

REPORT 2024

Labor Protests in Jordan 2023

PREPARATION:

Phenix Center for Economics & Informatics Studies

Amman Jordan

May 2024

www.phenixcenter.net





Phenix Center for Economics & Informatics Studies

The Phenix Center for Economic & Informatics Studies is a nongovernmental 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.



Jordan Labor Watch

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 is not responsible for the statements of workers and union officials cited in this report.

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Introduction



The Phenix Center for Economics and Informatics Studies, as part of its Jordan Labor Watch program, which was launched in the second half of 2009, is committed to monitoring and tracking events and activities in the Jordanian labor market at the level of policies and practices, alongside the shifts and labor movements that occur. Among the reports prepared by the Labor Watch team is the annual report on labor protests in Jordan.

The report aims to provide an economic and social analytical reading of all labor protests that took place in Jordan during the year 2023. All labor protests that occurred during this year were monitored and documented. The monitoring and documentation process was carried out through direct communication with the organizers of these protests, in addition to analyzing the media coverage conducted by Jordanian media outlets. All forms and sizes of labor protests fall within the scope of this report, including sit-ins, strikes, protest threats, and others.

Context

Workers in Jordan continue to face numerous challenges in the labor market, with high unemployment rates that have increased by about ten percentage points over the past decade. In 2013, the unemployment rate was approximately 12.6%, which rose to 21.4% by the fourth quarter of 2023. Poverty rates also increased, reaching 24.1% in the first quarter of 2022, according to the latest figures. Additionally, working conditions for most of the workforce have deteriorated.

Various indicators, including those in this report, clearly show that most workers in Jordan, whether in organized or unorganized sectors, are experiencing difficult and inadequate working conditions. This includes a lack of job

opportunities, declining wages, the absence of job security, and social protections such as social security and health insurance. Moreover, there has been an increase in violations and assaults on their labor and human rights.

Based on indicators of unemployment, poverty, and other factors highlighted in this report, it can be concluded that the essence of the labor protests crisis reflect an economic, social, and political crisis in Jordan. Economic and social policies developed and implemented by successive governments, including labor policies, wage policies, tax policies, and social protection policies, have deepened social inequality and economic disparities.

These policies have been biased against the interests of workers in Jordan, leading to significant legislative constraints on the labor movement and unions in the country. These policies also demonstrate a gradual abandonment of the government's social responsibility.

Based on the economic priorities program announced by the current government at the end of 2021, the policy's direction is clear: to prioritize economic growth at the expense of social protections. This includes encouraging investment by weakening labor policies and conditions.

Recent amendments to the Social Security Law exemplify this shift, allowing the private sector to reduce monthly contributions for retirement, disability, and life insurance by up to 50% for Jordanian nationals under 30 who have not previously contributed to social security. Additionally, another amendment extends work injury and maternity insurance to agricultural workers until a decision is made by the Cabinet to include them in all insurances.

Regarding labor laws, recent amendments allow the Ministry of Labor to contract with any entity inside or outside the kingdom or license specialized companies to recruit Jordanian workers and contract with employers. This amendment is likely to relax labor conditions and opens the door to violations and illegal practices in many sectors. Furthermore, pressure has been exerted on labor unions to retract a previous decision by the tripartite committee to automatically raise the minimum wage according to inflation rates announced by the Department of Statistics.

These imbalances and challenges, along with weak enforcement of labor laws, often lead workers to resort to protest actions such as sit-ins and strikes to voice their concerns and claim their labor and human rights as stipulated by Jordanian labor laws. Understanding the direction and framework governing these actions is crucial, as it determines the scope of action.

Social protest, according to social science literature, represents collective efforts to change the nature of established social conditions in society. Social movements aim to establish a new way of life and are based on dissatisfaction with the prevailing pattern and the desire for change, relying on continuity, conscious organization, and change. The reasons and circumstances leading to protests vary, but protests are usually resorted to after collective bargaining fails to achieve workers' demands or due to a lack of dialogue channels with administrations and/or employers.

The study of labor protest movements cannot be separated from broader social movements, as labor protests are considered part of social movements. Many schools of social movements argue that the economic factor is the main driver of social movements, and the increase in labor protests and their intensity gives rise to further social movements.

The importance of preparing this report lies in the belief of the Labor Watch team that labor protests are one of the most important indicators of economic and social crises, especially in the labor market, accurately reflecting the nature of the prevailing relationships between various stakeholders in labor relations, including workers, employers, and the government.

Terminology and Concepts:

Labor Protest:

A method for a group of workers (organized or unorganized), a labor union, or an individual worker to object to a current situation that harms their interests or to demand rights they do not possess. Labor protests typically take the form of sit-ins, strikes, threats, or marches.

Sit-in:

It is a form of protest to a specific policy, decisions, or actions that harm the interests of the protesters. It involves the protesters standing in the vicinity of the entity implementing the policy, often accompanied by banners to attract attention and media coverage.

Strike:

It is a form of protest where workers collectively stop working to pressure the employer to improve working conditions or meet specific demands related to their labor rights.

March:

It involves a group of workers walking from a gathering point to a specific destination. Chants and slogans are often shouted during marches to convey their demands.

Threat of Protest:

It is a form of protest where a group of workers threatens to carry out a sit-in, strike, or march, setting a date for implementation, to pressure the employer or responsible entity to meet their demands. This threat is typically conveyed through a press statement addressed to the employer and the media.

Threat of Self-Harm:

It is a manifestation of protest where an individual threatens to harm themselves physically to draw attention to their cause and pressure the responsible entity to meet their demands.

Electronic Storm:

It is a somewhat modern form of protest where a group of workers, a union, or civil society organizations agree to launch slogans and hashtags related to their demands collectively on social media platforms at a specific time, aiming to reach a larger audience with their demands and cause.

Digital Indicators:



The year 2023 witnessed a decrease in the number of labor protests by 45% compared to 2022, with a total of 89 protests in 2023 compared to 162 protests in 2022. This decrease can be attributed, alongside a general decline in the number of labor protests over the past decade (2013-2023), to several reasons, the most prominent of which include: the lack of seriousness from the government and most employers in meeting the demands of workers. Only 7 out of the total number of labor protests in 2023 saw their demands met, which discouraged many workers from engaging in further protests due to a sense of their demands not being met, along with a fear of job termination.

Additionally, some protesting workers were pressured and tempted with promises to meet their demands, leading them to withdraw from labor protests. Government pressures also played a role, as many protests, especially those of teachers and the unemployed, were dispersed.

Moreover, the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, which began on the October 7, 2023 and continues until now, led to a decrease in the number of labor protests demanding their rights. Wide sectors of workers who used to have near-weekly labor protests, such as teachers, transport drivers, and retired phosphate workers, suspended all their protests because of shifts in the general mood among Jordanians due to the ongoing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.

However, this aggression also prompted all sectors of the Jordanian people (workers, employers, children, women, and the elderly) to carry out hundreds of ongoing protests until now, demanding an end to the aggression on Gaza and showing solidarity with them.

Despite the noticeable decrease in the number of labor protests last year, alongside a decline in their numbers in previous years, the phenomenon of labor protests, which is a manifestation of social protests, remains evident.

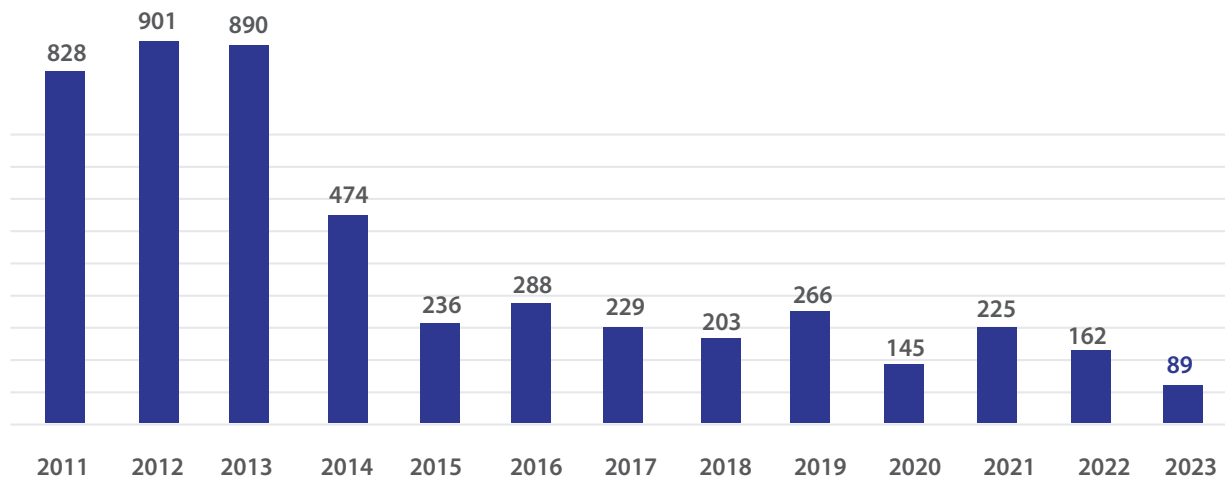
These protests reflect the depth of the economic and social crisis facing Jordan, with stagnant wage levels against consecutive increases in the prices of most goods and services, leading to deteriorating economic conditions for the vast majority of citizens.

Additionally, other factors include a decline in working conditions for the majority of workers, such as a tangible decrease in the real value of wages and their minimum wage, compared to an increase in inflation rates (price hikes), delays or cessation of salaries for many employees, and the lack of basic labor rights stipulated by Jordanian labor laws, including working hours, annual and sick leave, official holidays, availability of health and safety measures, and access to social insurance provided by the Social Security Corporation, as well as weak health insurance and other decent working conditions. Table 1 illustrates the numbers of labor protests from 2011 to 2023.

Table (1): Distribution of Labor Protests during the Years 2011 to 2023

Year	Number of Protests
2011	828
2012	901
2013	890
2014	474
2015	236
2016	288
2017	229
2018	203
2019	266
2020	145
2021	225
2022	162
2023	89

Figure (1): Distribution of Labor Protests during the Years 2011 to 2023



Causes of Labor Protests



The reasons for labor protests varied, including demands for wage increases and bonuses, or their disbursement, a set of demands or benefits (more than one goal per protest), protesting systems and laws, demands for job opportunities, protests against dismissal from work, and other reasons that prompted workers to carry out protests to demand their labor rights.

The figures indicate that the priorities of waged workers in Jordan focused on protesting against systems and laws, alongside decisions and measures that caused harm to workers. This category ranked first with 35 protests, representing 39.3% of the total protests. Most of these protests were by retired employees of the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company protesting the insurance company's actions that weakened their health insurance, as it canceled the approval of many treatments in pharmacies, such as treatments for chronic diseases, and coverage for seeing specialists, and placed obstacles to obtaining approvals when visiting hospitals or medical laboratories. Also, teachers protested decisions to refer them to compulsory service and early retirement, which affected 120 teachers who were suspended from work, arbitrary transfers affecting dozens of teachers in the provinces, and the continued closure of their union despite nearly a year and a half since the decision to suspend the union's work was issued by the Amman public prosecutor in 2020, which lasted for two years.

There were demands for job opportunities and demands for wage increases and bonuses, each with 21 protests, representing 23.6% for each. Most demands for job opportunities were for unemployed individuals, while most demands for wage increases and bonuses were for medical support staff employees and nursing staff participating in the Ministry of Health to raise the technical allowance (135) percent, similar to legal nurses and midwives. Public transport drivers in Amman demanded fuel subsidies similar to their counterparts in other provinces. In addition, faculty and administrative members at Yarmouk University protested reducing their allocations from the parallel program.

The third most common were protests carried out due to conflicting interests of policy implementers with other entities, and demands for social protections such as social security, health insurance, occupational health and safety conditions, and a suitable work environment with 6 protests, representing 6.7% of the total protests.

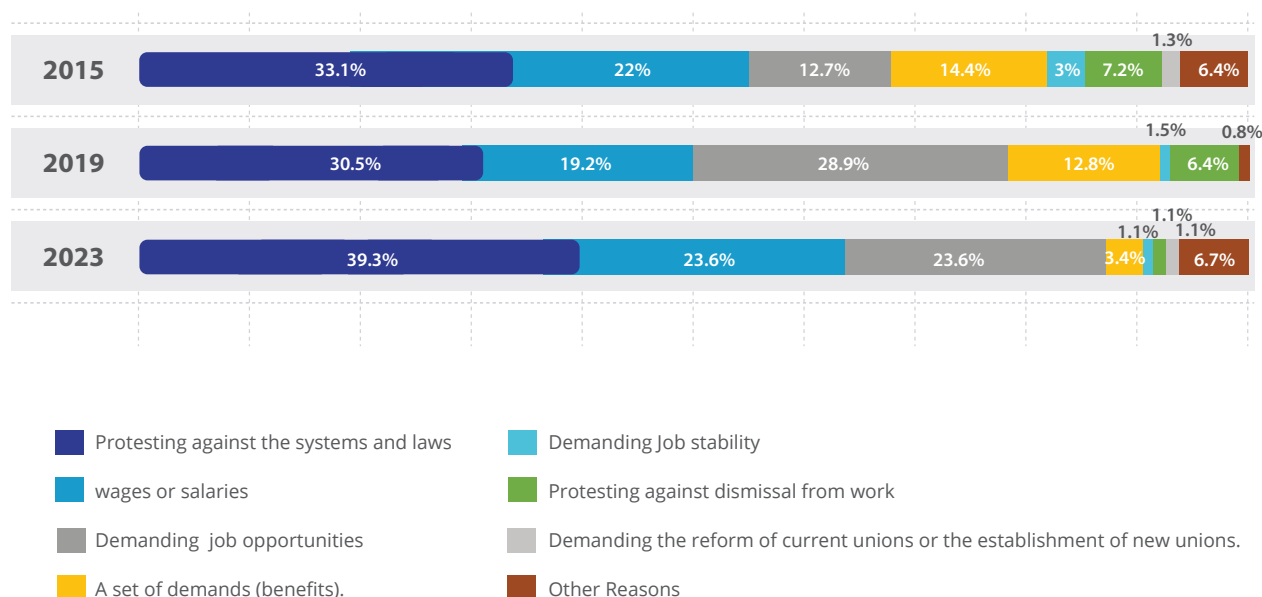
The fourth most common protests had multiple demands (more than one goal per protest) with three protests of this type, constituting (3.4) percent, with smart transportation application drivers protesting against the policies and practices of application companies (operating companies) and the Land Transport Regulatory Authority and the Ministry of Transport, as some driving service application companies do not adhere to the fare set by the Land Transport Regulatory Authority, and deduct a high percentage of drivers' (captains) total trip earnings, up to about (30) percent, in addition to drivers' demands to increase operational work to 10 years instead of 7, to enable them to pay off their accrued loans.

The least common protests demanded job stability, protests against dismissal from work, and demands for reforming current unions or establishing new ones, with one protest each, representing 1.1% for each, and Table (2) illustrates these indicators.

Table (2): Relative Distribution of Labor Protests According to Reasons for Protest

Causes of Protest:	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Protesting systems and laws	39.3%	43.8%	24.4%	24.8%	30.5%	38.4%	53.2%	25.0%	33.1%
Wages	23.6%	16%	16.4%	23.4%	19.2%	21.2%	12.7%	11.0%	22.0%
Demanding job opportunities	23.6%	16.7%	14.7%	11.0%	28.9%	6.4%	9.2%	13.0%	12.7%
Demanding job stability	1.1%	4.3%	7.6%	0.0%	1.5%	1.0%	1.7%	1.0%	3.0%
A set of demands (benefits)	3.4%	8.6%	7.1%	2.8%	12.8%	22.7%	14.0%	30.0%	14.4%
Demanding reform of current unions or establishing new ones	1.1%	0.6%	4.0%	--	--	0.5%	--	--	1.3%
Protesting dismissal from work	1.1%	3.1%	2.2%	4.8%	6.4%	4.9%	9.2%	10.0%	7.2%
Others*	6.7%	6.8%	23.6%	4.1%	0.8%	4.9%	0.0%	10.0%	6.4%

Figure 2: Relative distribution of labor protests according to the reasons for the protests.



Types of labor protests

Regarding the types of labor protests, for the purposes of this report, they have been categorized into sit-ins, work stoppages, threats of protest actions, self-harm, protest marches, and finally, electronic storms.

In 2023, threats of protest actions ranked first in types of protest with a percentage of 47.2, accounting for 42 threats, most of which were distributed among the unemployed, retirees of the phosphate company, and public transport drivers. This was followed by sit-ins, which ranked second with a percentage of (37.1), comprising (33) sit-ins, most of which were also for retirees of

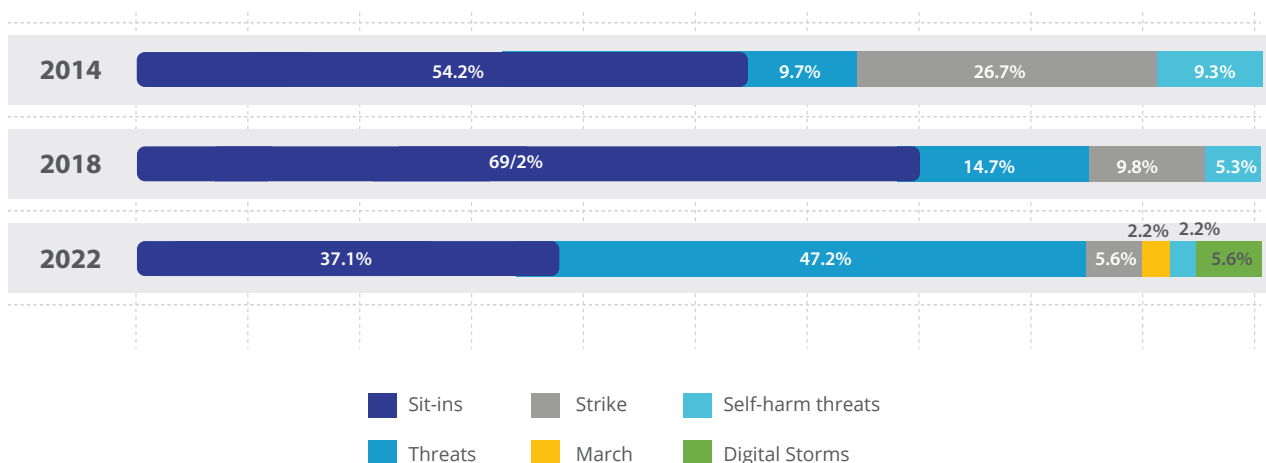
the phosphate company, supporting medical staff in the Ministry of Health, public transport drivers, and transportation service app drivers.

Work stoppages and electronic storms were tied for third place with a percentage of (5.6) each, comprising five protests for each type. Most of these were among iron factory workers for work stoppages and the teachers' union council for electronic storms. In last place, protest marches and threats of self-harm were also tied with a percentage of (2.2) each, comprising two protests for each type. Table number (3) illustrates these indicators.

Table (3): Distribution of labor protests according to the type of protest

Type of protest	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Sit-in	37.1%	61.1%	54.2%	62.1%	69.2%	62.6%	66.4%	56.0%	54.2%
Threat	47.2%	13.6%	23.6%	11.7%	14.7%	10.8%	9.2%	14.0%	9.7%
Strike	5.6%	14.8%	16.0%	7.6%	9.8%	22.7%	19.2%	25.0%	26.7%
March	2.2%	6.2%	4.4%	15.9%	--	--	--	--	--
Threat of self-harm or harm	2.2%	1.9%	1.8%	2.8%	5.3%	3.9%	5.2%	5.0%	9.3%
Electronic storm	5.6%	2.5%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Figure (3): Distribution of labor protests by type of protest



Labor Protests by Labor Sector

During the year 2023, workers in the public sector executed a total of 23 labor protests, accounting for 25.8% of the total protests. Meanwhile, workers in the private sector conducted 31 protests, representing 34.8% of the total, and 20 protests were carried out by the unemployed, constituting 22.5% of the total, in addition to 15 protests led by retirees, making up 16.9% of the total. In 2023, there were no joint protests between the public and private sectors, nor were there any protests by workers in the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA).

It is noted that the percentage of labor protests in the public sector remained relatively low during the years 2021, 2022, and 2023 compared to previous years. This can be attributed to several factors, including the annual decline in the momentum of labor protests and the somewhat favorable working environment in the public sector in terms of providing social protections such as social security and health insurance for all permanent employees, and not frequently infringing on other labor rights such as holidays, working hours, and wages.

Most of the demands of protesters in the public sector in 2023 were related to salary payment and bonuses, or their increase, and protesting systems, laws, decisions, and measures that caused harm.

There was also a decrease in the proportion of labor protests in the private sector compared to previous years. This decrease is not due to improvements in working conditions, which are continuously deteriorating, but rather because of the fear among workers in many sectors of being fired if they engage in protests, and the pressure on some protesting workers, tempting them with promises to meet their demands, to persuade them to withdraw from labor protests.

Moreover, the destructive Israeli occupation aggression on Gaza prevented further labor protests in both the private and public sectors. Large labor sectors (as mentioned at the beginning of the report) suspended all their protests in solidarity with the Palestinian people in Gaza during the last three months of 2023.

It should also be noted that the various working conditions in the private sector are continuously deteriorating, especially with wages remaining low compared to successive increases in the prices of most goods and services, the ongoing weakness of the social protection system for many workers, and the continued denial of the right of all workers to unionize and engage in collective bargaining due to restrictions imposed by labor laws.

Additionally, there was an increase in the proportion of protests carried out by the unemployed compared to the years 2020, 2021, and 2022. This increase can be explained by the persistently high unemployment rates compared to historical levels in Jordan and their rates in most countries worldwide. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the unemployment rate was 19.2%, rising to 22.3% in the third quarter of 2023, particularly among youth aged 15-19 and 20-24, with rates of 56.8% and 47.3%, respectively.

This indicates the government's lack of seriousness in addressing the real causes of the rise in unemployment rates and finding solutions to them, including: distortions in economic policies that have burdened the economy and society with indirect taxes (general sales tax, specific taxes, and customs duties), weakening the national economy's ability to generate sufficient job opportunities for job seekers, and governmental policies that have distorted the post-primary and secondary education system, with an emphasis on

expanding university education at the expense of intermediate, technical, and vocational education. Additionally, there is continued deterioration in working conditions in the private sector, especially wage levels.

As for the protests by retirees, most of which were by retirees from the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company, they remain present as of 2022. Table (4) illustrates these indicators.

Table (4): Relative Distribution of Labor Protests by Labor Sector

Labor Sector	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Private Sector	34.8%	38.9%	53.3%	43.4%	33.5%	50.2%	56.3%	64.0%	47.9%
Public Sector	25.8%	24.7%	25.8%	44.1%	36.1%	31.5%	34.5%	23.0	41.1%
Unemployed	22.5%	17.3%	12.9%	12.4%	28.2%	5.9%	9.2%	13.0%	11.0%
Public and Private Sectors	--	3.1%	4.0%	--	--	8.9%	--	--	--
Retirees	16.9%	15.4%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
UNRWA	--	0.6%	4.0%	--	--	3.4%	--	--	--

Participants in the labor protests

Most labor protests, for the thirteenth consecutive year, continue to be carried out by unorganized labor groups, with a percentage of 33.7% in 2023, representing 30 labor protests out of the total. In 2022, this percentage reached 43.2%, and in 2021, it was 40%. However, in 2020, it was higher at 59.3%, and in 2019, it was 50.8%, as well as in previous years.

This trend can be attributed to several reasons, most notably that many of these labor groups have become more fearful of losing their jobs, especially given the very high unemployment rates, which means it is difficult to find alternative employment. Additionally, consecutive increases in the prices of goods and services have made them keener on holding onto their jobs and refraining from resorting to protests.

Nevertheless, most labor protests, for the thirteenth consecutive year, are still carried out by labor groups without a union framework to organize them. The percentage of protests carried out by the unemployed in 2023 was 22.5% of the total labor protests, with 20 protests occupying the second position. Following that, in the third position, were the protests carried out by retirees, accounting for 16.9% with 15 protests. In the fourth position were the protests carried out by professional associations, representing 14.6% with 13 protests.

Finally, at the bottom, were the protests carried out by labor unions and their committees (official and independent), accounting for 12.4% with 11 labor protests. Table No. (5) illustrates these indicators.

Table No. (5): Distribution of labor protests according to the category that executed the protest

The category that protested	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Workers outside any union framework	33.7%	43.2%	40.0%	59.3%	50.8%	42.4%	72.5%	60.0%	62.3%
Labor unions and their committees	12.4%	11.7%	32.9%	3.4%	6.1%	31.0%	10.5%	22.0%	17.4%
Unemployed	22.5%	17.3%	13.3%	11.0%	28.2%	6.4%	9.2%	13.0%	12.7%
Professional unions	14.6%	11.7%	9.8%	23.4%	14.9%	20.2%	6.5%	5.0%	7.6%
Retirees	16.9%	15.4%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
UNRWA	--	0.6%	4.0%	--	--	--	--	--	--

It is noteworthy here that most labor protests in previous years were carried out by unorganized labor groups or by labor groups that have exceeded their union frameworks and replaced them with self-organizing bodies that advocate for their interests and demands.

This indicates the weakness and absence of channels for dialogue and negotiation between workers of various categories on the one hand and administrations and employers on the other

hand, leading to an increase in the number of labor protests.

This pushes us to continue thinking about the significant impact of the absence of effective labor union organizations on weakening labor conditions in Jordan, and weakening methods of social dialogue and collective bargaining, driving broad labor sectors to protest.



Labor Protests by Economic Sector

Labor protests in 2023 were distributed across several economic sectors to varying degrees. Protests in the "unemployed" sector accounted for 22.5%, with 20 labor protests, taking the first position among all protests. This was followed by the "retirees" sector at a rate of 16.9%, with 15 protests, and in third place was the education sector at a rate of 13.5%, with 12 protests. The health sector came in fourth at a rate of 12.4%, with 11 protests.

In fifth place was the transportation sector at a

rate of 11.2%, with 10 protests, and in sixth place was the services sector at a rate of 6.7%, with 6 protests. The industry and energy sectors were equal in seventh place at a rate of 4.5 percent, with 4 protests each, followed by the water sector in eighth place at a rate of 3.4 percent, with 3 protests. In ninth place was the agriculture sector at a rate of 2.2%, with only two protests.

In the end, both the trade and municipal sectors were equal at a rate of 1.1%, with only one protest each. Table No.6 illustrates these indicators.

Table No. (6): Distribution of Labor Protests by Economic Sector

Economic sector	Number of Protests	Percentage
Unemployed	20	22.5%
Retirees	15	16.9%
Education sector	12	13.5%
Health sector	11	12.4%
Transport sector	10	11.2%
Services sector	6	6.7%
Industry sector	4	4.5%
Energy sector	4	4.5%
Water sector	3	3.4%
Agricultural sector	2	2.2%
Commerce sector	1	1.1%
Municipal sector	1	1.1%
Total	89	100.0

Geographic Distribution of Labor Protests

The capital, Amman, ranked first in the number of labor protests carried out in 2023 with 45 labor protests, accounting for 50.6% of the total protests. Following that were the protests conducted across multiple governorates with (12) protests and a percentage of (13.5), and in third place were the protests held in Irbid Governorate with (9) protests and a percentage of (10.1). In fourth place was Tafilah Governorate with seven protests and a percentage of 7.9%.

In fifth place was Ma'an Governorate with six protests and a percentage of 6.7%, followed by Zarqa Governorate in sixth place with four protests and a percentage of 4.5%. Madaba Governorate occupied the seventh place with three protests and a percentage of 3.4%, followed by Aqaba, Mafraq, and Balqa Governorates, each with only one protest and a percentage of 1.1% for each. No labor protests were recorded in Jerash, Ajloun, or Karak governorates. Table No.7 illustrates these indicators.

Table No. (7): Distribution of Labor Protests by Governorate

Governorate	Number of Protests	Percentage
Amman	45	50.6%
More than one governorate	12	13.5%
Irbid	9	10.1%
Tafilah	7	7.9%
Ma'an	6	6.7%
Zarqa	4	4.5%
Madaba	3	3.4%
Aqaba	1	1.1%
Mafraq	1	1.1%
Balqa	1	1.1%
Total	89	100.0%

Monthly Distribution of Labor Protests

As for the distribution of protests according to the months, March ranked first with (13) labor protests, accounting for 14.6% of the total protests. These protests were distributed among the unemployed, retired employees of the phosphate company, support medical professions, participating nurses, and assistant staff at the Ministry of Health. Following March, both June and July came second with 11 protests each, representing 12.4% for each. In third place was January with 10 protests, making up 11.2%.

February followed in fourth place with nine protests, constituting 10.1%, while April, May, and September shared the fifth place with (8) protests each, accounting for (9) percent each. August came in sixth place with six protests, making up 6.7%, followed by October in seventh place with three protests, representing (3.4) percent.

Finally, both November and December tied for last place with only one protest each, making up (1.1) percent for each. Table No.8 illustrates these indicators.

Table No. (8): Relative Distribution of Labor Protests by Month

Month	Number of Protests	Percentage
January	10	11.2%
February	9	10.1%
March	13	14.6%
April	8	9%
May	8	9%
June	11	12.4%
July	11	12.4%
August	6	6.7%
September	8	9%
October	3	3.4%
November	1	1.1%
December	1	1.1%
Total	89	100.0%

significant decrease in the number of labor protests in the months of October, November, and December is attributed to the withdrawal of wide-ranging labor sectors from their protests, which were previously conducted almost weekly, in solidarity with the ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza.

Duration of Labor Protests

The durations of labor protests carried out in 2023 varied according to the organizers, their demands, and the mechanisms of dealing with them. The days of labor protests ranged from one day to seven days. The longest protests last year were in favor of the employees of the “Our Water” purchasing services company, where they held a seven-day continuous sit-in. Similarly, drivers working on sewage tanker trucks held a seven-day continuous strike, and faculty and administrative members of Yarmouk University held a sit-in for six consecutive days. Additionally, unemployed individuals in Tafilah Governorate and employees of a power generation company held a four-day continuous sit-in each.

The percentage of protests lasting only one day was 40.4%, accounting for 36 protests, while the percentage of protests lasting from two to three days was 5.6%, accounting for 5 protests. The percentage of protests lasting from four to five days was 2.2%, with only two protests falling into this category. Meanwhile, the percentage of protests lasting from six to fifteen days was 4.5 percent, with four protests. Table No.9 illustrates these indicators.

Table No. (9): Distribution of Labor Protests by Duration of Protests

Length of Protest (days)	Number of Protests	Percentage
1	36	40.4%
2-3	5	5.6%
4-5	2	2.2%
6-15	4	4.5%
Threat	42	47.2%
Total	89	100.0%

Most protests lasting only one day were halted for several reasons, including giving business owners and government administrations the opportunity to study the demands of the protesting workers. Additionally, most labor protests were unplanned and occurred spontaneously in response to specific actions.

Number of Participants in Labor Protests

The number of participants in labor protests varied according to the nature of the protest and its organizers. Labor protests involving 1 to 100 participants accounted for 52.8%, totaling 47 protests. Meanwhile, the percentage of protests with 101 to 500 participants was 25.8%, totaling 23 protests.

Similarly, the percentage of protests with 501 to 1000 participants was (5.6) percent, totaling (5)

protests, while the percentage of protests with more than 1000 participants was 15.7%, totaling 14 protests.

The participation of such large numbers can be explained by the fact that most of these protests took place across multiple governorates simultaneously for each protest. Table No.10 illustrates these indicators.

Table No. (10): Distribution of Labor Protests by Number of Participants

Number of Participants	Number of Protests	Percentage
1 - 100	47	52.8%
101 - 500	23	25.8%
501 - 1000	5	5.6%
1000+	14	15.7%
Total	89	100.0%

Fulfilments of Labor Demands

The numbers indicate that most labor protests in 2023 did not result in the fulfillment of their demands. Company administrations and government departments did not respond to the demands of 87.6% of the total labor protests, totaling 78 protests. Meanwhile, the percentage of protests where all demands were met was 7.9%, totaling just 7 protests.

As for the protests where only part of the demands were met, their percentage was (2.2) percent,

totaling only two protests. These were for employees working under the service purchasing system at "Our Water" company and workers at Ma'an Hospital. Additionally, there remain two protests, also accounting for (2.2) percent, for which the Jordan Labor Watch team did not have information indicating or confirming whether their demands were fully or partially met, or not met at all. Table No.11 illustrates these indicators.

Table No. (11): Distribution of Labor Protests According to the Fulfillment of Demands

Fulfillment of Demands	Number of Protests	Percentage
Demands were not met	78	87.6%
Demands were met	7	7.9%
No information available	2	2.2%
Demands were partially met	2	2.2%
Total	89	100.0%

The main reason for the high rate of non-compliance with the protesters' demands is attributed to the clear stance of the government and the private sector in not responding to labor protests to prevent their escalation. Additionally, it is due to the lack of sufficient experience among most protesting workers in the skills of conducting labor protests and the mechanisms and tools of collective bargaining, due to the weakness of labor unions, their ineffectiveness, and the weak organizational skills of workers in Jordan.

The weakness of the role of labor unions and the lack of their utilization by the majority of workers can be attributed to the restrictions imposed by the labor laws, in terms of the right to collective

bargaining, the powers granted to the Minister of Labor to dissolve any labor union committing a violation, and the classification of professions that allow their workers to form unions, in addition to the prohibition of union pluralism.

Wide sectors in Jordan continue to face clear problems in forming and organizing unions, especially with Jordan still not ratifying International Labour Organization Convention No. 87 concerning freedom of association and the right to organize, as well as the absolute authority of the Minister of Labor to classify the professions and jobs that allow their workers to form and organize unions according to Article 98 of the Jordanian Labor Law.

Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the report labor protests are occurring at a lower frequency than in the past decade. Their numbers reflect fundamental imbalances in labor relations, thus reflecting tensions in the Jordanian labor market. These protests reflect the depth of the economic and social crisis in Jordan: declining indicators of decent work, continued decreases and disparities in wages against the backdrop of rising prices of various essential goods and services, in addition to the pressures facing many economic sectors and their workers resulting from the implementation of unfair economic policies.

The labor market in Jordan still suffers from significant gaps in the application of decent work standards, principles, and fundamental labor rights in all its dimensions and indicators, in terms of legislation, policies, and practices. This is evident in the inability of the national economy to provide sufficient decent employment opportunities, the weakness of the social protection system for workers, and the failure to enable all workers to exercise their right to unionize engage in collective bargaining and enhance social dialogue on policies affecting the interests of various production stakeholders.

Based on the above, the report recommends the following:

1. It is necessary to apply the principles and standards of decent work, as well as the principles and fundamental rights at work, in all their elements to all wage workers in Jordan.
2. There is a need to amend the texts of the Jordan Labor Law related to the formation of labor unions and allow all wage workers in Jordan to freely form their unions, abolish the monopoly of representing workers by existing labor unions lacking the most basic rules of democratic work; and do not allow for the renewal of their leaderships. The law should be made compatible with the Jordanian Constitution, and the establishment of labor unions should be consistent with the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, which Jordan has ratified and published in the Official Gazette.
3. Amendments to the Civil Service Law are necessary to allow public sector workers to establish their unions freely, ensuring their rights as stipulated in the constitutional amendments of 2011 and Constitutional Court Interpretative Decision No. 6 of 2013, which guaranteed public sector workers the right to form their unions. This should also be in line with the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, ratified by Jordan and published in the Official Gazette. Collective bargaining between government administrations and workers should be allowed because dealing with labor protests in the public sector as absenteeism deserving punishment is unreasonable.

4. A review of wage policies towards increasing them in line with the cost of living in Jordan is necessary because it is unreasonable for wages to remain the same despite consecutive price hikes.
5. Suitable and low-cost insurance tools should be developed for all workers who do not have employers and work on their own, expanding coverage.
6. Amendments to the labor law regarding the concept of labor disputes and mechanisms for settling labor disputes are necessary as the existing mechanisms have proven insufficient in finding fair solutions to escalating labor disputes. New mechanisms and techniques for settling labor disputes should be used in line with International Labour Organization Convention No. 98 concerning the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining.
7. There is a need to increase the effectiveness of labor inspections carried out by the Ministry of Labor in the labor market to ensure the implementation of labor law provisions. This requires increasing the budget allocations for the Ministry of Labor to enable it to increase the number of inspectors and develop their inspection capabilities.
8. Developing mechanisms for enforcing labor legislation to curb violations and enable workers to enjoy decent working conditions is necessary.
9. A review of tax policies that have expanded the imposition of indirect taxes, burdened the purchasing power of citizens and production sectors, squeezed aggregate demand, led to economic slowdown, and a shift towards reducing the general sales tax is needed.
10. A real focus on vocational training by increasing the budget of vocational and technical training and education institutions and reviewing university specializations to make them meet the requirements of the labor market.
11. Focusing on establishing productive projects that generate real job opportunities for the unemployed, especially youth, is crucial.



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ECONOMIC & INFORMATICS STUDIES

المرصد العمالي الأردني
Jordan Labor Watch

CONTACT US:

الفينيق للدراسات الاقتصادية والمعلوماتية
PHENIX FOR ECONOMIC & INFORMATICS STUDIES

☎ Tel. +962 6 516 44 91
☎ Fax: +962 6 516 44 92
📍 P.O.Box: 304 Amman 11941 Jordan
✉ E-Mail: info@phenixcenter.net
🌐 www.phenixcenter.net

المرصد العمالي الأردني
JORDAN LABOR WATCH

📍 www.labor-watch.net



@LaborWatchJo



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