



# The Jordanian Labour Market

needs for migrant workers  
and the views of its employers



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Tamkeen Center for Legal aid and Human Rights

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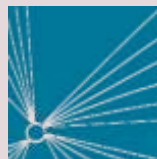
# **The Jordanian Labour Market**

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## FOREWORD

In recent years significant attention has been given to the situation of migrant workers in Jordan, their conditions and the hardships they face. The Jordanian government's regular issuance and amendment of laws that protect migrant workers and regulate their presence in Jordan demonstrates its concern about the issue.

As part of the debate over migrant workers, questions have been raised about Jordan's need for foreign labour. Some have questioned whether migrant labour is necessary in Jordan while others have expressed their belief that it competes with Jordanian labour and should be replaced by it.

These questions inspired this study. We wanted to look into the Jordanian market's actual need for migrant labour and whether and how much migrants contribute to the Jordanian economy. We also wanted to look at the feasibility of replacing migrant labour with Jordanian labour. We hope that this study may serve as a starting point for similar in-depth studies on the subject.

Tamkeen Centre for Legal Aid and Human Rights would like to thank Dr. Mohammed Al Mousa, expert in human rights, and his team for their efforts in conducting this research. The Centre would also like thank Mr. Hamada Abu Najmeh, expert in labour affairs, and show its appreciation for his contribution to this research.

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## **SUMMARY**

Migrant labour is an economic resource for any country and the nature of the migrant labour force in any country is a function of that country's market's needs, its priorities and its ability to sustain economic growth.

### **Objectives of the study**

- 1-** Assessing the Kingdom's need for migrant labour; determining the reasons for that need; determining the reasons for different sectors' preferences for migrant labour; studying the status' of migrant labourers, their futures and factors which motivate them to come to Jordan and to return to their countries of origin; assessing the feasibility of replacing Jordanian labour with local labour.
- 2-** Estimating to what extent migrant labour contributes to the Jordanian economy: whether it acts as a burden or a vitalizing and stabilizing factor.

### **Methodology of the study**

Data was collected through secondary data sources (including scientific books, statistical reports, references, Arabic and foreign periodicals that deal with this subject, particularly formal periodicals issued by Department of Statistics and others) in addition to a primary questionnaire distributed to a study sample which included owners of private sector facilities and interviews with business owners.

### **Facts about migrant labour in Jordan**

- Jordanian workers have high levels of education and professional and managerial competency. On the other hand migrant workers generally have a low education level, with low practical and educational skills. This is reflected in

the wages Jordanian workers abroad earn compared with migrant workers in Jordan. Jordanian workers abroad earn high wages and work in positions of responsibility while migrant workers in Jordan are mostly simple workers with low skills and low wages.

- Although migrant labour in Jordan is largely unprofessional it has significantly contributed to traditional economic sectors such as the construction sector, agriculture sector and sectors that Jordanians avoid like waste collecting. This labour has also had the effect of widening the market size and increasing the demand on production and consumption of products and services. Foreign workers pay taxes and save money in the country. All of these activities have a significant positive impact on the Jordanian economy.
- The contribution of the main economic sectors in which migrant labour works is 5743.1 million Jordanian Dinars (Dinars) according to 2010 estimates. 20% of the workers in these sectors are migrants therefore we can estimate that migrant workers contributed 1148.62 million Dinars to the Jordanian gross domestic product. Comparing this with the total value of outbound remittances for migrant labour in the same year which reached 309.8 million dinars, it is clear that their contribution to economy exceeds their remittances.
- National labour strategy aims to reduce migrant labour by an annual rate of 5% and replace it with Jordanian labour. This policy faces many challenges. For example Jordanian workers avoid working in occupations in which migrant workers tend to work for many reasons such as harsh working conditions and the lack of privileges (in terms of social security and health insurance).

This is the case for the agricultural sector where migrant labour represents more than 84% of total labour. This is also the case for sectors like construction which require hard physical labour while in the trade, restaurants and hotels sector, in which 24,000 migrant workers work, the demand of Jordanians for jobs is still weak as Jordanian labour avoids working in hospitality, catering, and loading and unloading occupations. Another reason for the difficulty of this government policy is the unwillingness of Jordanian workers to undergo the relevant training.

For example participants in a training program on sewing (very few sewing positions in Jordan are filled by national workers) in 2010 numbered only 181 of which only 111 graduated. The number of migrant workers in this field is 7258 tailors and 24,485 technician tailors. In agricultural training there were only 30 participants.

The National Company's (part of the Armed Forces) training program, which trained on technical occupations such as, carpentry, blacksmith, building, flooring, cutting stones and marbles, can be considered the only successful one in 2010 in which graduates reached 1482.

- Domestic work is dominated by migrant labour. It is known for being unattractive for Jordanians for reasons pertaining to its low wages and the culture of shame surrounding it. Moreover few families or women accept the idea of working in the houses of others. The preference of many families to have their domestic workers stay overnight in the family home to be 'on call' is a disincentive for many Jordanian women who would prefer to work and be paid by the day or by the hour. The regular violations of the rights of domestic workers are another reason for its

reputation as an undesirable role. On the other hand families prefer hiring migrant workers because they are less demanding and easier to control than Jordanians who may have relatives looking out for their welfare. Moreover if a foreign worker cannot understand Arabic well her ability to comprehend and pass on confidential information about the family is lessened.

- The closing of some occupations to migrant labour has, so far, not worked as Jordanian workers have not taken up jobs in services occupations. This is for a number of different reasons such as a shame culture and long working hours.
- 86.6% of business owners stated that it would not be possible to dispense with migrant labour at the present time or even in the near future, especially in the industrial, agricultural, construction and domestic work fields.
- What distinguishes migrant labour in the eyes of business owners is their experience in the required disciplines, their attention to detail in their work, their commitment to working hours, their ability to work for a longer period of time without annual leave, their obedience to management, their productivity, their respect of working systems and allegiance to work, the ability to move them according to facility's requirements and their cooperation with colleagues.
- The main reasons behind employers' dispensing with migrant workers were the relevant positions ceasing to exist and the desire of the employers to abide by the Work Law and systems and instructions that regulate the employment of migrant workers. The availability of a local alternative to migrant labour was the least significant reason for ceasing to employ migrant workers.



- 77.2% of the sample business owners of facilities that hire migrant workers referred to the fact that Jordanians do not accept work that migrant workers do. 60.7% of the sample stated that the qualifications offered by the Jordanian education system did not meet the needs of their facilities. As a result 58.9% mentioned that it would be impossible to replace migrant labour with national labour without the level of productivity in their establishments being affected.
- 85.2% of business owners stated that their need for migrant labour will last for five years more. 63.3% mentioned that they had no plan to train national workers in order to fill the jobs carried out by migrants. Of these 63.3%, 44.2% stated that such a plan was unimportant while 57.8% considered it worthwhile. None of the respondents considered such a plan 'important' or 'very important'.
- Business owners stated that replacing migrant labour with local labour would have a significant negative impact on productivity and increase the cost of production.
- The Jordanian labour market needs migrant workers who do jobs that Jordanians avoid. Business owners prefer them over local workers for economic reasons; the most significant of which is the high productivity of the migrant worker, the instability of local labour in work and the weakness of their commitment towards working hours. In addition migrant workers are generally freer than Jordanian workers and can devote more time to work.
- Usually migrant workers are prevented from receiving privileges like social security, retirement money and others. At the same time Jordanian labour is not

attracted to many occupations because of low wages and few privileges.

- Usually migrant workers are the first to be laid off when a financial crisis occurs, either on a company's level or country's level, despite the need for them in the Jordanian market.
- The wide-spread point of view that migrant labour is a burden on the Jordanian economy and contributes to the transfer of cash abroad is not true. It is no more than scaremongering and a way to spread hatred against migrant labour as the study shows that the contribution of this group of workers' to the Jordanian GDP exceeds their remittances abroad. This makes phasing out migrant labour unrealistic.



## **FUNDAMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1**

**The government should identify in a wide-ranging and cross-sectoral study the current and future requirements of the Jordanian labour market and its need for migrant labour.**

**2**

**The importance of creating a database for migrant workers and unifying sources of information about them; amending differences and contradictions between different bodies.**

**3**

**The media should be aware of its role in encouraging Jordanians to respect workers of all occupations and in all sectors.**

**4**

**Education outputs should be aligned with labor market needs. Vocational education should be developed to suit those needs and attractive incentives should be offered to enrollees on vocational training courses.**

**5**

**The government should insist on the provision of the right legal environment required to protect migrant labour rights and ensure their respect.**

**6**

**Serious reconsideration should be given to the issue of closed occupations and realistic and clear criteria should be set to justify the closure of such occupations. No occupation should be closed until there exists a proper, well trained local alternative labour force which can do same jobs as efficiently as migrant labour.**

## INTRODUCTION

Studies indicate that the movement or migration of people to other countries in search of employment has occurred throughout history and is by no means a new phenomenon. However international migration has greatly evolved during the last century due to technical, information, and economic developments which have caused some to compare the world to a small global village. In the field of economics the concept of the "movement of factors of production" on an international level used to refer to movement of capital from one country to another for direct and indirect investment. It covered different types of loans and various financial transactions. It also meant the transmission of labour as a process of supply and demand between the societies of the third world and the societies of the developed world. Third world societies used to offer their surplus labor to richer countries - those people who did not find in their homelands work opportunities to enable them to enjoy an appropriate livelihood. Rich, developed countries often suffered from a shortage of labour. Migration of labour to developed countries helped them to sustain the production level and therefore their prosperity and progress. ■

In today's world, the movement of factors of production, including the work force, is no longer in one direction only; from poor countries to rich countries. Labour moves within the poor countries themselves, among the rich countries, and from rich countries to other poor ones. There are many reasons behind this development, which occurred around two decades ago, such as the impact of economic globalization, the huge progress in technology and communication, the internet revolution, the so-called "Knowledge Economy", the growing role of the

■ Ahmed Abu Zeid, Strangers in Foreign Homelands, Journal of "AL-Arabi", Kuwait, No. 581.2007, p. 30.

multinational companies, and the development of national economies for example those based on oil and those of east and west Asia.<sup>▲</sup>

Migrant labour has started to play an important role in the maintenance and growth of economic production, whether in the sending or receiving countries of migrant labour.

Its role is no longer exclusively combating poverty and unemployment, low wages, and poor living conditions in the sending countries. It is also a significant factor in the economic growth of receiving countries and their increased productivity in the global market.

Jordan, like other countries, exports and imports labour simultaneously. Movement of labour to and from Jordan follows the rules of supply and demand. Jordan supplies other countries with labourers who do not have adequate opportunities in Jordan or who wish better living conditions or higher wages than they enjoy in Jordan

Concurrently, the kingdom suffers from a lack of labour in certain sectors and requires migrant labour to sustain its production level. There is often a lack of experience or desire on the part of Jordanian labour to be recruited for certain types of jobs, particularly hard, dangerous, menial, low paid jobs. Hence, it attracts citizens of other countries.

This migration of labour helps Jordan to guarantee continuous economic prosperity. Particularly when Jordan suffers from a shortage of labour (including

<sup>▲</sup> Mohammed Diab, Migration of Jobs; one phenomena of Knowledge Economy, Journal of National Defence, Edition 70, October 2009, <http://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/article.asp?ln=ar&id=23774>

on account of emigration), using migrant labour helps fill shortages in some production sectors and supports the continuation of development and production in the country.

Migrant labour in the Jordanian labour market is complementary and does not replace Jordanian workers, who are unwilling to work in some sectors. It is essential to satisfy the needs of employers and sustain production.





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**Impact of the global economic crisis**

**Necessity of the study and its objectives**

**Problem statements**

**Methodology**

**Population & Sample**

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## **IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS**

Despite the global financial and economic crisis and the incessant increase in the price of commodities, the Jordanian economy showed signs of flourishing in 2010. The pace of real growth in the Kingdom increased from 2.3% in 2009 to be 3.1% in 2010. In spite of this, the percentage of growth in 2010 was still below a desirable level.

The growth rate was influenced by the poor growth of commodity sectors in general, and of the construction sector in particular.

This development has affected the overall demand for migrant labour. According to employment and unemployment surveys, the percentage of unemployment declined from 12.9% in 2009 to 12.5% in 2010.

In terms of policy and procedure, the government has issued the National Strategy of Employment. In an attempt to eliminate unemployment in the Kingdom it has boosted the implementation of several programs and projects to provide unemployed Jordanians with jobs.

## **THE NECESSITY OF THIS STUDY AND ITS OBJECTIVES**

Migrant labour represents an extra financial resource for any country and enables it to achieve sustainable development. However, it is subject to the conditions of the labour market and the needs of each country. The current and future behaviour of migrant workers is governed by national priorities and needs, in addition to its ability to sustain the economic growth. In this sense, the aim of this study is to assess the Kingdom's need for migrant labour. The study discusses the reasons behind the market's need for migrants and explores the



reasons that the private sector prefers migrant labour.

It describes the Kingdom's current need for migrant labour, its potential future need and factors that increase or suppress that need. Additionally, the study explores the possibility of replacing the migrant workers with national labour.

The study also aims to identify the contribution of migrant workers in revitalizing the Jordanian economy; whether they are a burden on it or a fundamental element in its revitalization and stability.

Studying the status of migrant workers in Jordan, identifying the tendencies of employers toward using migrant labour and the reasons behind these tendencies aids concerned bodies and authorities in Jordan, including vocational training institutions. It helps to direct the policies and plans of institutions toward employers' needs.

The study presents an attempt to verify whether the statement that migrants are a burden on the Jordanian economy and can be dispensed with easily is true or not. Discussion of the validity of this statement may help to change the negative practices against migrant workers and empower them to enjoy their human and labour rights. Finally, the study issues recommendations as to how to effectively solve the problems linked to migrant labour.



## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Jordan has adopted an economic policy based on private sector participation in economic development. The policy contributes significantly in developing this sector which prioritises financial over social or political considerations. The private sector uses migrants as a part of its efforts to expand its services, improve its productivity and cover the shortage of national labour in some fields. Yet the private sector would face significant challenges in terms of performance and efficiency if it tried to replace migrant with national labour.

The research team concluded that there is a relationship between the reliance of private sector establishments on migrant workers on one side, and the fulfillment of labour local market needs on the other. According to stakeholders, particularly employers, the reliance has economic and social justifications. The study presents the current needs of the migrant labour force, the reasons for those needs, the results of hiring migrant labour, the challenges migrant labour presents in Jordan and the consequences of a failure to rise to those challenges.

### **The study will address the following questions:**

- What is the nature of the Jordanian labour market?
- What is the size of the migrant labour force in the kingdom?
- What are the needs of the migrant labourers?
- What is the impact of migrant labour on the production cost, and the employment opportunities of Jordanians?
- What is the contribution of migrant workers to economic revitalization and development in Jordan?

- To what extent does migrant labour compete with Jordanian labour?
- Is it possible to dispense with migrant labour entirely and replace it with national labour?
- From their experience, what is the assessment of private sector institutions of the performance of migrant workers?
- What are the reasons behind the private sector's use of migrant labour?

## **METHODOLOGY**

The nature of the study and its research questions required using the analytical descriptive method to come to conclusions. They allowed the research team to present an adequate description of the phenomenon discussed by the study. The method makes it possible to collect data and information about the phenomenon. Data was collected through secondary sources including specialized books, statistical reports, references, relevant Arabic and English periodical publications, particularly official publications issued by the Department of Statistics, and others.

Primary data collection was based a questionnaire designed specifically to meet the objectives of the study and to answer its inquiries. The questionnaire was revised by a group of specialists who listed their remarks. The remarks were included to structure the final version of the questionnaire. In addition, a number of field interviews with owners of establishments recruiting migrant workers and employers of migrant domestic workers were conducted.

Data was collected and analyzed with the statistical analysis program SPSS. This

program is the most suitable for the analysis of questionnaire data and results. Statistical descriptive methods were used, as they include percentages, arithmetic mean and standard deviation each of which indicate the trends of the study sample in relation to the study axis and its various aspects. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the extent of the relationship between variables which meet the objectives of the study.

The research team encountered a number of financial and administrative difficulties which led to a reduction of the sample size. It was difficult to collect data from some private sector employers who refused to cooperate. Some employers considered the required data and information confidential. Others rejected participation without providing any justification.

## STUDY POPULATION & STUDY SAMPLE

In line with the nature and objectives of the study, the study population consisted of private sector establishments which use migrant workers. Data from the Department of Statistics referring to the number of establishments using migrant workers in 2010 is presented below:

### Number of Establishments Using Migrant Labour Based on the Economic Activity

Sector	No. of Establishments
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	25960
Mines and quarries	570

<b>Sector</b>	<b>No. of Establishments</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>13153</b>
<b>Provision of electricity, gas and water</b>	<b>214</b>
<b>Construction</b>	<b>8703</b>
<b>Trade, hotels and restaurants</b>	<b>19098</b>
<b>Transportation, storage &amp; communications</b>	<b>970</b>
<b>Funding and real state</b>	<b>1192</b>
<b>Social and personal services</b>	<b>6592</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>76452</b>

Due to the size of the study population, 76,452, the research team decided to chose a random sample. It cannot be claimed that the sample represents the study population hence this study can be considered a pilot research project providing in-depth data on employers' preferences as concerns migrant labour. It explores the reasons why migrant labour is used in the Jordanian labour market. It also suggests solutions to the challenges exposed by the study.

100 questionnaires were distributed in all the major sectors which recruit migrant workers. The distribution was carried out by a questionnaire collector who was trained particularly for this purpose. The percentage of the study sample compared to the total study population is 0.13%. The number of the questionnaires received back from respondents was 81, 81%, however the number of correctly filled and legible questionnaires was 66, 66%. The distribution process occurred in October and November 2011. It covered the twelve governorates of the Kingdom. A number of interviews with the employers of certain sectors using migrant labour were also carried out.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

### First: Facts about Jordanian labour

The unbalanced sectoral, educational and professional distribution of labour is the main problem facing the Jordanian labour market. Workers in the service sector constitute 62.3% of the total workers in the Jordanian labor market. There are a number of reasons for this for example the high number of people working in education. Moreover education itself in Jordan is not aligned to the needs of the labour market. There is also a low rate of women's economic participation in Jordanian labor market for several reasons, such as their early withdrawal from the labor market. Limited jobs are created annually by the public sector for new entrants to the labor market, making the private sector the largest source of new job opportunities.

According to 2010 estimates, the total population of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was 6,113,000, 51.5% male and 48.5% female.

According to the population distribution by age, Jordanian society is very youthful in nature. 2010 statistics show that young people below working age (under 15) represent 37.3% of the population of Jordan, 2,281,710 in number. The working age population (above 15) represents 62.7%.

Those of working age may be divided into two further major groups; those who are economically active and those who are not, the former including both employed and unemployed populations. According to the National Center for Human Resources Development's 2010 estimates, the total number of economically active people in Jordan is 1,412,134; 1,235,948 of who are employed and

176,186 of who are unemployed. The proportion of working age people who are economically active is called the revised economic participation rate. In 2010 in Jordan this figure was 39.5.

The economic participation rate in Jordan is considered low when compared to working age population. The proportion of working age population has declined to 62.7%. This decline is due to several reasons. Prominent among them is: firstly the average female working age is less than the average male working age; secondly there has been an increase (as mentioned) in the percentage of population under 15; thirdly there has been an increase in educational enrolment and fourthly the rate of women's economic participation is low (85.3% of women of working age are considered economically inactive). In addition, the increased percentage of economically inactive people, 60.5% of the total population, lessens the economic participation rate.

Employed Jordanians tend to work in particular sectors. Around a quarter (24.1%) of the total employed work in the administration and civil defense sectors. 16.1% work in wholesale and retail trade, 12.1% in the education sector and 10.4% in manufacturing sector. There is a considerable difference between the distribution of female and male workers by sector. Statistics from the year 2010 show that 66.5% of the total female workers are employed in education, 14.7% in health sector and 12.7% in public administration and civil defense while male workers tend to work in other fields: 26.3% in public administration and defense, 18.1% in wholesale and retail trade, 11% in manufacturing and 9.6% in logistics, storage and communication. In terms of number of employees, the smallest sectors were water and sewage supplies (0.2%), real estate (0.4%), household owners (0.4%) and activities outside the state or region (0.4%).

## **A. The demand for Jordanian labour**

2009 figures from the National Center for Human Resources Development showed that 16%, one sixth, of all national and foreign jobs opportunities in Jordan were for engineers (of all subdivisions). The reason for the large number of engineering opportunities is due to the relatively high importance of the construction and housing sector to the Jordanian economy and also consistent and growing demand for highly qualified labour in the Gulf to supervise the large construction projects which are being executed in many Gulf countries. After engineering the marketing and promotion sectors employed the highest number of workers, 11% of the total job opportunities. Over the past few years, marketing and promotion have become essential elements in the business plans of economic institutions. The increase in the number of job opportunities in marketing and promotion can be explained by growing trade activities and the expansion of commercial centers.

After marketing and promotion, teaching (in schools and universities) was the third largest sector in terms of job opportunities. 10% of jobs advertised were in this sector. Education plays a growing social and economic role in Jordan.

The need for the education sector is considered large and growing in a society where labour is the main economic resource. Jordan's labour force is its biggest resource in its development. Also, labor markets abroad need teachers from all scientific disciplines and levels to fulfill the shortage in their education systems.

Notable is that despite the fact that posts for engineers made up the largest share of work opportunities in 2009, the percentage of opportunities for their assistants (engineering technicians) was very small (3%). Engineering technicians are



college graduates with an engineering diploma. This suggests that there is an unwillingness to hire diploma holders that graduate from Jordanian Civil Society colleges. Employers appear to prefer to hire holders of bachelor degrees.

## **B. Jordanian labour abroad**

The number of Jordanians working abroad is 600,000, that is around 10% of the total Jordan population which was estimated in 2010 to be 6,113,000. Most work in the GCC especially Saudi Arabia (260,000), UAE (250,000) and Kuwait (42,000). Jordanians abroad transfer around 2.37 billion Dinars to the kingdom annually.

### **Second: Facts about migrant workers in Jordan**

The Jordanian market acts simultaneously as a sender and receiver of labour. It exports highly professional and educated labour and imports labour with modest skills to work in sectors in which Jordanians are unwilling to work. Jordan has hosted migrant labour since the 1970s. The following statistics are from Ministry of Work and Department of Statistics' data:■

- Registered migrant labour in Jordan reached around 298,342 workers in 2010, representing 21.1% of the total labour force in Jordan which was 1,412,134 workers in 2010. It is believed, however, officially and unofficially that there are more than 150,000 unregistered migrant workers in the Kingdom, bringing the total to around 500,000. If this is the case migrant labour makes up 26.34% of Jordan's total labour force.
- The size of the officially registered migrant labour population in Jordan has declined from 335,707 in 2009 to 298,342 in 2010. Also the annual growth rate of

■ Ministry of Labour Annual Report 2010: <http://www.mol.gov.jo/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=d9VnJVLub8%3d&tabid=265>  
Labour Statistic Report for Jordan 2005 – 2009, General Statistical Department Dec 2010: [http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb\\_pop/sdb\\_pop\\_a/workstatistic.pdf](http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_a/workstatistic.pdf)  
Recruitment Survey for 2000 and after, General Statistical Department: [http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb\\_ec/sdb\\_ec\\_a/index.htm](http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_ec/sdb_ec_a/index.htm)

migrant workers has fallen back during the last five years. From 2005-2010 the growth rate varied as follows: 11.3% to 8.4% to -3.4% to 10.7% and to -11.1%. This was due to government policy aimed at reducing the rate of unemployment among Jordanians through replacing migrant with local labour by regulating the immigration of migrant labour in line the actual needs of the market, closing certain professions to foreigners to reduce their competition with local employment, improving the terms and conditions of employment in sectors that Jordanian workers avoid and training and qualifying them to enter the sectors dominated by migrant workers. The research team is also of the opinion that this decline is due to the government's failure to renew the work permits of migrant workers already in the country, with the consequence that their status became irregular. The statistical decline therefore may hide the fact that many workers remain in Jordan illegally.

- In 2009 the number of migrant labourers in private sector institutions was 102,832. That represented only 15.54% of the total labour in the private sector which at that time was 661,765 workers. 84.46% of this these workers were Jordanian. Males constituted the largest proportion of labour. Of the migrant labour in the private sector, 86.55% was male and 15.45% female. Of the Jordanian labour 82.11% was male and 17.89% female.
- 74,393 of the 76,452 private sector facilities counted employ migrant labour while the number of public sector facilities was 1985. Of the facilities which employed migrant workers 99.14% were owned by Jordanians, 0.62% by non Jordanian Arabs, 0.22% by non-Arab foreigners and 0.02% by a mixture of people with different nationalities.

- Egyptian labour represented 68.94% of total migrant labour in Jordan and labour from other Arab countries such as Syria, Iraq and Morocco was 1.85%. Labour from Sri Lanka was the most significant non-Arab population (7.38%) followed by Indonesia (7.29%) and the Philippines (5.01%). This non-Arab labour is focused in the domestic labour sector.
- Around 90.8% of migrant workers have a low educational level. 7.8% have a mid-level diploma meaning that they are not qualified enough to enable them to carry out the professional jobs carried out by Jordanian labour.
- The work carried out by migrant workers in 2010 was as follows: 28.1% worked in agriculture and hunting, 25.3% in social and personal services, 21.5% in manufacturing, 13% in trade, restaurants and hotels and 8.9% in building and construction. 74.5% of migrant workers were construction workers who were paid minimum wages. 10.8% worked in sewing, 75.8% of who were sewing technicians and 22.5% of who were tailors.
- 30.8% of the total migrant labour population works in cleaning, services and loading and unloading occupations. Of this 30.8%, 45,914 (mostly women) work as housemaids. (This figure only includes those registered. There are an undetermined number of unregistered workers in this field.). 21,668 work as street sweepers and 24,152 are loading and unloading workers. 8.1% of the total migrant population works in hotels, restaurants and cooking and 3.2% work as blacksmiths or in aluminum and manufacturing. 5137 workers work in maintenance, machinery and gas stations, 3832 of them are maintenance, gas stations and washing workers and they represent 74.6% of the total workers in this field. 1.1% of the total migrant labour in Jordan is distributed among occupations such as upholstery, carpentry and painting.

- The total number of migrant workers in qualified industrial areas was 35,941 in 2010. That represents 12.05% of the total registered migrant labour. 77.4% of workers in qualified industrial areas are migrants and 22.6% are Jordanian workers.
- Registered migrant labour is focused in the capital Amman (49.1%), followed by Balqa'a (12.9%), Zarqa (10.9%) and Irbid (10.6%) while Aqaba, Tafila and Ajloun governorates had the least migrant labourers with 0.7% of the total each.
- As concerns qualified industrial areas, Dlail had the highest rate of migrant labour employment with 85.6% of employees being non-Jordanian followed by the Sahab area with 83.1% and Al Hassan Industrial area with 73.3%.

#### **A. The role and the importance of migrant labour in Jordan**

- There is a big difference between the educational and professional characteristics of domestic Jordanian labour, Jordanian labour abroad and incoming migrant labour. Domestic Jordanian labour is distinguished by its high educational levels and its administrative and professional competency. On the other hand, migrant labour by and large has few practical skills and a low education level. This is reflected in the much higher wages which Jordanians abroad earn compared to migrant workers in Jordan. Jordanians abroad generally work in professional positions whereas migrant workers in Jordan generally carry out low-skilled work attracting low wages.
- Despite official efforts, a significant number of unregistered migrant workers reside in Jordan. Because they are not documented there are no official statistics on their whereabouts or their characteristics. This state of affairs will persist until a suitable practical procedure is put in place to remedy the situation.

- Migrant labour in Jordan, though mostly unprofessional, has contributed to sectors such as construction, agriculture and sectors that Jordanian labour avoids such as waste collection. Moreover migrant labour has had a positive impact on the Jordanian economy in terms of widening the market, increasing the demand for production and consumption of products and services, paying taxes and saving money.
- Despite the importance of migrant labour in achieving economic stability, filling gaps in the labour market and enhancing economic development, a prejudice exists in Jordan (as it does in other countries) against 'foreigners' and the social and economic burden they are seen to place on the country. Migrant workers are often exposed to human rights violations. Because of this the United Nations adopted a special international agreement to protect migrant workers and their families in 1990.

Until now however, Jordan has not signed up to the agreement despite the large numbers of Jordanian migrant workers abroad and migrant workers in Jordan and despite the latter's large contribution to the national gross domestic product as will be discussed later in this study.

## **B. Contribution to the gross domestic product**

The contribution of the main economic sectors that in which migrant labour works was 5743.1 million Dinars according to 2010 estimates. This represents 68.71% of the gross domestic product taking into consideration basic prices. The sectors which were counted include: agriculture, hunting and forestry, mining and quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water supplies, constructions, trade, hotels and restaurants and transportations, storage and communications.

Note that 20% of workers in these sectors are migrant labour, which means that their contribution to the gross domestic product amounts 1148.62 million Dinars.

Regarding money transfers from abroad to migrant workers in the Kingdom, Central Bank official data concerning the first six month's remittances for the year 2011 reported that the value of these remittances reached 2.138 million Dinars during the first two quarters of 2011.

Remittances during the first quarter totaled 70.4 million Dinars and in the second totaled 67.8 million Dinars, while outbound remittances for migrant workers reached 309.8 million Dinars in 2010 and 314.6 million Dinars in 2009.

By comparing migrant labour's contribution to the gross domestic product in 2010 (1148.62 million dinars) with the total value of outbound remittances for migrant labour in the same year (309.8 million dinars), we can see that migrant labour's contribution to the Jordanian economy exceeds its remittances.

### **C- Wages**

Precise figures about migrant workers' wages are not available. The relevant figures issued by the Ministry of Work and the Social Security Corporation contradict each other. The Ministry of Work's data shows that 97.16% of migrant labour is paid less than 200 Jordanian Dinars per month, that 1.82% is paid between 200 and 400 Dinars and that 1.01% is paid more than 400 Dinars. Social Security figures suggest that the reality is far different, stating that 75,345 migrant workers are paid 200 Dinars per month or less of the total registered workers: 103665 (Social Security figures 2010). The truth is that this data does not reflect actual migrant labour wages in Jordan as the figures that the Ministry of Work present are taken from the contracts that business owners present in applications

they submit to request the issuance of work permissions. The figures in these contracts often do not reflect the actual wage of the migrant worker and are only presented as requirement for the application. Moreover the data on which the Social Security Cooperation relies is from business owners who have an incentive to give inaccurate data in order to pay minimum fees for their migrant worker.



## CONCLUSION

To sum up, based on the indicators mentioned above, migrant labour in Jordan is unskilled labour that does jobs most Jordanians do not accept. This suggests that the most prominent feature of unemployment in Jordan (which stands at 26.3%) is that it is a behavioral unemployment resulting from Jordanians avoiding work in particular sectors. It is also the result of the mismatch between the qualifications of a wide segment of the Jordanian labour market and the jobs available at a time the private sector considered the largest contributor in providing work opportunities. Moreover there is an imbalance between the number of workers qualified to work in different sectors in Jordan, for example the number of people working in the education sector and the number who have done vocational training. This imbalance is a separate issue to that of migrant workers. For example of Jordan's 1,235,948 workers, 62.3% work in the service sector. This suggests there is a weakness in fulfilling the training needs of the market. This accounts for the high percentage of unemployment in the last 5 years.

Migrant labour has played a significant role in the development process in almost all sectors such as agriculture, construction, real estate, manufacturing, services,

electricity and others, as Jordanian workers avoid them voluntarily. Migrant workers tend to accept low wages, particularly when they first arrive in the country. They are also generally low-skilled with low educational qualifications. Ministry of Work statistics show that 89.7% of the total migrant labour has a low educational level and 7.8% hold mid-level diplomas. This labour tends to be focused in the agricultural sector which does not play a significant part in the national economy, and the construction sector which is not stable.

Agriculture business owners stress the crucial need for migrant labour in the Jordan Valley and different governorates on account of the nature of work they do there which relies heavily on physical power and endurance rather than other skills. Because of this migrant labour costs less. It is also more flexible and more productive than Jordanian labour. Because of this migrant labour is in demand. Over time migrant labour is able to gain more experience than their Jordanian counterparts.

In its efforts to encourage Jordanians to work in different occupations, the Ministry of Work has closed 16 occupations in to migrant labour in order to make job opportunities available for Jordanians. These professions are: medicine, engineering, management, accounting, writing, printing, hairdressing, secretarial work, telecommunications, telephone operating, warehouse work, all selling businesses, decoration, educational occupations except for rare disciplines, selling fuel in main cities, electricity occupations, cars repairing and mechanics, driving, guards and deliverymen, and security. In spite of this almost all of the building security workers in Jordan are Egyptian.



A number of policies were adopted to decrease the flow of migrant labour. For example the government improved the terms and conditions of work in sectors that Jordanians are traditionally reluctant to work in: they increasing wages, social security and health insurance enrolment and enhanced work environments.

However closing occupations to migrant labour did not work as Jordanian workers did not move towards services occupations as hoped. This is for different reasons including a culture of shame and long working hours. The Ministry of Work is coordinating with other authorities and carries out daily campaigns to enforce Jordanian immigration law, expelling irregular workers from the Kingdom regardless of whether they are working in permitted sectors or not. These workers' permission may have expired or they may be working illegally for a second employer.

Due to the financial challenges facing businesses in the Qualified Industrial Zones employers often find themselves unable to pay fair wages, to pay wages on time or to give their employees good working conditions. Workers are sometimes forced to work for extra hours and sometimes their employers' business ends and he/she leaves before paying the employees all that is owed to them.



### **Third: Policy of replacing migrant labour with Jordanian labour**

The national labour strategy aims to reduce migrant labour by annual rate of 5% and replace it with Jordanian labour. Nevertheless of the total number of workers in 2010 mounted 1,534,290, 298,342 were migrant workers. This represents 19.4% of the total labour according to official labour market statistical data. Moreover the proportion of new work opportunities taken by migrant labour was 12% in 2010. Government policy continues to be hindered by the unattractive characteristics of the jobs traditionally filled by migrant labour for example working conditions, wages and privileges.

In sewing occupations, for example, the ratio of migrant labour is high. Most jobs in this sector (77%) are in qualified industrial zones. The ratio of migrant labour is high in this sector for many reasons, such as the lack of skilled Jordanian labour. The field is focused on occupations of secondary auxiliary production processes, such as packing, packaging, quality, finishing and tailor assistant, and although Vocational Training Corporation provides many training programmes in sewing, such as manual sewing, seaming, industrial sewing, machine embroidery, and many others, these programmes considered undesirable. For example participants in sewing training courses in 2010 were only 181 and only 111 graduated while number of migrant workers in this field is 7258 tailors and 24,485 technician tailors.

In agriculture, where migrants represent more than 84% of the workforce although the occupation is listed in Labour Law, the demand for jobs in this profession low, as is the demand for training programmes.

The number of participants in these programs did not exceed 30 participants in 2010. This is a result of the difficult work conditions, the lack of privileges such as social security and health insurance and increased immigration from the countryside to the city.

In building and construction occupations licensed migrant labour is 25%. Jordanian labour does not work in this sector because of the hardship of work, the competition from migrant labour. There are not enough Jordanian technicians available to work in this sector. Migrant labour tends to do carry out work that may not necessarily need training but that is physically hard. The National Company, which is part of the Armed Forces, works in training Jordanians in technical occupations such as carpentry, blacksmith occupations, building, flooring and cutting stones and marbles. There were 1482 graduates in 2010.

24,000 migrant workers work in the trade, restaurants and hotels sectors. Most roles in these sectors, such as in cafeterias, buffets, coffee shops and restaurants, do not need training. However Jordanian demand for work in this sector is still weak as Jordanian nationals, on the whole, are unwilling to work in hospitality, catering and loading and unloading occupations. Also relevant is the lack of trained Jordanian cooks and the low number of female workers.

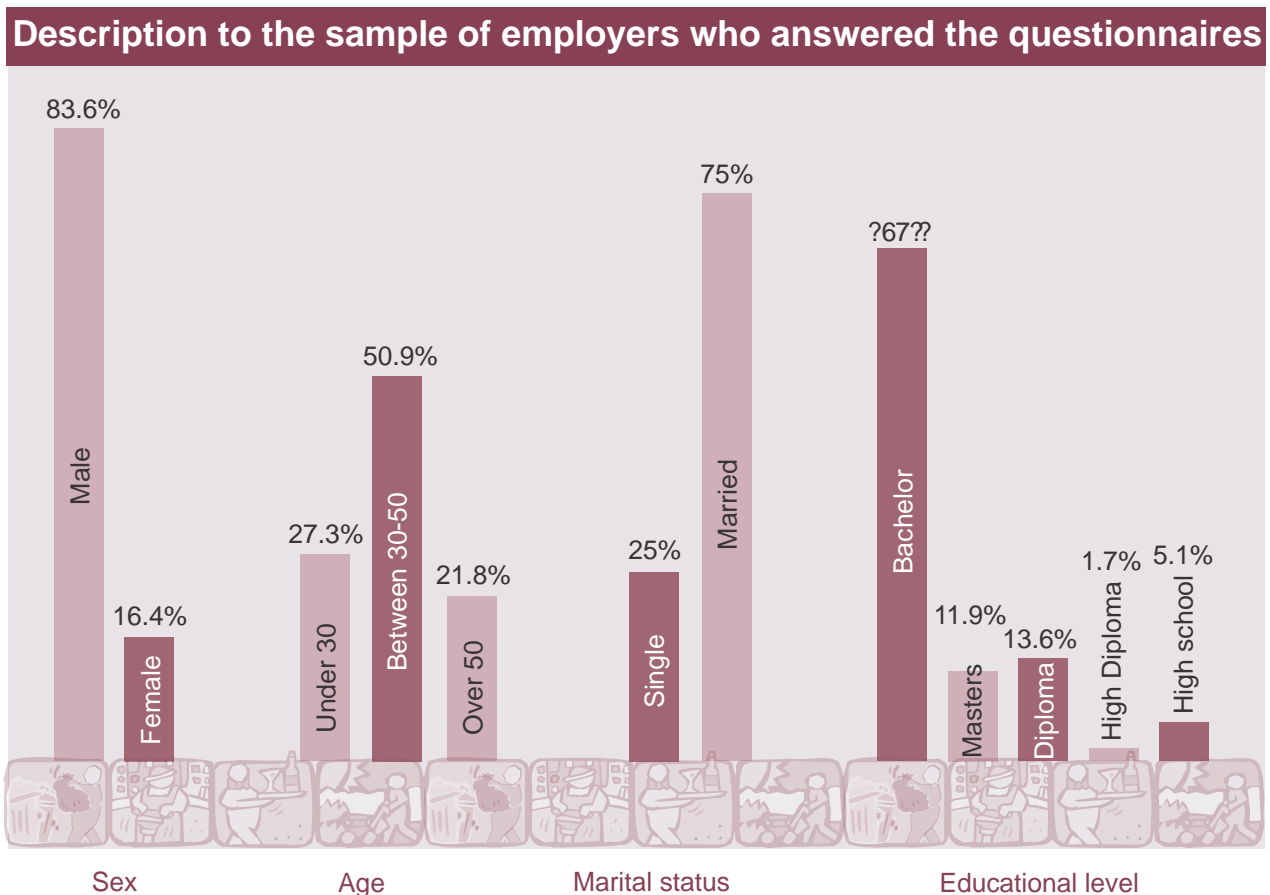
As concerns domestic work, this is dominated by migrant labour: there are 46,000 registered migrant workers. Domestic work is known for being unattractive for Jordanians for reasons pertaining to its low wages and the culture of shame surrounding it. Moreover few families or women accept the idea of working in the houses of others The preference of many families to have their domestic workers

stay overnight in the family home to be 'on call' is a disincentive for many women who would prefer to work and be paid by the day or by the hour. The regular violations of the rights of domestic workers are another reason for its reputation as an undesirable role. On the other hand families prefer hiring migrant workers because they are less demanding and easier to control than Jordanians who may have relatives looking out for their welfare. Moreover if a foreign worker cannot understand Arabic well her ability to comprehend and pass on confidential information about the family is less.



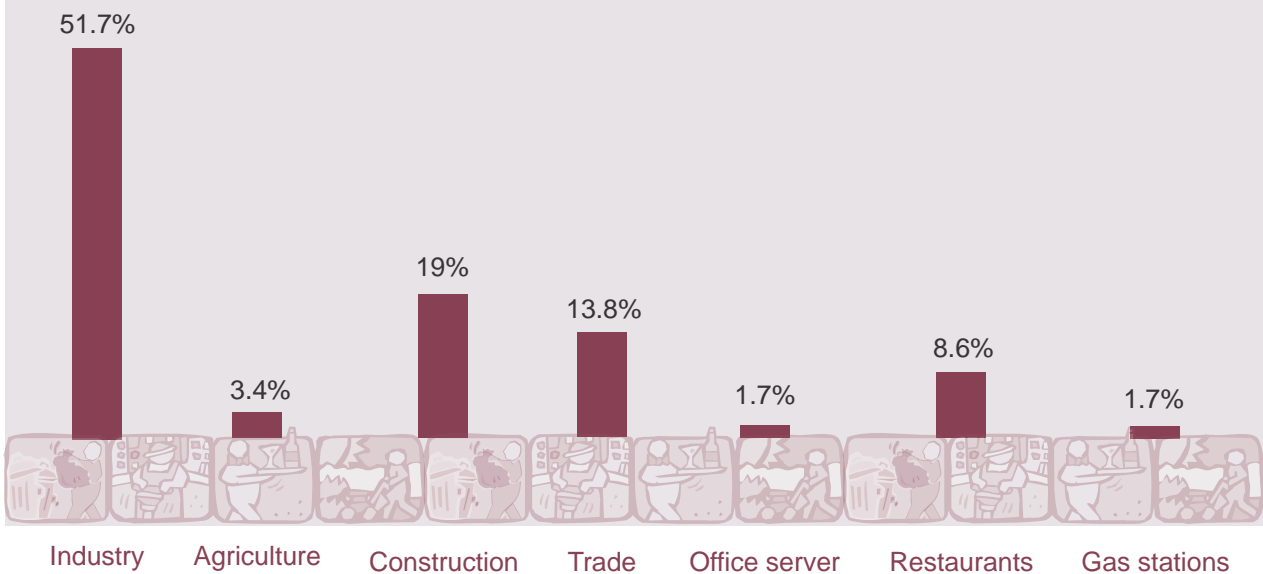
#### Fourth: Results of field study

1. Data was collected from employers of migrant labour. The majority of the sample, 83.6%, was male. 75% were married, 50.9% were between 30 and 50 years old and 67.8% held a bachelor degree. The following table presents the data:



2. 86.9% of employers of migrant labour stated that they were in need of migrant labour and that this labour was indispensable to their work. The sectors of the sample employers are presented below:

## Sectors of the employer respondents of the questionnaire



3. 95.1% of employers of migrant workers said that their establishments had a departmental structure. 91.8% of respondents stated that whether their 'company' was departmental was dictated by its legal status. 4.9% of employers stated that their employees worked individually, without a departmental system. 8.2% were small-scale businesses managed by one person.

4. 70.5% of employers stated that their company's capital was totally Jordanian. 29.5% indicated that there was a non Jordanian contribution to the capital of their establishments. Of this 29.5%, 38.8% stated that the percentage of non-Jordanian contribution was less than 50% while for 61.5% of respondents it was over 50%.

5. 48.3% of the respondents said that the services or products produced by migrant labour were consumed within Jordan while 23.3% stated that those services or products were exported. 28.3% of respondents stated that they would be consumed both nationally and internationally. Thus 67.6% stated that the work

of their migrant labour serves the Jordanian market.

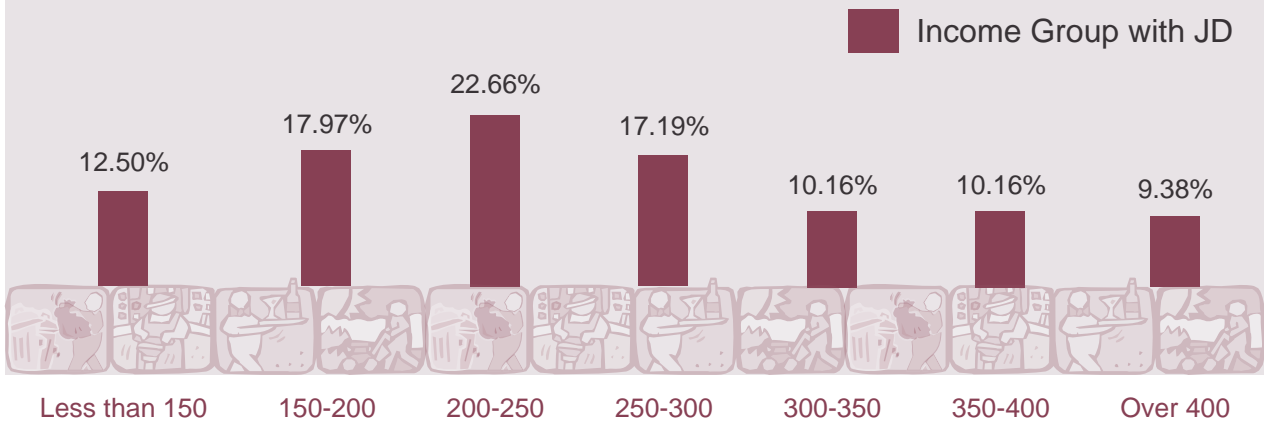
6. 59.3% of employers stated that only for the past 10 years or less had they relied on migrant labour. For 40.5% the period was more than 10 years.

7. The total number of migrant workers employed by the establishments owned by the respondents was 16,749. 68.89% of those migrant workers had qualifications lower than high school qualifications. 20.74% had a two year or vocational diploma. 10.37% of the employees had Bachelor degrees. According to data received by the Ministry of Labour and Department of General Statistics the relatively high percentage of employees with Bachelor degrees can be explained by the focus of the study sample on the trade and industrial sectors.

8. 30% of respondents were questioned on their migrant workers' average wages. They responded that 12.5% of workers working for them received less than 150 Dinars per month; the national minimum wage. This is illegal except in the garment sector where the minimum wage is 110 Dinars per month. The salaries of 40.65% of migrant workers were between 150-250 Dinars per month.

The salaries of 27.34% of labourers were between 250 – 350 Dinars per month while the percentage of migrant labour whose salary exceeded 350 Dinars per month was 19.53%. In 2006 the General Department of Statistics stated that the poverty line (below which a person with struggle to have enough food) was 680 Dinars per year - 57 Dinars per person per month. The following table categorises the migrant workers according to their income:

## Average salary of migrant workers employed by the respondents



9. 47.86% of respondents were asked about any benefits they provided to their migrant employees over and above their wages. 27.81% stated that their employees were provided with accommodation or housing allowance. 25.83% stated their employees were provided with medical insurance or medical insurance allowance. 21.85% stated their employees were provided with transport or transport allowance. These benefits are shown below:

### Table of benefits/allowances given to migrant workers

Benefit	%
Accommodation or housing allowance	27.81
Transport or transport allowance	21.85
Medical insurance or medical insurance allowance	25.83
Wage increase in line with inflation	3.97
Children's school fees paid	1.32
Airline tickets	13.25



<b>Benefit</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Food allowance</b>	<b>2.65</b>
<b>Incentives</b>	<b>1.32</b>
<b>Paid vacations</b>	<b>0.66</b>
<b>Social security</b>	<b>0.66</b>
<b>Hardship allowance (working away from home)</b>	<b>0.66</b>

10. The respondents were asked about their reasons for recruiting migrant workers. Their responses are shown in the table below:

#### **Reasons given by employers for their recruitment of migrant labour**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
<b>Having more experience</b>	<b>67.20</b>	<b>14.80</b>	<b>18.00</b>
<b>Migrant workers possess the required specialized skills</b>	<b>62.70</b>	<b>18.60</b>	<b>18.60</b>
<b>Migrant workers are more thorough</b>	<b>86.40</b>	<b>8.50</b>	<b>5.10</b>
<b>Migrant workers meet deadlines</b>	<b>86.90</b>	<b>4.90</b>	<b>8.20</b>
<b>Migrant workers are more punctual</b>	<b>62.30</b>	<b>8.20</b>	<b>8.20</b>
<b>Migrant workers have a higher sense of responsibility</b>	<b>73.80</b>	<b>16.40</b>	<b>16.40</b>
<b>Migrant workers are more cooperative with their colleagues</b>	<b>77.00</b>	<b>8.20</b>	<b>8.20</b>

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Migrant workers are more obedient	93.40	3.30	3.30
Migrant workers are more personable	83.60	6.60	9.80
Migrant workers do not create many problems	58.30	10.00	31.70
Migrant workers are more capable in English language	14.80	8.20	77.00
It is easier to manage migrant workers	81.40	6.80	11.90
Migrant workers' salaries are lower	46.70	8.30	45.00
Migrant workers are more productive	76.70	6.70	16.70
It is easier to recruit migrant workers	27.10	10.20	62.70
It is easier to fire migrant worker	43.30	6.70	50.00
Migrant workers follow orders and codes of conduct	68.30	15.00	16.70
It is possible to select migrant workers on a more specific basis	45.80	25.40	28.80
Jordanian workers are less serious	57.60	10.20	32.20
Migrant workers keep improving their performance	42.60	19.70	37.70
Migrant workers do whatever you ask them to do	74.60	11.90	13.60
Migrant workers carry out unpaid overtime	16.90	8.50	74.60
There are no Jordanian domestic workers	72.10	6.60	21.30
Migrant workers are ready to do whatever you ask them to do	64.40	15.30	20.30
Migrant workers are ready to work long hours for no pay	21.30	11.50	67.20
Migrant workers are ready to work under very harsh conditions	72.90	5.10	22.00
Migrant workers are ready to work for a long time without taking an annual vacation	21.30	11.50	67.20
Migrant workers are ready to work without taking weekly days off	43.10	20.70	36.20

**Based on the table above, the following conclusions can be drawn:**

a. The employers agreed on 23 reasons for recruiting migrant workers out of 28 reasons mentioned in the questionnaire. The most important four reasons that the employers agreed on were;

- Migrant workers have more experience
- Migrant workers possess the required specialized skills
- Migrant workers are more thorough and meet deadlines
- Migrant workers are more punctual

**The least important reasons were;**

- Migrant workers are ready to work without taking weekly days off
- Migrant workers are ready to work under very harsh conditions
- Migrant workers are ready to do whatever you ask them to do
- There is a shortage of Jordanian workers
- Migrant workers do whatever you ask them to do

b. The reasons that employers agreed that they use migrant workers were;

- Migrant workers are more capable in English language
- It is easier to recruit migrant workers
- It is easier to fire migrant workers
- Migrant workers are ready to work long hours for no pay
- Migrant workers carry out unpaid overtime

(These reasons are in ascending order according to the average.)

c. Three reasons were given equally, according to the average, to justify their use of the migrant labour;

- Migrant workers' salaries are lower
- Migrant workers keep improving their performance
- Migrant workers are ready to work for a long time without taking an annual vacation

(These reasons are in descending order according to the agreement indicator and the average)

11. We asked the employers about their assessment of the work ethic of the migrant labourers in their institutions. Their answers are given in the following table:

### Employers' assessment of the work ethic of their migrant labourers

Ethics	Employers' assessment				
	Excellent	V. good	Good	Acceptable	Weak
Punctuality	62.30	29.50	8.20	0.00	0.00
Hard working	49.20	37.70	11.50	1.60	0.00
Consistent	44.30	29.50	21.30	4.90	0.00
Productivity	54.10	31.10	14.80	0.00	0.00
Respectful of rules	50.00	38.30	10.00	1.70	0.00
Experience	15.00	33.30	28.30	23.30	0.00
Desire to improve their capacity to work well	11.70	6.70	46.70	21.70	13.30
Acceptance of being moved within the company	45.80	32.20	16.90	5.10	0.00
Cooperation with colleagues	42.60	27.90	26.20	3.30	0.00

Ethics	Employers' assessment				
	Excellent	V. good	Good	Acceptable	Weak
<b>Obedience</b>	<b>55.70</b>	<b>32.80</b>	<b>11.50</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Trustworthy</b>	<b>19.00</b>	<b>22.40</b>	<b>34.50</b>	<b>17.20</b>	<b>6.90</b>
<b>Responsible</b>	<b>30.00</b>	<b>38.30</b>	<b>23.30</b>	<b>8.30</b>	<b>0.00</b>

The table above demonstrates the results of the employers' assessment of the work ethic of their migrant labourers according to a 5-levelled scale. The quality considered the most important by employers according to the results is the punctuality of migrant labourers. The second most important was their obedience followed by their productivity, their respect of the establishment's rules, their hard work, their acceptance of being moved within the company, their consistency and their cooperation with colleagues. The employers questioned ranked their migrant employees 'very good' in terms of the above qualities.

The respondent employers rated the following qualities 'good' (mentioned in order of importance): they are dependable, responsible, they have experience and they are trustworthy.

Regarding the desire to improve their capacities to work was the only quality that received the rank 'acceptable'. This quality received the lowest average score.

12. Employers think that the main reason for not employing migrant workers is that the position ceases to exist. Another reason is that they must comply with the Labour law and instructions which regulate the use of migrant labour. The third reason given was patriotism and the fourth was Patriotism a desire to decrease their costs. The least popular reason was that a Jordanian labourer was available for the role.

13. 77.2% of the respondent employers referred to the fact that Jordanian people do not accept certain roles. 60.7% of the sample stated that the qualifications offered by the Jordanian education system do not meet the needs of their establishments. As a result 58.9% mentioned that it would be impossible to replace migrant labour with national labour without the level of productivity in their establishments being affected.

14. 85.2% of employers stated that their need for migrant labour will last for a further five years. 63.3% mentioned that they have no plan to train national workers in order to fill the jobs carried out by migrants. Of these 63.3%, 44.2% stated that such a plan is unimportant while 57.8% considered it worthwhile. None of the respondents considered such a plan 'important' or 'very important'.

15. 62.12% of the sample stated that they did not agree with the closure of some professions (professions in which only Jordanian nationals can work). 25% of this 62.12% gave the following reasons for their opinion: not having enough national labour; migrant labourers being more committed, achieving more and being more thorough in spite of harsh conditions; Jordanian labourers being less serious; migrant labours being more skilled in the required roles; national labourers being unwilling to carry out the work done by migrants and the need for labour regardless of nationality.

16. The employers stated that replacing migrant labour with national labour would have a significant negative impact on productivity and increase the cost of production. The following table shows the percentage and average of these two indicators:

### **The impact of replacing migrant labour with national labour**

Indicators	Employers' assessment				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
The increase in the overall production cost	29.8	38.3	23.4	6.4	2.1
The decrease in the level of performance	26	44	0.00	22	8

17. We asked employers about strategies which may decrease the number of migrant workers in Jordan and in their establishments in particular. Their answers were as follows:

#### The estimated impact of strategies to decrease the number of migrant workers

The Strategies	Very Positive	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Very Negative
Filling any new vacancies exclusively with national labour	33.30	46.70	6.70	11.70	1.70
Gradually replacing migrant labour with Jordanian	27.60	46.60	8.60	17.20	0.00
Forcibly filling certain vacancies with national labour	30.00	31.70	11.70	25.00	1.70
Placing further restrictions on the recruitment of migrant labour	28.80	28.80	6.80	29.80	6.80

<b>The Strategies</b>	<b>Very Positive</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Very Negative</b>
<b>Rebuild the capacity of the national labour force</b>	<b>55.90</b>	<b>33.90</b>	<b>10.20</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Cease burdening national workers with extra unpaid working hours</b>	<b>37.30</b>	<b>35.60</b>	<b>13.60</b>	<b>8.50</b>	<b>5.10</b>
<b>Not forcing migrant workers to work through national holidays</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>44.10</b>	<b>23.70</b>	<b>10.20</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Providing paid annual leave of a duration of at least one month</b>	<b>20.30</b>	<b>35.60</b>	<b>25.40</b>	<b>18.60</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Providing transport or transport allowance to national workers</b>	<b>51.70</b>	<b>41.40</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Providing housing or housing allowance to national workers</b>	<b>43.90</b>	<b>43.90</b>	<b>10.50</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Providing medical insurance to national workers</b>	<b>59.60</b>	<b>36.80</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Improve educational curriculum to meet the needs of the labour market</b>	<b>46.60</b>	<b>39.70</b>	<b>12.10</b>	<b>1.70</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Pay more attention to training</b>	<b>54.10</b>	<b>32.80</b>	<b>9.80</b>	<b>1.60</b>	<b>1.60</b>
<b>Improving the working system</b>	<b>47.40</b>	<b>36.80</b>	<b>10.50</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>1.80</b>
<b>Establishing a database for the labour market</b>	<b>54.40</b>	<b>35.10</b>	<b>8.80</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>0.00</b>



The above table shows the opinion of the employers regarding the impact of the strategies to replace migrant labour with national labour. The most important reasons given are:

a) Most of the employers agreed that the above strategies could be effective in reducing the number of migrant workers both nationally and in their institutions.

b) According to the employers point of view the most effective strategies mentioned are (in descending order of importance):

- Improving the working system
- Rebuilding the capacity of the national labour force
- Establishing a database for the labour market
- Providing transport or transport allowance to national workers
- Paying more attention to training
- Improving the educational curriculum to meet the needs of the labour market
- Providing housing or housing allowance to national workers
- Gradually replacing migrant labour with Jordanian
- Ceasing to burden national workers with extra unpaid working hours
- Filling any with new vacancies exclusively with national labour
- Not forcing migrant workers to work through national holidays
- forcibly filling certain vacancies with national labour
- placing further restrictions on the recruitment of migrant labour.





In light of the results of the study, the study team was able reach the following conclusions:



The Jordanian labour market needs migrant workers to do jobs that Jordanians avoid. Business owners prefer migrant workers over local workers for economic reasons, the most important of which is the high productivity of the migrant workers, the lack of commitment of local labour, the reluctance of local workers to work long hours and their low productivity compared to migrant labour. As concerns wages, it is known that Jordanian labour avoids some occupations as they have low pay such as the garment industry sector. However this is not the only reason: if other costs are added to the wages that migrant worker get in such occupations, for example housing, food, allowances (for example air tickets for Asian domestic workers) and others, migrant workers' wages would be higher than many Jordanians'. This fact demonstrates that employers do not employ migrant labourers because they are able to pay them less. Instead they employ them because of their high productivity, in some cases the ability to make them work longer hours without paying them for the overtime, the ease of managing them, their obedience and their weak reaction to any excessive demands in terms of either working hours or work type. In addition, migrant workers are generally more devoted and committed to work than Jordanians.



Local labour in Jordan does skilled work in industry, the services sector and others, while migrant labour does work which is often difficult and detrimental to its health, with longer working hours and lower wages compared to local workers.



Business owners benefit from migrant labour as expenditure on wages and production is lessened. The recruitment of migrant labour also helps business owners to keep the wages of national labour low: if migrant labour was not cheap and readily available the employers would be forced to raise wages in order to attract Jordanian labour to the roles.



Usually migrant workers are prevented from receiving privileges like social security, retirement contributions and others. Jordanian labour is unwilling to work in particular roles because of low wages and few privileges, for example in qualified industrial zones and some services roles such as cleaning. Business owners in this occupation deliberately do not hire local labour as they are convinced that this labour is a burden

for the reasons mentioned earlier. Hiring migrant workers saves business owners money, lowers the cost of production and enhances the competitiveness of their products in both local and foreign markets.



Migrant workers are usually the first to be laid off when a financial crisis occurs, either at company level or at the national level, despite the need for them in Jordanian market.



The problem of migrant labour in Jordan is that they accept lower wages than local workers in same field or they take up jobs which offer low wages. This makes it easy for business owners to keep salaries low which benefits those businesses but is unpopular with the government, unions and Jordanians with few employment opportunities. This state of affairs suggests there is a deficiency in the inspection systems for these institutions.



The wide-spread point of view that migrant labour is a burden on the Jordanian economy and contributes to a transfer of cash abroad is not true. It is no more than scare-mongering and a way to spread hatred against migrant labour. As the study shows this group of workers' contribution to GDP exceeds their remittances abroad. This fact makes dispensing with migrant labour extremely difficult.



Business owners do not encourage closing some occupations to migrant workers, and believe that this closure would reduce productivity and quality, which leads to increased production costs. This would also be true if one were to eliminate migrant labour from Jordan, bearing in mind conclusion 7 above.



Jordan is a labour-sending country. Most of those who emigrate are highly skilled, from the most educated and competent section of the Jordanian labour force. They migrate to jobs with responsibility and higher wages levels than they can earn in Jordan. This leads to a shortage of highly skilled individuals in Jordan and leads to a tendency

for wages to increase in Jordan. The remittances from workers abroad support the economy by increasing consumption. Because of this the Jordanian government cares about its own nationals who are migrant workers abroad. They are eager that these workers enjoy their rights in other countries. This should impel them to care about migrant workers in their own nation in a similar way.



## **STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**In the light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the study team suggests the following recommendations:**

**1**

**When dealing with migrant labour the government should examine its precise effects on the sectors it works in and on the Jordanian economy. The government should avoid making generalized assumptions about the effect of migrant labour in Jordan for example that they are a burden or that they take the jobs of Jordanians.**

**2**

**The government should adopt policies that reflect the importance of migrant labour to the private sector and the sectors to which they contribute widely. These policies should be based on evidence based studies.**

**3**

**The importance of creating database for migrant workers and unifying sources of information about them, amending differences and contradictions between different institutions, and updating the information regularly.**

**4**

**A wide-ranging and detailed study, covering every sector, should be carried out to determine the future need of the Jordanian market for migrant labour**

5

**The government should ensure that migrant workers enjoy a working environment where their rights are respected.**

**This is particularly so in light of our conclusion that migrant labour cannot be eliminated from Jordan, in the medium term at least. It is unacceptable that this group of labourers continues living in circumstances that violate their human and labour rights. Moreover the providing of this environment will support their stay in Jordan and maintain their pivotal role in economic development in Jordan. Jordan should become party to international agreements relating to the protection of migrant labour and their families.**

6

**The government should establish an inspection system for institutions and facilities that hire migrant workers to ensure that they are employed under conditions consistent with laws that regulate work, particularly minimum wages, social security, the availability of decent work conditions and proper and healthy housing.**

7

**The government should review its closed occupations policy and set realistic and clear criteria for the selection the closed occupations. The government should not close any occupation unless there is a well-trained alternative local labour force which can carry out the same roles as efficiently.**



8

**Authorities should be made more aware of their role in increasing awareness among business owners about migrant labour rights and the importance of compliance with their employment regulating laws. Migrant labour should also be educated about their rights and obligations at work and their responsibilities in regulating their legal condition in the kingdom.**

9

**The media should be aware of its role in in encouraging Jordanians to respect workers of all occupations and in all sectors.**

10

**Education outputs should be aligned with labor market needs. Vocational education should be developed to suit those needs and attractive incentives should be offered to enrollees on vocational training courses.**

