

Report

Employment Trends in Jordan 2016

Labor Watch Reports

Prepared by:
Jordan Labor Watch
Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies

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The Phenix Center for Economic & Informatics Studies is a non-governmental organization dedicated to independent policy research and measuring public opinions on impactful current and emerging issues in areas of economics, society, and its legislative environment in Jordan. The Center was founded in Amman, Jordan in 2003 under the registration number 142203. It works to promote a sustainable developmental paradigm in Jordan, rooted in human rights and the principles of democratic governance by focusing on reforming the labor policies, lifting of restrictions on freedom of association, and strengthening of social protection policies. The Center specializes in promoting inclusivity in development processes. It compiles databases of relevant actors and stakeholders, develops research, studies, papers and reports, conducts conferences and advocacy campaigns, and empowers several actors to take part in steering development through capacity building.

Is a German non-profit political foundation based on the principles of social democracy. FES was founded in 1925, it promotes international cooperation, education and research in Germany and abroad. The foundation opened its office in Amman in 1986 to support and enhance efforts of civil society organizations to become accepted partners of public bodies, enhancing furthers political dialogue between decision-makers from Jordan, Iraq, Germany and the region, and strengthening the participation of youth in the political process.

Jordan Labor Watch contributes to improving work conditions for all workers in Jordan in accordance with international labor standards. This is done through developing studies and reports covering various aspects of labor issues related to workers, uncovering violations and abuses to which workers are exposed in the work place. The program provides a comprehensive database covering various indicators related to the labor market, trade unions, labor organizations, laws and regulations, as well as governing performance. Furthermore, the program strives to present alternative policies that tackle challenges facing the Arabian and Jordanian labor market as well as conducting training programs that support upgrading skills and capabilities of advocates in the labor movement.

Disclaimer:

Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung are not responsible for the statements of workers and union officials cited in this report.

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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	Percentage
Managerial and Financial	29.1
Education	22.1
Vocational and Technical	12.9
Health and Medical (Assistants)	7.7
Health and Medical (Senior Positions)	6.9
Engineering	5.4
Hotels and Restaurants	4.6
Information Technology (IT)	3.4
Drivers	3.1
Unskilled Workers	3.1
Others	1.6
Total	100.0

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	Percentage
Not specified	55.2
Bachelor's Degree	26.1
Doctorate/PhD	7.6
Higher Diploma	5.5
Master's Degree	4.2
Secondary	1.2
Technical and Vocational	0.3
Total	100.0

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	Percentage
Not specified	59.2
Health and Medicine	8.0
Humanities	7.2
Engineering	6.8
Management and Economic Sciences	6.7
Any related major	5.4
Information Technology (IT)	3.4
Pure Sciences	3.2
Total	100.0

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	Percentage
No experience required	62.4
1 – 3 years	20.2
4 – 6 years	10.3
6 – 10 years	5.5
Not specified	2.1
10+ years	1.6
Total	100.0

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)	Percentage
Jordan	79.5
Arab Gulf countries	20.0
Other Arab countries	0.5
Total	100.0

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	Percentage
Male	9.7
Female	9.9
Not specified	80.4
Total	100.0

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	Percent
Arabic	83.9
English	16.1
Total	100.0

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%	100.0
Education	2.9	9.5	87.6	100.0
Vocational and Technical	27.3	8.3	64.4	100.0
Health and Medical (Assistants)	4.4	18.4	77.2	100.0
Health and Medical (Senior Positions)	1.4	6.4	92.1	100.0
Engineering	6.3	3.6	90.1	100.0
Hotels and Restaurants	17.0	6.4	76.6	100.0
Information Technology (IT)	1.4	1.4	97.1	100.0
Drivers	50.0	0.0	50.0	100.0
Unskilled Workers	19.0	12.7	68.3	100.0
Others	6.3	3.1	90.6	100.0

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.
10. 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%).

