

## Employment Trends in Jordan 2016

A study of employment ads in Jordanian newspapers

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## **Introduction**

In the context of research efforts aimed at analyzing the realities of the Jordanian labor market – its challenges and imbalances – the Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies published, over the past years, a number of studies and reports regarding the many sectors, aspects and gaps of economic life in Jordan.

One of the issues which the Center had not, to date, delved into in depth, was that of labor market demand. As such, and given the country's high unemployment rates, which stand at 15.8%, during the third quarter of 2016 in general, and 13.8% and 25.2% amongst men and women, respectively, the Phenix Center made the decision to conduct an analysis of the job postings advertised on Jordanian newspapers. Conducting such an analysis is made all the more pertinent given the growing numbers of migrant workers in the Jordanian labor market. The government estimates the number of migrant workers in the country to have reached 1 million, two thirds of which are engaged in the informal economy, i.e., do not hold work permits.

The current study will aim to gauge labor market demand in Jordan by identifying the nature of the job positions advertised on national newspapers, in terms of job type, country, and desired gender, as well as educational, skill, and experience requirements. In doing so, the Center aims to provide data which may inform policymaking, namely regarding labor and education, and thus help to bridge the gap between labor market supply and demand, promote the integration of university graduates into the labor market, and reduce unemployment levels, especially among the youth.

## **Methodology**

For the purpose of this study, a sample of 2042 job postings was collected from such Jordanian newspapers as Ar-Rai, Al-Ghad, and Ad-Dustour. The collection process took place in two phases, the first in January, and the second in July 2016. These months were selected with the aim of reflecting labor market demand in the beginning and middle of the year. The sampled job positions were analyzed according to the following indicators: Type of job/occupation; required scientific and technical competence; required skill level; desired applicant gender; required experience; and place of work.

## **Results**

### **1. Jobs and Occupations**

The majority of job openings advertised in Jordanian newspapers in 2016 fell into the category of "managerial and financial", accounting for as much as 29.1% of sampled job postings, followed by jobs in education, at 22.1%, and jobs in vocational and technical occupations, at 12.9%. 7.7% of job postings concerned health and medical assistants, while 6.9% sought senior health and medical professionals. Jobs related to engineering represented 5.4% of job postings collected, 4.6% pertained to jobs in hotels and restaurants, and 3.4% represented jobs in information technologies (IT). Among the least sought after were drivers and unskilled workers, representing 3.1% of job postings each, and other occupations, at 1.6%.

**Table 1: Labor market demand by occupation in Jordan, 2016**

Occupation	Incidence	Percentage
Managerial and Financial	594	29.1
Education	452	22.1
Vocational and Technical	264	12.9
Health and Medical (Assistants)	158	7.7
Health and Medical (Senior Positions)	140	6.9
Engineering	111	5.4
Hotels and Restaurants	94	4.6
Information Technology (IT)	70	3.4
Drivers	64	3.1
Unskilled Workers	63	3.1
Others	32	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2042</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 2. Educational Level

As can be seen in Table 2 below, the majority of job postings (55.2%) did not specify any educational requirements. However, 26.1% of sampled job postings required applicants possessing Bachelor's degrees, followed by those calling for Doctorate/PhD holders (7.6%), applicants with higher diplomas (5.5%), and holders of Master's degrees (4.2%). Comparatively few job postings called for applicants with secondary (1.2%), technical and vocational (0.3%).

**Table 2: Labor market demand by level of education in Jordan, 2016**

Educational Level	Incidence	Percentage
Not specified	1127	55.2
Bachelor's Degree	533	26.1
Doctorate/PhD	155	7.6
Higher Diploma	112	5.5
Master's Degree	85	4.2
Secondary	22	1.2
Technical and Vocational	6	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2042</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 3. Specialization

The study concluded that the majority of advertised job openings (59.2%) did not require applicants to be specialized in any particular scientific field. Only 8% of job postings required applicants to hold specializations in health and medical sciences whereas, as can be seen in Table 1, nearly 15% of advertisements pertained to occupations in health and medicine (whether assistants or senior professionals). This is likely explained by the fact that, in some job postings, it is assumed that applicants possess the necessary qualifications to apply, and therefore this requirement is omitted. 7.2% of advertisements specifically requested that

applicants be specialized in humanities, without detailing a particular field (sociology, psychology, etc.), while 6.8% of job postings requested engineers, 6.7% requested candidates specialized in management and economic sciences, and 5.4% accepted applicants with specializations in any related field. Fewer job postings requested IT specialists (3.4%) and fewer still (3.2%) sought candidates specialized in pure sciences (e.g., chemistry, biology, mathematics, physics).

**Table 3: Labor market demand by specialization in Jordan, 2016**

Specialization	Incidence	Percentage
Not specified	1208	59.2
Health and Medicine	164	8.0
Humanities	148	7.2
Engineering	139	6.8
Management and Economic Sciences	136	6.7
Any related major	111	5.4
Information Technology (IT)	70	3.4
Pure Sciences	66	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2042</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4. Additional Skills

Regarding additional skills, the study showed that 12.8% of job postings required candidates to possess some level of computer skills, and that 19.4% requested a knowledge of the English language. It is worth pointing out that 16% of job advertisements were written in English, which suggests that a higher percentage of jobs than specified the need for a knowledge of English actually required using the language. Moreover, 14.3% of job postings required possessing some job-related skill. Among the job advertisements which did not mention the need for possessing specific skill sets, it was often implicitly assumed that applicants would have acquired certain job-related skills, such as computer proficiency and a knowledge of English.

**Table 4: Labor market demand by the additional skills in Jordan, 2016**

Skill	Required (%)	Not Required (%)	All (%)
Not specified	12.8	89.2	100,0
English	19.4	80.6	100,0
Related Technical Skills	14.3	85.7	100,0
Computer Skills	29.8	70.2	100,0

## 5. Work Experience

The majority of sampled job postings (62.4%) did not require any previous experience, while 20.2% required applicants to possess one to three years of work experience, 10.3% four to six years of experience, and 5.5% six to ten years of experience. Only 1.6% required applicants to possess over ten years of experience, and 2.1% of job postings did not specify any requirements in regards to experience.

**Table 5: Labor market demand by experience requirements in Jordan, 2016**

Work Experience	Incidence	Percentage
No experience required	1233	62.4
1 – 3 years	413	20.2
4 – 6 years	210	10.3
6 – 10 years	112	5.5
Not specified	42	2.1
10+ years	32	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2042</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 6. Job Location (Country)

As indicated in the Table 6 below, 79.5% of job postings in Jordan in 2016 were located in Jordan itself, while 20% were located in Gulf States. A negligible percentage (0.5%) were located in other Arab countries.

**Table 6. Labor market demand by job location (country) in Jordan, 2016**

Job Location (Country)	Incidence	Percentage
Jordan	1622	79.5
Arab Gulf countries	409	20.0
Other Arab countries	11	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2042</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 7. Gender Preferences

The results of the study indicate that the majority of job postings in Jordanian newspapers in 2016 did not specify preferences regarding applicants' gender. Nevertheless, 9.7% of advertisements specifically requested male applicants, and 9.9% favored female applicants.

**Table 7: Labor market demand in Jordan according to employers' gender preferences**

Gender	Incidence	Percentage
Male	199	9.7
Female	203	9.9
Not specified	1640	80.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2042</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 8. Advertisement Language

As was alluded to above, 16.1% of advertisements were written in English, while the remaining 83.9% were in Arabic. It should be noted that the job posting in English concerned international institutions and foreign companies operating in Jordan. Once again, it is worth stressing that the fact that the job postings are in English can be understood to implicate that the position requires a knowledge of the language.

**Table 8: Job postings in Jordan according to advertisement language**

Advertisement Language	Frequency	Percent
Arabic	1714	83.9
English	328	16.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2042</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 9. Gender Preference by Occupation

The study's results indicate that the majority of job advertisements did not specify a preference for male or female applicants, with the percentage of employers indifferent to applicants' genders ranging from 50%, in the driving sector, to 97.1% in IT. Employers seeking assistants in the health and medical sector were those who most favored female applicants, at 18.4%, followed by management and finance, at 13.5%. As for employers favoring male workers, they were particularly predominant among those hiring drivers (50%), followed by employers in vocational and technical fields (27.3%), those seeking unskilled workers (19%), and employers in hotels and restaurants (17%).

**Table 9: Labor market demand according to gender preferences in Jordan, 2016**

Occupation	Gender			Total (%)
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Not specified (%)	
Managerial and Financial	5.9%	13.5%	80.6%	<b>100.0</b>
Education	2.9	9.5	87.6	<b>100.0</b>
Vocational and Technical	27.3	8.3	64.4	<b>100.0</b>
Health and Medical (Assistants)	4.4	18.4	77.2	<b>100.0</b>
Health and Medical (Senior Positions)	1.4	6.4	92.1	<b>100.0</b>
Engineering	6.3	3.6	90.1	<b>100.0</b>
Hotels and Restaurants	17.0	6.4	76.6	<b>100.0</b>
Information Technology (IT)	1.4	1.4	97.1	<b>100.0</b>
Drivers	50.0	0.0	50.0	<b>100.0</b>
Unskilled Workers	19.0	12.7	68.3	<b>100.0</b>
Others	6.3	3.1	90.6	<b>100.0</b>

## 10. Gender Preferences by Job Location (Country)

Also regarding gender preferences, the study showed that, overall, the same percentage of Jordanian employers favored male and female workers (11.5% each), whereas 76.9% indicated no preference in regards to gender. As for employers based in Gulf countries, while a greater percentage did not indicate a preference for male or female workers (93.6%), the remaining were slightly more likely to favor females – 3.4%, to 2.9% favoring males. In other Arab countries, however, seemingly no employers favored male applicants, whereas 18.2% specifically requested females and the remaining 81.8% indicated no preference.

**Table 10: Job postings in Jordan, 2016, according to gender preference by job location (country)**

Job Location (Country)	Gender			Total %
	Male %	Female %	Not specified %	
Jordan	11.5	11.5	76.9	100.0
Arab Gulf countries	2.9	3.4	93.6	100.0
Other Arab countries	0.0	18.2	81.8	100.0

## 11. Experience Requirements by Occupation

In terms of experience requirements, the study showed that the majority of job postings (62.5%) did not require previous experience. However, 60% of employers in IT sought experienced applicants, most of which required one to three (40%) and four to six (20%) years of previous experience. These were followed by employers in the health and medical sector (53.4%), and those in engineering (47.7%). Employers in hotels, Doctors and workers didn't require any experiences.

**Table 11: Experience requirements in the labor market by occupation**

Occupation	Years of Experience					Total %
	1 – 3 %	4 – 6 %	7 – 10 %	More than %	No experience required %	
Managerial and Financial	22.9	14.5	8.2	1.9	52.5	100.0
Education	15.9	1.3	1.5	0.4	80.8	100.0
Vocational and Technical	16.3	17.8	6.1	3.0	56.8	100.0
Health and Medical (Assistants)	50.0	3.8	0.6	0.6	44.9	100.0
Health and Medical (Senior Positions)	4.3	7.1	2.1	0.0	86.4	100.0
Engineering	23.4	24.3	22.5	5.4	24.3	100.0
Hotels and Restaurants	3.2	1.1	7.4	0.0	88.3	100.0
Information Technology (IT)	40.0	20.0	5.7	5.7	28.6	100.0
Drivers	15.6	12.5	0.0	0.0	71.9	100.0
Unskilled Workers	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.7	100.0
Others	18.8	15.6	0.0	0.0	65.6	100.0

## 12. Occupational demand by Job Location (Country)

Table 12 below elaborates on the location of job postings by country by differentiating between occupational sectors. It was shown that the majority of employers seeking senior professionals in the health and medical sector were located in the Arab Gulf (75.7%) that the majority of employers in Arab Gulf were seeking for senior professionals in the health and medical sector (75.7%), while 35.4% of positions for health and medical assistants and 26.8% of job postings in the educational sector were also located in the Gulf.

**Table 12: Occupational demand by job location (country)**

Occupation	Job Location (Country)			Total
	In Jordan %	GCC %	Other Arab countries %	
Managerial and Financial	85.7	13.8	0.5	100.0
Education	73.2	26.8	0.0	100.0
Vocational and Technical	96.2	2.7	1.1	100.0
Health and Medical (Assistants)	63.3	35.4	1.3	100.0
Health and Medical (Senior Positions)	24.3	75.7	0.0	100.0
Engineering	81.1	18.9	0.0	100.0
Hotels and Restaurants	89.4	9.6	1.1	100.0
Information Technology (IT)	92.9	7.1	0.0	100.0
Drivers	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Unskilled Workers	98.4	0.0	1.6	100.0
Others	90.6	6.3	3.1	100.0

## Summary and Conclusions

According to the study's results, the following can be inferred:

1. Job positions in managerial and financial occupations accounted for as many as 29.1% of sampled advertisements, followed by jobs in education, at 22.1%, and vocational and technical occupations, at 12.9%.
2. The majority of job postings in 2016 (55.2%) did not specify a minimum level of education as a requirement.
3. The majority of job advertisements (59.2%) did not require applicants to be specialized in a particular field, while the least percentage of job postings (3.2%) requested specialists in pure sciences, e.g., chemistry, biology, mathematics, physics, etc.
4. Regarding additional skills, it was shown that 12.8% of job postings required applicants to be, to some degree, computer-savvy, while 19.4% required a knowledge of English, and 14.3% required that applicants possessed certain job-related technical skills.
5. The majority of job advertisements (62.2%) did not require any previous experience.
6. Most sampled advertisements (79.5%) were for job positions in Jordan, while the remaining job positions (20.0%) were located in the Gulf.



7. Most job postings also didn't indicate a preference for applicants of a certain gender. In fact, 80.4% did not specify such a preference, while 9.7% and 9.9% required applicants to be male and female, respectively.

8. Most advertisements (83.9%) were in Arabic, while the remaining 16.1% were in English.

9. In 2016, 62.5% of sampled job advertisements in Jordan did not require applicants to have work experience, while 60% in the IT occupations required some degree of experience, followed by 53.4% of jobs in the health and medical sector and 47.7% of jobs in engineering, while hotel professions, doctors and workers did not require any previous experience.

11. In regards to job positions located in Gulf countries, senior health and medical professionals were the most sought after (75.7%), followed by health and medical assistants (35.4%) and workers in education (26.8%).