equal participation in education. Primary education is compulsory and education in state education institutions is free of charge in all phases of education from primary school to university.

All Egyptian laws and statutes affirm the principle that all citizens have an equal right to work. The constitution places an obligation on the state to protect mothers and children, as well as to facilitate work and family commitments.

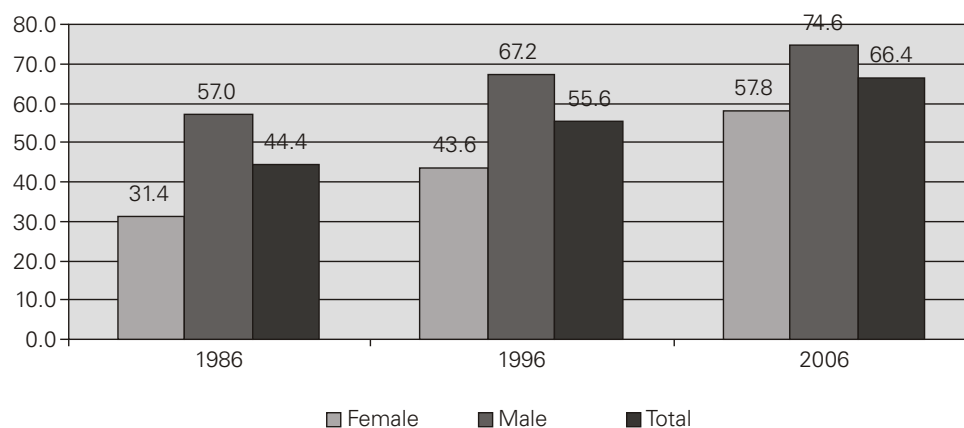
The labour law¹⁴ prohibits the employment of women between 7pm and 7am (except in certain types of work, including work in hotels, restaurants, theatres, hospitals, cinemas, airports, tourism and airline offices), and during official holidays. The law is intended to protect women and also requires employers to provide transport for women after 8pm. It provides maternity leave and accommodates women who are breastfeeding. Furthermore, companies with 100 or more female employees are required to set up a nursery close to the workplace (RWELP, 2006c).

Egypt ratified the CEDAW convention in 1981 with some reservations including the nationality of children, marriage and family life. It has also ratified relevant ILO conventions regarding women working underground and at night, equal pay, non-discrimination at work and the rights of workers with family responsibilities. Egypt has not ratified the ILO convention on maternity leave (RWELP, 2008).

TABLE 3: EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA, 2007

	Agriculture (%)	Industry (%)	Services (%)
Egypt	32%	23%	46%
Jordan	3%	20%	77%
Tunisia	17%	33%	49%

Source: MEDA-EYE Database, 2009

GRAPH 3: ADULT LITERACY RATES BY GENDER IN EGYPT, 1986-2006

Source: UNESCO, 2010

Education and training

Due to a substantial investment in primary education, Egypt has achieved high primary net enrolment rates; 94% for boys and 91% for girls in 2007 (UNESCO, 2010). There is a positive trend in literacy particularly when youth and adult populations are compared; literacy levels are lower among adult women (58%) than men (75%) but the gender difference is less pronounced in the 15-24 age group (82% females, 88% males) (UNESCO, 2010). Nevertheless, about 42% of women and 25% of men are illiterate in Egypt (see **GRAPH 3**).

Enrolment rates in secondary education are lower for both sexes; in 2002-08 the net enrolment rate for males was 82% and for females 78% (UNICEF, 2010). About 39% of girls in secondary education go on to general secondary education and the rest to technical education¹⁵ (ETF, 2010a). Consequently, girls are well represented in secondary technical education accounting for 46% of students. Secondary technical education is organised around three key streams; industry, agriculture and trade. Women represent 22% of students in agriculture, 38% in industry and 64% in trade.

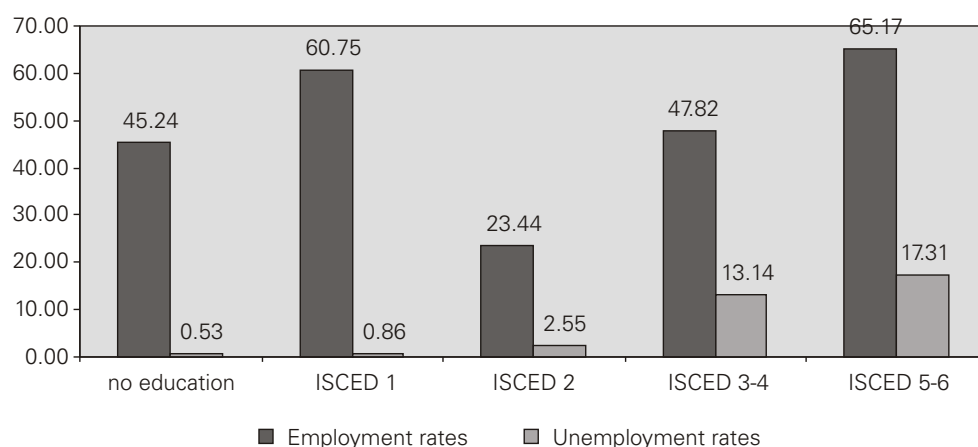
The gross enrolment rate in higher education in Egypt was 28% in 2008 (UNESCO, 2010). The share of women is increasing and in 2004/5 they represented 49% of enrolments (SIS, 2009). However, female enrolment tends to be concentrated in fields of study that are traditionally considered appropriate for women such as the arts, humanities, home economics and nursing, while their presence in natural sciences, engineering, computer sciences and medicine is relatively low (CAPMAS, 2007).

Employment

In 2009, the female labour force participation rate in Egypt was 22.4% compared to a male participation rate of 75.3% (KILM, 2009). The public sector and the informal sector are the biggest employers of women. In total, 40% of women working outside the home are employed in the public sector and women account for about 30% of government employees (Assaad, 2006). The share of working women in the services sector is relatively high but sectoral segregation is too. As an example, in 2006, 18.5% of women working outside the home were employed in education, constituting 40% of the workforce (SIS, 2009). 47% of women still work in agriculture (CAPMAS, 2010). Almost 60% of the Egyptian population lives in rural areas.

Women are more likely to be unemployed than men. Whereas the male unemployment rate was 5.9% in 2007, at 18.6% the rate for women was three times higher (MEDA-ETE, 2009). The unemployed are in general young and educated. The unemployment rate for the 15-24 age group was estimated at 16% for males and 54% for females in 2008 (CAPMAS, 2010). Unemployment for both men and women increases with the level of education. The incidence of unemployment is highest among those with higher education (17%), followed by those with upper secondary education (13%), indicating that unemployment is mainly a problem of finding a place for educated youth and eliminating the mismatch between labour supply and demand (see **GRAPH 4**).

¹⁵ The general secondary stage includes 3 years of education, whereas the secondary technical track lasts from three to five years. The formal TVET covers different levels of qualification ranging from skilled worker to higher technical. TVET is provided through technical secondary education (Ministry of Education, Technical Colleges (Higher Education) and Vocational Training (various line ministries) (ETF, 2010).

GRAPH 4: EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY EDUCATION LEVEL IN EGYPT, 2007

Source: National Statistics Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection

3.2.2 Women in education, training and employment in Jordan

Legislation

Although the Jordanian constitution proclaims that all Jordanians are equal before the law, the principle of gender equality is not enshrined in all laws. This is because most of the laws regulating marriage and family follow the logic of complementary gender roles rather than granting men and women the same rights. Hence, in laws regulating the private sphere - marriage, divorce, custody and inheritance - women and men are treated differently, while in the public sphere, including education and employment, they enjoy the same rights. However, the different treatment of men and women in the private sphere has implications for female participation in the public sphere. The Personal Status Act stipulates that a woman must live in her husband's home and must accompany him if he moves. Similarly, a married woman must have her husband's permission to work outside the home without losing her rights (Al-Manar, undated).

Furthermore some legal provisions reinforce the idea of women's work as being of secondary importance and reduce the incentives for married women to work. For example, female employees in the public sector are not entitled to receive a family allowance if the fathers of their children are alive and fit for work¹⁶. Furthermore, a deceased wife's pension cannot be transferred to her husband unless he is unfit for work and does not have any other source of income¹⁷.

The Jordanian labour code of 1996 protects pregnant women from dismissal although only from the sixth month of pregnancy onwards and during maternity leave and grants 70-90 days' paid maternity leave. Women

working in enterprises employing ten or more workers are also allowed to take one year of unpaid leave to raise a child and to shorten their working day by one hour to nurse the baby. The labour laws include an obligation to provide children's daycare facilities at the workplace in enterprises employing 20 or more married women. Private sector employers are required to provide maternity leave allowances and childcare facilities at their own expense (Al-Manar, undated). With a few exceptions such as jobs in hotels, airports or hospitals, women are prohibited from working at night and are barred from taking certain jobs.

Jordan ratified CEDAW in 1992 with reservations regarding equality before the law and governing marriage and families. Jordan has not ratified ILO conventions on women working underground and at nights, maternity protection or the rights of workers with family responsibilities, although it has ratified the ones on equal pay and non-discrimination at work (RWELP, 2008).

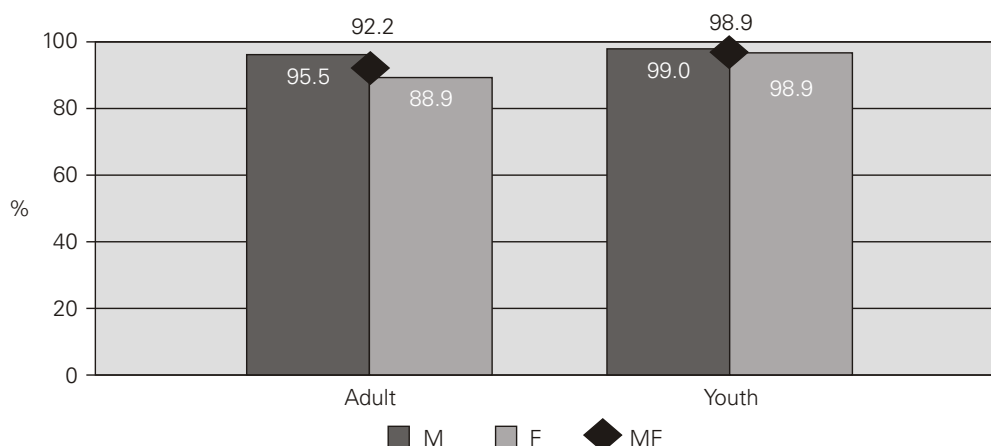
Education and training

Adult women in Jordan remain slightly less educated than men although the gender gap in educational attainment is quickly disappearing among younger cohorts. The primary net enrolment rates are high; 90% for girls and 89% for boys in 2008 (UNESCO, 2010). Jordan has one of the highest literacy rates in the region for both men and women (96% and 89% respectively) and literacy among young people is almost universal (see **GRAPH 5**).

In 2008 more Jordanian girls attended secondary school than boys – 84% compared to 80% (UNESCO, 2010). However, subject choices continue to follow traditional gender patterns. In secondary school, women are more likely to choose the literary stream and less likely to

¹⁶ 2007 Civil Service Statute.

¹⁷ 2001 Social Security Law.

GRAPH 5: PERCENTAGE OF LITERATE ADULTS 15+ AND YOUTH (15-24) IN JORDAN, 2007

Source: UNESCO, 2010

choose the vocational stream. Furthermore, most education in Jordan, especially at primary and secondary levels, is provided separately for boys and girls, a reflection of continuing cultural sensitivity about co-education. Although this helps to attract and keep girls in school, it may affect both men's and women's ability to handle mixed situations in the workplace in later life.

The female participation rate in all VET programmes increased from 6% in 2001 to 27% in 2006. In 2009 girls represented 34% of students in secondary VET (Al-Manar, undated). This increase is attributed to the expansion of female vocational training centres and the provision of new programmes that are attractive to female students such as information technology, personal services and secretarial work. However, few girls enrol in industrial or hotel programmes and few boys in home economics.

There are also more women than men in higher education, giving gross enrolment rates of 43% and 39% respectively in 2008 (UNESCO, 2010). However, in 2006, women constituted only 45% of those awarded Bachelor's or Master's degrees and 29% of those completing advanced research programmes but earned 66% of tertiary non-university degrees from community colleges (UNESCO, 2006). This trend is changing with fewer women selecting technician education in community colleges. Academic programmes are considered the most prestigious, so when more places are made available in university education, fewer female students are interested in enrolling in technician programmes. In higher education, women are in the majority in education and teaching, social sciences, humanities and religious studies, while men make up the majority in scientific and technical areas.

Employment

The labour force participation rate of men in Jordan is 73.9% compared to only 23.3% of women (KILM, 2009)¹⁸. Although shrinking, the public sector remains the largest employer, employing half of all working women and a third of all working men. The private sector is overwhelmingly made up of small enterprises: 94% have four workers or fewer and employ some 40% of the total workforce (DOS, 2006). Women hold only 19% of formal private sector jobs.

Working women are concentrated in education (39% of the total), health and social work (14%) and public administration (13%). They are least present in agriculture, construction, transport, trade and production, accommodation, food services, information and communication and entertainment and recreation, all sectors employing less than 2% of the total of working women (DOS, 2010).

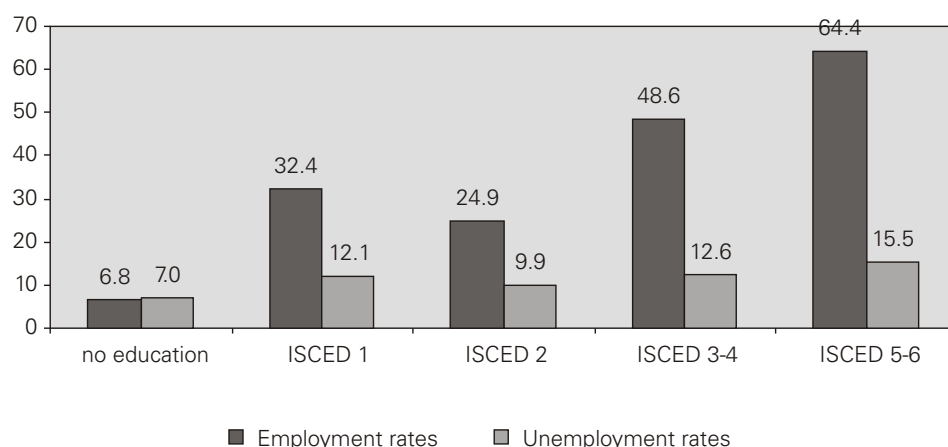
Women's unemployment is higher than men's, 24% in 2008 compared to 10% of men (KILM, 2009). The unemployment rate is especially high for young men aged 15–19 (up to 28%), and for young women aged 15–24 (up to 50%) (DOS, 2008). The unemployment rate increases with the level of education (see **GRAPH 6**).

3.2.3 Women in education, training and employment in Tunisia

Legislation

The Tunisian constitution of 1956 and personal status code of 1956 enshrine the principle of equal opportunities for men and women. Tunisian legislation is seen as the most advanced of the Arab countries in terms of gender equality.

¹⁸ The estimates of female labour force participation rates are even lower by the Department of Statistics; i.e. 14% in 2008 but this study refers to ILO data for all the countries. The World Bank estimates the Jordanian female labour force participation rate to be 24.7% in 2008.

GRAPH 6: EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY EDUCATION LEVEL IN JORDAN, 2007

Source: National Statistics Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection

The personal status code has undergone several reforms. A significant amendment in 1993 replaced the requirement that women should obey their husbands with the obligation on both spouses to treat each other with kindness and to help each other in running the home and caring for their children (Hayef et al, 2006).

Since 1958, Tunisian law has guaranteed girls' rights to education. The constitution also determines the same rights for women and men at work and in terms of social security. The labour law reaffirms the principle of non-discrimination for access to employment and equal pay for both the public and private sector (RWELP, 2006b) although the punishment for failure to observe this principle is slight (Hayef et al, 2006).

In the public sector, the labour law gives women the right to two months of maternity leave on full pay and a further four months leave on half-pay, but in the private sector, only 30 days of paid maternity leave exists, although further extensions are possible on medical grounds. The law allows for breastfeeding breaks during the first year and unpaid leave to look after young, sick or disabled children. Both men and women can benefit from welfare cover earned by their spouse and equal benefits on becoming a widow or a widower (Credif, 2009). As in Egypt and Jordan, women are not allowed to work at night unless they are managers or work in social services. Nor are they allowed to perform arduous or dangerous work in mines or in quarries or to perform certain risky types of agricultural work (Hayef et al, 2006). The penal code addresses sexual harassment but the labour law does not.

Tunisia ratified CEDAW in 1985 with reservations regarding the nationality of children, equality before the

law and marriage and families. Tunisia has not ratified the ILO convention on maternity protection (RWELP, 2008).

Education and training

The gender gap in education has shrunk and today girls outnumber boys in secondary and higher education. In fact, among the younger generations, there are twice as many female graduates of higher education as male. However, partly due to the fact that the gaps between generations remain higher among women than men, there are still more illiterate women than men (see **GRAPH 7**).

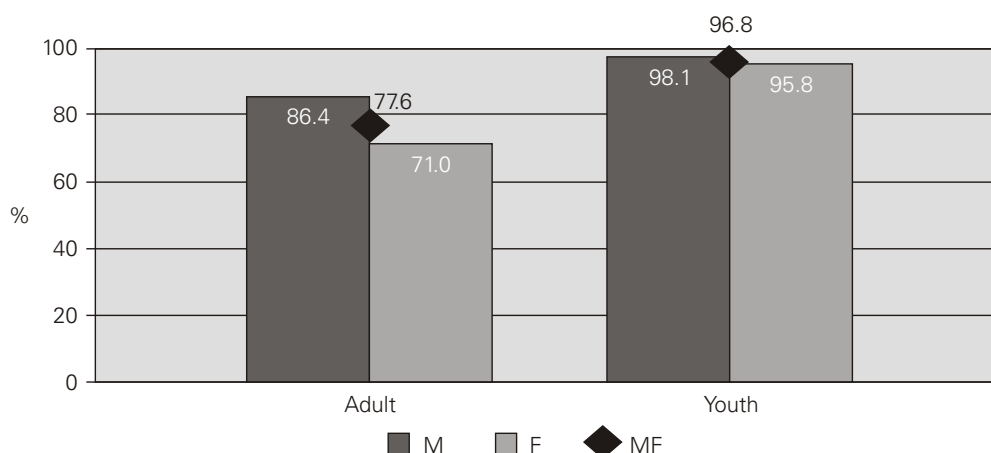
The net enrolment rate in primary education for both sexes stands at almost 100%. At secondary level the enrolment rates are substantially higher for girls (76%) than for boys (67%) (UNESCO, 2010).

Strong segregation in terms of subject choices persists. In 2008/09, at general secondary schools, girls accounted for almost 72% of students in the literary stream, more than 70% in science and 64% in economy and management while their share of the technical stream was only 27%. Interestingly, girls accounted for 43% of secondary students in the ICT stream¹⁹ (MOE, 2010).

Girls account for less than one-third of students in secondary vocational education and their share continues to decrease. Girls are slightly better represented in apprenticeship schemes than in vocational schools but here too their numbers are dropping. Furthermore, subject segregation in VET is even stronger than in general secondary education. Girls are highly concentrated in textiles²⁰ and clothing and some service sector occupations such as secretarial work.

¹⁹ There is no tourism stream.

²⁰ The tendency for girls' participation in VET to decrease can be partly explained by the crisis in the textile sector.

GRAPH 7: PERCENTAGE OF LITERATE ADULTS 15+ AND YOUTH (15-24) IN TUNISIA, 2008

Source: UNESCO, 2010

The biggest changes in women's participation in education have been in higher education. Over the last four decades, women's share of university enrolment has progressed from 19% in 1965/06 to 59% in 2008/09. Enrolment rates were 27% for men compared to 40% for women in 2008 (UNESCO, 2010).

However, women remain a minority in scientific and technical disciplines. In 2007/08, women accounted for 81% of students in languages and applied humanities, 74% in health science, 72% in education and 69% in literature and humanities while they accounted for only 32% of students in engineering, 38% in architecture and construction and 39% in mathematics and statistics. Interestingly for this study, 10% of female students were studying ICT, accounting for 46% of all ICT students in 2008 (MESRST, 2009).

Employment

Women's participation in the labour market remains low; the female labour force participation rate was 25.6% in 2009 compared to 70.6% of men (ILO, 2009). Women between the ages of 25 and 34 have a considerably higher activity rate (42% in 2007), followed by 35-44 year olds (32%) (MFPE, 2007).

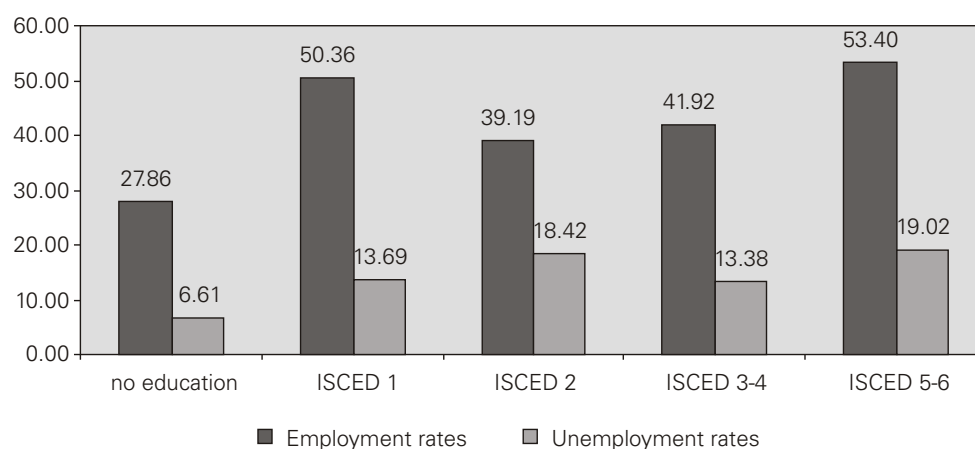
In 2007 women represented 55% of all Tunisia's public sector workers. This is due to the increasing number of women in areas such as education and health. Indeed, public administration, health and education employed 21% of the total female work force (INS, 2007). A total of 33% of working women worked in manufacturing and 21% in agriculture in 2005 (MFPE, 2008).

The female unemployment rate was 18.6% in 2008 while it was 12.6% for men (MFPE, 2008). The unemployment gender gap has been growing; while the overall unemployment rate decreased by 2.2% between 1984 and 2008, over the same period, female unemployment increased by 3.8%. Youth unemployment is a particular problem. Two-thirds of the unemployed are under 30 years old and women account for 73% of these (ANETI, 2009). As in Egypt and Jordan the unemployment rates increase with the level of education (see **GRAPH 8**).

3.3 GENDER EQUALITY IN EURO-MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION

The European Union sees the principle of equality between women and men as a common aim and a common value for the EU as a whole and as a goal in its own right. Promoting women's rights also features strongly in EU external policy. The *Joint EU Policy Statement*²¹ identifies gender equality as one of the five key principles of the EU's development policy: "the gender aspect must be addressed in close conjunction with poverty reduction, social and political development and economic growth, and mainstreamed in all aspects of development cooperation. Gender equality will be promoted through support to equal rights, access and control over resources and political and economic voice." (European Commission, 2005).

²¹ European Commission, *Joint EU development policy statement: The European Consensus on Development*, Brussels, 2005, www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/NewsWord/en/gena/87092.doc; see also www.fp7.org.tr/tubitak_content_files/268/dokumanlar/eu-consensus-development.pdf

GRAPH 8: EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY EDUCATION LEVEL IN TUNISIA, 2007

Source: National Statistics Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection

The European Union has long been committed to promoting gender equality in the Mediterranean region. The Barcelona Declaration of 1995 which established the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership²² relates the EU's global policy commitments on equality between men and women to the Mediterranean region by recognising the key role of women in development and the part they can play in economic and social life as well as in job creation. The work programme of the Union for Mediterranean - that relaunched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in 2008 - includes gender equality as a priority.

In the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference held in Istanbul in November 2006 on strengthening the role of women in society, ministers approved the Istanbul Framework for Action²³ for the promotion of women's rights and gender equality in civil, political, social, economic and cultural spheres. The measures agreed were confirmed by the Euro-Mediterranean employment and labour ministers' conference held in Marrakesh in November 2008 and those which are most relevant to this study are:

Economy and employment:

- Create equal opportunities and remove obstacles for women to work or to be recruited/ employed or to stay employed.
- Promote family friendly policies, aiming at reconciliation between professional and family life, in particular affordable care services for children, elderly people and other dependents and ensure a professional environment that is suited to women in terms of transport and safety and non-discrimination at the workplace.

- Promote and strengthen national capacities to regularly collect and analyse gender disaggregated data, including the informal sector and the impact of macro-economic reforms on women and men.
- Strengthen knowledge of the impact of macro-economic policies on women's and men's employment and develop research focused on gender to enable the elaboration of efficient strategies aiming at strengthening the role of women in the economy.
- Promote women's representation and participation in economic decision-making positions, in particular in employers' association, workers' unions and other socio-economic structures.

Education and training:

- Ensure the empowerment of women including through greater access to education at all levels and to vocational and technical training.

In this regard:

- Promote specific vocational and technical training courses for women in diversified job sectors.
- Promote post-training support through appropriate linkages between relevant partners such as training institutions and governmental employment agencies.
- Ensure greater access to lifelong learning to provide women with skills responsive to the rapidly changing labour market.
- Provide guiding programmes to help women return to the labour market after an absence or to direct them to new sectors.

²² The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process) began in 1995 and is a broad framework for political, economic and social relations between EU Member States and partners from the southern Mediterranean. It comprises 35 members, 25 from the EU and 10 from the Mediterranean region (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, occupied Palestinian Territory, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey). Libya has held observer status since 1999. The three main objectives of the partnership are: 1. To define a common area of peace and stability through the reinforcement of political and security dialogue (Political and Security Chapter). 2. To build a zone of shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free-trade area (Economic and Financial Chapter). 3. To bring people together through a social, cultural and human partnership aimed at encouraging understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies (Social, Cultural and Human Chapter).

²³ For further information, please see http://www.euromedheritage.net/resources/euromed_report_96_en.pdf

The second Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on strengthening the role of women in society in November 2009 in Marrakesh, as a follow-up to the Istanbul Process, confirmed the commitment to three focus areas of the Framework for Action (civil and political rights, cultural and social rights and economic rights) including gender equality in employment, equal pay and decent work, social protection and the fight against poverty, equal access and promotion in employment, women's entrepreneurship. Ministers also integrated gender as one of the priority project areas of the Union for the Mediterranean.

The European Commission prepares a yearly report on the Istanbul Framework of Action based on self-monitoring reports by the EU Member States and the Mediterranean signatories of the declaration. Regional expert meetings should act as follow-up mechanism resulting in an

outcome document on progress for the next Ministerial Conference in 2012.

The European Commission has also implemented regional programmes to support the implementation of the Istanbul Framework of Action. The role of women in economic life programme (RWELP) 2006-09 has been followed by the enhancing equality between men and women project in the EuroMed region. It is funded by the EU under the ENPI with a budget of €4.5 million. It has three main aims: providing support to the current dynamics that favour gender equality and promote women's rights and to the full implementation of CEDAW and related instruments; contributing to increased knowledge on gender-based violence and support to actions combating its occurrence and its root causes; and supporting the follow-up of the conclusions and the action framework of the Istanbul Ministerial conference.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

This chapter summarises the main findings of the study. It is divided into five parts:

1. the impact of education on women's employment in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia overall and in tourism and ICT in particular;
2. the potential of female employment generation in the tourism and ICT sectors;
3. women's occupations in the tourism and ICT companies surveyed;
4. factors influencing women's transition from education to work;
5. equal opportunities in the workplace.

While this chapter includes some country specific information and findings, it mainly aims to identify common trends in the obstacles to and opportunities for women's employment in tourism and ICT. It does not claim to provide a systematic comparison of conditions in the three case study countries. Detailed country specific information can be found in the country reports (www.etf.europa.eu/publications).

The respondents to the survey were either managers or human resources managers of the companies selected for interview, hereafter referred to as "employers" or "companies". The participants in the focus groups were young women aged 15-29 studying, working or looking for a job in the relevant sectors, hereafter referred to as "young women".

4.1 THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

4.1.1 Female employment by education level in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia

Using data from the MEDA-ETE project (ETF, 2010) some general observations can be made on the impact of education and training on women's activity, employment and unemployment rates in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia:

1. education has a stronger impact on women's than men's activity rates;
2. higher education substantially boosts women's activity rates;
3. the active female population is therefore more educated than the active male population even though the proportion of illiterate active women is higher;

4. education seems to have a lesser impact on the actual employment of women. Unemployment rates of women are higher than men's regardless of their education level and they increase more with higher educational levels for women than men. Moreover, the employed female population is more educated than the employed male population.

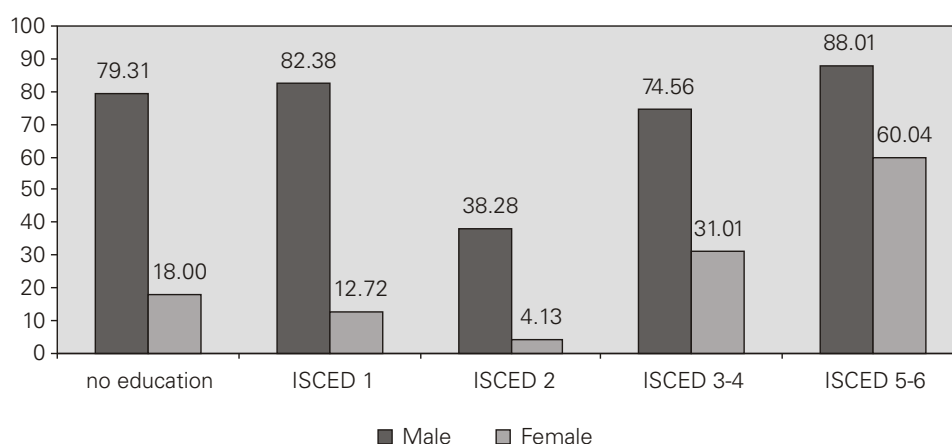
Education and activity rates

In Egypt, according to ETF calculations in the framework of the EC MEDA-ETE project (MEDA-ETE, 2009), men's activity rates increase from 82% with primary education (ISCED level 1) to 88% with higher education (ISCED 5–6) while women's activity rates increase from 13% to 60% with higher education in 2007 (see **GRAPH 9**).

In other words women's activity rates more than quadrupled with higher education compared to those with primary education while men's participation increased only by about 6 percentage points. On the other hand, women with primary or secondary education are less active than women without education which reflects the importance of female agricultural work that does not require schooling (47% of all employed women) and informal sector in Egypt. Both men and women with lower secondary education have the lowest activity rates among their respective gender groups.

In Jordan, education has a stronger impact also on men's activity rates (see **GRAPH 10**). However, the increase of the activity rates from primary level education to higher education was 21 percentage points for men and 61 percentage points for women which shows the stronger impact of education and, in particular, of higher education on the activity rates of women also in Jordan. The very small agricultural sector is noticeable in the low activity rates of women without education compared to Egypt. Women make up the majority of graduates from community colleges (66%) (see Chapter 3) but that level of education does not yet appear to be enough to encourage female participation to the same extent as university education while men's activity rates are considerably higher among those with upper secondary and post-secondary education including community colleges.

In Tunisia the activity rates of men by education level vary the least among the three countries. With higher education men's activity rates were 4 percentage points lower compared to men with primary education while the activity rates of women more than doubled from 26% with primary education to 56% with higher education (see **GRAPH 11**). Primary education increases women's activity rates more than in Egypt and Jordan.

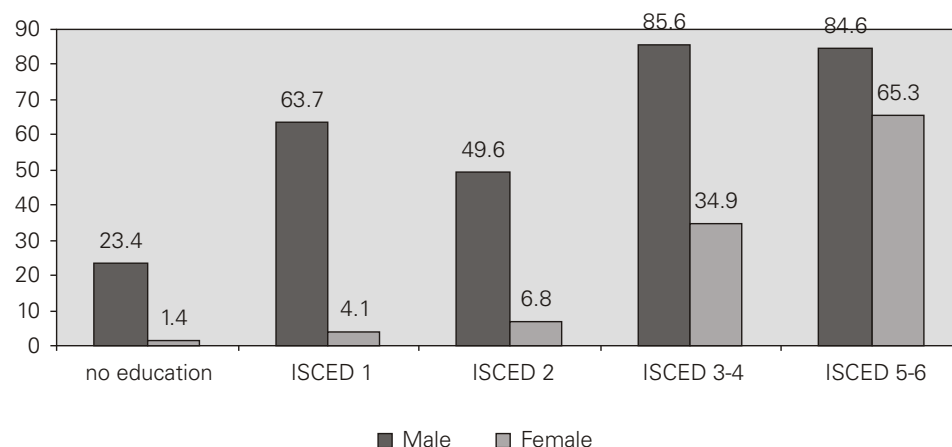
GRAPH 9: ACTIVITY RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN EGYPT, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-EITE data collection.

In summary, education has an impact on the activity rates of both men and women but it has a lesser effect on men's activity. Overall, education has a positive impact on women's activity in the labour market but it is only with higher education²⁴ that women's activity rates make the great leap upwards. Men seem to seek or find work more easily regardless of their education level. This matches society's expectations of men's responsibility as the main or sole bread-winner no matter the investment made in their education and training. Women, on the other hand, need education, and in particular higher education, before being encouraged to be active in the labour market (or before being expected to work). It can also be that higher educated women remain active since the opportunity costs in becoming inactive become much higher after lengthy and costly investment in years of education.

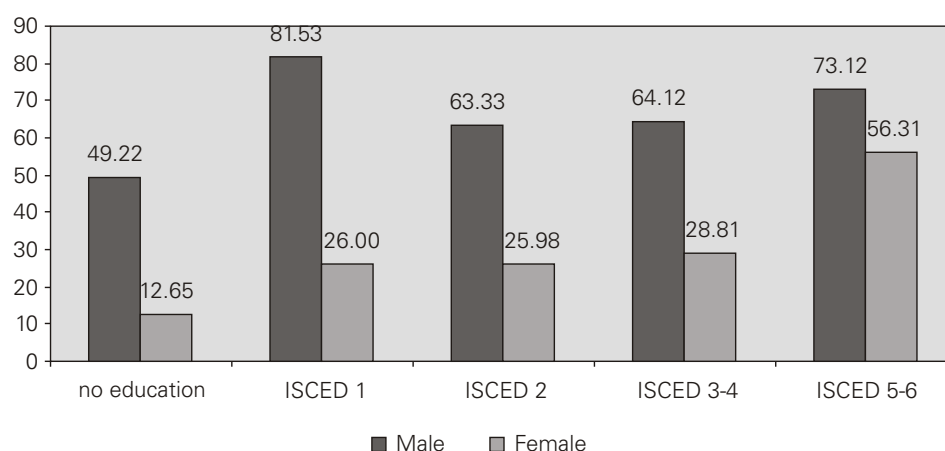
It is also interesting to note that primary education has proportionally more impact on men's activity rates while for women having no education or primary education has little impact in Jordan, some impact in Tunisia and actually a negative impact in Egypt. This reflects the importance of female agricultural work among the illiterate (Egypt and Tunisia, while in Jordan agriculture employs few people) or the non-availability or non-suitability of other low-skilled jobs for women that they could perform with primary education (Jordan, Egypt).

It is noteworthy that the activity rates of men decrease from primary education to secondary education in all three countries. Further research would be necessary to understand the reasons for this.

GRAPH 10: ACTIVITY RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN JORDAN, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-EITE data collection

²⁴ This is also true for the intermediate diploma (ISCED 4) in Jordan due to the specificities of the education system where post secondary community colleges are important education providers, in particular for women.

GRAPH 11: ACTIVITY RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN TUNISIA, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection

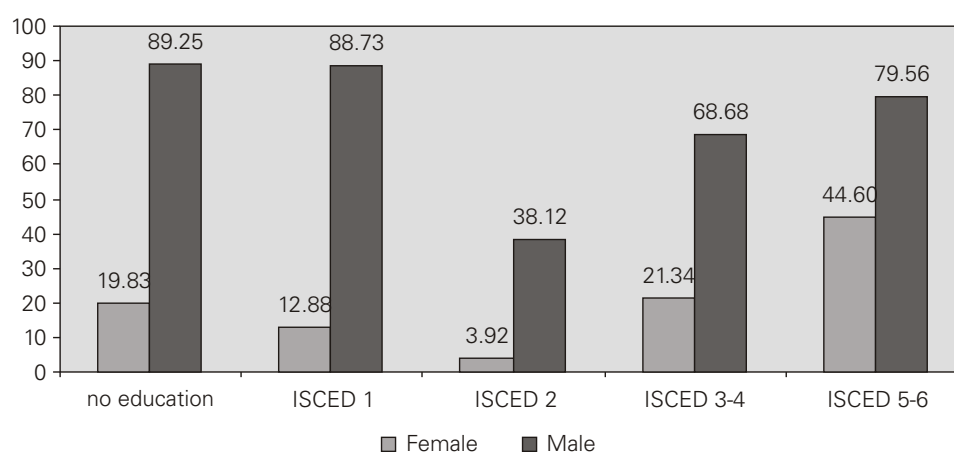
These tendencies result in an active female population that is more educated than the male active population in all three countries. In most countries of the world a higher proportion of the active female labour force has attained tertiary education (ILO, 2010).

Education, employment and unemployment

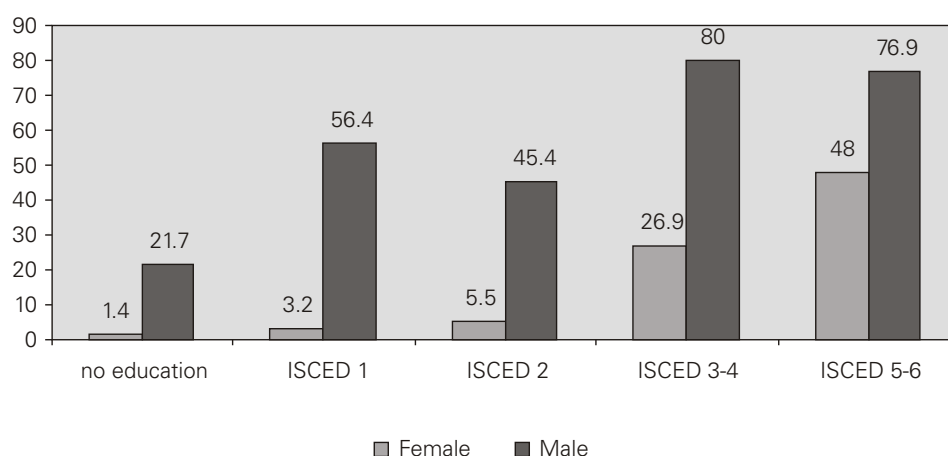
Looking at the labour force participation rates alone does not show whether there has been an increase in female well-being. The ILO points out that although there has been a slow increase in the activity rates of women at global level, unemployment, underemployment, part-time work and other forms of non-traditional work have actually increased at the same time (ILO, 2010). Due to the limited

scope of the study, the following looks only at the employment and unemployment rates for women in the three countries.

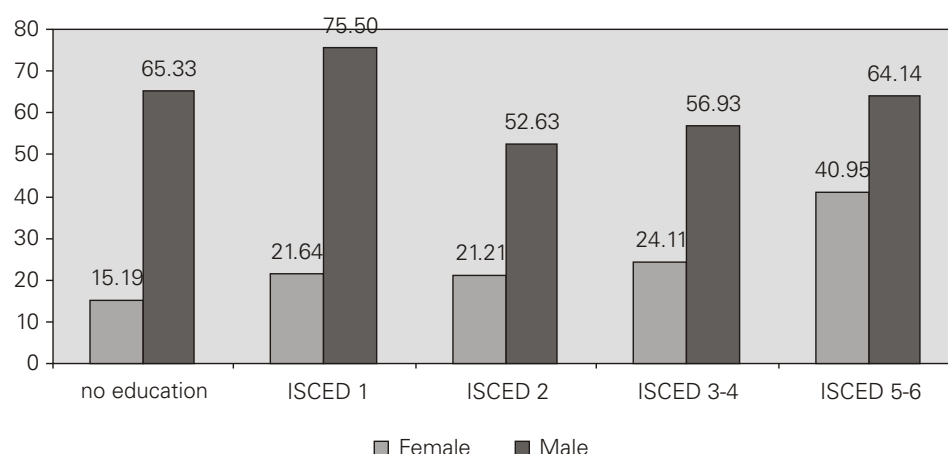
Employment rates are defined as the share of the actually employed population from the working age population, i.e. the share of the employed population of the potential work force (whether active or inactive). The employment rates of women do increase with education level to the same extent as their activity rates. However, the difference between men's and women's employment rates is wider at the higher education level than it is between their respective activity rates. Higher education therefore seems to ensure proportionally better access to employment for men than women.

GRAPH 12: EMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN EGYPT, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection

GRAPH 13: EMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN JORDAN, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection

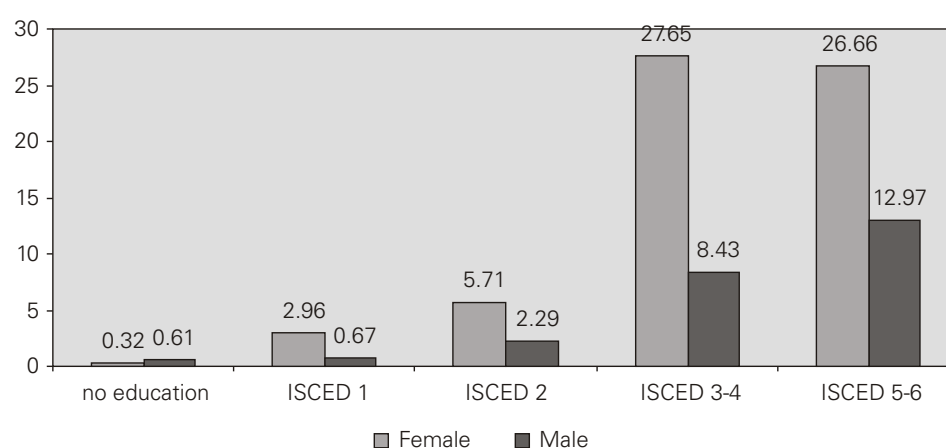
GRAPH 14: EMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN TUNISIA, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection

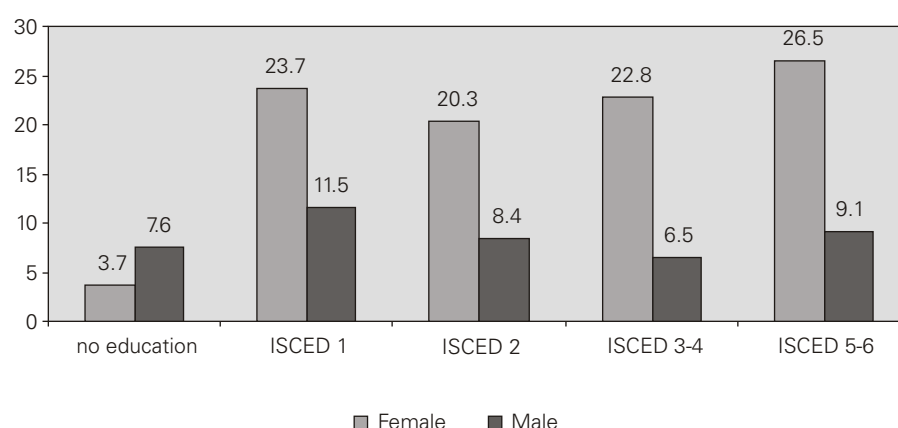
Three issues are worth mentioning in this regard. First, there are proportionally more higher educated women than men in the employed labour force even though their employment rates are lower than the employment rates of higher educated men. This reflects the absolute number of women with higher education available in the countries (see chapter 3 for higher education participation) and the greater impact of higher education on women's activity rates. Second, there are at the same time proportionally more illiterate women than men in the employed labour force in Egypt and Tunisia which means that there are proportionally more active women than men working in low-skilled and low-paid jobs. Third, as for the activity rates, men's employment rates decrease with lower secondary education in all three countries and in Egypt also for women.

Regarding unemployment, first of all it increases for both males and females with education level due to the mismatch between the relevance of the qualifications for labour market needs. Second, female unemployment rates are higher than men's at all education levels. This shows how much more difficult it is for active women to integrate into the labour market regardless of their education level. Being educated does not facilitate women's access to jobs to the same extent that it does for men. It seems that women are doubly penalised by the weak relevance of the education system and discrimination on the basis of gender in the labour market.

Unemployment rates in Egypt are also characterised by the much lower levels of no education to lower secondary

GRAPH 15: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVELS IN EGYPT, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-EET data collection

GRAPH 16: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN JORDAN, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-EET data collection

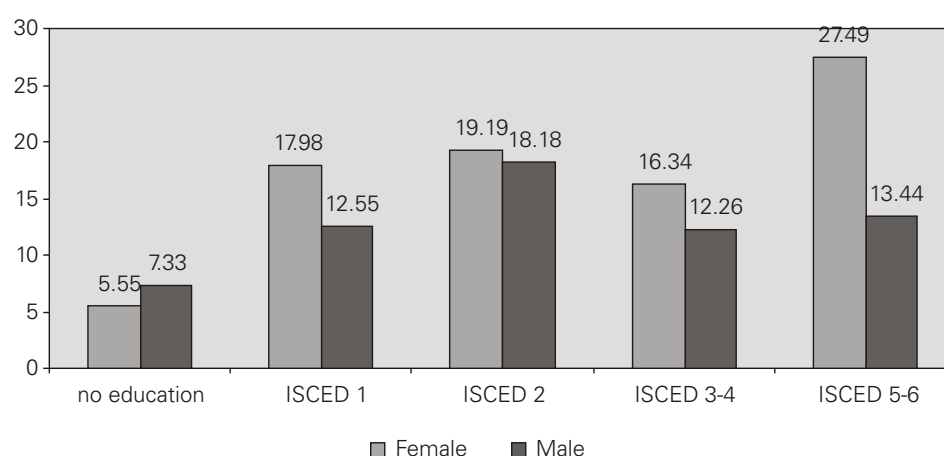
level (see **GRAPH 15**). This is due to the importance of agricultural and informal work at those education levels, which does not show in the unemployment rates.

Overall, education level has a lesser impact on unemployment in Jordan (see **GRAPH 16**). Men's unemployment is close to 10% regardless of education level and for women it stands at around 20-25%, although it is much lower for illiterate women.

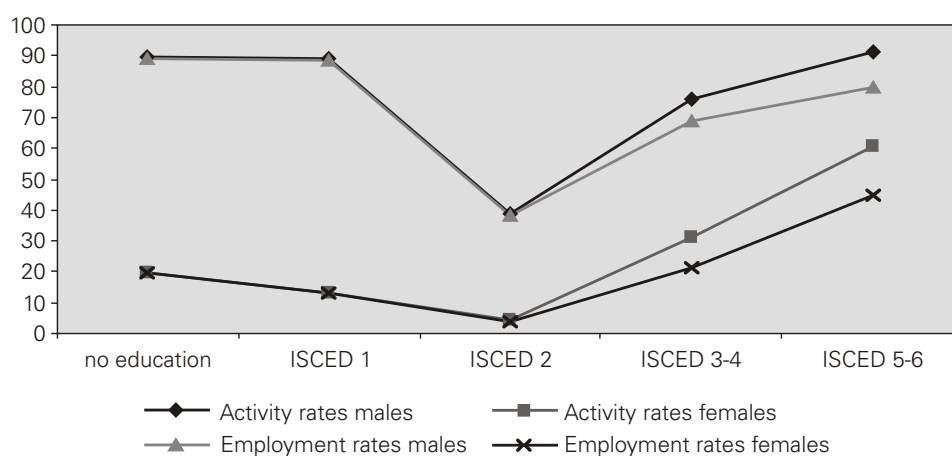
In Tunisia women's and men's unemployment rates are slightly lower than in Jordan. However, the Tunisian labour market seems to be characterised by very high unemployment among the higher educated (see chapter 3). Men's unemployment rates are higher than in Egypt and Jordan; this results in a smaller difference between the unemployment rates of men and women in Tunisia than in Egypt and Jordan (see **GRAPH 17**).

Furthermore, unemployment increases more for women than men with higher education levels. This can be seen in the gap between activity and employment rates that widen for women with tertiary level education more than for men (see **GRAPHS 18-20**).

In summary, the fact that women's unemployment rates increase with education can partly be attributed to the fact that education raises women's aspirations and encourages them to become active in the labour market. The low unemployment rates of women without education is due to the higher numbers absorbed by unpaid domestic work and informal labour, which does not show in unemployment rates. At the same time these trends demonstrate how much more difficult it is for women to actually get a job even with increasing levels of education. A bigger share of individual and national investment in women's than men's education is lost in the productive process.

GRAPH 17: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN TUNISIA, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-EET data collection

GRAPH 18: ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND BY EDUCATION LEVEL IN EGYPT, 2007

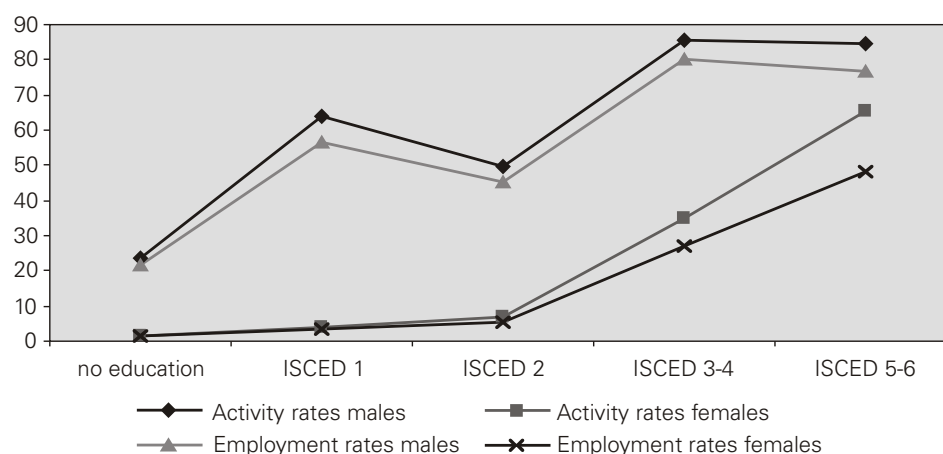
Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-EET data collection

4.1.2 Education and training and female employment in tourism and ICT

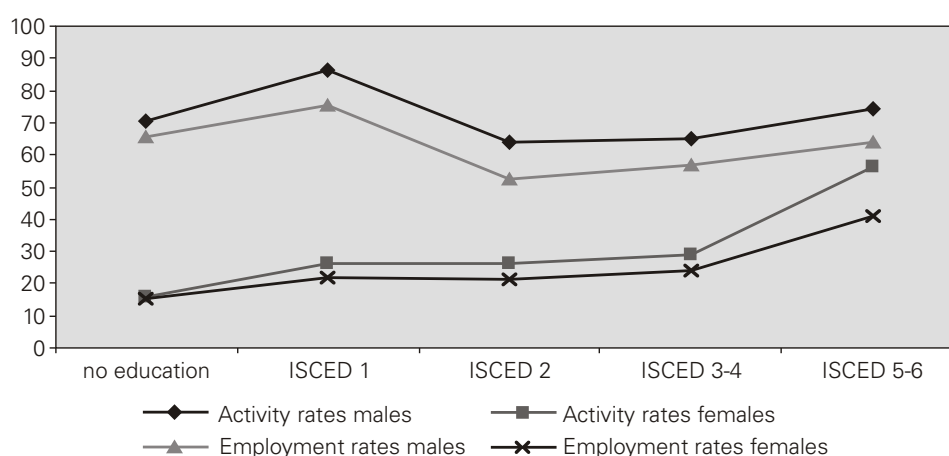
There is not enough nor complete information on the enrolments and graduates (by gender) in different tourism or ICT education pathways (secondary or university, general or vocational) to be able to assess the access to employment of women and men having chosen these study fields. The following is a short comparison of the education levels of women employed in the companies surveyed in the two sectors and a brief description of the available education in tourism and ICT.

Tourism

In Egypt, tourism recruits relatively well-educated women; employers estimated that 48% of women in the companies surveyed have a university degree and 43%, vocational education. Taking into consideration that the majority of Egyptian women do not have education (44% of the women aged 15 or older), it is clear that the tourism sector is accessible only for a minority of the female Egyptian population. Higher education levels of females in tourism, both at secondary vocational education and higher education, would certainly increase women's employment opportunities in tourism.

GRAPH 19: ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN JORDAN, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection

GRAPH 20: ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER AND EDUCATION LEVEL IN TUNISIA, 2007

Sources: National Stats Offices, according to MEDA-ETE data collection

Egypt has a number of specialised education institutes in the field of tourism, ranging from universities, at the highest level, to specialised vocational schools providing basic skills in one or another of the branches of tourism. The highest density of faculties, institutes and schools is found in Cairo and Alexandria; this decreases considerably in tourism governorates such as Hurghada, South Sinai and Delta, although these account for the largest labour force in the tourism sector. The technical institutes that offer tourism-related courses accept students who have finished secondary school and offer two-year and four-year study periods. Women represented 38% of the students enrolled in these courses in 2007 (EU TVET, 2010). There are no recent data about the enrolment of students in university faculties on courses linked to tourism.

In Jordan tourism also recruits quite well-qualified women: 35% of the female employees in the surveyed companies were estimated by employers to have secondary general education, 34% university education and 25% vocational education. Education and training in hotel and tourism in Jordan is currently offered in comprehensive secondary schools, Vocational Training Cooperation centres, community colleges and universities in both public and private establishments. Comprehensive secondary schools produce the highest number of graduates, but women constituted only 2% of the pupils in hotel programmes of comprehensive secondary schools in 2008/09. The majority of women in tourism education are concentrated in universities. Most of them are enrolled in tourist guidance and the rest in hotel (and tour) management studies. A minority of women are

enrolled in community colleges (16% of all students in the field) and vocational training centres.

In Tunisia, tourism recruits relatively less educated men and women. According to the National Statistics Institute (INS, 2007), 90% of workers in the hotel sector have secondary level education or below. In the surveyed hotels, 38% of the female employees were estimated to have secondary education, 36% vocational education and 15% primary education or less. Only a minority of female employees in the hotels in Tunisia have higher education. Men working in the hotels are slightly more educated and almost half of them had vocational education.

Tourism education and training at secondary level in Tunisia is offered by eight private vocational hotel schools and by ten private centres. There are three state higher education institutes and ten private institutes which offer Bachelor's and Master's degrees in tourism. The majority of students in tourism attend vocational secondary hotel schools but girls are a minority in these schools. According to the Tunisian Hotel Federation, in 2009/10, only 20% of students at the ten vocational public tourism schools were female, less than the share of girls in vocational in general (30%). Few people study tourism at public universities and, in 2008/09, women represented only 32% of these.

While the data is not sufficient to draw firm conclusions on the impact of women's education and training in the tourism on their employment in the sector, it can be said that tourism studies are not very accessible or attractive for women and women tend to be under-represented in this study field, which may partly explain their low presence among the employees in the sector. If there is more demand than supply for female labour in tourism sector, educational orientation of women to this sector should be enhanced. Tourism could offer a variety of jobs for women, low skilled, skilled and professional.

Information and communication technologies

The ICT sector recruits women mainly among university graduates: in all the three countries employers estimated that over 70% of their female employees had higher education.

In Egypt, current female employment (in the surveyed companies) does not yet correspond to the share of women among university students. ICT education is organised around two specialities: IT and communications. In 2009 females represented 38% of the IT speciality graduates and 33% of the communications speciality graduates according to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology but the official figures of the Ministry of Higher Education reveal that women represent 49% of the ICT graduates overall. Egypt has put ICT training at the top of its agenda and enrolment at higher education in ICT has been increasing since the mid 1990s. The total number of ICT graduates reached 9,311 in 2007/08 with an annual growth rate of 17% (MCIT, 2010).

In Jordan courses in ICT skills and computer literacy have become one of the most popular VET streams at secondary level, especially among women. Figures from the Cisco Networking Academy programme show that since January 2008, around 36% of the newly enrolled students in Jordan were women. Women are a minority among the IT students at university level which could partly explain their relatively small share of the total employment in the sector.

Also in Tunisia the share of women in the total of employees in the surveyed companies is far from their share of ICT students at universities. The number of students studying IT, multimedia and telecommunications at university has increased sharply in recent years and in 2008/09 they accounted for 13% of all university students. Women are well represented: they accounted for 50% of graduates in this field in 2008 (MESRST, 2009). In addition to the 13 public universities, ICT is taught in four specialised institutes. Girls and boys can choose an IT stream in Tunisia starting from the second year of general secondary school but data was not available on the share of females and males selecting this stream.

Female enrolment in ICT studies at university level, from where most of the employees in the sector are recruited, seems to be increasing in Egypt and Tunisia but comparing this to the female employment in the surveyed companies reveals that the access to ICT jobs does not follow the trend and factors other than education must be playing a role in transition to work in ICT. Women's enrolment in ICT studies still needs promotion, in particular in Jordan.

4.2 FEMALE JOB POTENTIAL IN THE TOURISM AND ICT SECTORS

This assessment of the potential of the two sectors for female employment is based on desk research and the employers' survey.

4.2.1 Tourism

Tourism is a leading sector in the region, which is extremely rich in cultural and natural heritage. Government development programmes in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia have all identified tourism as a priority sector for future economic development.

Tourism also employs large numbers of people. It provides direct employment for almost 7% of the Egyptian workforce and another 6% indirectly (EU TVET Programme, 2010). In Jordan, tourism is estimated to provide direct and indirect jobs for 11% of the workforce and, between 2002 and 2009, the total employed by the sector almost doubled (Fischer, 2010). In Tunisia, tourism employs around 12% of the workforce (ONTT, 2008).

People employed in these two sectors tend to be young in all three countries which makes them very relevant for the potential employment of the target group of the study. The trend seems to be strongest in Jordan where 39% of the companies surveyed estimated that a full two-thirds of their staff was under 30.

In spite of the ongoing economic crisis, only 6% of the tourism companies surveyed in the three countries saw their financial situation as bad or very bad and about a third were planning to create new jobs during the coming year²⁵. However, over the twelve months before the survey only a quarter of companies had taken on new staff while about another quarter had let employees go.

Tourism companies mainly employ men, and, as the survey shows, the tendency is for this sector to become even more male-dominated. In the companies surveyed, in Egypt²⁶ only 10% of the workforce was female, in Jordan²⁷ 20% and in Tunisia 23%. Reflecting this against the overall female activity rates in the three countries (22%, 23%, 26%) shows that far fewer women are represented in tourism sector than in the workforce at large. Furthermore, females represented only 8% of new recruits during the twelve months before the survey in Egypt and Jordan compared to 23% of new recruits in Tunisia.

4.2.2 Information and Communication Technologies

A relatively new sector, ICT has emerged in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia over the past two decades and is therefore not yet as big an employer as tourism. Between 78% and 94% of the companies surveyed were set up after 1989 and the sector employs a large proportion of young people who are more likely to possess the skills required than older cohorts. The trend is the strongest in Tunisia where 34% of companies declared that over 90% of their employees were under 30.

The governments of the three countries see ICT as a priority sector, due to its potential for growth, creating jobs, attracting investment and boosting exports, and are investing accordingly. ICT accounts for around 9% of formal employment in Egypt (CAPMAS, 2009, KILM 2008) and the number of people employed in the sector grew by 4% in 2008/09 (MCIT, 2010b). In Jordan, in 2007 the ICT sector only accounted for around 1% of jobs (KILM, 2009, Int@j, 2010) but between 2003 and 2007, the average rate of growth in employment was almost 7% (Int@j, 2010). In Tunisia the share of ICT in total employment can be estimated at 1.3% (MFPE, 2008, UTICA, 2010)²⁸.

While the ICT does not currently employ a great number of people, the survey shows it does have the potential to do so. Around 76-79% of ICT companies surveyed see their financial situation as good or very good and 62% of Egyptian and 50% of Jordanian ICT companies were planning to recruit people in the year following the survey. The Tunisian companies are also optimistic about their financial prospects while a smaller share, some 21% are planning to take on staff. In 43% of the Egyptian companies surveyed, 34% of the Jordanian ones and in 60% of the Tunisian ones, the number of employees had increased during the last twelve months before the survey. All of this points to a sector which is generating employment.

Women are already benefiting to some extent from the growth of the ICT sector and from increasing demand for the services of young people. Women accounted for 27% of employees in the ICT companies surveyed in Egypt²⁹, 23% in Jordan³⁰ and 41% in Tunisia. In Tunisia, the high share of female employees is partly due to the inclusion of call centres in the sector sample but, even when call centres are excluded, the female share remains at 35%³¹.

The ICT sector is clearly less male-dominated than tourism. While women are under-represented, with respect to their overall activity rates, they are better represented in the ICT sector than in the workforce overall in all three countries. Furthermore, 31% of new recruits over the last twelve months before the survey in Egypt, 25% in Jordan and 54% in Tunisia were females, something which signals a positive trend for working women.

4.3 WORKING WOMEN

To understand the obstacles to and opportunities for women's employment in tourism and ICT, it is necessary to investigate where women work in each sector and which jobs they perform. ICT employment is by its nature concentrated in the capital regions of the countries. In tourism women seem to have easier access to jobs in the capital urban areas, while there are important tourism locations in more remote rural areas too. Both horizontal and vertical segregation by gender is significant in tourism and ICT companies.

4.3.1 Tourism

Employment in tourism, as well as being heavily concentrated in the hotel sub-sector, is also limited to some regions. In Jordan, tourism companies tend to be

25 45% of companies surveyed in Egypt, 30% in Jordan and 35% in Tunisia planned to invest in new technologies.

26 Estimates of female employment in Egypt in previous studies vary. CAPMAS has estimated women to constitute 22%-28% of the workforce in tourism (CAPMAS, 2009). However, the CAPMAS 2008 labour force survey estimated only 20.5% of male and 0.2% of female labour force to be working in hotels and restaurants.

27 It should be noted that if the airline Royal Jordanian, which is classified as a tourist agency according to Jordanian classifications, were excluded from the sample, women's share of employment in tourism would drop to 12%. This is closer to the 10% figure given by Fischer in 2010.

28 ETF calculations. The figure includes 10,000 employees of IT service companies, 17,000 of call centres, 2,000 in hardware distribution, 5,000 in installation, 7,000 operators in telecommunication.

29 CAPMAS 2009 labour force survey estimated this share to be 19%, representing 1% of the total number of employed women in Egypt.

30 In Jordan, a survey estimated that 24% of employees are women (Int@j, 2010).

31 The Tunisian Ministry of Communication Technologies has estimated the share to be around 25%. <http://www.infocom.tn>

based in the capital Amman (70%) and Aqaba (11%) (MTA, 2009). In Tunisia most hotels and most employment in the hotel business is located on the East Coast (Hammamet, Sousse, Monastir, Mahdia and Djerba) (ONTT, 2007, ONEQ, 2007). However, the proportion of female employees in Tunisia is proportionately higher in the hotels of Greater Tunis - where they account for 30% of employees - and the north and north west of the country (35% of employees). This is a reflection of more traditional attitudes in rural areas and the south (just 16% of employees). In Egypt, hotels are concentrated in the major tourist locations of Greater Cairo, South Sinai and Upper Egypt. As in Tunisia, female employment in hotels is concentrated in the capital: according to the 2007 CAPMAS survey, 60% of hotel jobs occupied by women are concentrated in Cairo, Giza and Alexandria, i.e. Greater Cairo while another 20% are in the four main tourist destinations outside Greater Cairo - Luxor, Aswan, South Sinai and the Red Sea area.

In numerical terms, most tourism jobs occupied by women in Jordan are in hotels, especially four- and five-star hotels, but the proportion of female employment is actually higher in travel agencies (27%) and tourist shops (21%) (MTA, 2008). In Egypt, three- to five-star hotels are the main providers of jobs to women (CAPMAS, 2007). In Tunisia, women's share of jobs did not vary according to the category of hotel.

Gender segregation of jobs is marked. In Egypt, women tend to work in administration, reception and room service and in Jordan, they are usually found in administration, maintenance and finance³². In Tunisia, this concentration of female employment is even stronger as 70% of women work in reception and room service. On the other

hand, reception and room service seem to be particularly unpopular among women in the Jordanian hotel sector compared to other functions (see **TABLE 4**).

Bars and restaurants are strongly male-dominated domains in all three countries; women represent only 4% of bar and restaurant workers in Egypt, 10% in Jordan and 7% in Tunisia. This work calls for flexible hours and night shifts, something which women with family obligations may find hard to do. Night shifts are also forbidden in all the three countries by law even though the legislation allows for exceptions. Bars and restaurants also provide more opportunities to come into contact with alcohol and clients, something which is often seen as unacceptable for women. It is also difficult for women to enter the kitchen, traditionally seen as a man's professional domain, when they have few female colleagues.

This gender division does not appear to be changing as the recruitment during the twelve months before the survey followed a similar pattern. New female recruits in Egypt and Tunisia were mainly, and increasingly, taken on to work in reception and room service (almost 80%) and in Jordan in administration (46%) while recruitment for restaurant and bar work remained as male-dominated as before.

"There are no female head chefs or maitres d'hôtel in five-star hotels in Tunisia, with the exception of one maitre in a restaurant in a big hotel in Sousse. The reason given is that high-end restaurants require training as a sommelier, which is a profession reserved for men."

Young woman employed in tourism, Tunisia

TABLE 4: EMPLOYEES BY GENDER AND DEPARTMENT IN TOURISM COMPANIES IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA

	Egypt		Jordan		Tunisia	
	% males	% females	% males	% females	% males	% females
Sales and marketing	3.6	15.2	6.2	5.7	1.3	2.2
Reception and room services	16.8	22.7	9.8	5.9	16.0	70.4
Food and beverages	28.9	11.1	11.9	5.2	46.1	11.5
Maintenance	11.9	5	17.2	24.7	10.7	0.2
Finance	10.7	14.2	19.6	19.3	5.3	4.1
Administrative support	12.8	26.9	35.2	39.2	3.1	4.8
Other	15.3	4.9	-	-	17.5	6.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Employers' survey

³² The proposed structure by department is artificial though based on functions that are normally found in any given tourist/hotel establishment. The respondents assigned employees to different departments at their discretion and inconsistencies between employers may have occurred. Owing to the prevalence of multi-tasking and the fact that administrative support is a function found across several departments, the distinction between departments is not clear-cut.

In terms of their hierarchical position, men tend to be more evenly distributed throughout job categories³³. Women account for between 5% of unskilled workers in Egypt and 27% of unskilled workers in Tunisia. Compared to the overall share of female employment in the sector in each country, women are over-represented as high and middle managers (39%) and professionals (13%) in Egypt, as professionals (24%) in Jordan and as unskilled workers (27%) in Tunisia.

Indeed, tourism tends to attract better educated women in Egypt and, to some extent, in Jordan. In Egypt, women are concentrated in professional and skilled jobs (50% and 24% of women respectively) and in Jordan they are most likely to work either as professionals (36%) or as unskilled workers (34%) (see **TABLE 5**). The Tunisian tourism sector is more likely to employ both men and particularly women in slightly less qualified positions as 50% and 55% respectively are employed as skilled workers. Women are well represented in this category (24% of employees) and over-represented in the category of unskilled workers (27%)³⁴.

As most female new recruits are hired for positions where they are already over-represented, this indicates that in tourism employment for women is still mainly limited to certain jobs. Gender roles evolve however over

time and some small changes can be observed in the patterns of recruitment. First, in Egypt an increase in the proportion of women being recruited for reception and room service (from 23% to 78%) and for bar and restaurant (from 11% to 20%) may change their current distribution in the sector and signal that it is becoming acceptable for women to work in more visible posts where they have direct contact with clients. Second, in Tunisia while women are still mainly recruited as skilled workers (52% of all the newly recruited women) a growing proportion are being taken on as professionals (26% of the total newly recruited professionals). This could indicate that there is a potential for hotels in Tunisia to recruit university educated women, not just unskilled and skilled female workers.

4.3.2 Information and communication technologies

Due to the nature of the sector, ICT companies are usually to be found in urban areas and capital cities. For both women and men, employment in the production department is the most common form of work (see **TABLE 6**). In Jordan a significant proportion of male and female employees are assigned to the administrative and sales and marketing department as well.

TABLE 5: EMPLOYEES BY GENDER AND CATEGORIES IN TOURISM COMPANIES IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA

	Egypt		Jordan		Tunisia	
	% males	% females	% males	% females	% males	% females
Top managers	1.9	2.5	6.3	3.9	2.4	1.4
Middle managers	6.3	15.3	7.2	5.3	7.3	7.1
Professionals	40.3	50.4	28.4	36	22.9	17.7
Skilled workers	35.5	24.2	25.7	20.3	50.4	54.8
Unskilled workers	15.0	6.9	32.4	34.5	12.7	16.4
Other	1.0	0.8	-	-	4.3	2.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Employers' survey

³³ The following categories were used: high-level managers, middle-level managers, professionals (people who have at least higher education and/or management skills), skilled workers (those who have high or technical school education and experience) and unskilled workers (those with no specific training regardless of the education level acquired). The categories are not clear-cut according to education credentials and respondents assigned employees to different categories at their discretion, so inconsistencies between employers may have occurred.

³⁴ These cross-country differences are partially due to the composition of the sample by sub-sector and the types of function/department women are mainly hired for (e.g. more women in reception and room services in Tunisia requiring middle level skills).

TABLE 6: EMPLOYEES BY GENDER AND DEPARTMENT IN ICT COMPANIES IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA

	Egypt		Jordan		Tunisia	
	% males	% females	% males	% females	% males	% females
Sales and marketing	11.7	10.8	16.5	32.1	7.1	12
Production	49.2	64.1	36.4	31.7	73.9	69.5
Maintenance	13.1	2.6	8.5	2.4	7.2	2.7
Finance	8.6	5.7	11.7	4.5	2.2	4.2
Administrative support	10.7	13.2	26.9	29.3	8.5	10.5
Others	6.8	3.6	-	-	1.1	1.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Employers' survey

Women are best represented in production departments in Egypt (31 % of the employees in production), in sales and marketing in Jordan (37%) and in finance in Tunisia (56%). In all three countries, women are severely under-represented in maintenance. During the twelve months prior to the survey, companies continued to recruit women in production (and administrative support and sales and marketing in Jordan). There was an increase in recruitments for sales and marketing in Tunisia probably due to the importance of call centres in the sector.

Working in ICT calls for people with a high level of skills. In both Egypt and Jordan, women and men are most likely to be employed as professionals. In Tunisia the degree of vertical segregation is stronger; men are more likely to work as middle managers and professionals and women as skilled workers. This is partly due to call centres but also shows how the feminisation of a sector, i.e. increasing numbers of female employees, leads to the concentration of female employment lower down the job hierarchy (in this case in call centres). Having said that, even in the companies surveyed in Tunisia, 72% of women and 79% of men were employed as managers and professionals making the sector a significant employer of highly skilled workers, particularly university graduates. In Egypt the ICT sector seems to almost exclusively employ women with higher education; 97% of women work as managers or professionals compared to 80% of men. In Jordan 64% of the women employed by the surveyed companies worked as professionals (see **TABLE 7**).

This distribution of male and female employment results in women being over-represented as middle managers (27%) and professionals (31%) in Egypt, as professionals (34%) in Jordan and as skilled (55%) and unskilled workers (47%) in Tunisia. The other trend they highlight is the growing numbers of women being recruited as skilled

workers in Tunisia which may once again be due to jobs being created in call centres.

4.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN'S TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

Mismatches between supply and demand in the labour market affect everyone. However, the higher rates of unemployment and lower activity rates of women outlined in Chapter 2 indicate there is clearly a gender dimension to this issue.

In order to better understand the transition from school to work issues, the experiences and expectations of young women who are still either at school or currently employed or seeking employment or have dropped out of the labour market are important. Employers on their side determine the workforce they need, how they recruit and how they assess the candidates' fitness for the job. This section looks closely at women's and employers' perceptions, expectations and behaviour (as reported by them in the employers survey and the focus group discussions with young women).

4.4.1 Education choice

Data on female and male enrolment in education is becoming increasingly reliable but it is still not possible to give precise figures comparing their participation in ICT and tourism education in the region. What is clear is that the numbers of female students are increasing faster in ICT than in tourism partly due to the importance of VET in tourism training which is often a less attractive option for girls and women than more academic streams.

TABLE 7: EMPLOYEES BY GENDER AND CATEGORY IN ICT COMPANIES IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA

	Egypt		Jordan		Tunisia	
	% males	% females	% males	% females	% males	% females
Top managers	3.4	1.8	4.4	2.1	7.1	3.2
Middle managers	7.2	7.6	6.5	4.9	37.8	29.9
Professionals	69.2	88	37.8	64.3	33.7	29.7
Skilled workers	11.4	1.6	22.6	13.2	20.4	35.8
Unskilled workers	8.4	1	28.7	15.5	0.9	1.1
Others	0.4	-	-	-	0.1	0.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Employers' survey

According to tourism companies, there are fewer women than men applying for the jobs available. Young women interviewed report that women do not join the tourism sector because of society's negative attitudes towards women working in the sector, particularly in hotels. Those who do opt to study tourism find the sector attractive for various reasons; the chance to work with people, learn languages and other skills, good job prospects and salaries and the opportunities for cultural exchange.

Family members usually play a decisive role in encouraging girls to choose this education path; sometimes, interestingly, the encouragement comes from mothers or older sisters, friends or cousins already working in the sector. This points to the importance of appropriate role models for young women. In many other cases young women have to overcome opposition from their families in order to pursue their goal. Some participants to the focus group discussions also mention that their families agree to them studying this field in full knowledge that they will not allow them to actually work in the industry.

"Parents prefer that girls study easy subjects because eventually they will get married and stay home".

Young female student in tourism, Jordan

In ICT there are also more men than women applying for jobs although the tendency is changing in Tunisia with the emergence of the call centre industry. Young women interviewed believe that working in the ICT sector has many advantages such as challenging work, a creative, enjoyable atmosphere and good job prospects and salaries. They think that it fits very well with what they see as female characteristics such as patience, good organisational skills and precision.

The choice to study ICT is often influenced by teachers, parents and friends. Some young women say their families encourage them to study in scientific streams citing better job prospects in the future. Others note that they chose ICT because it calls for characteristics from both scientific and literary streams. Moreover young women believe that more and more females are studying science majors because female students are doing well in these fields.

Young women feel the need for more professional advice when making education choices. This is true not only when choosing the field of study but also during their time as students in order to gain more knowledge of the industry, its various subsectors and what it is really like to work there.

4.4.2 Recruitment and job search

Women are usually better represented in sectors where recruitment is based on open competitions or standardised and transparent criteria instead of informal practice. This is also true when it comes to promotion (Padavic & Reskin, 2002). This partly explains women's higher share in jobs in the public sector. In more traditional societies and rural areas where women are less mobile and less active in the public sphere, their lack of networks is also believed to contribute to their difficulties in finding work.

In the private sector, recruitment procedures tend to be less standardised and formal. The tourism companies surveyed regularly use personal contacts and recommendations for recruiting new employees. Advertisements are also important as a recruitment channel in Egypt and Jordan. Only in Tunisia do employment offices play a role (see **TABLE 8**).

TABLE 8: CHANNELS THROUGH WHICH NEW YOUNG EMPLOYEES ARE RECRUITED IN TOURISM COMPANIES IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA

	Egypt	Jordan	Tunisia
	%	%	%
Advertisements	31.9	39.2	11.7
Online	6.8	12	1.0
Through an employment office	10.6	3.8	32.8
Through an interim work agency	3.9	0.4	1.3
Personal contacts and recommendations	33.3	29.7	33.9
Through an education institution	9.2	13.9	15.5
Job fair	3.9	1	-
Others	0.4	-	1.7
DK/NA			2.1
Total	100	100	100

Source: Employers' survey

In ICT personal contacts and recommendations still play an important role in recruitment, as do advertisements, but online recruitment has also become popular (see **TABLE 9**).

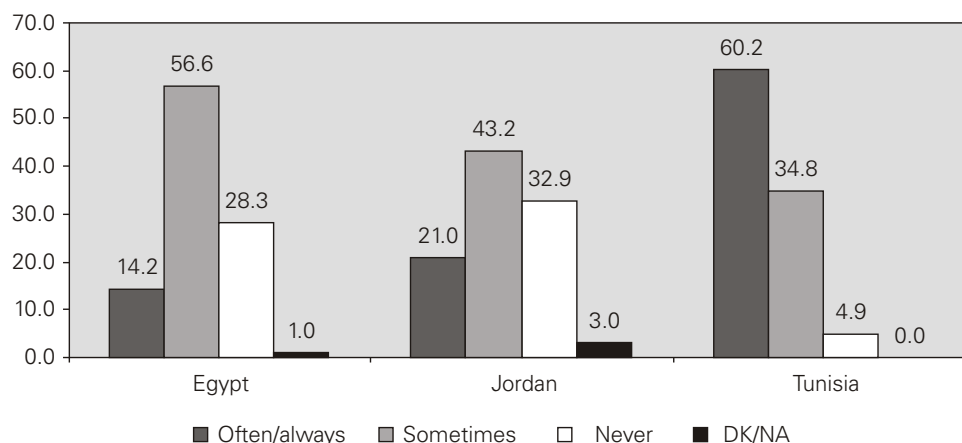
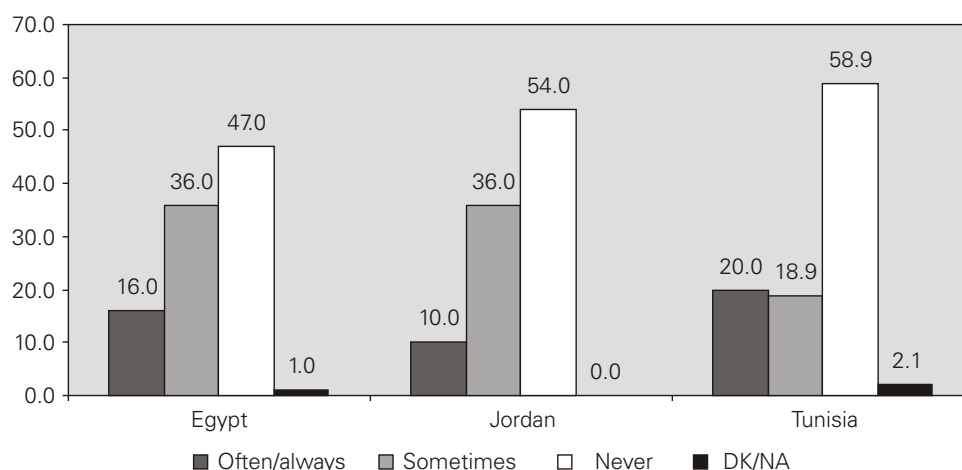
Young women seem to be active in their search for jobs. They use various channels including direct spontaneous

applications to companies but also recognise the importance of personal contacts and networks for finding work. In the ICT sector women also mention using online applications and receiving job offers after attending training courses. However, they complain that many jobs are only open to men and that recruiting is not always based on transparent criteria.

TABLE 9: CHANNELS THROUGH WHICH NEW YOUNG EMPLOYEES ARE RECRUITED IN ICT COMPANIES IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA

	Egypt	Jordan	Tunisia
	%	%	%
Advertisements	22.7	32.6	31.6
Online	27.3	25.3	14.7
Through an employment office	9.7	9.6	18.2
Through an interim work agency	2.3	2.3	2.7
Personal contacts and recommendations	30.1	24.9	24.4
From an education institution	4.6	3.4	6.2
Job fairs	2.3	1.9	1.3
Others	0.9	-	0.9
Total	100	100	100

Source: Employers' survey

GRAPH 21: COMPANIES SPECIFYING GENDER IN RECRUITMENT IN THE TOURISM SECTOR IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA**GRAPH 22: COMPANIES SPECIFYING GENDER IN RECRUITMENT IN THE ICT SECTOR IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND TUNISIA**

Source: Employers' survey

Indeed, a significant number of employers in both sectors admit to having a gender preference for jobs. Despite legislation in all three countries outlawing specifying gender in job advertisements, it is still common practice in the tourism sector. In Egypt 14%, in Jordan 21% and in Tunisia 60% of companies surveyed always or often specified gender. This is less common among employers in ICT but the proportion remains significant; in Egypt 16%, in Jordan 10% and in Tunisia 20% of companies still always or often specify gender.

"In some employment agencies, we are told that such and such a job is for men only, perhaps because they have greater flexibility in terms of working hours or have a driving licence. This is very disappointing for us".
Young unemployed woman looking for a job in tourism, Tunisia

Comparing the importance employers give to different characteristics when recruiting young people in general and when recruiting young women in particular shows some interesting differences.

In tourism, employers value highly soft skills such as discipline and commitment to work, a customer service attitude and the ability to work with other people and in teams. According to the surveys of this study, training and qualifications are seen as the most important factor in Tunisia and come second in Egypt and Jordan. Work experience - also seen as important by all - comes in third place. With the exception of physical appearance, personal characteristics such as nationality, religion, age, marital status, having young children or physical strength do not count for much.

When it comes to just female candidates, soft skills are also seen as most important. Qualifications and work experience count for less in Egypt and Jordan while in Tunisia which institution someone graduated from counts more for women than for men. Interestingly, characteristics such as the availability to work nights, weekends or overtime are seen as less important for women than for men. It may be that employers do not rate this characteristic for women as they do not really expect them to take on tasks or timetables requiring this. Language skills are also seen as less important in female than in male candidates, something which indicates that women are expected to have less contact with foreign guests. It is likely that women are not seen as competing with men for the same jobs as they tend to concentrate in different areas and may be assessed differently.

Surprisingly, in Egypt and Jordan marital status and having children is not seen by employers as much more important for women than for men. This is probably because married women with children rarely apply for positions in tourism. In Tunisia however this is seen as a much more important criteria when assessing female job candidates. This indicates that Tunisian women do not leave their jobs as often as a matter of course when they get married or have children and that employers are aware of this.

Employers in tourism state they are not interested in whether a woman is veiled or not. However, the opinions of young women contradict this finding as they claim many employers prefer not to employ veiled women and, if they do recruit them, they usually do so for back office type positions which call for little contact with clients.

In addition to soft skills, training and qualifications in ICT – a sector offering sophisticated products and services – it comes as little surprise that specific job-related skills are an important consideration when it comes to selecting staff. Employees are not generally expected to work nights, but the ability to work overtime is seen as reasonably important.

There are fewer differences in how employers in ICT rate the desirable characteristics of female candidates rather than staff in general than employers in the tourism sector. Whether someone is married or has children is given less overall importance than in tourism, although this still counts more in the case of female job candidates. Employers' expectations that female workers should be flexible over working nights and weekends are also slightly lower, although there are higher expectations of availability to work overtime than in tourism reflecting the need to respond to urgent client requests and orders.

In some ICT departments such as sales and marketing, the issue of the veil is mentioned but in general, in a sector where work involves more time interacting with machines than with people, wearing a veil is not cited as a recruitment issue by employers. Some young women however insist that employers prefer not to employ veiled women or that sometimes women can be asked to make changes such as wearing different colour headscarves

especially if recruited for jobs that call for frequent contact with customers.

***"I applied for a job in person and when the manager saw me he refused even to even take my CV".
Young veiled unemployed woman looking for a job in ICT, Jordan***

4.4.3 Skill shortages

A significant proportion of employers in tourism report difficulties finding women with necessary qualifications; 59% in Jordan, 35% in Egypt and Tunisia. This indicates, to different degrees, that there is demand for adequately qualified women in the tourism sector which is not met due to the educational preferences of women (mainly for higher education). A slightly smaller share of employers in ICT make similar observations; between 22% and 36% of employers in the three countries.

Regardless of gender, the tourism sector suffers from a chronic shortage of skilled people. Between 75% and 85% of companies surveyed face skills shortages when recruiting young people. This is particularly the case when hiring people for reception bar and restaurant work and room service. There seems to be a general lack of women who are trained and willing to work in room service as cleaners, a job seen as women's work by employers but suffering from a bad image that contributes to women's reluctance to take such jobs. In addition sales and marketing departments in Egypt and Jordan are facing skills shortages.

When it comes to the types and levels of job for which skills shortages are reported, professionals followed by skilled workers come first in Egypt and skilled workers followed by professionals in Jordan and Tunisia reflecting the tendency of the tourism sector in Egypt to employ higher skilled workers. Perhaps surprisingly the third category where skills shortages are reported is unskilled workers. Tourism continues to have a need for large numbers of unskilled workers with no specific training.

Regarding the skills shortages in tourism by different levels of education of candidates, the employers in Tunisia complain less about the skills shortages of the university. About half of the Tunisian employers feel that VET graduates and those with a lower level of qualifications were lacking the skills they needed. In Jordan, on the contrary, employers found skills shortages were particularly acute among university graduates (55%), compared to VET (47%) and secondary school leavers (45%). In Egypt, the skills mismatch increased with the level of education; according to employers it concerns 97% of university graduates, 64% of VET graduates, 31% of secondary school leavers and 29% of primary school leavers.

I have great difficulties with languages because I have not had enough practice speaking English and because I have to compete with those with vocational training who do a lot more practice and participate in more work programmes; at

university, we do a lot of theory, general knowledge, we do one "hands-on" work programme and one "technical" work programme, which seem quite inadequate to us. Students at vocational training centres do two months in efficient work placement programmes. Young woman employed in tourism, Tunisia

When asked what kind of skills and knowledge young job seekers were particularly lacking, the answers show that technical (professional) skills and knowledge and language and communication (public relations) skills are in particular demand. Young women seem to be aware of the skills that employers are looking for and acknowledge they have gaps in their language skills and lack work experience that would open the door for the all important first job.

As ICT mostly recruits young people with higher education it is among university graduates that most of the employers face skills shortages in all three countries. The problem is less acute when recruiting people with lower education levels but these constitute a minority of new recruits. The greatest shortages are reported for people needed in sales and marketing and production, precisely those areas where the sector is taking on the largest numbers of new staff.

Skills reported to be in short supply included soft skills such as communication and language skills, but also technical and professional job-related skills due to the highly theoretical training received at universities. Young women also feel that they lack some basic skills that are not related to their field or specific role but which are nonetheless useful. These include leadership skills, dealing with customers, languages and communication skills. They are aware of the need for learning to work in a team and customer service orientation, skills which are not currently taught in schools or universities.

When the kind of labour on offer does not match the demand one way to overcome this is through on-the-job training. However, in Jordan and Egypt, women seem to benefit slightly less from these training opportunities than men. Between 70% (ICT) and 75% (tourism) of Egyptian companies and between 77% (tourism) and 89% (ICT) of the Jordanian companies organised training for all or most of new employees. However, only between 65% (tourism) and 68% (ICT) of the companies in Egypt and between 77% (tourism) and 85% (ICT) companies in Jordan organised training for all or most of the female recruits. This either indicates that highly educated women hired mainly for administrative positions do not need specific training or that many women are hired as unskilled labour and are not being trained. Another explanation could be that employers avoid investing in training women as they think they may not stay in their jobs for long after marriage.

In Tunisia the trend is slightly different. Less than half of the hotels organise training for new recruits, but in the companies where training is organised, 60% of the female recruits on average participate in the training. This is due to the importance of seasonal work in the hotel

sector where the employers provide a short training for the (unskilled) workers who are recruited for one season. Among the female recruits this concerns room service in particular. In ICT in Tunisia a large majority of companies (79%) organise training for new recruits and among those companies 82% of female employees receives training. Again, this may be attributed to the importance of female employment in the call centres that organise methodically training for all the recruits.

4.5 WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is important to understand whether tourism and ICT companies are working environments which provide equal opportunities for women's employment, integration, careers and development.

4.5.1 Attitudes towards female employment

Preconceived ideas about women's abilities or perceived difficulties for women to find their place in the workplace may influence decisions to hire and retain female workers.

Society has a generally negative image of women working in the tourism sector, especially in hotels. All women working in the tourism sector experience this to some extent. The reasons for opposing women being employed in tourism are the clash with traditional values, the long working hours, the possibility of night shifts, a widely held bad image of tourism in general due to contacts with foreigners and alcohol, the conditions of working in closed places and the tensions between these conditions and traditional ideas of a woman's place in society and her family role and obligations. This negative view is strongest in more remote and traditional areas such as Petra or Djerba. It is exacerbated in rural areas by the fact that working in a hotel often means travelling long distances or even overnight stays at the place of work.

In the 1960s, only women who were obliged to support their families worked in this sector: widows, divorced women, women who had not married and women without resources. They were looked down on and had difficulties finding husbands or wives for their children. Young women employed in tourism, Tunisia

The main reasons given for the unwillingness of young women studying tourism to actually work in the sector are family opposition – either from the family of origin or the fiancée. Often women stop working in tourism when they get married in order to protect the family name. Moreover, due to financial and socio-cultural constraints, the ability of female students to challenge the current status quo is limited. As a number of students point out, this becomes even more difficult if there is no male support, such as the father or an older brother already working in the sector.

Men respect their female colleagues but they would never go so far as to marry one.

Young women employed in tourism, Tunisia

There is also a significant minority of employers in tourism who think that it is not appropriate for women to work in a company like theirs, ranging from 11% of companies in Egypt and Tunisia to 20% in Jordan.

Women also face conflict both in the workplace and at home; at work male colleagues undermine their work and at home they often find that spouses or other family members object to their working outside the home. Many women are put in the position of having to justify their presence in the workforce by constantly having to prove their capabilities. 58% of employers in Egypt, 16% in Jordan and 12% in Tunisia think that women perform less well in their jobs than men.

'I met my husband in the same company and we worked equally for three years. When we got married I struggled to get home to fulfil all the household duties, in which my husband refused to give a hand. He stayed late at work. After two years I had a child; my husband was promoted and became a section head, and I did not move one step forward professionally.'

Young woman employed in ICT, Egypt

At the same time, a large majority of employers think that women can give their company a better image. A slightly smaller majority thinks women can establish better relations with clients. Women are appreciated for their patience and about half of the employers think women are more customer service oriented than men.

Employers do not believe that customers would not like to be served by women although between 11% and 19% think their employees might not like to work with female colleagues. Some employers mention however that it would be more likely that women would not wish to work with men in order to avoid sexual harassment.

In ICT only a very small minority think that it is not appropriate for women to work in a company like theirs or that women perform less well than men in their jobs. The majority of employers believe women can improve a company's image and that they are more patient. Most Egyptian and Jordanian employers also believe that women are more precise than men and that women can establish better relations with customers. Women are also appreciated for their commitment to their jobs. Employers disagree that customers do not like to be served by women or that male employees do not like working with female colleagues.

Young women, however, assert that stereotypes about what kind of work women should do are still prevalent in ICT. Employers prefer male workers in the hardware field and female for the soft IT skills. Employers refuse to assign certain tasks to a woman, even if it is within her speciality, because they believe that certain jobs should only be done by men.

"I have specialised in networks but the manager of the company refused to assign me to work in that department and assigned me to other tasks where I do not have to go to the field because he feels the network department is for men."

Young woman employed in ICT, Jordan

Young women believe that society sees ICT as more appropriate for men than for women and believes that men are more capable than women in certain specialisations. This means women have to work harder to convince their colleagues and business owners of their worth.

I have graduated with excellent grades in programming and received training and after that I applied to work in a company and I was offered the job but in marketing and not programming and I decided to decline the offer and look for another job".

Young unemployed woman looking for a job in ICT, Jordan

The focus group participants are clear that they are perfectly capable of working in all fields of ICT. However they report that some male colleagues believe women cannot work in fields such as mechatronics or networks because they call for more physical strength and field work. Some participants mention that men are becoming more aware of women's potential and are starting to see them as competitors. Most participants say that many customers are suspicious of females' workers abilities at first but quickly come to trust them once they see them in action.

4.5.2 Female-friendliness of work places

Many women list the following difficulties and challenges that they face at work - lack of transport, long working hours, discrimination over incentives such as promotion, low salaries, sexual harassment at work and their inability to talk about this issue and the lack of childcare facilities close to the place of work.

Balancing the demands of work and the family is one of the biggest challenges the women face. Many women claim that the burden of taking care of the house and children falls exclusively on them and that they do not get help from anybody including their husbands. Women complain about demanding bosses at work and demanding husbands at home; thus they feel caught between conflicting pressures of similar significance.

"I want to change sectors, for a young woman it might be interesting, but for a married women, it is difficult, even accommodation, because conditions are irregular. You have to work from 7.00 to 15.00. This is difficult for married women, unless they are married to someone from the same environment."

Young unemployed woman looking for a job in tourism, Tunisia

Inactive women who previously worked give the following reasons for stopping work; getting married, having children and the difficulty of satisfying both work and family commitments. They cite that this is due to the lack of appropriate childcare and long working hours. Married women who left their jobs cite the importance of their husbands' attitudes for their ability to work after marriage. Some husbands do not want their wives to work and others do not provide any support for women who do so. Most of these participants feel that the fact that they are not working has a negative effect on their personal well being and their ability to raise their children as they feel that their way of thinking has become more limited and they are losing touch with the outside world.

About half of the employers in tourism in Egypt, Jordan and in Tunisia think that women create organisational problems for their companies. One of the biggest problems is transport. 61% of companies in Egypt, 43% in Jordan and 47% in Tunisia have problems providing transportation for female employees. Even though that would mean long periods spent travelling, women say that they would be willing to work in far away places if the transport issue is resolved.

Young women also say that employers prefer to hire single women because they are afraid that married women will have more family obligations and cost them more money in maternity leave.

"The first question the owner asked me, even before he asked about my qualifications, is whether I am married or engaged or have plans to get married or engaged soon."

Young woman employed in ICT, Jordan

In tourism 26% of Egyptian employers, 31% of those from Jordan and 16% of those from Tunisia say that employing married women causes difficulties. Employing women in general was considered expensive due to legal obligations by 26% of companies in Egypt, 38% in Jordan and 6% in Tunisia. It should be kept in mind that these obligations usually only apply to companies over a certain size.

"Women dream of being given a breastfeeding break, but it is impossible to grant this; the only benefits they have are perhaps the fact that they can leave work early during the month of Ramadan or the evening before religious holidays such as Eid."

Young woman employed in tourism, Tunisia

In the ICT sector the perception that employing women causes problems is less widespread but is still held by a considerable proportion of employers; 50% in Egypt, 30% in Jordan and 28% in Tunisia believe that women create organisational problems for companies.

34% of ICT companies in Egypt believe employing women costs more due to legal requirements, 25% in Jordan and 2% in Tunisia. Transport is also a problem for the ICT sector. 61% of companies in Egypt, 42% in Jordan and 36% in Tunisia find it difficult to provide transportation for female employees. 26% of companies

in Egypt and 18% in both Jordan and Tunisia believe it is difficult to employ married women.

Women workers also speak of what they call the worst challenge of all - sexual harassment. Women are exposed to sexual harassment from superiors, colleagues and customers. New female recruits face harassment in many enterprises, especially in small companies, and young women do not feel they are adequately trained in how to deal with such situations. Sexual harassment is more frequent in tourist areas where female employees are working far from home. Women may also experience sexual harassment when they travel to and from work, especially if they do not own their own cars and the employer does not provide transport. Although sexual harassment is rarely mentioned officially, some research suggests that sexual harassment and intimidation of women by their male colleagues and superiors is quite common (Al Manar, undated, CAPMAS, 2008).

"Because of my extensive experience, I got a job in the public relations department of a five-star hotel in Hurgada. I was thrilled at the opportunity. However, just a few weeks after starting the new job, my boss approached me and quite bluntly told me that he expected a little more from me than just work. I said that I was not interested and tried to forget about it, but he continued to harass me with inappropriate talk and gestures that made me feel uncomfortable. Finally he told me that I should just make it easy for myself – it was not going to help my career if I refused him. I was alone, no one was there to help me; all the supervisors in the hotel were men. I couldn't complain to any of them. In the absence of any formal body to complain to, I had to quit the job and go back home."

Young woman employed in tourism, Egypt

4.5.3 Career prospects and ambitions

Reasons given by the young women in the focus group discussions for their desire to work concern economic independence and having an active role in society. Some women saw work as simply a means to show that they exist in society. Young women in both tourism and ICT think they are capable of doing all the jobs available in these sectors apart from those which call for physical strength.

"Women have so far demonstrated their abilities in the area of education. All they need now is to be given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities in the professional field."

Young unemployed woman looking for a job in ICT, Egypt

However, young women interviewed feel that managerial positions and certain jobs such as that of cook in the tourism sector are not open to them. Many women in ICT complain that they are offered jobs which bear no relation to their qualification or specialist area such as office work, secretarial work and marketing. They also cite

discriminatory practices in the workplace like being asked to take on tasks which are not part of their jobs such as cleaning the office or serving coffee to the manager of the company.

Women also claim that male colleagues are treated better in terms of salaries, bonuses and promotions with the excuse that men have to provide for their families. Working women ask whether they are not supporting their families too.

“When you have a master’s degree and are offered a job that pays 100 TND, it’s really humbling, humiliating and depressing.”

Young unemployed woman looking for a job in ICT, Tunisia

Unemployed women say they feel disappointed, bored and frustrated at not being able to use their qualifications by working. They also report feelings of helplessness and shame at being totally dependent on their families. Some participants mention that they are gradually losing their skills due to long periods of unemployment and that this will make it even more difficult to find work.

“I have worked in IT, taken many training courses, and have a good work record but have never been promoted while my male colleagues were always preferred over me. That left me feeling disappointed and I resigned and have no desire to work anymore”.

Young unemployed woman Jordan

While most inactive women have left their jobs in order to take care of children and husbands, some did not work because their financial situation is good enough for them not to need to. Many women expect they would face problems if they go back to work. These problems might include their age, the lack of relevant experience, the loss of skills due to long periods away from the job market and

the difficulty of readjusting to conditions in the workplace. Most women mention they would like to go back to work when their children grow up, if they receive support from their families or their husbands or if they could get domestic workers to help them.

Women are willing to make sacrifices to get the job they want including working long hours, overtime and weekends or accepting a lower salary at the beginning of their careers. The majority of employers do not believe or, at least do not admit, that women accept lower salaries than men. The tendency is stronger in tourism where 46% of employers in Egypt and Tunisia and 30% in Jordan think women accept to work for lower salaries. Although this may benefit employers by reducing the wage bill, this tendency should be resisted as it will only widen the gender pay gap. A few women from less traditional areas were ready to move house to get a job that would satisfy their ambitions and expectations, although this was more common in Tunisia than in Egypt or Jordan.

“I am very ambitious, I want to obtain a doctoral degree and other qualifications, I want to study and work at the same time to be independent, have pocket money and be active.”

Young female student in ICT, Tunisia

Those students who are intending to go ahead and work in tourism say they will strive to achieve the difficult balance between the needs of their families and their careers. They believe that working in the tourism sector will allow them to do so as the working hours are flexible and they will be able to choose hours that suit them.

“Even with a simple qualification (a BTP, for example), you can advance in this career, you can start as a receptionist and quickly become head receptionist. In other sectors, however, it is difficult to advance so quickly.”

Young female student in tourism, Tunisia

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Women in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia are enjoying better access to education and are achieving substantially more within the education system than ever before. This means that the current generation of young women are likely to have a better education than their mothers and so therefore should have better chances of personal and professional fulfilment in their adult lives. In all three countries, legislation is in place guaranteeing the principle of equal opportunities for women and men in education and employment.

However, in spite of the progress young women are making in education and the high priority governments are giving to gender equality, this success in education is not yet translating into gains in employment and in the three countries studied, as elsewhere, women are only slowly and, at times painfully, finding their place in the labour market.

Two main arguments dominate in current debates on women and economic empowerment. The rights-base argument focuses on increasing women's job opportunities and their freedom to choose to work in security and dignity. While one should not assume that all women want to work, it is safe to say that women want to be given the same freedom as men to choose to work if they want to; and if they choose to work, they should have the same chance of finding decent jobs as men.

The economic argument emphasizes women's economic capacities and potential contribution to economic growth. Although equal individual rights and freedom of choice are important also in the southern and eastern Mediterranean region this study has looked at women's employment in the region from the economic point of view and how education and training as an investment in human capital could be made more profitable for women's economic empowerment. A fuller participation of women in paid work is essential for economic growth and poverty reduction³⁵.

The study has thrown some new light on why women's progress in employment is taking so long to materialise and this chapter draws some conclusions and suggests what can be done to remedy this. The study has analysed both the supply of and demand for female labour in the tourism and ICT sectors using desk and field research in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia. It has identified and illuminated obstacles and opportunities for women's employment including the potential of these sectors to offer decent work for women, the impact of education on female employment, how education choice affect this, where occupational and vertical segregation exists, how

employers choose their workers and to what extent gender influences their decisions, what women can offer the sectors in question and whether the working environment they will find there is female-friendly.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 High potential but low demand for female labour: employment lagging behind education

Women's employment in tourism and ICT lags behind their increased education levels. While women are still heavily under-represented in tourism studies, they are beginning to have an equal presence to men in ICT studies. In the case of tourism and particularly for skilled workers, there is a lack of suitably qualified women as many are discouraged from choosing this training path due to society's negative image of the sector and resistance from family members and partners. However, a lack of qualified women is hardly a credible explanation for the low presence of women in ICT at a time when more and more young women are choosing to study the subject particularly at university.

While the tourism sector is currently also a source of employment to varying degrees for skilled and unskilled female workers in Jordan and Tunisia, ICT usually recruits women with higher education. In the Egyptian tourism sector too, women are mainly to be found in more responsible positions which call for higher education. This is a positive feature but it also means that uneducated women, who constitute the majority in Egypt, have limited access to jobs in either tourism or ICT. Most demand in hotels - the biggest subsector of tourism - is for skilled labour but women rarely choose the vocational path. Seeing there is a demand for skilled labour in tourism, women should be encouraged to study for jobs in this sector. Tourism could offer a variety of jobs for women, low skilled, skilled and professional.

In all three countries, the ICT sector recruits women with university education. Employers estimated that over 70% of their female employees have higher degrees. Female enrolment in ICT studies at universities seems to be increasing in particular in Egypt and Tunisia.

In line with overall trends, education does have an impact on the activity and employment rates of both men and women in both sectors but it has a stronger impact on

³⁵ The externalities of educating girls and women on other measures of human development are well known; reduced fertility, lower infant mortality and maternal death, longer life expectancy and better schooling and health for children. These cascading or multiplier effects of educating women trickle down to next generation with a continuous improvement on human development (Unicef, 2005).

women. Education, especially higher education, increases the likelihood of women being active in the labour market. This is also true to some extent with VET when it comes to working in hotels.

The fact that education has a stronger effect on women's than men's employment results in an active female population that is more educated than the male active population in all the three countries. When one looks at supply and compares women's general levels of education in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia to the current employment of women in the two sectors and the positions women actually hold in companies, it is clear that there is an untapped educated female labour force available for both sector (except for skilled female workers for tourism).

Both tourism and ICT sectors on the basis of economic indicators and the survey results seem to have potential for generating employment for women, although tourism – for various reasons – to a lesser extent. The service sectors are creating jobs and, in spite of the economic crisis, employers surveyed in both sectors are reasonably optimistic about their companies' prospects.

Both sectors mainly recruit young people under 30, something which makes them very relevant for the target group of this study, namely young women between 15 and 29. Over the twelve months leading up to the survey, the ICT companies surveyed recruited a percentage of women out of the total new recruits that is higher than the percentage of women employees out of the total number of current workers. Although ICT does not currently employ large numbers of people in the countries concerned and much fewer than in tourism, it is less male-dominated with 26% of female employees in Egyptian, 23% in Jordanian and 41% in Tunisian companies.

The tendency in tourism is the opposite as this is a sector where the current share of female workers (Egypt 10%, Jordan 20%, Tunisia 26%) is lower than the share of women in the active population at national level (Egypt 23%, Jordan 26%, Tunisia 26%), i.e. the share of potential workers, and where the proportion of women among new recruits is even less. However, tourism is a labour intensive industry. It cannot be exported or outsourced and it provides a wide range of job and career opportunities for a wide range of people – the low-skilled, young people with little work experience as well as the well-educated and highly-skilled. Clearly its potential for providing jobs for women should not be underestimated.

The lower presence of women in the two sectors can partly be explained by the overall difficulties for women to access employment. Women's unemployment rates are always higher than men's no matter what their education level. Being educated does not facilitate women's access to jobs to the same extent that it does for men. It seems that women are doubly penalised by the weak relevance of the education system and discrimination based on gender in the labour market.

5.1.2 Working women: strong horizontal and vertical segregation

Employment remains strongly delineated by sex, involving both horizontal segregation (men and women concentrated in different types of occupations) and vertical segregation (men more likely to work in jobs of a higher grade or occupations of higher status than women). Separating groups into different places or different roles facilitates unequal treatment.

In both tourism and ICT in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia, horizontal and vertical segregation of jobs by sex clearly exists.

Women have difficulties reaching the upper echelons of companies while men tend to be slightly more evenly distributed throughout job categories. And women tend to cluster in certain departments and functions such as room service, administration, finance and sales and marketing while certain departments such as bars and restaurants in tourism remain quite inaccessible for women. Even when they are suitably qualified, women in ICT believe that they tend to be only given certain jobs and tasks due to stereotypes such as women being more suited to work with software than hardware.

Confining people to certain occupations according to their gender also reinforces stereotypes. This may make women more vulnerable to job shortages and can make them miss out on chances of promotion. It also limits their opportunities to use their education and training in getting jobs which correspond to their level of qualifications.

Employers' ideas on what kind of work it is appropriate for women to do are only changing slowly. Only very minor changes were noticed in the horizontal and vertical concentration of new female recruits which indicates that female employment is mainly limited to certain jobs. As a consequence women lack role models which can direct them into traditionally less female-dominated fields and the workforce as a whole misses out on the chance to of working in a more gender-balanced environment.

5.1.3 Matching supply and demand: transition from school to work

The numbers of qualified candidates to fill positions is not the issue, employers say. It is the quality of the education both women and men receive that is still not up to the mark. Most employers complain of skills shortages, particularly soft skills and practical job-related skills, among young employees and recent graduates.

Fewer women than men apply for jobs in both sectors in all three countries according to employers. This may indicate a lack of female labour although the gender

preferences of employers when recruiting may also have an effect. A second factor could be the significant minority of employers in tourism (ranging from 11% of companies surveyed in Egypt and Tunisia to 20% in Jordan) and to lesser extent in ICT (ranging from 7% in Jordan and Tunisia to 11% in Egypt) who think that it is not actually appropriate for women to work in a company such as theirs.

Many employers report difficulties finding suitably qualified women. However, when you take into account the prevalence of preconceived ideas on which jobs are suitable for women, it is not clear whether this scarcity concerns women's qualifications overall or whether there is a skills mismatch. It may be that employers are only looking for female candidates for certain jobs and women do not have the appropriate qualifications for such jobs due to their education choices. The findings of the study do suggest that there is an inadequate supply of skilled female workers willing to take up jobs particularly in tourism and above all in hotels and restaurants due to negative perceptions in society towards working women in the sector. Women are reluctant to enrol on tourism and hospitality programmes and in Jordan and Egypt sometimes choose this field with no intention of actually working in the sector.

Women's education choices are influenced by teachers, parents and friends. Male and female relatives already working in the sector may encourage young women to undertake studies in tourism or ICT which indicates the importance of role models. Young women say they would appreciate more professional advice in choosing the field of studies as well as more information on what jobs are available.

Women feel strongly that employers tend to recruit them for traditionally female tasks no matter what their qualifications may be. This is confirmed by the fact that a considerable number of employers still specify gender when advertising job vacancies even though this is against the law in all three countries.

Recruitment is still heavily dependent on personal contacts and recommendations rather than standardised processes and open competition. While the young women interviewed use various channels for job seeking in tourism and ICT, women in general are penalised when recruitment depends on networks due to their more limited social connections in a public sphere and business world which remains male-dominated. This also partly explains why women are better represented in the public sector which tends to use more open competitions and standard criteria for recruitment.

Furthermore, women benefit less often from on-the-job training that could help to overcome the skills gap. This reflects that women are often recruited for administrative positions that do not require any specific training but it may also indicate that employers avoid investing in upgrading women's skills as in any case they are likely to leave once they get married.

Employers do not expect women to work night shifts or overtime indicating that they take for granted that there may be constraints on women's mobility and that they may have extra responsibilities. This may work to women's advantage in the short term but in the long term it is one more obstacle to a stronger female presence in the labour market.

When asked about the importance of certain characteristics when recruiting in general and specifically when recruiting women, surprisingly employers do not attach any particular significance to a woman's marital status or whether she has children. This may indicate that female job seekers are often single women without family commitments or that women are in any case expected to stop work when they get married.

5.1.4 Lack of equal opportunities in the workplace

Indeed the majority of women do leave their jobs once they marry. Balancing work and family life seems to be one of the biggest challenges facing working women. Work places are rarely female-friendly environments and employers worry over the cost and organisational problems associated with employing women. Private sector employers are left alone to cope with the financial burdens linked to maternity leave and the obligation to provide childcare and transport. Meanwhile women struggle to shoulder the double burden of doing their jobs and caring for children and a home. Married women who left their jobs cite the importance of their husbands' attitude for their ability to work after marriage.

In Egypt, there is a huge gender gap in the way employers assess the performance of male and female employees, with a majority of employers (66% in tourism, 58% in ICT) claiming that women do not perform as well as men. In Jordan and Tunisia, a significant minority of employers in tourism (16% and 12%) and ICT (8% and 10%) think the same. If it is not true, it indicates a degree of prejudice against working women or the existence of double standards in the way women and men are assessed, requiring women to perform better than men to be treated as equal to them. If the claim is really true and women's productivity is less than men's, then this would seem to be an important area for future interventions to upgrade women's skills and create working conditions that could foster better performance.

Overall however employers do appreciate women's qualities and see many advantages to employing them. These include giving a company a better image, more customer service orientation and better relations with clients. This positive attitude of employers is an asset that should benefit women's employment. The incentives that employers believe could encourage them to employ more women mainly concern ways of reducing the related costs rather than training and qualifications. They mentioned ways of sharing costs or fiscal incentives for childcare facilities, maternity leave and transport.

While young female students are confident about their abilities to work in tourism and ICT, the women who are already working, while generally keen to continue, are less positive about their experience. In addition to the difficulties of combining family responsibilities with work, they claim to be faced with discriminatory behaviour such as being given lowly tasks, being passed over for promotion and training, earning lower salaries than male colleagues and having to constantly prove their abilities. Young women themselves are already thinking in terms of households with two breadwinners where their contribution is as important as the man's.

Sexual harassment by colleagues, employers or clients is frequently cited as a serious problem. Although no quantitative data exists to gauge the extent of the problem, even sporadic instances of sexual harassment may create an unfriendly atmosphere where women may feel unwelcome or even unsafe.

Working women report that having a job increases their self-respect and gives them more of a say in family matters. Unemployed women feel humiliated at being economically dependent on their husbands and families and say this lessens their ability to participate in the decision making process in the family. Being unemployed is even tougher in rural areas since there is a lack of further training opportunities and, due to social pressure, women cannot travel to other regions to get further training or look for a job.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on an analysis of obstacles to women's employment and possible ways of addressing them which are common to Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia. In light of the differences between the countries, not all recommendations may be applicable to all and others may need to be adapted to their context.

However, given that the economies, societies and cultures of the region have many points in common and that gender roles evolve over time in line with cultural and social change, it is likely that some of the recommendations can be considered overall for enhancing women's access to employment in the private sector in the region as a whole.

The countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean region are making progress in the reforms of their education and training systems and employment policies. Lower rates of female labour force participation are also to be found in many more developed countries. The recommendations provided by this report do not aim to try and introduce a whole new set of reforms to the political agenda but rather to build on the reforms already underway or in the pipeline. The aim is to try to integrate a gender sensitive approach in the different components of education, training and employment policy reforms in progress.

The thinking behind the recommendations is as follows; governments have invested a lot of effort in facilitating girls' and women's access to education in recent years but if something is not done to facilitate their access to work, this investment in education and training will be wasted. Legal provisions and formal equality of access to education have not produced equality of outcomes in terms of employment and therefore specific action is needed. Women seem to be doubly penalised; first by the weak relevance of the education system to the needs of the labour market and second by discrimination on the basis of gender in the labour market. If women are to benefit more from their studies and society is to benefit from women's capabilities, education and training must be made more relevant taking into consideration the specific obstacles for women's employment. There should be a bigger role for gender sensitive career guidance, the gender bias in education must be addressed, women's integration into the workplace supported and employers encouraged to employ women while respecting labour laws.

Cooperation among different stakeholders, education institutions, employers, legislators and governments is needed in order to boost women's employment. A single actor cannot address the issues affecting women's employment opportunities when they cover such a broad spectrum of education issues such as curriculum or career guidance, employment issues such as respect of labour legislation and the female-friendliness of the workplace and social attitudes towards working women. Therefore the following recommendations have been grouped by theme.

5.2.1 Tapping the potential of educated women

Improving the image of women's work

It is important to accept new economic roles for women. Stereotypes vary from one culture to another, including what is seen acceptable as women's work or men's work, something that indicates that they are not immutable and can be influenced. For example, in Asia the ICT sector employs many women while in Europe it is seen as a predominantly male sector (ILO, 2010b). Unless something can be done to change society's negative perception of women's employment and in the tourism sector in particular, women will continue to drop out of the workforce.

- Awareness raising campaigns could be organised in the media to help to alter negative perceptions of working women, concentrating in particular on work in tourism and hotels. The media should be used extensively to promote positive images or success stories of women in non-traditional fields, for instance in television series, broadcasting and social media.
- Regional and local opinion leaders in remote areas should be involved in promoting a positive image of tourism as a safe sector for women's employment.

Influencing mindsets via education

Schools themselves are also major managers of social values and representations that can reinforce stereotypes. Qualitative aspects such as teacher and student attitudes and gender messages embedded in the school curricula and textbooks used to teach boys and girls require attention.

- Education should not reproduce and reinforce traditional gender roles, and efforts must be made to remove the gender bias. This should include revising curricula and teaching methods and ensuring that textbooks do not use gender stereotypes but rather include positive images of women working in non-traditional fields.
- Teacher training could include preparing for detecting gender inequalities in school curricula and class organisation.

5.2.2 Addressing horizontal and vertical segregation

Career guidance

Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan like the other Mediterranean countries started developing their career guidance services in the 1950s but there is a need to extend the reach of career guidance services, improve the quality of career information and establish career guidance more strongly within the school curriculum (ETF, 2008). The people who provide vocational guidance and counselling may have stereotyped attitudes which can discourage young women from choosing training that would give them better earning potential and greater employability (ILO, 2009b). Women are often steered towards the traditional caring occupations of teaching and nursing. What this study reveals about women's experiences and ambitions and the attitudes of employers indicates that career guidance could play a role in tackling gender-based segregation in the labour market.

- Career guidance needs to start early and it should provide information in equal measure to male and female students on the full range of occupations available. It should also encourage girls and women to consider what are seen as less traditionally female fields of study where the number of female students is currently low. Taking into account the potential of ICT and tourism to provide jobs for women, women should be encouraged to study specialities relevant to these two sectors.
- Career guidance is often seen as providing biased information and advice to women but it should not be forgotten that men's education and career choices also contribute to gender balances. Therefore career guidance should also aim at encouraging male employment in sectors traditionally defined as "female" as a means of raising both the average pay and status of these occupations.

- Taking into consideration the lack of skilled female workers in tourism reported by the employers, career guidance should address stereotypes through improved career information and practical training in particular in tourism.
- Practical training should be provided wherever possible in a gender-mixed working environment in order to prepare women and men to work together.

5.2.3 Facilitating women's transition from school to work

Enhancing women's employment via curriculum and practical training...

Employers report a lack of certain qualifications when recruiting young people in general. Young women interviewed also sometimes felt that the education that they had received did not provide them with adequate qualifications, in particular with practical experience.

- Curricula and teaching methods should be revised to equip students, both female and male, with soft skills and competences, thus preparing young people better for job-related challenges.
- As a joint effort between business and education institutions, work placements should be made an integral part of vocational education, thus giving both young women and men the chance to gain practical experience.
- Female students should be given preference for these internships in order to give women more opportunities. As this report has shown, women are often at a disadvantage when it comes to taking up opportunities for practical training for social and cultural reasons. Female students could also be encouraged to take internships in jobs where women are under-represented.

...and career guidance

- In order to prepare young women for the world of work, career guidance could also include raising awareness on the rights of women (and men) at work and ways of dealing with problems they may encounter such as sexual harassment or discrimination.
- Counselling should also be provided when women are about to graduate and are taking their first decisions on joining the work force. This should cover how to look for a job and what to expect in a specific job or career.
- Counselling and career guidance should also take the shape of individual sessions at the beginning of VET studies in order to keep female students motivated and avoid dropouts as is happening in tourism where women sometimes undertake studies with no intention to work in the sector.

5.2.4 Supporting working women and tackling unequal opportunities at work

Supporting working women

In addition to the difficulties of getting a job, young women report discouraging conditions in many workplaces that may lead them to drop out of the labour market.

- During the first weeks or months in the first job, women could be assigned a more senior female (or male if appropriate) colleague to act as a mentor. This person could help them find their feet in the new place of work, plan their careers, learn how to deal effectively and assertively with colleagues and bosses and cope with the challenges of combining work and private life.
- Special mentoring schemes could be used to support women who are aiming for a managerial career. Mentoring could also take place via online platforms, workshops and conferences.
- Networking between girls still at school, young women in universities, recent graduates, newly recruited female workers and their better-established female colleagues could be encouraged, in order to provide role models, enable the exchange of information and facilitate mentoring and coaching.
- Employers could be encouraged to invest in training their female employees by fiscal incentives on technical issues and on topics such as assertiveness training and management and leadership skills thereby showing women the opportunities to aspire to higher technical and managerial levels.

Supporting the private sector: reconciliation policies

The government may regulate the workplace but it cannot regulate the family. Since one form of inequality cannot be solved without solving the other, this may explain why the gender gap is proving so difficult to overcome. However, the government can facilitate a better balance between work and family life.

In the name of social justice, it is unfair that just one individual of either sex should have to take on all the responsibility of having a family and children to the detriment of their chances on the labour market. Nor should the private sector be left alone to bear this burden. In order to persuade women to join the labour market and encourage them to stay once they do, smart modern policies are needed that can help women to combine work and family responsibilities without putting all of the burden on employers. Without this, we may either see a growing reluctance of women to join and stay in the labour market or, in case of growing unemployment, increasing discrimination against women by employers. If the private sector in particular SMEs is not able to take full responsibility for ensuring equal opportunities, the state may have to play a bigger role, something which can be

justified in economic terms by the positive effect of gender equality on employment and economic growth.

- Companies could be encouraged to recruit more women and provide more on-the-job training for women by means of fiscal incentives.
- Governments should also help companies bear the costs of maternity leave, childcare, breastfeeding breaks, transport, and other measures required by law.
- In particular, the government should create appropriate facilities for women in tourist establishments in remote areas such as transport, housing and schools for their children.
- Governments should ensure that responsibility for gender equality issues is not confined to a single ministry of equal opportunities. Instead gender equality units should be set up in ministries of education and employment. Furthermore, ministries should work in close cooperation with employers' associations and trade unions to create an ongoing dialogue which can help to promote the employment of women and protect them from all forms of discrimination in the labour market.

Monitoring of labour laws

The effective implementation of labour laws and respect of principles of non-discrimination at work should be monitored by the relevant authorities and social partners. There is also evidence that an increased participation of women in trade unions and employers' organisations has increased the attention given to gender equality in employment within the social dialogue (ILO, 2008).

- Governments and legislators should ensure that the provisions of labour law covering aspects such as maternity leave, companies' obligations to organise childcare and the outlawing of specifying gender when advertising job vacancies are enforced.
- Social partners and especially trade unions should become more active in protecting the rights of female workers regarding maternity issues as well as combating sexual harassment and discrimination. Trade unions should make more of an effort to attract women and should encourage female members aspire to higher positions within the unions.

In addition

- There could also be awareness raising campaigns addressing the unequal division of labour in the home that leaves women working a double shift.
- Individual companies could also be encouraged to take action such as organising training or circulars addressed to employees and managers for raising awareness on sexual harassment and discrimination. Guidelines for dealing with incidents of harassment and discrimination could be drawn up and counsellors appointed to treat any complaints in a confidential manner.

5.2.5 EU and other donor initiatives

- In view of the gap between the education levels of women and their rate of participation in the labour market in the region, donors should ensure all sector programmes on education, training and employment include a gender component, especially in active employment measures. The approach should be based on reflecting the differences of obstacles for men's and women's integration into the labour market.
- An essential precondition for successful gender mainstreaming is the availability of gender-disaggregated statistics that allow the assessment of the actual gender (in)equality. Donors should support the partner countries in collecting and analysing gender disaggregated data on education, training and employment in order to have reliable information on which to base initiatives and policies to promote greater gender equality. It has become evident when implementing this study that some gender-disaggregated data is not available. Moreover data from national and international sources are often different and harmonisation should be done by cooperating with the national statistical institutes.
- In order not to reinforce horizontal gender segregation donors could develop some specific projects in those sectors where women are under-represented.

- Donors should ensure all projects targeting education, training and employment include a component of promoting social partnership and gender sensitivity. This would aim to raise the awareness of social partners on gender equality issues in education, training and employment and encourage them to become active promoters of gender equality.

5.2.6 Need for further research

This study has revealed gaps in available data and information which would allow us to draw firmer conclusions. Further research is recommended in the following areas:

- The impact of primary and lower secondary education on both men's and women's employment. In particular men's activity and employment rates decrease considerably with secondary education.
- The data currently available groups together upper secondary VET education (ISCED 3) and post-secondary non tertiary education (ISCED 4). This does not allow an assessment of the impact of post-secondary non-university education on employment.
- Provisions of labour law designed to protect women may have also negative consequences on female employment but the real impact of this is difficult to judge on the basis of the survey of employers. More in-depth research is needed.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BTP	Professional technician diploma (<i>Brevet de technicien professionnel</i>)
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GDP	Gross domestic product
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information and communication technologies
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
MEDA-ETE	MEDA Education and Training for Employment Project
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
RWELP	Role of Women in Economic Life Programme
SME	Small and medium size enterprises
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
Unicef	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
VET	Vocational education and training
WOW	Women and Work

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