

ANNEX H

Economic assessment

According to the last World Bank assessment in Autumn 2023, the **Jordanian economy was trapped in a low-growth equilibrium averaging 2.2% over the past decade**, slower than many other countries in the region.¹

It found that **growth was propelled by a strong contribution from the service sector**, in particular transport and communications, finance and insurance and wholesale and retail trade (a combined 0.9%), as well as a 0.3% contribution from the agriculture sector.

Employment overview

Despite economic growth, new employment opportunities have remained low. **Labour force participation has continued to fall**, reaching 33.0 percent in Q2-2023. Male participation rates remain low at 53.0% and **female participation in the labour force remains among the lowest in the world** and has declined further to 13.8% in Q2-2023.²



A consistent view held by those interviewed for the study felt that this lack of growth across the whole economy meant a low number of new job opportunities were being created and that given the high percentage of youth employment, it was critical to stimulate and support greater entrepreneurial opportunities across the economy, and in particular in emerging areas such as the green and gig economy.

Employment rates have fallen from 26.1% in Q2-2022 to 25.6% in Q2-2023. As a result, **unemployment rates remain high** and have only slightly declined to 22.3% in Q2-2023, compared to 22.6% in the previous year. Unemployment has not fallen below pre-pandemic levels and **women and youth (ages 15-24) continue to be the most affected**, with 30.9% and 47.0% unemployment rates, respectively.³

Employment growth was the highest in the hospitality and tourism sector (29%), reflecting the increased visitor numbers, but this comes after three consecutive years of decline following the COVID-19 pandemic. Those sectors that have created employment opportunities also include manufacturing and agriculture.

The informal economy continues to play a significant role in the Jordanian labour market. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates **that about 1.2m individuals earn their living in the informal economy**.

¹ World Bank (Fall 2023) Jordanian Economic Monitor: Building Success, Breaking Barriers: Unlocking the economic power of women in Jordan

² Ibid

³ Ibid

Sectoral overview

In identifying sectors that have the potential to create the most employment opportunities, it is important to distinguish between those creating new jobs and those creating jobs to replace existing staff.

This distinction is important as the vast majority of stakeholders interviewed for this study cited examples of previous training and employment interventions that have trained people to enter sectors with high labour turnover, such as the garment making sector, only for the beneficiaries to leave soon afterwards.

Given the emphasis of the ELP project on decent jobs it will be important to concentrate on those sectors that can create these opportunities, rather than support a low-wage, low-job retention model.



In 2021, a study through the EDU-SYRIA III project into the Jordanian labour market identified a number of sectors that they felt had the greatest employment opportunities following the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴ They identified five industrial sectors and the logistics sector. See Table 1.












The Technical and Vocational Skills Development Commission (TVSDC), which was established as a tripartite body to ensure that TVET provision reflects labour market needs and supports skilled individuals to enter the workforce, identified 11 priority sectors, where skill priorities were identified. These occupations were identified by the relative Sector Skills Councils (SSC) for their sector. Each SSC undertook a Sector Skills Assessment to identify the skills and the labour market needs of their sectors and through that identified the current skill shortages for their sector. Those assessments are the basis for the list that TVSDC has compiled.

Between 2013 and 2023 the National Center for Human Resources Development has produced a series of demand and supply assessments, which have identified employment opportunities across a number of critical sectors.

Table 1 outlines these sectors and compares them to the results of the 2021 study undertaken by the EDU-SYRIA III project and the skill shortage list drawn up by TVSDC.

⁴ EDU-SYRIA III project (November 2021) Jordanian Labor Market Needs - A Research Study

Table 1: Sectors with skill shortages and employment opportunities according to recent studies

Sectors	TVSDC sectors	EDU-SYRIA III project sectors	National Center for Human Resources Development	Open to Syrian refugees
 Food				Yes
 Leather and garment making				Yes
 Hospitality and tourism				Yes, with the exclusion of 4 and 5 star hotels
 Transportation and Logistics				No
 Plastics				Yes
 ICT				No
 Agriculture				Yes
 Automotive mechanics				Yes
 Construction				Yes
 Water and energy				Some occupations
 Wood and furniture				Yes

Source: TVSDC, 2023, the EDU-SYRIA III project 2021 & the National Center for Human Resources Development 2013-2023

There is a degree of overlap across the studies, in particular looking in the leather and garment making, logistics, plastics and ICT sectors, and with those identified by TVSDC and the National Center for Human Resources Development.

All stakeholders who were interviewed for this study were asked for their views on the sectors with employment potential. These interviewed broadly validated the 11 sectors identified above. The vast majority of stakeholders felt that the construction sector should not be

included because the demand for labour was felt to be owing to a high turnover of workers and the impact of the informal sector undermining progression opportunities. This view was not shared by the Ministry of Labour which felt that there were new employment opportunities for growth. Data presented in the analysis of the construction sector seems to confirm this.

Stakeholders interviewed for the study consistently underlined the importance of supporting those in vulnerable groups with **support to start their own businesses, and the potential opportunities for green jobs and those in the gig or platform economy.**



All the stakeholders interviewed for the study reinforced the importance of decent work and that there was an array of different human resources being practiced. They underlined the **importance of working with employers to ensure that they are offering decent job opportunities**, such as competitive levels of pay, progression opportunities, good management practices and a commitment to respect the rights of women.

Geographical profile

The geographical make-up of the sectors means quite significant employment disparities across the six governorates, **with more opportunities available in larger urban areas such as Amman and Irbid**, compared to Mafrq, Talifah and Karak. However, there is felt to be scope to **expand the tourism sectors in Karak and to a lesser extent Talifah**, but this will require co-ordinated support.



The population density in more urban areas means that the demand for jobs significantly outstrips demand. Table 2 outlines figures from 2015 highlighting the differing demand pressures.

Table 2: Job vacancies and unemployed in the six governorates (2015)

Governorate	Job creation	Unemployed	Balance
Amman	22,748	35,609	-12,861
Irbid	7,510	37,960	-30,450
Mafrq	3,603	11,135	-7,532
Karak	2,164	9,056	-6,842
Talifah	896	3,727	--2,831
Aqaba	1,549	2,969	-1,420

Source: Department of Statistics 2015⁵

Table 3 outlines the potential employment opportunities for each of the thirteen sectors identified (to include the 11 sectors highlighted within the studies in table 1, plus the green, and gig and platform sectors). It shows those with the most employment and entrepreneurship potential across the six governorates. This is based on the size of the current employment in each governorate, based also on the opportunities raised during the interviews with the stakeholders for this study.

⁵ Taken from EDU-SYRIA III project (November 2021) Jordanian Labor Market Needs - A Research Study

The table differentiates between those employment opportunities based on existing employers seeking to fill vacancies and entrepreneurship opportunities, based on the potential for those in the three vulnerable groups to set up their own businesses. It suggests that while **there are more employment opportunities in the more northern governorates, there are still potential entrepreneurship opportunities in those further south.**

Table 3: Overview of the employment potential of the identified sectors at a governorate level

	Employment opportunities	Entrepreneurship opportunities
Amman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food manufacturing • Leather and garment making • Hospitality and tourism • Transport and logistics • Plastics • ICT • Automotive • Construction • Wood and furniture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT • Agriculture • Green jobs • Gig and platform
Irbid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food manufacturing • Leather and garment making • Agriculture • Hospitality and tourism • Automotive • Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • ICT • Agriculture • Green jobs • Gig and platform
Mafrq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food manufacturing • Leather and garment making • Agriculture • Automotive • Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • ICT • Agriculture • Green jobs • Gig and platform
Karak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • Automotive • Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • ICT • Agriculture • Green jobs • Gig and platform
Talifah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automotive • Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • ICT • Green jobs • Gig and platform
Aqaba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • Transport and logistics • Automotive • Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • ICT • Green jobs • Gig and platform

Vulnerability mapping

Young people

Characteristics across the six governorates

According to figures from the Department of Statistics, in 2022, there were **189,021 unemployed young people aged 15-29 across the six governorates**.

At a governorate level, the highest percentage of young people who are unemployed as a proportion of total unemployment are found in Talifah and Karak at 71.1% and 68.0% respectively. In contrast, Mafraq has the lowest with 47.9%. However, in absolute terms, **83.0% of unemployed young people are found in Amman and Irbid**.



In considering the age breakdown of those aged 15-29, **the highest percentage of those who were unemployed is in the 20-24 age category**, followed by those aged 25-29. This is the case in all governorates with the exception of women in Karak, Talifah and Aqaba where they are more likely to be unemployed between the ages of 25-29.

The **educational profile of unemployed young people is markedly different between men and women and this will be important to consider when matching to the employment opportunities**. Men are more likely to have either completed basic education or have a bachelor's degree or above. In contrast, unemployed young women are more likely to have a bachelor's degree or above or a diploma at intermediate level than men.

Attitudes to work and sector opportunities

The focus groups and online survey asked young people about whether they were seeking employment. The vast majority of those participating in the study who did not already have a job were seeking employment. Those that were not seeking employment were women with family commitments.

There was a consistent view expressed by those participating in the focus groups that **young job seekers were seeking opportunities that allowed them progression opportunities and job enrichment**. This was the case regardless of the level of educational attainment. The focus group participants were realistic about the challenging labour market and were **prepared to work in a lower paid entry level job if there were progression opportunities** and opportunities to upskill or broaden their skill sets.



The vast majority of those taking part in the focus groups were open to work in any sector that provided these opportunities.

There were consistent **negative attitudes towards the garment making and food manufacturing sectors** as participants felt that job opportunities that provided enrichment and progression were not available in these sectors. These attitudes were sometimes based on personal experience of working in those sectors but were often drawn from the experience of family or friends.

There was a lot of **interest in starting their own small-scale agriculture business**, but there was little to no interest from those participating in any of the focus groups to work in the

agriculture sector as an employee. This was because it was seen as physically demanding, low paid, seasonal and long hours.

Opportunities for skills development

There was a **strong appetite to develop more skills**. For those at a graduate level, it was to enhance or specialise their skills, such as in graphic design or through specialist agriculture courses. Many had already taken up opportunities for online training in a broad range of areas.

Those with lower levels of academic training were **typically looking to develop technical skills**. They were either seeking technical training to enter employment at entry level or training which would allow them to establish their own business at home, such as in textiles or hospitality. There was generally a **demand for more English language skills**.

The views of young people expressed in the focus groups in the different governorates were broadly consistent. However, there was a realisation that some areas did not have the same range of job opportunities. This was particularly marked for those in Talifah and therefore they were seeking greater support to develop technical and entrepreneurial skills to establish their own business.

Attitudes to setting up own business

There was a **positive attitude to setting up their own business**. In particular, establishing a home-based business selling home made products, textiles and food or working in the gig economy. The vast majority of those participating in the focus groups had access to their own computers and had internet connection. There was a strong interest in taking advantage of these opportunities, particularly those that had studied at higher education.

To support these endeavours, there was seen to be a **need to access higher levels of technical training**, particularly in ICT and to have broader entrepreneurship skills.

There was also an **acute need to align any training intervention to provide the finance through grants or loans** to buy the equipment and use their skills.



Women

The previous section explored the characteristics of unemployed young people, including women and attitudes towards employment. In this section the focus broadens to explore unemployed women of all ages. According to figures from the Department of Statistics, there were **125,577 unemployed women in Jordan in 2023**.

Characteristics across the six governorates

Women are 25.6% less likely than men to have previously worked. Amman and Irbid represent the highest percentage of unemployed women, which reflects their relative populations.



The high proportion of unemployed women with higher level educational attainment helps explain why many of those participating in the focus groups were looking for higher level employment opportunities or would be prepared to accept an entry level job if there were clear progression opportunities.

Attitudes to work and sector opportunities

The attitudes towards employment expressed by those participating in the study were largely the same regardless of sex. **Women want to have enriching jobs that provide progression and development opportunities as much as men.**

In the focus groups women were as open as men to working in a wide variety of sectors. However, they were more reticent when certain sectors were explored in more depth. **The hospitality and tourism sector, food manufacturing and garment making sectors were seen by some female participants as not being an option owing to social attitudes.** A number of participants highlighted that while many women were working in the garment making sector, many of the supervisors and managers were male and this was intimidating for some of them. These attitudes were at odds with the views of a number of NGOs interviewed for this study that felt that the garment making sector was seen to be female friendly,

Attitudes to setting up own business

Women participating in the focus groups were **enthusiastic about wanting to set up their business** as they could earn money without working in environments which were predominately male.



In particular, many of those taking part in the focus groups would be keen to start their own businesses producing food and craft products. Many spoke positively about starting a home-based business and the opportunities to combine this with family responsibilities. Those who had studied an ICT-related course would be happy to work in the ICT sector and the gig economy from home.

Syrian refugees

Characteristics of Syrian Refugees

UNHCR figures from March 2024 suggest that there were 639,552 Syrian refugees in Jordan. The majority were found in Amman, Irbid and Mafraq. In addition, there were 78,475 based in Zatari camp in Mafraq.

There were 303,459 Syrian refugees aged between 18-60, broadly reflecting the working age.

Employment of Syrian refugees

The Ministry of Labour is responsible for regulating non-Jordanian workers, including Syrian refugees, in the Jordanian labour market. Any foreign worker needs to work legally and to obtain the necessary and appropriate work permits.

Between 2016 and June 2021, **239,024 work permits were issued to Syrian refugees**. A detailed sector breakdown is unavailable, but work permits typically remain concentrated in the construction, agriculture, manufacturing, and service sectors, with **jobs that are typically low-skilled and featuring poor working conditions.**⁶



⁶ Ibid

The Ministry of Labour has indicated that it is reviewing the current arrangements where Syrian refugees do not have to pay for the work permit. There was considerable concern amongst UNHCR and other stakeholders taking part in the study that if it was not continued then this could have significant implications for many refugee's livelihood, but it is a reflection of the Jordanian Government's concern about high levels of Jordanian unemployment.

Refugees are considerably more likely to report working in the agricultural sector in rural than in urban areas, 28% and 4% respectively. Refugees in urban areas are more likely to be working in the accommodation and food sector.

In terms of age, individuals between 26 and 50 years of age are the most likely to participate in the labour force (47%), followed by those 18 to 25 years old (38%) and 51 to 60 years old (26%). Critically for this study, **young people (aged 18–25) constitute the largest cohort who are out of employment, but actively looking or willing to work** (13%).⁷

UNHCR (2022) also found that the level of education had an impact on the sectors in which the Syrian refugees were working. Those who have never attended school were considerably more likely to work in agriculture, with 25% reportedly doing so, compared to 9% overall. Those with pre-school/kindergarten education only, were more likely to work in the construction sector (55% compared to 28% overall). Some 27% of those with pre-school/kindergarten education work in transportation, a percentage significantly higher than the average 6%.⁸

The UNHCR (2022) concluded from their findings of work-related income that:

1.	Individuals with lower education levels find it hard to get a job.
2.	Those with mid-education levels tend to find jobs but work in poorer conditions including lengthy working days and poor salaries.
3.	Those at the higher education levels are able to find jobs in better conditions and are more self-reliant.

The **majority of working age Syrian refugees in Jordan do not have a valid work permit**, with only 8% of consulted working age (18-60) individuals reportedly having one.⁹

The most commonly cited reason for not wanting to or not being able to renew the work permit was **the initial cost of obtaining the work permit and the monthly social security contribution** which is mandatory irrespective of employment status. Some 45% of Syrians reporting it as the main reason for not renewing their permits.¹⁰



Syrian Refugees' attitude to work

Those Syrian refugees participating in the focus groups had similar views to Jordanian youth and women in relation to employment opportunities. They have the same aspirations but were **aware of the limitations to them in closed sectors**. A number had high level skills in ICT

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

but were unable to get jobs in the formal sector and some had tried the gig economy, but the cost of being on a platform offering graphic design support was seen as prohibitive.

Many of the Syrian refugees wanted to seek opportunities to open their own business but were seeking training and access to finance. One male refugee had set up his own greenhouse after undertaking online training and having access to a grant.

An overview of current interventions

As part of the interviews with stakeholders there are a number of current interventions that are supporting those in vulnerable groups into employment.

The **SAIJEL platform administered by the Ministry of Labour aims to employ 60,000 Jordanians**. It brings together employers who register on the platform with job seekers. Those employers who recruit job seekers through the platform and commit to retain them for 12 months, receive a financial incentive administered by the National Aid Fund. The financial incentive scheme is targeted at those who fall below a minimum income threshold, but the platform also supports job seekers who do not fall within this income bracket.

The scheme is **largely not available in Aqaba, Talifah and Karak, nor is it available to Syrian refugees**.



There are a number of interventions supported by international donors and administered by NGOs to broker employment opportunities and align these with training interventions.

More broadly, TVSDC has with the support of international donors and organisations established 13 SSCs. The SSCs have developed Sector Skills Assessments to identify the needs of the sectors. These have informed the skill shortage occupations outlined by TVSDC. The Sector Skills Assessment also include recommended action to address the skill needs identified in their research and any mismatch in the training and vocational education and training provision (TVET).

TVSDC has also worked with the SSCs to produce 1,130 occupational standards that outline the skills, knowledge and competence required for each occupation. These occupational standards largely align with the occupations identified by the SSCs.

Enhancing the employment opportunities of women, refugees and young people

In order to support young people, women and Syrian refugees access to employment, it is important to align the interests and aspirations as far as possible with the employment opportunities in each sector. Table 4 provides an overview of where there might be some obvious alignment between those sectors that have employment opportunities and the aspirations of those in the three vulnerable groups.

Table 4: Aligning potential employment opportunities with each vulnerable group aspirations

Sector	Young people	Women	Syrian refugees
Food manufacturing	Entry level and higher level job opportunities suitable for young people, but mainly interested in those employers that can offer decent job opportunities with career potential	Entry level and higher level job opportunities suitable for young people, but mainly interested in those employers that can offer decent job opportunities with career potential	Employment opportunities available across open occupations for Syrian refugees
Leather and garment making	Entry level and higher level job opportunities suitable for young people, but mainly interested in those employers that can offer decent job opportunities with career potential	Entry level and higher level job opportunities suitable for young people, but mainly interested in those employers that can offer decent job opportunities with career potential	Employment opportunities available across open occupations for Syrian refugees
Hospitality and tourism	Entry level and higher level job opportunities suitable for young people	Some interest in working in the sector, also potential for entrepreneurship opportunities in tourism activities	Employment opportunities available in many parts of the hospitality sector in open occupations for Syrian refugees
Logistics	Entry level and higher level job opportunities suitable for young people	Potential for entry in ancillary occupations (such as sales and customer service) and higher level skill occupations	
Plastics	Entry level and higher level job opportunities suitable for young people		Entry level employment opportunities available across open occupations for Syrian refugees
ICT	Entry level and higher level job opportunities suitable for young people and the potential for entrepreneurship opportunities	Entry level and higher level job opportunities and potential for entrepreneurship opportunities in tourism activities	
Agriculture	Entry level employment opportunities suitable for young people	Potential for entrepreneurship opportunities	Entry level employment opportunities available across open occupations for Syrian refugees and potential for entrepreneurship opportunities
Automotive mechanics	Entry level and higher level employment opportunities suitable for young people		Entry level employment opportunities available across open occupations for Syrian refugees
Construction	Entry level and higher level employment opportunities suitable for young people		Entry level employment opportunities available across open occupations for Syrian refugees
Water and energy	Entry level and higher level employment	Potential for entry in higher level skill occupations	

	opportunities suitable for young people		
Wood and furniture	Entry level employment opportunities suitable for young people		Entry level employment opportunities available across open occupations for Syrian refugees
Green jobs	Potential for entrepreneurship opportunities	Potential for entrepreneurship opportunities	Employment opportunities available across open occupations for Syrian refugees and potential for entrepreneurship opportunities
Gig and platform jobs	Potential for entrepreneurship opportunities	Potential for entrepreneurship opportunities	Employment opportunities available across open occupations for Syrian refugees

DRAFT

RECOMMENDATIONS ON TARGETED SUPPORT

**Targeted support****Focusing on sectors and programmes**

Provide local targeted support and interventions for vulnerable groups, to overcome barriers to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities through the following mechanisms.

Target the following sectors and engage sector stakeholders to support those in vulnerable groups into **employment**:

- Food manufacturing
- Leather and garment making
- Transport and logistics
- Plastics
- ICT
- Automotive
- Construction
- Wood and furniture

Target the following sectors and engage sector stakeholders and NGOs to support **entrepreneurship** opportunities in the following sectors:

- ICT
- Agriculture
- Green jobs
- Gig and platform

	Employment opportunities	Entrepreneurship opportunities
Amman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food manufacturing • Leather and garment making • Hospitality and tourism • Transport and logistics • Plastics • ICT • Automotive • Construction • Wood and furniture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT • Agriculture • Green jobs • Gig and platform
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Talifah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automotive • Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • ICT • Green jobs

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gig and platform
Aqaba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • Transport and logistics • Automotive • Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and tourism • ICT • Green jobs • Gig and platform

Skills development



Offer skill development programs aligned with priority sector labour market needs, catering to both higher-educated individuals seeking specialisation and those with lower academic training seeking technical skills, ensuring training opportunities correspond to employment sectors with potential for decent work.

Identify/ develop and deliver bridging courses to **support those with graduate degrees to develop specific higher-level skills** aligned with the following sectors:

- ICT
- Water and energy
- Plastics

Identify/ develop and deliver courses targeted at all three vulnerable groups to **develop technical skills at an entry level and align these with employer brokerage** and the delivery of work readiness skills. These should be targeted in the following sectors:

- Food manufacturing
- Leather and garment making
- Hospitality and tourism
- Automotive
- Wood and furniture
- Plastics



Support for entrepreneurship:

Identify/develop and deliver **entrepreneurship programmes** that combine technical and business skills in relation to the following sectors.

Ensure access to finance through grants or loans to support entrepreneurship efforts, including the purchase of necessary equipment and resources for setting up businesses.

- ICT
- Agriculture
- Green jobs
- Gig and platform

Each of the 11 sectors, together with green jobs and the gig and platform economy are explored below.

Food manufacturing

Employment characteristics

The food manufacturing sector has a **wide range of entry level job opportunities**. These are mainly in production lines undertaking routine tasks. The **demand for labour is largely to replace existing staff** and the sector is **characterised by long hours and low rates of pay**. A number of NGOs interviewed for this study questioned whether many entry level jobs could be described as decent jobs and were concerned that interventions to support entry into the sector meant that businesses were not being forced to address their employment conditions.



Data regarding the distribution of the workforce based on gender, age and nationality are unavailable.

The sector is open for Syrian refugees to undertake entry level occupational roles.

Employment opportunities and skill needs

However, the TVSDC has highlighted a range of skill shortages, which also includes higher level skilled roles, that will require higher levels of education and specialisation. The sector also requires skilled ancillary roles, such as those in financial management. See table 3. Employment is seen to be largely in Amman, Irbid, Mafraq and Aqaba.

Table 3: Skill shortage occupations in the food manufacturing sector

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Baker	Open
Pastry Maker	Open
Sweets maker	Open
Kneading specialist	Open
Quality control and assurance technicians/baking sector	Open
Raw materials, warehouse, and packaging workers	Open
Production Supervisor / Bakery Sector	Closed
Technicians operating and maintaining molding, ovens, and packaging machines	Open
Procurement and supply chain officer	Closed

Sales Officer	Closed
Dairy manufacturing technicians	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining pasteurisation, sterilisation, and packaging machines/dairy sector	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining cutting and packaging machines / tobacco and its products sector	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining cutting and packaging machines / tobacco and its products sector	Open
Technicians mixing and preparing juice and its inputs	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining pasteurisation and packaging machines / juice and beverage sector	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining plastic bottle blowing machines/juice and beverage sector	Open
Technicians for manufacturing and preparing meat and its inputs	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining cutting, pulling, and packaging machines/meat sector	Open
Technicians prepare mixtures and flavours for chips and pasta	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining mixing, ovens, drying, and packaging machines/chips and pasta sector	Open
Food mixing and preparation technicians	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining mixing, sterilisation, and packaging machines/food preservation sector	Open
Technicians preparing and mixing spices	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining grinding, roasting, mixing, and packaging machines/mills and spices sector	Open
Technicians preparing and mixing sweetness	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining grinding, roasting, mixing, and	Open

packaging machines/tahini and halvah industry sector	
Technicians preparing and roasting coffee and nuts	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining roasting, mixing, and packaging machines/roasters and coffee sector	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining pressing, filling and packaging machines / oil industry sector	Open
Raw materials, warehouse, and packaging workers/oil industry sector	Open
Technicians preparing and mixing chocolate	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining mixing, ovens, softening, molding, packaging and packaging machines / chocolate industry sector	Open
Production Manager	Closed
Maintenance manager	Closed
Personnel Officer	Closed
Accountant	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining mixing, ovens, drying, and packaging machines/chips and pasta sector	Open
Food mixing and preparation technicians	Open
Technicians operating and maintaining mixing, sterilisation, and packaging machines/food preservation sector	Open
Technicians preparing and mixing spices	Open

Source: TVSDC, 2023

In summary

- The food manufacturing sector has employment opportunities at an entry level and for occupational roles at higher skills levels
- The demand for labour is largely driven to replace the existing workforce lost to high labour turnover, driven by long-hours, low pay and few progression opportunities
- The sector is actively looking to recruit women, young people and is open to Syrian refugees to undertake entry level jobs.

Leather and garment making

Employment characteristics

The size of employment in the leather and garment making sector is disputed. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) presented a number of different figures in their 2020 report.¹¹ According to the Jordanian Chamber of Industry, total employment in the sector was 73,148 in 2018. This contrasts with the Department of Statistics figure of 21,986 in 2017. According to Better Work Jordan¹², total employment in the exporting garment industry alone stood at 68,300 in January 2019, of whom 51,500 were migrants.¹³



According to the results of the ILO research undertaken in 2019 (ILO, 2020), employment in the companies surveyed was 42,233 workers in 2018, representing around 61% of total employment in the Jordanian garment and leather sector in that year. **Migrant workers accounted for 66% of the workforce in these priority occupations and Syrians for 4% of workers.** Jordanians accounted for 30% of workers (20% female and 10% male).¹⁴ There were no data available by age.

Research undertaken by the National Center for Human Resources Development in 2014 found that men are more likely to be working in smaller businesses (likely their own) and women are more likely to be found working in larger businesses. See table 4. There are no breakdowns by governorate, but a regional analysis presented in table 4 shows that the vast majority of the workforce are found in the central region, followed by the northern region.

Table 4: Percentage of the garment making workforce broken down by gender, size of business and region (%)

Size of enterprise	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Small	74.7	25.2	21.3	79.2	20.8	68.7	74.4	25.6	10.0
Medium	43.5	56.5	11.7	59.8	40.2	87.1	16.7	83.3	1.1
Large	42.7	57.3	38.9	33.6	66.4	58.1	11.0	89.0	3.1
Total	53.7	46.3	24.0	57.5	42.5	71.3	34.0	66.0	4.7

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2014

¹¹ Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (STED) in the Garment & Leather Manufacturing Sector In Jordan (2020), ILO

¹² Better Work – a collaboration between the United Nations' International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group – is a comprehensive programme bringing together all levels of the garment industry to improve working conditions, respect of workers' labour rights and boost the competitiveness of apparel and footwear businesses.

¹³ Better Work Jordan data excludes non-exporting companies and other subsectors in the garment and leather industry.

¹⁴ Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (STED) in the Garment & Leather Manufacturing Sector In Jordan (2020), ILO

There are no data available for age, but a number of those stakeholders interviewed for the study felt that the age range was relatively broad. However, they felt that the long hours and the close eye-work was better for younger workers.

Research from 2014 (National Center for Human Resources Development, 2014) suggested that the workforce is made up of a high proportion of non-Jordanians. See table 5. The garment making sector is open to Syrian refugees to work in entry level occupational roles.

Table 5: Percentage of the garment making workforce broken down by gender, nationality and region (%)

Size of enterprise	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Jordanian	27.0	29.1	28.2	37.8	31.0	33.5	56.3	14.3	22.4
Non-Jordanian	73.0	70.9	71.8	62.2	69.0	66.5	43.5	85.7	77.5

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2014

Employment opportunities and skill needs

The leather and garment making sector **has a large number of entry level jobs. It is characterised by high labour turnover**, which means that many of these roles are to replace existing staff. However, two NGOs interviewed for this study highlighted that there were **new companies investing in Jordan**, such as Classic Fashion, that had a different economic model. Employment interventions in these businesses were seen to be positive and retention was high. TVSDC (2023) has highlighted a range of skill shortages, including those at higher skill levels. These skills as highlighted in the ILO's 2020 study are largely being filled by foreign workers.¹⁵ See table 6. Employment is seen to be largely in Irbid, Mafraq and Amman.

Table 6: Skill shortage occupations in the leather and garment making sector

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians	Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Quality assurance technician	Open	Carpet maker	Open
Quality control technician	Open	Carpet rolling machine operator	Open
Embroidery application developer	Open	Multi-skilled tailor	Open
Embroidery machine operator	Open	Fabric or leather cutting worker	Open

¹⁵ Ibid

Knitting machine programmer	Open	CAD technician	Closed
Carpet machine operator	Open	Production Supervisor	Closed
Carpet grinder operator	Open	Quality supervisor of the knitting sector	Closed
Carpet weaving machine operator	Open	Production planning technician	Closed

Source: TVSDC, 2023

In summary

- The leather and garment making sector has employment opportunities at an entry level and for a number of occupational roles at higher skills levels
- The demand for labour is largely driven to replace the existing workforce lost to high labour turnover, driven by long-hours, low pay and few progression opportunities
- The sector is actively looking to recruit women, young people and is open to Syrian refugees to undertake entry level jobs.

Hospitality and tourism

Employment characteristics

The hospitality and tourism sector has in a good year **a large number of employment opportunities**. The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities estimated that the total number of employees in the sector was 51,270 in 2017 of which **15.9% were foreign workers**.¹⁶



A study in 2018 for the National Center for Human Resources Development (National Center for Human Resources Development, 2018) estimated that sector had 54,904 employees, of which 90% were men and that 80% were over 25 years of age.¹⁷ The sector is largely open to Syrian refugees, with the exception of four- and five-star hotels. A survey of Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2022) working before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022 found that 17% were working in the hotel and accommodation sector. This had fallen to 16% at its onset.¹⁸

The same study did not provide governorate level data but did provide regional employment breakdowns. See table 7. The data shows regional employment across the size of enterprise. It shows that the majority of the workforce regardless of size are found in the central region, which includes Amman. Employment in the southern and northern regions was considerably smaller, especially when looking at employment in large companies. Table 6 also presents the percentage gender breakdown in each region. It shows a higher percentage of women working in medium

¹⁶ Shahateet, M & Partale, K (2019) Tourism Sector Analysis and Strategy for Sectoral Improvement, GIZ

¹⁷ National Center for Human Resources Development (2018), The gap between the supply and demand sides of the Tourism sector

¹⁸ UNHCR (2022) Vulnerability Framework - Population Survey of Refugees Living in Host Communities

sized enterprises in the northern region compared to the other regions. Similarly, there is a higher percentage of women working in larger enterprises in the southern region.

Table 7: Percentage of the hospitality and tourism workforce broken down by gender, size of business and region (%)

Size of enterprise	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Small	90.0	9.6	7.7	85.8	14.2	80.6	91.2	8.8	11.7
Medium	82.6	17.4	3.5	87.3	12.7	88.2	90.4	9.4	8.3
Large	91.0	9.0	1.5	91.3	8.7	89.5	88.2	11.8	9.0

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2018

Employment opportunities and skill needs

The majority of stakeholders, including those in the tourism sector, interviewed for this study felt that there were **opportunities to expand the tourism offer** across Irbid, Mafraq and especially in Karak, where they are not seen to be part of the tourism offer, as much as other parts of the country. There are specific initiatives in Karak to increase its attractiveness as a destination and it has been suggested that there are entrepreneurial opportunities for guided hiking and community-based tourism that would create employment. These views reflect the recommendations of a 2019 study into the tourism sector (Shahateet & Partale, 2019), which found that there was a need to support local producers and service providers with information and marketing to respond to the demand requirements for locally sourced products including food products, fresh produce and handicraft and other creative industries' products and services (e.g. cultural tourism tours, themed experiences) related to the tourism value chain.¹⁹ This reinforces the wider benefits of tourism that can positively impact employment in supporting sectors, such as retail, transport and the creative industries.

According to the TVSDC (2023) there are **skill shortages for skilled and entry level roles**, however, the volatile trading conditions has resulted in considerable employment fluctuations. This was supported by research in 2018 (National Center for Human Resources Development, 2018), which found similar skill shortages and concluded that the majority of these were to replace existing staff owing to **high labour turnover**.

Despite this, the representative of the Hospitality and Tourism Sector Skills Council felt that there were currently vacancies **in a wide range of hospitality roles**, particularly in Amman and Aqaba, where there are large concentrations of hospitality and tourism activities. Given the current

¹⁹ Shahateet, M & Partale, K (2019) Tourism Sector Analysis and Strategy for Sectoral Improvement, GIZ

workforce characteristics, the sector is actively recruiting young people, women and Syrian refugees.

The TVSDC has identified the following occupational areas as requiring skilled workers. These are predominately hospitality, tour guides and archaeologist roles. The range of hospitality and tour guide roles identified by TVSDC were also mentioned by a number of NGOs and the Ministry of Labour during the interviews for this study. However, the need for archaeologist roles appears to have only been identified by TVSDC. See table 8.

Table 8: Skill shortage occupations in the hospitality and tourism sector ²⁰

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians	Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Exécutive Chef – Kitchen Manager	Open	Heritage resources specialist	Closed
Sous-Chef	Open	Archaeological excavation official	Closed
Pastry – Bakery Chef	Open	Archaeological surveys official	Closed
Catering Manager	Open	Museum observer	Closed
HR Manager	Open	Museum curator	Closed
Guest Relations	Open	Museum director	Closed
Spa Manager	Open	Archiving specialist	Closed
Lifeguard	Closed	Heritage Architect	Closed
Reservation Officer	Closed	Archaeological development specialist	Closed
Sales Officer - Manager	Closed	Archaeological conservation specialist	Closed
Security Guard	Closed	Therapeutic conservation specialist	Closed
Cashier	Open	Adventure Tour Guide (Cycling)	Closed
Drive Through Operator	Open	Adventure Tour Guide (Zipline)	Closed
Store Manager / Coffee house	Open	City Tour Guide	Closed
Sommelier		Guest house service providers	Open
Artists & Designers	Closed	Oriental food chef	Open
Sales & Marketing Manager	Closed	Western food chef	Open

²⁰ The hospitality and tourism sector is largely open for Syrian refugees, with the exception of four and five star hotels.

Tour Coordinator B to B	Closed	Commis chef	Open
Ticketing Staff	Closed	Pottery restoration specialist	Closed
Reservations Officer	Closed	Archaeological documentation officer	Closed
General restorer	Closed	Archaeological documentation officer	Closed
Stone maintenance specialist	Closed	Site and archaeological manager	Closed
Specialist in interpreting and presenting archaeological sites	Closed	Archaeological and historical site supervisor	Closed
Organic materials restoration specialist	Closed	Glass restoration specialist	Closed

Source: TVSDC, 2023

In summary

- The hospitality and tourism sector has employment vacancies when the tourism market is buoyant and Jordan is receiving international visitors. The current situation in the region means that this is not currently the case.
- Despite the lack of international visitors, the hospitality sector continues to have employment opportunities.
- Employment opportunities are largely in Amman, where the majority of sector employment can be found.
- Employment demand in the hospitality sector is for entry level and higher level roles and these are largely open for Syrian refugees
- The tourism sector has vacancies for specialist archaeological and curator roles at higher skill levels.
- The sector is looking to attract people in all three vulnerable groups
- There are potential entrepreneurship opportunities across the tourism sector, particularly in governorates where there is potential to further develop the tourism offer. This includes Karak and Talifah.

Transportation and Logistics

Employment characteristics

The logistics sector has seen a degree of volatility in recent years **corresponding to the political situation in the region and the COVID-19** pandemic. However, Jordan is seen to be **well positioned geographically** in terms of road transport and Aqaba continues to be an important port for inward goods in the region. ²¹



According to research by the National Center for Human Resources Development in 2020, 90% of the transportation and logistics workforce were male. The vast majority of the sector were over 25. In the case of male workers 95% and females 86%. ²² The sector is closed to non-Jordanian nationals.

The same research suggests that the vast majority of the workforce are found in Amman (67%), followed by 19% in Aqaba and 2% in Irbid. The study did not identify any workforce in Mafraq, Karak and Talifah.

Employment opportunities and skill needs

The National Center for Human Resources Development (2020) found that 46% of transportation businesses faced some difficulties in hiring, of which 71% identified this as a slight challenge. The majority of difficulties were due to the large shortage of workers who have the required skills, in particular licences to be able to drive specific vehicles.

Despite the low number of female workers, the same study found that there was a demand for female workers to address shortages related to customer services and marketing in logistics and supply chain management, administrative secretarial work and general accountant (revenue and expenses).

The TVSDC (2023) has identified a number of **broad managerial level roles**, that require knowledge of the sector, as well as more logistics-specific managerial roles. See table 9.

Table 9: Skill shortage occupations in the logistics sector

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Director of Operations	Closed
Supply chain manager	Closed
Sales and Marketing Director	Closed
Customer Services Manager	Closed
Clearance Manager	Closed
Warehouse manager	Closed
Information Systems Manager	Closed
Distribution manager	Closed

²¹ Jordan Strategy Forum. Transportation & Logistics Sector - Jordan's Economic Vision Roadmap

²² National Center for Human Resources Development (2020) The gap between supply and demand side of Transportation

Human Resource Manager	Closed
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Source: TVSDC, 2023

In summary

- The transportation and logistics sector has employment opportunities for drivers and ancillary roles, such as customer service and marketing occupations.
- There are skill shortages across a range of logistics specific managerial positions.
- The demand is largely from those employers in Amman and in Aqaba, where the majority of the workforce can be found.
- The sector is closed to Syrian refugees and other non-Jordanian nationals
- The sector's workforce is predominately male, but employers are also seeking women to undertake ancillary roles.

Plastics

Employment characteristics

Data by Jordan Chamber of Industry (2020) suggested that there were 614 enterprises in the sector and that this had **grown by 6.6% in the previous five years**. The research suggests that there were US\$157.6 in untapped export potential in the sector.



The plastic sector includes:

- Flexible packaging
- Rigid packaging
- Construction materials
- Agriculture plastics
- Raw materials
- Furniture and homeware
- Foam products
- Medical supplies and packaging

The same report (Jordan Chamber of Industry, 2020) estimated that sector employment stood at 10,757, of which 80% were Jordanian and six percent women.²³ The **workforce has more than doubled over the past ten years**, but this still only accounts for four percent of the overall workforce. Separate data are unavailable on the number of Syrian refugees working in the sector and the age breakdown of the workforce.

There are no data breaking down the workforce by age, but table 10 presents data from the National Center for Human Resources Development (2019) which shows that women made up

²³ Jordan Chamber of Industry (2020) Plastics Sector Profile – Industry Overview

only a small percentage of the workforce (6.3%). It also found that the central region accounted for 89.8% of the workforce.²⁴

Table 10: Percentage breakdown of the workforce by size of business, gender and region (%)

Size of enterprise	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Small	85.7	14.3	1.3	96.3	3.7	87.2	85.7	0.2	1.3
Medium	96.9	3.1	1.6	86.8	13.2	92.5	96.9	0.0	1.6
Large	97.8	2.2	4.7	87.0	13.0	89.7	97.8	0.1	4.7
Total	93.5	6.5	2.5	90.0	10.0	89.8	97.6	2.4	3.6

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2019

Employment opportunities and skill needs

The EDU-SYRIA III project (November 2021) found that job applicants typically lack specific technical skills with graduates having machine operations skills, but not the knowledge to apply this to the plastics sector.²⁵

The National Center for Human Resources Development (2019) identified a number of occupations that were in demand in the sector. These are outlined in table 11 and include a number of intermediate level occupational roles, such as machine operator, as well as higher level skilled occupations such as chemical engineers.²⁶ The research found that employers were predominately looking for male recruits, as they believed that the available roles suit men.

The manufacturing of plastic goods is largely open to non-Jordanians.

Table 11: Skill shortage occupations in the plastics sector

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Machine operators	Open
Chemical engineers	Closed
Vacuum technicians	Closed

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2019

TVSDC identified a broad range of technical roles that were suffering from skill shortages. These are outlined in table 12.

Table 12: Skill shortage occupations in the plastics sector

²⁴ National Center for Human Resources Development (2019) The gap between the supply and demand sides of the Chemical, plastic and rubber Industry sector

²⁵ EDU-SYRIA III project (November 2021) Jordanian Labor Market Needs - A Research Study

²⁶ National Center for Human Resources Development (2020) The gap between supply and demand side of Transportation

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians	Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Extrusion technician	Open	Injection mold assembly and inspection technician	Open
Sponge production technician	Open	Injection mold maintenance technician	Open
Rotary plastic production technician	Open	Flexographic printing technician	Open
Fiberglass technician	Open	Plastic cutting and cutting technician	Open
Polymer processing and mixing technician	Open	Product formulation and commissioning technician	Open
Sheet production technician	Open	Production planning and management technician	Open
Injection molding technician	Open	Maintenance management technician	Open
Plastic manufacturing and assembly technician (windows and doors)	Open	Operations management technician	Open
Robotics and automation technician	Open	Supply Chain Management and Procurement Technician	Open
Mechanical maintenance technician for plastic machines	Open	Energy efficiency and audit specialist	Open
Electro-mechanical maintenance technician for plastic machine	Open	Occupational health and safety specialist	Open
Plastic product design and modelling technician	Open	Plastics laboratory and testing technician	Open
Injection mold design and prototyping technician	Open	Blowing machine operator	Open
CNC Injection molding Technician	Open	Injection machine operator	Open

Source: TVSDC, 2023

In summary

- There are employment opportunities in the plastics sector at an entry level and at higher skill levels.
- The main demand for labour is in Amman, where the vast majority of the workforce can be found.
- The sector’s workforce is predominately male and employers are primarily seeking male workers.
- The sector is open for Syrian refugees.

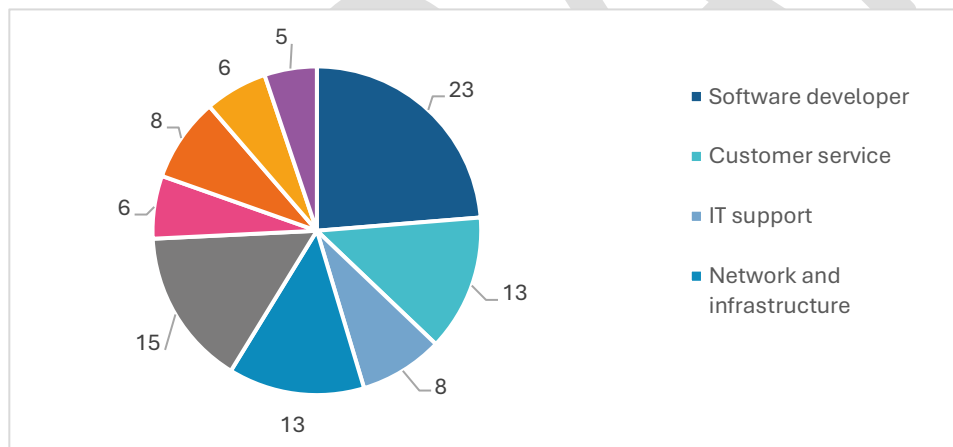
ICT

Employment characteristics

The Jordan Information and Communications Technology Association undertook a study in 2018 to understand the segmentation of the ICT sector’s workforce. See figure 1. It found that the majority of the workforce were found in software development, management, network and infrastructure and customer care.²⁷



Fig 1: Segmentation of the ICT sector workforce



A report from the National Center for Human Resource Development (2018) that looked at the demand and supply issues facing the ICT sector found that the vast majority of the workforce was male and whilst it did not provide a breakdown by governorate, it found that over two thirds of the workforce were based in the central region, followed by the northern region. A very small percentage of the workforce were found in southern governorates. See table 13.²⁸

²⁷ Taken from EDU-SYRIA III project (November 2021) Jordanian Labor Market Needs - A Research Study

²⁸ National Center for Human Resources Development (2018) The gap between the supply and demand sides of the ICT sector

Table 13: Percentage of the ICT workforce broken down by gender, size of business and region (%)

Size of enterprise	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Small	99.4	0.6	24.7	97.2	2.8	67.7	98.8	1.2	7.6
Medium	94.3	5.7	3.1	81.5	19.3	94.6	100.0	0.0	2.2
Large	96.2	3.8	0.4	73.6	26.4	99.6	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2018

Whilst there are no figures for the age of the workforce. It was largely felt to be a young workforce by those interviewed for this study, as well as those taking part in the focus groups. The sector is closed to Syrian refugees, but as table 14 shows there is a very small percentage of the workforce that are non-Jordanians.

Table 14: Percentage of the ICT workforce broken down by gender, nationality and region (%)

Nationality	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Jordanian	93.8	77.3	93.7	96.7	97.7	96.9	91.5	90.0	91.4
Non-Jordanian	6.2	22.7	6.3	3.3	2.3	3.1	8.5	10.0	8.6

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2018

Employment opportunities and skill needs

Many stakeholders interviewed for this study felt that there was the **potential for growth given the high digital literacy levels of Jordanian youth** and the number of specialist graduates in this area. There were also felt to be **opportunities for freelancers and for companies to compete internationally**, especially if this could be coupled with proficiency in English. A number of partners made a point that they believed that higher level TVET provision was particularly strong in this subject area and this was something that could be maximised.

The study by the National Center for Human Resources Development (2018) found that the demand for labour was more concentrated in the central region. They estimated that the volume of demand for professions in the ICT sector between 2017-2019 would be approximately 12,738 workers, with males amounting for 61% of the demand. There are no data to suggest whether these projections were accurate, but the consistent view from the majority of stakeholders interviewed for this study was that demand has continued to increase and that it would continue to do so.

The same study (National Center for Human Resources Development (2018) also found that nearly half of businesses (48%) were not looking for new entrants to have any previous experience. It also found that the most sought-after skills were allocating projects and programmes, the .NET programming language, knowledge of wireless electrical equipment and its specifications, developing standards for operating and maintaining systems, inspection and diagnosis of electrical and electronic faults, installation, maintenance and repair of electronic, supervision of the installation and operation of electrical and electronic systems and equipment, Java programming language (Java), databases.

TVSDC (2023) has identified a range of front end and back end occupational roles that are priority skills areas in the sector. See table 15.

Table 15: Skill shortage occupations in the ICT sector

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians	Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Data Analyst	Closed	Data Architect	Closed
Associate Data Engineer	Closed	Big data engineer	Closed
Data Engineer	Closed	Data scientist	Closed
Associate Software Engineer	Closed	Artificial intelligence engineer	Closed
Software Engineer	Closed	Algorithm specialist	Closed
Associate UI Designer	Closed	Lead Data Modeler	Closed
UI Designer	Closed	ML Lead	Closed
Associate security analyst	Closed	Business Intelligence Analyst	Closed
Cyber risk analyst	Closed	AI consultant	Closed
Vulnerability assessment and penetrating testing analyst	Closed	Robotics engineer	Closed
Security operations analyst	Closed	Computer vision engineer	Closed
Digital marketer	Closed	Manager Data Analyst	Closed
Machine learning engineer	Closed	Natural language processing engineer	Closed
AI/ML Developer	Closed	AI Developer	Closed

Source: TVSDC, 2023

Those taking part in the focus groups for this study and who typically had a bachelor's degree, were enthusiastic about working in the ICT sector, either as an employee or as a freelance worker.

Some had already undertaken their degrees in ICT and these and others were seeking specific courses to help develop further skills in programming and graphic design.

In summary

- The vast majority of the workforce can be found in Amman and this is largely where the majority of employers are seeking employees
- The majority of the workforce are male, but it is felt to be attractive for female employees
- There are a wide range of occupational roles that have identified skill shortages, but despite the specific technical nature of many of the areas, employers were reported as not seeking specific experience.
- Stakeholders taking part in the study felt that there were opportunities for new entrants to enter the sector and start their own businesses. This would potentially provide additional employment opportunities in other governorates.

Agriculture

Employment characteristics

Research undertaken in 2022 (National Center for Human Resources Development, 2022) found that there were 423,728 workers in the agriculture sector.²⁹



Table 16 outlines the percentage breakdown of the workforce by gender and shows that women made up 15.7% of the agriculture workforce in 2022 and that they were more likely to work in seasonal roles. No data are available for the age of the workforce.

Table 16: Percentage of the agriculture workforce broken down by gender and type of work (%)

	Permanent employment	Casual employment	Seasonal employment	Total
Male	90.9	82.4	77.5	84.3
Female	9.1	17.6	22.5	15.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2022

Table 17 breaks down employment by the type of work and nationality and shows that 45.5% of the workforce were permanent employers, 40.4% were seasonal employees and 14.1% were casual employees.

²⁹ National Center for Human Resources Development (2022) The gap between the supply and demand sides of the Agricultural sector

Table 17: Percentage of the agriculture workforce broken down by types of work and nationality (%)

Nationality	Permanent employment	Casual employment	Seasonal employment	Total
Jordanian	83.6	71.7	69.5	76.2
Egyptian	10.9	13.7	13.1	12.2
Syrian	2.9	12.9	16.3	9.7
Others	2.6	1.6	1.2	1.9

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2022

Jordanian nationals made up the majority of the workforce (76.2%) followed by Egyptian and Syrian nationals. The agriculture sector is an open sector for Syrian refugees and they make up 16.3% of the seasonal workforce, 12.9% of the casual workforce and 2.9% of the permanent workforce.

Looking at the workforce breakdown by governorate, table 17 shows a third of the agriculture workforce can be found in Irbid, with the other governorates having a smaller workforce the further south they are situated. Despite the relative size of the agriculture workforce in the southern governorates, one NGO based in Karak interviewed for the study believed there were opportunities for small scale urban agriculture enterprises to be set up and there was interest from those taking part in the focus groups to do this.

Table 18: Percentage of workers by type of employment and governorate (%)

Governorate	Permanent employment	Casual employment	Seasonal employment	Total
Amman	9.6	5.2	5.7	7.4
Irbid	24.1	38.1	41.7	33.2
Mafrq	8.9	11.9	13.3	11.1
Karak	8.8	3.4	6.5	7.1
Talifah	2.3	2.1	1.0	1.8
Aqaba	3.3	0.8	1.8	2.3

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2022

Employment opportunities and skill needs

The National Center for Human Resources Development (2022) also identified expected job opportunities for the years 2022-2024. They estimated that there were 32,667 job opportunities, which were largely picking crops, packaging, ploughing, irrigation and fertilisation. There was little interest from those taking part in the focus groups for this study to undertake these types of jobs, although there was considerable interest to start small scale agricultural businesses. An NGO based in Karak suggested there were opportunities to develop small scale urban farm which presented employment opportunities for those in vulnerable groups.

The skill shortages identified by TVSDC (2023) suggest a **broad range of skills requirements across a variety of different crops and livestock**. It also identified flower picking, which

received different views from those stakeholders interviewed in this study, with a number of them questioning whether the cost of production and the water scarcity would allow Jordan to compete effectively with international competition such as the Netherlands, which leads the field and has more cost effective systems and international transport links. See table 19.

Table 19: Skill shortage occupations in the agriculture sector

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians	Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Agricultural worker/packaging worker	Open	Poultry/egg breeder	Open
Garden and landscaping service worker	Open	Poultry breeder/broiler	Open
Farmer - nursery farms, vegetable seedlings	Open	Animal/sheep breeder	Open
Farmer - Almonds	Open	Animal/camel breeder	Open
Farmer - Palm	Open	Animal/horse breeder	Open
Palm pollinator	Open	Poultry breeder/hatchers	Open
Farmer - medicinal and aromatic plants	Open	Slaughtering and processing worker in slaughterhouses	Open
Farmer - tree pruning and grafting	Open	Farmer - hydroponics	Open
Farmer - nursery farms, tree seedlings	Open	Agricultural equipment mechanic assistant	Open
Farmer – cut flowers	Open	Installation and maintenance of irrigation networks	Open
Farmer - vegetables	Open	General farms, aquaponics	Open
Farmer - olives	Open	Citrus farms	Open
A worker to operate and maintain olive presses	Open	Farms pollinate flowers and vegetable seeds and extract the produced seeds	Open
Food processor - pickled olives, packing, grading and marketing processes	Open	Farms produce vital enemies	Open
Animal breeder (cows)	Open	General fish breeder	Open

Source: TVSDC, 2023

In summary

- The agriculture sector has permanent, casual and seasonal job opportunities, these are mostly entry level are not seen as attractive by those taking part in the focus groups
- The sector is open to Syrian refugees and a significant percentage of the workforce are employed in the sector, particularly during peak seasons.
- The sector attracts female workers, especially as seasonable workers.
- There are higher employment needs in Irbid, Mafraq and Amman, but there was felt to be opportunities for small scale farming in Karak.
- There was significant interest from those participating in the focus groups from all three groups to start their own small scale agriculture business.

Automotive mechanics

Employment characteristics

The rise of electric and hybrid cars is **increasing the demand for mechanics with the ability to service electric vehicles**. This is resulting in **skill gaps, as well as skill shortages** as the market expands. There are reported to be 60,000 electric vehicles registered in Jordan (out of a total 2.2m registered vehicles). However, the number of electric vehicles rose 103% between July 2022 and 2023. The rise was 167% for the whole of 2022, which coincided with a fall in imports of petrol and diesel powered cars by 27% and hybrid vehicle imports by almost 25%.³⁰



There are no data that provides a breakdown of the workforce by age. However, available data suggests that women make up 6.9% of the workforce. The sector is open to non-Jordanians, but Syrian refugees account for just 2.7% of the total workforce (EDU-SYRIA III, 2021).³¹

Employment opportunities and skill needs

Men taking part in the focus groups indicated an interest in working in the sector, but typically not women. TVSDC highlights a broad range of roles from entry level to those that require higher, specialist skills. See table 20.

Table 20: Skill shortage occupations in the automotive sector

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians	Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Automotive/hybrid vehicle electrician	Open	Vehicle glass compound	Open
Electronic/Vehicle Technician (Autotronics)	Open	Mechanic of diesel pumps and injection systems	Open

³⁰ <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20231101-electric-vehicles-gain-traction-in-jordan-as-petrol-prices-rise> - accessed on 11 April 2024

³¹ EDU-SYRIA III (November 2021) Jordanian Labour Market Needs

Mechanical/Automotive Technician - Vehicles	Open	Truck pneumatic systems mechanic	Open
Car painters	Open	Vehicle operating and access systems service technician	Open
Car/vehicle paint assistant	Open	Electromechanics of hybrid vehicles	Open
Assistant Mechanic/ Vehicle	Open	Mechanic/Heavy machinery	Open
Vehicle/Truck Body Repairer	Open	Electronic vehicles	Open
Plastering and painting mechanic	Open	Electromechanics of electric vehicles	Open
Car/light vehicle mechanics	Open	Vehicle cleaners	Open
Bus and truck mechanics	Open	Vehicle glass compound	Open
Auto/Vehicle Electricians	Open	Mechanic of diesel pumps and injection systems	Open
Gasoline engine/overhaul restoration mechanics	Open	Truck pneumatic systems mechanic	Open
Car/Vehicle Mechanic (Other)	Open	Vehicle operating and access systems service technician	Open
Automatic gearbox mechanics	Open	Electromechanics of hybrid vehicles	Open
Radiator/radiator mechanics	Open	Car/vehicle upholstery assistant	Open
Tire repair mechanics	Open	Car upholsterers	Open
Car/light vehicle driving mechanics	Open	Diesel engine overhaul/overall mechanic	Open

Source: TVSDC, 2023

In summary

- There is a demand for a range of specialist mechanics in the sector and the rising demand for electronic vehicles is liable to increase the demand for mechanics with these needs
- The workforce is largely male
- Despite the sector being open to non-Jordanians the percentage of Syrian refugees working in the sector is low.

Construction

Employment characteristics

The construction sector is the **sixth largest sector in terms of employment**, but despite population growth, the sector witnessed negative growth rates in 2015, 2017, and in 2018. However, its direct contribution to GDP has



remained around 3.0% to 3.5%.³² There are no official breakdowns as to the number of Syrian refugees working in the construction sector, but a survey by the UNHCR (2022) suggested that 31% of Syrian refugees who were working, were working in the construction sector. This was significantly higher than any other sector.³³

Research undertaken by the National Center for Human Resources Development in 2018 found that the majority of the workforce were male and while no governorate level data existed, regional data suggested that 88% of the workforce were found in the central region.³⁴ See table 21.

Table 21: Percentage of the construction workforce broken down by gender, size of business and region (%)

Size of enterprise	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Small	0.0	100.0	0.0	86.3	13.7	82.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Medium	99.6	0.4	5.6	86.8	13.3	85.4	99.6	0.0	5.6
Large	0.0	0.0	0.6	92.0	8.0	96.1	0.0	0.0	0.6
	33.2	33.5	2.1	88.4	11.6	88.0	96.2	3.8	1.0

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2018

There are no data for the age of the workforce. The sector is open to Syrian refugees, with a processing fee of 10 JODs and an additional 2 JODs to the service providers.

Syrians applying for a work permit in the construction sector also need to pay an additional 45 JODs to cover the cost of mandatory insurance (Ministry of Labour, 2020)³⁵ A quarter of the workforce are non-Jordanian and table 22 shows the breakdown by gender and nationality across each region. The highest concentration of foreign workers can be found in the central region.

Table 22: Percentage of the construction workforce broken down by gender, nationality and region (%)

	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Jordanian	68.4	0.0	5.1	73.2	97.3	79.5	68.4	0.0	15.4
Non-Jordanian	31.6	0.0	6.7	26.8	2.7	86.1	31.6	0.0	7.2
	100.0	0.0	5.5	100.0	100.0	81.1	100.0	0.0	13.4

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2018

³² Jordan Strategy Forum (October 2019) The Construction and Housing Sector in Jordan: The Challenge of Demand and Supply Alignment

³³ UNHCR (2022) Vulnerability Framework - Population Survey of Refugees Living in Host Communities

³⁴ National Center for Human Resources Development (2018) The gap between supply and demand in the Construction sector

³⁵ Ministry of Labour (29 December 2020) Number:1/1/14142 – Closed occupations for non-Jordanian nationals

Employment opportunities and skill needs

The consistent view from stakeholders interviewed as part in the study was that the construction sector did not present many employment opportunities, as **demand was largely to fill the turnover** of the existing workforce. The Ministry of Labour did not share this view and research in 2018 (National Center for Human Resources Development, 2018) supports this view as they found that 66% of the demand for labour was owing to expansion, 15% as a result of labour turnover and 19% from both reasons.

Many of the stakeholders interviewed for the study also felt that the **informal workforce continued to play an important role** in the sector, which undermined the career trajectories within the formal economy.

The same study found that employers were not necessary looking for experience from job applicants. Some 28% of employers were not looking for any previous experience. This was largely in relation to entry level jobs such as masons.

Occupational skill shortages identified by TVSDC (2023) identified entry level and higher level skilled occupations and the list underlines the growing need for green skills in the workforce, such as retrofitting houses and for sustainable energy. See table 23.

Table 23: Skill shortage occupations in the construction sector

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians	Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Traditional toubar	Open	Electrical technician - home installations	Closed
Modern toubar	Open	Plumbing technician	Closed
Mechanical short	Open	Renewable energy technician	Closed
Tiler	Open	Renewable energy maintenance technician	Closed
Blacksmith Toubar	Open	Conditioning and refrigeration technician	Closed
Occupational safety and health supervisor in construction projects	Closed	Low current systems technician	Closed
Environmental supervisor in construction projects	Closed	High pressure tower technician	Closed
Mason	Open	Tower crane operating technician	Closed
Mason (traditional and mechanical stone construction)	Open	Tower cranes installation and installation technician	Closed

Source: TVSDC, 2023

Research by the National Center for Human Resources Development (2018) also identified a need for a number of other occupations such as architectural engineers and electricians.

Table 24: Skill shortage occupations in the construction sector

Occupations	Open for Syrian refugees
Architectural engineers	Closed
Electricians	Closed

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2018

In summary

- The construction sector has recruitment needs. While it has the majority of its workforce based in Amman, its workforce is spread across the whole of the country.
- It is an open sector for non-Jordanians and attracts a significant percentage of non-Jordanians.
- The workforce is predominately male and this may be a barrier for women considering employment in the sector.
- A large number of stakeholders did not see the construction sector as offering employment opportunities owing to high levels of turnover and the strength of informal employment in this sector. However, this view was not shared by the Ministry of Labour and data suggests that a significant percentage of the demand for labour is because of new demand and not simply to replace existing staff.
- Climate adaption and mitigation means that there will be greater emphasis on sustainable practices and retrofit of buildings to conserve energy use. This is likely to increase demand for these types of skills.

Water and energy

Employment characteristics

The National Water Strategy 2023-2040, launched in 2023 aims to address critical shortages of water in Jordan. This is acute problem for Jordan affecting domestic consumption, but also critical sectors, such as agriculture. The government predicts that climate change will result in a further 15% decline in freshwater resources by 2040 ³⁶



The strategy to address the lack of water has three goals:

1. Provide sufficient and sustainable municipal water supplies to meet water demand allocation policy equitably across all governorates
2. Reform irrigation practices by reducing the amount from freshwater resources used to irrigate crops, and replace it with non-conventional sources, while increasing total water allocations and value from non-conventional sources and more efficient irrigation

³⁶ Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (2023) National Water Strategy 2023- 2040

3. Increase non-conventional

Meeting these goals will result in job creation in the construction sector, building pipes and infrastructure, create green jobs, with solar panels and drip irrigation, but also increase the demand for jobs within the energy sector.

The need for more sustainable energy generation is placing greater emphasis on specialist roles to design, assess and fit new technologies. These roles also emphasise the **growing importance on engineering roles** identified in the ED-SYRIA III project.

There are no figures for the size and age profile of the sector, however, a report by USAID in 2020 cited the 2018 Gender Study on Women Working in the Water Sector that highlighted the disparity between women comprising over half of the engineering graduates in Jordan, and their labour force participation rate in 2018 being only 14%.³⁷ There are similarly no figures for the number of Syrian refugees working in the sector.

Jordan Energy Strategy 2020-30 aims to achieve a secure sustainable supply of energy and optimal utilization of natural resources. Its plan includes a focus on renewable energy, oil and gas. It again reinforces the importance of the kingdom having skilled engineers to fulfil the strategy and move forwards more sustainable supplies of energy, including solar.³⁸

Whilst many of the occupations in the water and energy sector are closed, there will be those occupations in the construction sector that are open to non-Jordanians and will benefit for the focus on addressing the current water and energy challenges.

Employment opportunities and skill needs

TVSDC (2023) has identified a number of areas where there are employment needs. These include those at lower skill levels such as installers, as well as engineers at higher level. See table 25.

Table 25: Skill shortages areas in the water and energy sector where skilled workers will be required³⁹

Operation and maintenance of photovoltaic solar cells
Off-grid solar energy systems
Battery storage technologies
Solar pumping systems
Energy management systems
Energy checker and efficiency upgrade
Cleaner Production Evaluator
EV charging

³⁷ USAID (February 2020) Water Management Initiative (WMI) Gender Policy for the Water Sector in Jordan

³⁸ Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Summary of Jordan Energy Strategy (2020)

³⁹ Note. These are not occupational areas, but the occupations that would be created in these areas, would likely be closed to Syrian refugees

Source: TVSDC, 2020

In summary

- Climate change and the need for sustainable energy is likely to mean growth in the water and energy sectors.
- The employment demand is likely to be at different skill levels. Roles such as installers of solar panels and pump systems and energy assessors are likely to increase demand.
- It is also likely to increase the demand for construction workers in the infrastructure sub-sector
- Whilst many of the occupations in the water and energy sector are closed to non-Jordanians, there will be benefits in the construction sector (infrastructure) which has occupations open to non-Jordanians.

Wood and furniture

The wood and furniture sector is concerned with the manufacturing of wood, carpentry and decoration works, articles made of cork and straw, glass household and packaging products, ceramic household products, metal and wooden home and office furniture, kitchens, specialized furniture, furniture parts, other furniture products and furniture service.



Employment characteristics

According to the Jordan Chamber of Industry the sector's workforce is an estimated 8,077 employees.

Research by the National Center for Human Resources Development in 2014 found that the sector's workforce was predominately male (98.3%) and that employers were reluctant to recruit women as they did not feel that the work was appropriate for women⁴⁰ Table 26 shows that the majority of the workforce are found in the central region and the gender split is relatively even despite the size of business. Further breakdowns by governorate are not available.

Table 26: Percentage of the wood and furniture workforce broken down by gender, size of business and region (%)

Size of enterprise	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Small	98.7	1.3	2.3	97.6	2.4	86.8	98.7	0.0	2.3
Medium	100.0	0.0	4.7	99.8	0.2	89.3	100.0	0.0	4.7
Large	0.0	0.0	2.8	98.0	2.0	87.3	0.0	0.0	2.8
Total	66.2	0.4	3.3	98.5	1.5	87.8	99.2	0.8	2.8

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2014

⁴⁰ National Center for Human Resources Development (2014) The gap between supply and demand sides of Furniture industry

The same research (National Center for Human Resources Development, 2014) found that 19.1% of the workforce are non-Jordanian and according to the figures presented in table 27, these non-Jordanians are male. The research also makes reference to concerns expressed by businesses that are concerned about Syrians entering the market with higher level skills.

Table 27: Percentage of the wood and furniture workforce broken down by nationality gender, and region (%)

Size of enterprise	Northern Region			Central Region			Southern Region		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Jordanian	88.5	0.0	10.9	80.1	98.0	86.8	67.1	0.0	2.3
Non-Jordanian	11.5	0.0	6.0	19.9	2.0	89.3	32.9	0.0	4.7
	100.0	0.0	10.0	100.0	100.0	87.3	100.0	0.0	2.8

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2014

Employment opportunities and skill needs

The National Center for Human Resources Development (2014) identified a demand for a number of skilled professions. They also identified that employers were seeking job seekers with at least one year's experience.⁴¹

Table 28: Skill shortage occupations in the wood and furniture sector

Occupations	Open to non-Jordanians
Assistant carpenters (furniture)	Open
Carpenters (furniture)	Open
Furniture upholsterer	Open
Bamboo carpenter	Open

Source: National Center for Human Resources Development, 2014

In summary

- The wood and furniture sector is smaller than other sectors and is made of a high proportion of smaller business. However, there are employment needs.
- The sector's workforce is largely male and it may be difficult to attract women into the sector.
- The sector is open to non-Jordanians and provides opportunities for Syrian refugees
- There may be potential for small business opportunities.

⁴¹ Ibid

Green jobs

Employment characteristics

There is no standard definition of a 'green job'. However, the ILO define it as 'decent jobs that contribute to preserve or restore the environment, be they in traditional sectors, such as manufacturing and construction, or in new, emerging green sectors, such as renewable energy and energy efficiency.'⁴²

Employment opportunities and skill needs

Modelling by GIZ suggests that Jordan has **considerable potential of green jobs** in the agriculture, transport, water and waste, manufacturing, tourism and energy sectors. It suggests that in a business-as-usual scenario (no further green investment), the total employment in Jordan would grow **with 127,000 jobs**, while the number of **green jobs could grow by approximately 5,500 jobs**. They also outline that with consolidated efforts to undertake a range of initiatives to promote sustainable practices then the economy could grow by 113,000 jobs.⁴³

Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision fosters the ambition of Jordan "to be a low-carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive nation that serves as a regional hub for green entrepreneurship and innovation".⁴⁴ It targets the **creation of one million jobs by 2033**, activating eight main drivers of growth in 35 sectors, via a broad portfolio of 366 initiatives. The ILO Global Employment for Youth 2022 report (ILO, 2022) shows that the path to net zero would bring a 3% increase in employment in the Arab States region by 2030, compared to a business-as-usual pathway. According to the ILO, Jordan is expected at a minimum to experience a similar growth in employment if the measures in the plan would be implemented.

In order to underline the potential for Jordan to create green jobs the GIZ suggested opportunities in:

- Recycled plastic
- Recycled textile
- Resource efficiency in the food-processing sector
- Sustainable value extraction of sludge
- Water scarcity
- Green publicansport

The types of jobs that are likely to be created included:

- Retrofit assessor
- Retrofit co-ordinator
- Air tightness tester
- Solar panel installer

⁴² ILO, UNICEF, World Bank (February 2024) Skills for a Green Transition: Solutions for Youth on the Move

⁴³ GIZ (September 2022) Green Jobs Assessment in selected Economic Sectors in Jordan

⁴⁴ Government of Jordan (2022) Economic Modernisation Vision Unleashing potential to build the future

- Solar pump installer
- Textile recycler
- Plastic recycler
- Water resources engineer

In addition, there is likely to be a demand for construction related roles that require knowledge of energy reduction and retrofit. These include:

- Masons
- Electricians
- Window installers
- Carpenters
- Tilers

In summary

- There is general agreement from stakeholders interviewed for this study that there will be significant growth in green jobs. Some of this will impact other sectors such as water and energy and construction
- There is also the potential for entrepreneurial opportunities in recycling and in other green jobs
- The sector would be able to attract those in all three vulnerable groups

Gig and platform economy

Employment characteristics

A recent report from the ILO into the platform economy in Jordan highlighted data from the Online Labour Index that showed that online work in represented approximately 0.08 per cent of all global online labour, amounting to approximately **11,000 workers** over the period 2017–2022. Within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, labour supply from Jordan represents 2.2 per cent of the total. The Arab countries with the highest share of online labour within MENA include Egypt (45 per cent), Morocco (11 per cent) and the UAE (10 per cent).⁴⁵

A lack of internet access is unlikely to be an obstacle to people wishing to work in the gig economy. The latest figures suggest that 84% of individuals in Jordan are using the internet.^[1] Data published by [Ookla](#) cited by Datareportal (2022) indicates that internet speeds are good and continue to increase.^[2] The vast majority of those in vulnerable groups participating in the three working groups for this study indicated that they had laptops and access to the internet.

^[1] International Telecommunication Union (2021) World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database, taken from the <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS?locations=JO> accessed on 5 May 2024

⁴⁵ ILO (2023) Platform Work in Jordan

^[2] Datareportal (2022) Digital 2022: Jordan

The ILO report outlined two types of platforms:

1. Location-based platforms, where tasks are performed at a specific physical location by individuals
2. Online web-based labour platforms, where tasks are performed online and remotely by workers.

Examples of the first type of platform include taxi/ride-hailing applications (e.g. Uber, Careem) and delivery applications (e.g. Talabat). The second type includes:

- Freelancing platforms (e.g. Mostaq),³ which enable “freelancers” or “independent contractors” to connect with clients for specific tasks ranging from translation to graphic design
- Microtask platforms (e.g. Kader), which outsource “low-end” clerical tasks, such as data entry and collection
- Competitive programming platforms (e.g. CodeForces), through which individuals solve complex programming or data analytics problems within a designated time. According to the Crunchbase database, there were at least 777 active DLPs in January of 2021, of which 283 (36 per cent) were online web-based platforms.

According to ILO estimates, the majority (64%) of these online web-based platforms are aimed at freelancers, followed by microtask platforms (16%), contest-based platforms (13%) and competitive programming platforms (7%).⁴⁶

The report suggests that some 52.0% of platform workers reported having up to five years’ experience in their current sector, compared with only 38.6% of traditional workers. This suggests that those successfully working in the sectors can demonstrate both competence and experience, which **may reduce the opportunities for new entrants who lack that**

experience. There are overlaps with the professions found in the ICT and transport sector, such as programme developer, app developer and delivery drivers.

Employment opportunities and skill needs

Many of those stakeholders interviewed for this study believed that the gig or platform economy presented much **potential to offer services outside of the country**, but they also highlighted the growing use of apps to provide services such as food deliveries in Jordan. They suggested that the sector provided specific opportunities for women, given that many of the working environments of those in the sector, were in someone’s own home or in workplaces with a balance

⁴⁶ Ibid

of men and women. They also felt that there were fewer opportunities for Syrian refugees as many of the occupations were ICT related and therefore closed for Syrian refugees.

The ILO concludes that **there is significant potential to target skills development at platform work**. On one hand, experience is concentrated within a range of specific activities (e.g. translation, graphic design and video editing), indicating higher demand for these services in both traditional and platform work. This suggests that developing skills in these areas would lead to a higher return on investment with lower risks. On the other hand, the higher demand for specific skills (e.g. drone video, audio recording and English-to-Arabic simultaneous interpretation) on platforms, signals an important entry point for skills development programmes that could target vulnerable workers who possess these skills but who have been unable to use platforms because of obstacles related to digital literacy, costs or lack of mobility, among others.⁴⁷

In summary

- The gig economy provides opportunities for self-employment opportunities across the whole of the country, as well as potential employment opportunities as employees as the sector continues to grow
- The gig or platform sector has cross over with the ICT and transport sectors
- The sector could be attractive for those in all three vulnerable groups, although there are some barriers for Syrian refugees as ICT occupations are closed to non-Jordanian

Jordanian youth unemployment across governorates – in summary

- There are approximately 189,021 unemployed young people aged 15-29 across the six governorates
- The highest percentage of young people who are unemployed as a proportion of total unemployment are found in Talifah and Karak. Mafraq has the lowest with 47.9%.
- In absolute terms, 83.0% of unemployed young people are found in Amman and Irbid.
- The highest percentage of those who were unemployed is in the 20-24 age category
- The educational profile of unemployed young people is markedly different between men and women, with a much larger proportion of women having completed a bachelor's degree or above
- Having a previous experience of work largely depends on location and gender. Unemployed men are much more likely to have worked if they were based in Amman, Irbid, Mafraq and Aqaba. In contrast the vast majority of women have never worked.

Women – in summary

- There were 125,577 unemployed women in Jordan in 2023
- The highest percentage of unemployed women are found in Amman and Irbid

⁴⁷ Ibid

- The highest percentage of those who were unemployed is in the 20-24 age category and only a small percentage of women aged above 39 are classified as unemployed.
- The vast majority of unemployed women aged 15-39 hold a bachelor's degree or above
- Many of those participating in the focus groups were looking for higher level employment opportunities or would be prepared to accept an entry level job if there were clear progression opportunities.
- Women were 25.6% less likely to have worked than men and this varies significantly across each governorate
- In the focus groups women were as open as men to working in a wide variety of sectors. However, they were more reticent when certain sectors were explored in more depth. The hospitality and tourism sector, food manufacturing and garment making sectors were not seen as an option by some female participants as an option owing to social attitudes
- Many of those participating in the focus group spoke positively about starting a home-based business and the opportunities to combine this with family responsibilities. Those who had studied an ICT-related course would be happy to work in the ICT sector and the gig economy from home.

Syrian refugees - In summary

- In March 2024 there were 639,552 Syrian refugees living in Jordan, with the majority living in Amman, Irbid and Mafrq
- There are 303,459 Syrian refugees aged between 18-60. Female Syrian refugees were more populous than men both in the total number of refugees and those of working age. The highest proportion of men and women were aged between 18-35
- Between 2016 and June 2021, 239,024 work permits were issued to Syrian refugees. Work permits typically remain concentrated in the construction, agriculture, manufacturing, and service sectors, with jobs that are typically low-skilled and featuring poor working conditions
- Individuals between 26 and 50 years of age are the most likely to participate in the labour force (47%) and young people (aged 18–25) constitute the largest cohort who are out of employment, but actively looking or willing to work
- Those who have never attended school were considerably more likely to work in agriculture. Those with pre-school/kindergarten education only, were more likely to work in the construction sector and 27% of those with pre-school/ kindergarten education were likely to work in transportation.
- The majority of working age Syrian refugees in Jordan do not have a valid work permit. 11% of Syrians report previously having obtained a work permit. Among those who are employed, 19% of Syrians hold a valid work permit.