

Jordan



Population: 6,508,271 (July 2011 est.)
Population Growth Rate: 0.984% (2011 est.)
Birth Rate: 26.79 births/1,000 population (2011 est.)
Life Expectancy: total population: 80.05 years
male: 78.73 years
female: 81.45 years (2010 est.)
Literacy Rate: total population: 89.9%
male: 95.1%
female: 84.7% (2003 est.)
Net Migration Rate: -14.26 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2011 est.)
Unemployment Rate: 13.4% (2010 est.)
Gross Domestic Product per Capita: \$5,300 (2010 est.)
Religions: Sunni Muslim 92%, Christian 6%, other 2%
Languages: Arabic
Ethnic Groups: Arab 98%, Circassian 1%, Armenian 1%
Capital: Amman¹

Trafficking Routes

Jordan is a transit and destination country for trafficking in persons. Reports indicate that men and women who are trafficked into forced labor are originally from Bangladesh, China² and Sri Lanka.³ Jordan is also a transit country for people being trafficked from Asia to Iraq for the purposes of forced labor and sexual exploitation.⁴ Often, victims experience physical or sexual abuse, non-payment of wages, threats, restrictions, and unlawful withholding of passports.⁵

¹ CIA, The World Factbook 2009, (Mar. 8, 2010), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

² Sarah Lazare, *Human trafficking in Jordan*, MULTINATIONAL MONITOR, May 1, 2006, available at: <http://www.allbusiness.com/public-administration/3965112-1.html>.

³ International Labour Organization (ILO): Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour: Eliminating Forced Labor and Trafficking in Jordan, http://www.ilo.org/sapfl/Projects/lang--en/WCMS_104064/index.htm (last visited Feb. 15, 2010).

⁴ Sebastian Swett, *Trafficking of Iraqi Women Rampant Despite U.S. Commitment To End It*, The Nation (2010), available at: http://www.alternet.org/rights/147962/trafficking_of_iraqi_women_rampant_despite_u.s._commitment_to_end_it [accessed June 19, 2012]

⁵ *Jordan: Government adopts anti-human trafficking law*, INTEGRATED REGIONAL INFORMATION NETWORKS (IRIN), Jan. 27, 2009, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/498178901e.html>.

Factors That Contribute to the Trafficking Infrastructure

One factor that contributes to human trafficking is the non-inclusion of persons working in the unofficial sectors (i.e. agriculture, households and family enterprise) as beneficiaries of protection under the Jordanian labor law. This has led to labor exploitation, especially in the domestic service sector. Protection of children is also absent in this sector.⁶

Jordanian women, who face conditions of inequality both within the family and in society, are vulnerable to situations of exploitation primarily for domestic services. In addition, Jordan's location as a point of arrival for many refugees fleeing the bordering Palestinian and Iraqi conflicts results in the presence of individuals in situations of poverty and despair, which increases the chances of becoming a victim of trafficking. As of 2012, UNHCR reports indicate that up to 455,986 people are current refugees in Jordan, many of whom come from Iraq.⁷ Harsh conditions faced upon arrival – unemployment, homelessness, limited legal protection – have led women and girls to prostitution for housing and income.⁸

Although it appears that cases of labor exploitation are decreasing, the conditions of guest workers remain often unsatisfactory. Reports show that several strikes among foreign workers have taken place, precisely to protest against vexing working conditions, dismal pay and lack of protection.⁹

Forms of Trafficking

The main form of trafficking in Jordan is trafficking for the purpose of forced labor. Violations occur mainly in the Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZ)¹⁰ and have often concerned the production of clothing items destined to the industrialized world. Factories producing for companies such as Wal-Mart, Gloria Vanderbilt, Target, Kohl's, Kmart, Victoria's Secret and L.L. Bean, have been indicated as responsible for severe labor exploitation.¹¹

In addition, almost 70,000 migrant domestic workers from Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines face physical and psychological abuses; these include

⁶ DR. MOHAMMAD SHAWABKEH, UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, LABOR RIGHTS IN JORDAN (2007) available at: www.undp-jordan.org/Portals/0/Labor%20Rights-English.doc.

⁷ "Subregional Operations Profile: Middle East: Working Environment, Statistical Snapshot." <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486566> January 2009 [accessed September 15, 2009]

⁸ UNHCR, country operations profile – Jordan, 2012, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486566> [accessed June 19, 2012]

⁹ Hani Hazaimeh, THE JORDAN TIMES, *Hundreds of foreign workers end strike*, Jan.7, 2008, available at: <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=4822>.

¹⁰ The (QIZ) are business parks that are recognized as free trade zones in collaboration with Israel and the United States. Jordan is one of two countries to have this arrangement, the other one being Egypt. For more information: CRS, *Qualifying Industrial Zones in Jordan and Egypt*, (2006), available at: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rs22002.pdf> [accessed June 19, 2012]

¹¹ Charles Kernaghan, *U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement Descends into Human Trafficking and Involuntary Servitude*, THE NATIONAL LABOR COMMITTEE, May 2006, available at: <http://www.maryknollogc.org/economic/Jordan%20FTA%20labor%20abuses.pdf>.

beatings, confiscation of passports, confinement to the house, insults, non-payment of salaries, and overlong working hours with no days off.¹²

Workers arriving from South-East Asia under promises of high salaries and optimal working conditions have been stripped from their passports upon their arrival and been forced to work until exhaustion, for a misery pay. Physical violence on the job, such as hitting with sticks or belts, sexual harassment, and detention of workers who requested the payment of their wages were reported, as well as cases of rape by factory managers, one of which led to the suicide of the victim.¹³

The concentration of services and activities in Amman linked to the Iraqi war has led to an increase in demand for entertainment, including sexual services for men who are passing through the city. This resulted in an increase in trafficking of women from Eastern Europe who are exploited in strip clubs and as prostitutes.¹⁴

Child labor also contributes to the trafficking problem in Jordan. It is estimated that there are approximately 50,000 child workers in Jordan today and that the number is increasing. Children between the ages of five and sixteen work in agricultural, manufacturing, construction, transportation and sanitation sectors. Daily shifts typically last up to 12 hours, under horrendous working conditions with little to no pay.¹⁵

Government Responses

On March 31, 2009, the Lower House in Jordan passed an anti-human trafficking law that prohibits all forms of trafficking.¹⁶ In correlation with this enactment, the government also amended its labor law to include agriculture and domestic workers. The law penalizes those accused of trafficking by prescribing ten years of imprisonment for crimes involving forced prostitution and other aggravated circumstances, including trafficking of a child and trafficking involving a public official. Crimes which do not qualify under aggravated circumstances face a penalization of a six month minimum imprisonment along with a \$7,000 maximum fine.¹⁷

Under the new law, the Human Trafficking Office was established within the Public Security Directorate's (PSD) Criminal Investigation Unit in order to improve efforts to identify trafficked victims and other victims of such exploitation.¹⁸ The

¹² Human Rights Watch, *Jordan: Domestic Worker Protections Ineffective*, (September 27, 2011) available at: <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/09/27/jordan-domestic-worker-protections-ineffective> [accessed June 19, 2012]

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ Press Release, Women's Refugee Committee, *Iraqi Refugees in Jordan: Desperate and Alone* (July 10, 2007) available at: <http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/press-room/453-iraqi-refugees-in-jordan-desperate-and-alone->.

¹⁵ NATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, *FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT: THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN (2007)*, available at: http://nchr.org.jo/uploads/Fourth_Annual_Report.pdf.

¹⁶ Protection Against Trafficking of Human Beings Law of 2008 (Jordan).

¹⁷ Protection Against Trafficking of Human Beings Law of 2008 art.7 (Jordan).

¹⁸ Human Trafficking Office, Public Security Directorate at http://www.psd.gov.jo/arabic/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=35&Itemid=429.

identification unit specifically works to seek out foreign domestic workers, women in prostitution, and foreign laborers and to raise public awareness on the dangers of human trafficking in society.¹⁹

In 2010, the Jordanian government adopted a national strategy which adopts an integrated system to prevent human trafficking in Jordan. The strategy adopts four comprehensive anti-trafficking polices, including preventing human trafficking, protecting victims of human trafficking, prosecuting human trafficking and establishing national, regional and international partnerships in the human trafficking context.²⁰ Moreover, in 2011, the Jordanian National Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) launched a national campaign to combat human trafficking in Jordan.²¹ The Campaign established a national hotline dedicated to reporting human trafficking and to requesting general information or specific anti-trafficking resources.²² The Campaign also implemented an awareness media project to educate the general public and foreign migrant workers in all sectors on human trafficking, particularly forced labor and domestic work.²³ Additionally, the NCHR supports projects aimed at empowering unemployed youth, marginalized women and rural communities.²⁴

Finally, Princess Basma Youth Resource Center has partnered the National Campaign to promote public awareness on human trafficking.²⁵ The Center organizes national and regional anti-trafficking workshops and trainings of law enforcement officials and representatives of human rights organisations on combating human trafficking and protecting victims of trafficking.²⁶ The Center also works with the Jordanian government to include human trafficking and related issues in the curricula of secondary schools and higher education institutions and to enhance the role of religious

¹⁹ Khetam Malkawi, *Lower House Endorses 2009 Anti-human Trafficking Law*, JORDAN TIMES, Jan. 26, 2009, available at: <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/newsarchive/2009/01262009001.htm>.

²⁰ ACJLS, *National strategy to prevent trafficking in human beings and framework for the years 2010-2012*, available in Arabic at: <http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=اى جى تارتس اال+ةى ن طول+ةى ن مل+ا راجت اال+ا ر ش بل اب+ا ر اط او+ا ر م ع ل+ا ر م ع ل ل+ا ر م ع ل ل+2010-2012+&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CFQQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.acjls.org%2Fforum%2Fadmin%2FUpload%2FComponent%2Fnational%2520strategy%2520to%2520prevent%2520trafficking%2520in%2520human%2520beings.doc&ei=qwbiT7vDOMr50gGI6aT3Aw&usq=AFQjCNEdMmgLRpv3NwEItEf3J7bPdYQrpg> [accessed June 20, 2012]

²¹ Addostour Newspaper, *the National Center for Human Rights Launches Campaign to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings*, (July 15, 2011), available at: http://www.addustour.com/ViewTopic.aspx?ac=%5CLocalAndGover%5C2011%5C07%5CLocalAndGover_issue1371_day15_id341565.htm#.T_r0UWBRIvk [accessed June 27, 2012]

²² *Id.*

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions (ICC), *Working Groups Session 1: Human trafficking*, available at: http://www.humanrightsbusiness.org/files/ICC%20WG%20docs/file/icc_conf_trafficking_en1.pdf [accessed June 27, 2012]

²⁵ PBYRC, *Promoting Women's Rights, Gender Equity*, available at: http://www.princessbasma.jo/index.php?page_type=pages&page_id=4847 [accessed June 27, 2012]

²⁶ PBYRC, *Arab Countries Not Immune to Human Trafficking – Princess Basma*, (05 June, 2012) available at: http://www.princessbasma.jo/index.php?page_type=news&press_id=1048&cat=News [accessed June 27, 2012]

the Commission runs an initiative aimed at strengthening the relationship among members of parliament on women's issues, including the priorities set in the National Strategy for Jordanian Women to prevent trafficking in human being.³²

Finally, the Queen Zein Al Sharaf Institute for Development conducts multiple activities to raise awareness on human trafficking.³³ The Institute regularly calls for amendments to the discriminatory laws against women.³⁴ In addition, the Institute joined a regional partnership which seeks to protect domestic workers through the establishment of national and regional networks, assisting victims of human trafficking and lobbying for changes to domestic workers' laws.³⁵ Moreover, the Institute effectively collaborates with the Goodwill Campaign; a national campaign seeking to protect children's rights and reduce child labor in Jordan.³⁶

Multilateral Initiatives

The American Bar Association, under the Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI), established a program to combat human trafficking in Jordan in February 2010.³⁷ The program seeks to develop human trafficking's prevention, prosecution and public awareness initiatives as well as improving the quality of legal services provided to victims of human trafficking.³⁸ The program also provides anti-human trafficking trainings and develops curricula and guides for lawyers, judges, prosecutors and police officers.³⁹ Finally, the program supports the Jordanian Ministry of Justice and the Jordanian National Anti-Trafficking Committee in their efforts to confront human trafficking in Jordan.⁴⁰

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³² Rowaida Al Maaitah, *Arab Women and Political Development*, available at:

http://www.bridgew.edu/soas/jiws/Vol12_no3/2_Rowaida.pdf [accessed June 29, 2012]

³³ Rehada Abdoush, *Services provided to abused women in shelters*, Syrian Women, February 11, 2001 available in Arabic at: <http://nesasy.org/index.php/-intro-398/9492-q-----q> [accessed July 16, 2012]

³⁴ Id.

³⁵ Jordanian Women's Union, *Programs and Projects*, available in Arabic at: <http://jwu.org.jo/women-federation/PagesDetiles.aspx?lng=2&pageid=20>

³⁶ Heyam Abu-Nai'aj, *Princess Basma embarks the Goodwill Campaign*, available in Arabic at:

<http://www.amanjordan.org/a-news/wmview.php?ArtID=14842> [accessed July 16, 2012]

³⁷ American Bar Association: Criminal Law Reform and Anti-Human Trafficking, available at:

<http://www.abanet.org/rol/programs/anti-corruption.html> [accessed July 18, 2012].

³⁸ Id.

³⁹ Id.

⁴⁰ Id.