

## FWF GENDER FACT SHEET - JORDAN

### FACTS & FIGURES

- Human Development Index: 102 of 189 countries (UNDP 2019)
- Gender Inequality Index: 102 of 189 countries (UNDP 2019)
- Global Gender Gap Index: 138 of 153 countries (WEF 2020)
- Violence against women ever experienced, intimate partners: 19%
- Child marriage: 8%
- Child labour: 1.7%
- Adolescent birth rate: 25.9 per 1,000 births
- Infant mortality rate: 14.6 deaths per 1,000 live births
- Maternal mortality rate: 58 deaths per 100,000 live births
- Mandatory paid maternal leave: 70 days
- Literacy Rate (adult, +15 years old): 97.9%
- Population with at least some secondary school education: female: 82% - male: 85.9%
- Share of seats in parliament held by women: 15.4%
- Labour force participation rate: female: 14.1% - male: 64%
- Total unemployment rate (female to male ratio): 1.73
- Unemployment youth /aged 15-24): 37.2%
- Estimated gross income per capita (2011 PPP \$): female: 2,734 - male: 13,668
- Population: 10 million
- Urban population: 91%
- Sex ratio at birth (male to female births): 1.05
- Religions: 92% Sunni Muslims - 6% Christians - 2% others
- Ethnic groups: Jordanian 69.3%, Syrian 13.3%, Palestinian 6.7%, Egyptian 6.7%, Iraqi 1.4%, other 2.6% (includes Armenian, Circassian)

### COUNTRY CONTEXT:

- Jordan was part of the Ottoman empire until 1918 and after the WWI it was under a mandate of the United Kingdom; **Jordan became independent in 1946.**
- **It is among the most politically liberal countries of the Arab world;** nonetheless, it shares some of the social norms and traditions of that region.
- **One-fourth to one-half of Jordan's population are Palestinians.**
- Rapid population growth is straining health services, overcrowding schools, and pushing water demand beyond its current supply, being **one of the world's most water-scarce countries.**
- Since 2011, **the Syrian crisis has had significant repercussions on the socio-economic stability and security of Jordan;** the population is asking for the implementation of political-social reforms for improving the economic condition of the country.

### Economy:

- **Jordan's economy is among the smallest in the Middle East, with insufficient supplies of water, oil, and other natural resources.**
- Since 1999, the government has attempted to undertake broad economic reforms mostly focused on economic liberalization and privatization.

- Despite the economic growth of the past decade, **the economy is still vulnerable because of the quite high levels of poverty and unemployment and the endemic instability of the region.**
- **Unemployment is high, particularly among women and youth.** The increasingly growing population and influx of refugees from regional crises are straining the country's limited resources, threatening the country's development.
- **Jordan is nearly completely dependent on imported energy**—mostly natural gas—and energy that amount to 25-30% of Jordan's imports.
- Only a tiny fraction of Jordan's land is arable, and **the country imports high quantities of food to meet its internal needs.**
- Jordan's **primary exports are clothing and chemicals.**
- Labour unions and employer organizations are legal, but **the trade-union movement is weak.**

#### The garment industry:

- **The garment sector is one of the principal drivers of economic growth in Jordan today.**
- Jordan and U.S. have signed the Qualifying Industrial Agreement in 1996 and then, in 2001, the free-trade agreement; from that moment on, Jordan and U.S. have established a stable supply chain.
- **In 2016, Jordan and EU signed the Jordan Compact that aimed at the creation of 200,000 job posts in Jordan for Syrian refugees in 3 to 5 years;** in exchange, Jordan can export its product to Europe tariff-free.
- **Jordan's garment industry employs approximately 77,000 people, working approximately 1,300 industrial and small size factories.**
- **Jordan imports all the fabrics needed,** sourcing a wide range of fabrics and trims from abroad.
- Jordan's garment sector has high production costs in general (considering that they have to import all the raw materials). **Jordan's exporters serve mid-high market, being well-known its high-quality products.**
- **The average wages in Jordan are higher compared to other regional competitors** (Egypt, Morocco).
- **Most of Jordan's large garment factories are owned by foreigners;** Jordan are quite well-educate on average, so they are employed as managers in the manufacturing industry, instead **manual labour is left to immigrants.**
- **Most of the stitching and needlework is made by immigrant non-Jordan women,** generally young, with low education.
- Despite the fact that Jordan is a relatively male-dominated society, **women can assume quite fast leadership roles in the garment industry compared to others;** Jordan women are employed as managers on the factory floor, but sporadically they can be employed in the senior-level management.
- **Garment workers are paid at least the national monthly minimum wage in Jordan, JOD220 (\$310) in 2018.** Jordanian workers receive an additional JOD80 per month for their living expenses. Immigrant workers are paid JOD120 (\$169), because they need to pay for accommodation costs which are standardised through collective bargaining agreement.
- **The working conditions are relatively good compared to the south-Asian region.** Overwork can happen, but it is strictly regulated by law.

- The larger factories have a clinic with a doctor or nurses for emergency treatment; instead the smallest factories do not generally have safety protocols.
- Many workers are members of Jordan's General Trade Union of Workers in Textile Garment and Clothing Industries.

#### **Women in the society and gender-based violence:**

- Despite being on the most liberal countries in the Arab region, **Jordan is a male dominated society.**
- **Less than one-fifth of women in Jordan participate in the workforce**, political participation remains limited, and violence against women persists.
- **Married women are considerably less likely to participate in the labour force.** Young and educated women, ready to join the labour force, face high levels of unemployment.
- Under the Jordanian Penal Code, **sex outside of marriage** - including pre-marital and extra-marital sex (adultery) - **is criminalised** with a prison sentence of between 1 and 3 years.
- **Women can also be forcibly separated from their children if their babies are seen as "illegal"**, when they are the result of a relationship outside the wedlock.
- Despite being illegal, **in rural areas of Jordan it is common that brides are forced to take a "virginity test"**.
- **Jordan's guardianship laws impact women from an early age** because their custodians decide if and what they are allowed to study and what profession to pursue.
- **Early marriage is a culturally accepted practice for many Syrian refugees in Jordan.** Parents believe that marriage might secure a better future for their children and ease the financial burden on families who depend on humanitarian aid.

#### **LEGAL CONTEXT:**

##### **National legislation:**

- Until 2017, **article 308 of the Jordan Penal Code allowed perpetrators of sexual assault to escape punishment if they married their victims** (now this provision is abolished). **In 2017, marital rape was criminalized for the first time.**
- Under article 10 of the current Personal Status Law, **the minimum marriage age is 18, but Sharia Court judges can make exceptions "in special cases"** for children between 15 and 18 if the marriage is necessary and in their interest.
- Under Jordanian law, **women must obtain the permission of a male guardian, usually their father, to marry**, according to article 14 of the 2010 Temporary Personal Status Law. **Jordanian law does not provide for equality between the wife and husband**, but rather stipulates complementary rights under which **a wife must obey her husband in return for financial support.** A woman can lose the right to financial support from her husband under articles 60 and 61 if she lives or works outside the home without her husband's consent.
- Under article 310 of the current law, **women are generally only able to inherit half the amount to which male relatives are entitled.**
- **Men can unilaterally divorce their wives without restrictions**, but they could be obligated to pay compensation to their wives only in certain cases and for no more than 3 years.
- **Women have no right to unilateral divorce** and are subject to lengthier and more costly processes.

**International legislation:**

- **Jordan ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).**

**SOURCES:**

Global Gender Gap Index (WEF 2020): [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2020.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf);

UN Human Development Index Jordan: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/JOR>;

The Centre for the Promotion of Imports from the Developing Countries - Jordan 2019: [https://www.cbi.eu/sites/default/files/2019\\_vca\\_jordan\\_apparel.pdf](https://www.cbi.eu/sites/default/files/2019_vca_jordan_apparel.pdf);

UN Women Jordan: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/pt/countries/asia/jordan>;

Amnesty international: <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1212941/download>.