

# JORDAN

## VET GOVERNANCE COUNTRY PROFILE 2021



### 1. INTRODUCTION

Despite a challenging socioeconomic situation and the persistent impact of the region's instability, particularly the crisis in Syria, the government of Jordan continued its efforts towards sustainable growth, making use of its primary resource – human capital. The international community continued to support Jordan in these endeavours, providing financial aid in response to the increasing pressure on the country's labour market and education and training system<sup>1</sup>. As a result, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector in Jordan is changing fast. New institutions, new programmes and initiatives are emerging.

An ETF study was conducted in May–November 2020 in Jordan, using an ETF VET Governance Inventory Tool and an assessment methodology to understand VET governance and finance effectiveness. The self-assessment instrument involved 22 key stakeholders, including ministries, government VET advisory bodies, employers, unions, and

<sup>1</sup> [Country Fiche 2020 Jordan - Education, Training and Employment Developments.pdf](#) (europa.eu), ETF

VET institutions. It focused on 65 key indicators to enable analysis and self-assessment based on seven core VET governance functions: formulation and implementation of overall policy framework, including strategic policy tools; provision of the legal and regulatory framework; management of the VET and skills provider network; alignment and coordination of financial arrangements; management of public-private partnerships (PPP) for VET and skills development; monitoring, evaluation and review of VET and skills policies, including research and development; and management of information systems, including data and statistical provision<sup>2</sup>. Achievements and shortcomings in the capacity of Jordan's VET system to deliver VET were observed.

The Jordan country profile paints a picture of VET governance based on the findings of the ETF VET Governance Inventory tool.

<sup>2</sup> The results of the assessment on 65 governance indicators are presented in the VET governance self-assessment results in Jordan: Assessment Report, 2020 ETF.

### COUNTRY CONTEXT

**Demography.** According to the 2019 population and housing census conducted by the Department of Statistics (DOS), Jordan's total population is (10 554 000). Males comprise 53% of the population, while females are 47%. The number of Jordanian citizens is about 70% of the total population, while non-Jordanians make up about 30%. There is high demographic pressure from those under the age of 15, who form about 35% of the population; this requires significant public investment in education, health, employment, housing, and infrastructure.

**The economy.** Jordan's economy is among the smallest in the Middle East, with insufficient supplies of water and other natural resources. Regarding GDP, between 2000 and 2009, Jordan averaged 6.5%, but from 2010 until 2016, the average growth was a mere 2.5%. Furthermore, Jordan's total public debt has increased exponentially, exceeding economic growth. By the first quarter of 2020, GDP growth had reached 1.3%.

**The labour markets.** The Jordanian workforce. The quarterly report by the Department of Statistics for the third quarter of 2020 on the unemployment rate showed that the unemployment rate reached 23.9% during that quarter, representing an increase of 4.8 percentage points compared to the third quarter of 2019. The unemployment rate for men reached 21.2% during the third quarter of 2020 and 33.6% for women. We can see that unemployment for men increased by 4.1 percentage points and unemployment for women by 6.1 percentage points, compared with the third quarter of 2019. The highest rate of unemployment was recorded in the 15-19 and the 20-24 years age groups, with 53.1% and 45.0%, respectively. The refined economic participation rate (the labour force attributed to the population aged 15 years and over) is 34.4% (53.5% for men and 14.9% for women).



## 2. VET AND SKILLS POLICY

The Government of Jordan (GoJ) has adopted policies and strategies to support the current and future generations in developing the necessary educational and vocational skills. Therefore, Jordan 2025 Vision and the Jordan Economic Growth Plan (JEGP) 2018-2025 are essential. The JEGP comprises different pillars. The main two sections related to VET are the social development emphasising education and human resource development, and the labour market policy, emphasising skills development. In addition, several institutional strategies serve as a reference for the different training providers. These include the Vocational Training Centres (VTC) Strategic Plan 2015-2025, the Education Strategic Plan 2018-2022 of the Ministry of Education (MoE), and the Balqa Applied University (BAU) Strategic Plan 2017-2021<sup>3</sup>.

The National Strategy for Human Resources Development 2016-2025 rests on the principles that education leads to prosperity and that fostering talent achieves a better quality of life. The main pillars are:

- ensuring equal access to education for all students
- providing international best practices, outputs, and results to all stakeholders
- empowering institutions to take responsibility for their performance by delegating responsibilities and decentralising decision-making
- incorporating innovative and creative approaches using technology to achieve the required results.

The key focus of the labour market policy is on 'empowering Jordanian youth academically and professionally by instilling an entrepreneurial mindset while providing the required funding and enabling environment'<sup>4</sup>. The main pillars of the policy are:

- restructuring and organising TVET
- expanding the establishment of Centres of Excellence for vocational training to match

<sup>3</sup> TORINO PROCESS 2018-2020 JORDAN

<sup>4</sup> Jordan Economic Growth Plan, 2018 – 2022

training programmes and labour market needs, in coordination with the private sector.

- spreading a culture of entrepreneurship and self-reliance through self-employment programmes in coordination with the private sector.

With a set of indicators, ETF VET Governance Inventory Tool assessed the quality of the policy dialogue. The findings indicate that 63.7% of the stakeholders who took part in the self-assessment strongly agree that 'the policy for VET combines long-term objectives and short-term targets'<sup>5</sup>. However, the rest of the stakeholders believe that Jordan tends to develop a policy and a strategy without adopting sustained implementation plans. They also indicated that policies and strategies are donor-driven rather than nationally driven and not owned by all national stakeholders<sup>6</sup>. Only 13.4% strongly agree that 'cooperation and coordination between national and sub-national (regional, local) public departments

<sup>5</sup> Indicator A2, ETF VET Governance Inventory Tool

<sup>6</sup> VET & Skills Governance Inventory 4.0. Assessment Results Report. Jordan ETF, 2020 (unpublished)

## METHODOLOGY

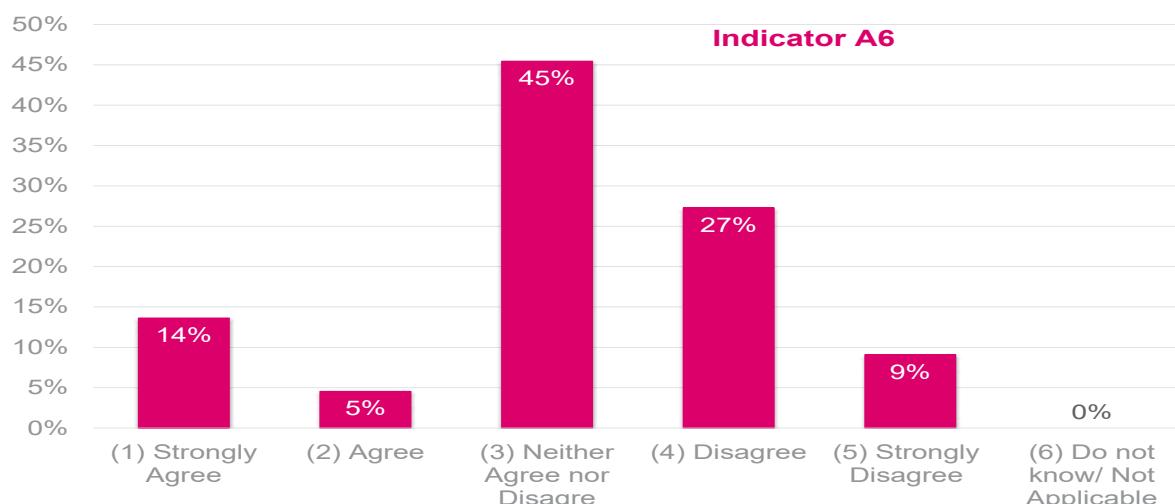
ETF VET Governance Inventory 4.0 is a pioneering tool for assessing institutions' readiness to advance policy priorities in the VET and skills sector. In 2020, it was implemented in five ETF partner countries – Albania, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Moldova, and Uzbekistan. This exercise's key focus is on a set of 65 governance indicators that measure progress in overall VET policy, management, and financing. The key objectives are to keep abreast of ETF analytical and operational actions carried out as part of a good multi-level governance process in VET, to provide analytical information and a comprehensive picture of VET governance to complement the findings and policy analysis provided by the ETF Torino process; to implement regular updating and monitoring of VET governance functions and arrangements focusing on overall VET planning, management, and financing, etc..

and agencies are effective<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, 36% of stakeholders emphasised that they strongly disagree that the cooperation between government and non-government organisations, including social partners, is transparent and effective<sup>8</sup>. (Indicator A6, See Figure 1.)

7 Indicator A5, ETF VET Governance Inventory

8 Indicator A6, ETF VET Governance Inventory Tool

**FIGURE 1: Indicator A6 'cooperation between government and non-government organisations (including social partners) is transparent and effective'**



### 3. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Technical and Vocational Skills Development Commission (TVSDC) was established in 2019 to improve governance across the TVET sector. The objective was to have an umbrella organisation overseeing the TVET sector in Jordan, headed by the Minister of Labour and with the membership of Minister of Education, Minister of Higher Education, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Labour, the president of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education institutions (AQACHEI), a representative of the Crown Prince Foundation, representatives from the private sector, and representatives from the tourism, industrial, commercial, construction, communications and health sectors. The private sector is strongly represented on the board<sup>9</sup>. However, there are no representatives from the trade unions.

The TVSDC is responsible for approving the TVET sector's strategies, policies, and plans.

9 Jordan Chamber of Industry is the key employer organisation in the country.

The TVET sector's related law proposals, approving occupational standards and coordinating with other education, economic, social, and human resources councils, are also part of its mandate. It is also responsible for: accrediting and supervising TVET providers, developing TVET programme standards, registering qualifications in the National Qualification Framework (NQF), identifying TVET teachers and trainer selection standards, classifying them and developing their skills and abilities, institutionalising PPP in TVET and licensing TVET providers<sup>10</sup>.

In 2019, another significant development in the sector of Education and Training emerged. The Jordan National Qualification Framework (JNQF) by-law was issued to provide transparency and mobility in Jordan's qualifications<sup>11</sup>. The AQACHEI governs the JNQF for Higher Education Institutions.

10 TVSDC website

11 For more information on JNQF see National Qualification Frameworks -JORDAN, ETF 2021



The Technical and Vocational Skills Development (TVSD) Law approved in 2019 is expected to improve TVET sector governance at the national level through the TVSDC. This independent institution will be acting as a leading and coordinating body for the TVET sector. Indeed, the participation of ministers of the main TVET policy institutions (Minister of the Ministry of Labour (MoL) as Head of the Council, Minister of MoE and the Minister of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR) as members) in the governing board of the TVSDC; is expected to facilitate cooperation and coordination of those institutions in terms of policy and legal provisions. In addition, the establishment of the Sector Skills Councils (SSC) will allow employers' associations to set policies for training and support the labour market needs.

Regarding the legal frameworks and considering the findings on selected governance indicators, 41% of the stakeholders strongly agree that 'the legal framework for VET aims to meet the expectations of both public and private stakeholders'<sup>12</sup> In responding to the statement 'the legal framework supports lifelong learning (LLL), not only initial VET'<sup>13</sup>, 54% of the stakeholders disagreed or strongly disagreed. Furthermore, the stakeholders disagreed that the legal framework addresses other challenges such as VET and skills within the LLL perspective. Additionally, the stakeholders added that LLL needs further understanding and appreciation by the TVET stakeholders concerned with initial VET. (Indicator B1 and B4, See Figure 2).

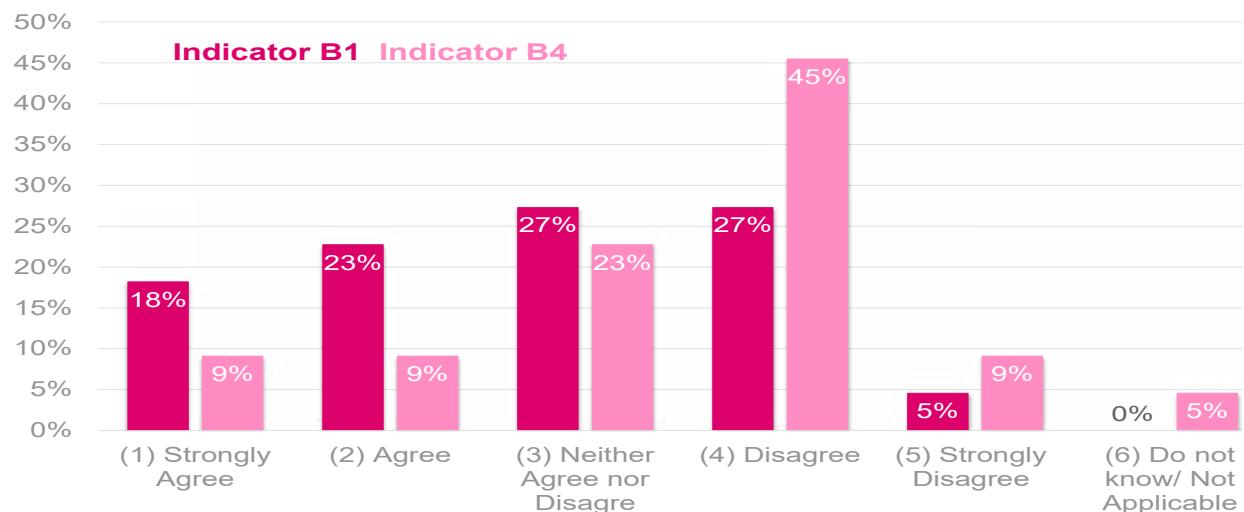
12 Indicator B1, ETF VET Governance Inventory Tool

13 Indicator B4, ETF VET Governance Inventory Tool

**FIGURE 2:**

**Indicator B1: 'The legal framework for VET aims to meet the expectations of both public and private stakeholders'**

**Indicator B4: 'The legal framework supports lifelong learning (LLL), not only initial VET (I-VET).'**



## 4. FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS

The primary source of TVET financing is public finance through the Ministry of Finance (MoF). Each institution that provides TVET programmes deals directly with the MoF. Despite this, no central body allocates the funds based on needs or decides on the priority of specific projects. Moreover, the budget decisions are not based on the programmes or organisations' performances, reducing providers' incentives to make their programmes more attractive.

Public VET is not well resourced, and the financial resources do not cover the system's basic needs. The government funding covers operational costs but not capital investment. Most of the financing for innovation and transformation of the sector comes from international funding

such as EU grants, international donors' programmes, etc. On the other hand, the donor community's support is crucial, so coordinating, unifying, and streamlining donors' efforts to prevent duplication of the work are highly necessary. In summary, the problems facing the funding TVET system are as follows<sup>14</sup>:

- 1) Budgets are primarily based on one year and not on strategic plans spanning several years.
- 2) Insufficiency of allocated resources for development issues, barely covering salaries and basic operational costs.
- 3) Lack of financial management authorities delegated to TVET providers at the local level hinders both efficiency and development.
- 4) Resource allocations are not based on results/performance but on expenditure needs as identified in the annual work plan for the institute, school, or college.
- 5) Shortage of funding due to cuts in the proposed budgets affects the development activities/initiatives of TVET institutions.

According to the TVSD Law of 2019, the TVSDC mandate is to approve TVET programme

14 TORINO PROCESS 2018-2020 JORDAN, National report

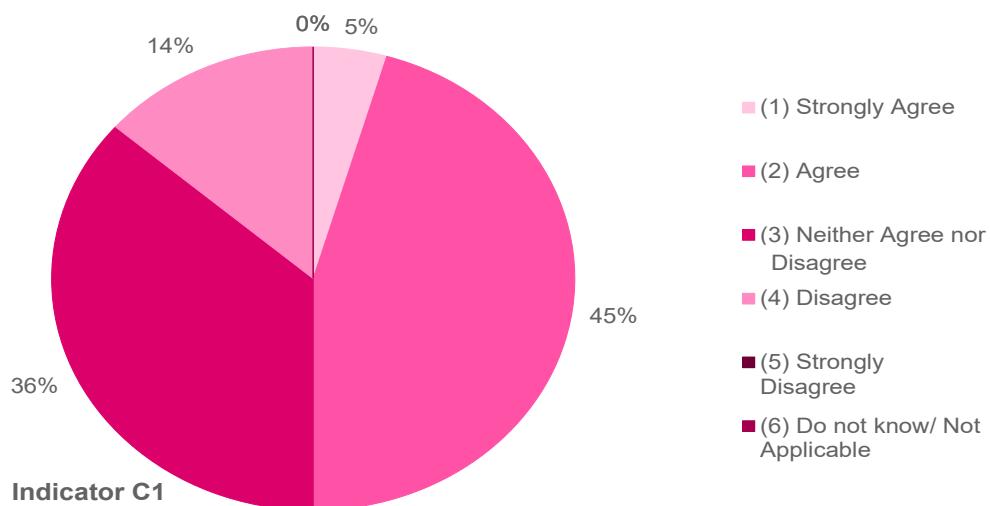
budgets based on specific criteria and supervise its spending. Having a central body for disbursement allocations to TVET institutions is expected to lead to more fairness in allocating financial resources for TVET providers. In addition, the establishment of a skills development and TVET activities support fund (replacing the ETVET Fund) within the Commission will increase funding for implementing TVET programmes.

In the self-assessment exercise, the stakeholders responded to the statement 'VET providers are accessible to users, including students, parents and employers'<sup>15</sup>. 45% of respondents strongly agreed. They emphasised that VET network providers exist all over Jordan. In addition, they are accessible to different users, including young males and females, the poor and, to some extent, persons with disabilities and students' parents. In addition to where they are located, other factors enhance the accessibility of VET providers in Jordan, such as free or low enrolment fees for VET and support funds for students in marginalised communities and the readiness of some institutes, schools, and colleges to provide training to people with disabilities<sup>16</sup>. See Figure 3.

15 Indicator C1, ETF VET Governance Inventory Tool

16 VET & Skills Governance Inventory 4.0. Assessment Results Report. Jordan, ETF, 2020 (unpublished)

**FIGURE 3: Indicator C1: 'VET providers are accessible to users, including students, parents and employers'**





## 5. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MONITORING FUNCTIONS

Before the TVSDC was established, the Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA) was in place and recently was merged with the TVSDC. It is tasked with licensing and accrediting vocational training institutions and programmes and supervising and coordinating the quality assurance system within the TVET sector. It could be considered that by merging the CAQA with the TVSDC, there is a potential lack of independence since this creates a quality assurance system for the whole sector. The AQACHEI and BAU are tasked with accrediting the technical level programmes and licensing the training providers for community colleges.

TVSD Law No 9/2019 was adopted to improve the TVET sector's efficiency and merge the different bodies previously in charge of various system segments. This includes restructuring the previous TVET secretariat, the TVET fund and the CAQA under the same institution: the TVSDC. The objective was to remedy the system's fragmentation caused by having different institutions in charge of TVET, such as the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. In addition, the Law authorised the TVSDC to accredit, supervise, evaluate and license TVET providers.

The Law also mandated the TVSDC, among other tasks, to identify selection and classification criteria for TVET teachers and trainers. The following by-laws have been issued<sup>17</sup>:

- By-law No 15 of 2020 – Identifying technical and vocational trainers and supervisor selection standards, classifying, and organising their professional ranks.
- By-law No 19 of 2020 – TVET provider accreditation.
- By-law No 20 of 2020 – Equivalence and accreditation of technical qualifications and certificates.

The supervisory bodies focus on internal quality control by monitoring competence within establishments regarding input,

processes, and output. There is little external quality control or evaluation of the effectiveness of institutions' output. Institutions and trainers are not held accountable for training outcomes, and their standards apply only to private training providers. 31.8% of stakeholders disagreed that 'a Quality Assurance (QA) policy is in place across both system and provider levels'<sup>18</sup>. Overall, QA policies and systems are not mature enough to monitor VET providers' results. Each VET provider has its QA policy and mechanisms. Therefore, most of the efforts are on measuring the internal quality of training programmes within each training institution, in contrast to having external monitoring and evaluation tools across different providers and on various levels.

When it comes to data collection on TVET, several different institutions are involved. Several sources gather labour market information – the Department of Statistics (DoS), the MoL, the Social Security Corporation (SSC), the Civil Service Bureau (CSB), the MoHESR, and the National Aid Fund (NAF). The absence of a comprehensive, coordinated, and accurate Labour Market Information System (LMIS) inhibits the TVET sector's development and responsiveness to labour market demands. There are also challenges in obtaining and maintaining reliable and consistent data on the sector. The TVSDC will play a role as the national authority for monitoring and following up on the work and quality of VET programmes.

18 Indicator C1, ETF VET Governance Inventory Tool

## 6. POLICY POINTERS FOR MOVING FORWARD

The assessment of different governance functions in Jordan, implemented in 2020 using the ETF VET Governance Inventory Tool, found that efforts have been put in place to ensure better governance of education and training in the last decade<sup>19</sup>. The focus is on ensuring that the policymaking process responds to the current challenges faced by the education system and develops a demand-driven education that enables Jordanians to fulfil their career aspirations and contribute to economic growth and social development. Despite all of this, evidence collected informs on many challenges ahead for finetuning an effective VET & Skills governance system in Jordan.

Policymakers may wish to consider the following points for reflection to work towards implementation in line with national priorities, as well as regional and local needs.

### VET POLICYMAKING AND GOVERNANCE

1. Strengthen the TVSDC and ensure policy measures for it to play its role as a coordination body for the TVET sector.
2. Pave the way to empower social partners with more strategic and practical input into VET initiatives for their effective involvement in VET.
3. Empower regional/local authorities to form local partnerships with employers and other key actors.
4. Address the absence of local governance and ownership of VET by governorates and municipalities. The governorate councils in Jordan should be empowered to deal with the human resources issue, especially in the VET sector.
5. Develop a communication strategy for the TVET sector, highlighting the progress and role of the TVSDC to all stakeholders, and distribute council decisions and outcomes to all stakeholders systematically and transparently.

### FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS

1. The budget setting process for VET should be

developed and driven by good dialogue among key ministries, targeting long-term strategic goals and challenges

2. The financial allocation should be based on clear and transparent criteria with responsibilities and accountability mechanisms
3. Adopt a sector-wide quality assurance system with monitoring and evaluation systems for performance-based budgeting.
4. Decentralise financial authority to promote efficiency and development at schools and training centres.
5. Enhance the efficiency of public expenditure, including closer links between policies and budget allocations.
6. Enhance the legislation to support PPPs in VET and provide financial and non-financial incentives for promoting employers' participation in VET and skills policy development.

### QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MONITORING FUNCTIONS

1. Map all the policies and institutional actors and put in place effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms with performance indicators to support TVSDC and the functioning of the VET and skills system.
2. Ensure a quality assurance (QA) policy is in place. Develop performance criteria for TVET institutions to monitor and evaluate financial allocation disbursement and accountability systems.
3. Develop the TVET institution monitoring, and evaluation system linked to the central monitoring and evaluation system (M&E) in the TVSDC. This will ensure the availability of data that could be a source of developing the National M&E reports.
4. TVSDC should develop an effective information system to support and improve planning and governance decisions and reduce uncertainties.
5. Ensure active use of the M&E reports to support VET & Skills policy development, with stakeholders' involvement and participation.

<sup>19</sup> VET & Skills Governance Inventory 4.0. Assessment Results Report. Jordan. ETF, 2020 (unpublished)



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