



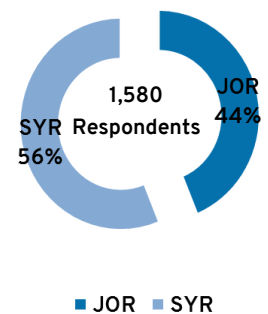
# IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON WORKERS IN JORDAN A RAPID ASSESSMENT

## Introduction

The International Labour Organization’s *Regional Office for Arab States* (ROAS) and Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research (Oslo, Norway) recently conducted a rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups in the Jordanian labour market, including Syrian refugees and workers in informal employment.

The objective of the assessment was to explore some of the immediate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the employment situation of workers in Jordan, and provide a baseline for assessing the longer-term impacts on these workers through follow-up surveys in the coming months.

The study population consists of Syrians and Jordanians who have received support or participated in programme and project schemes implemented by the ILO in Jordan.



## Key Findings

- 24 percent of Jordanian men and 62 percent of Jordanian women worked in the manufacturing sector.
- 55 percent of Syrian men worked in construction and 41 percent of Syrian women worked in manufacturing.
- Assessed by type of contract, the level of informal employment was higher among Syrians (52 percent) than Jordanians (35 percent).
- Social security coverage for Syrian respondents was limited to 24 percent, while 63 percent of Jordanians had social security coverage facilitated by their employer.
- The overall percentage of Syrian respondents with valid work permits was 30 percent.
- Almost one-third of Syrians (34 percent) who lost their job had a verbal agreement with their employer, compared to those with written contracts (29 percent).
- Only 4 percent of the respondents reported to have worked during the lockdown.
- 47 percent of those who were in employment before the lockdown (1-5 March 2020), were currently (1-15 April 2020) out of work.
- 13 percent had been permanently dismissed; 18 percent had been temporarily laid-off; and 16 percent were on paid leave.
- More Syrians (35 percent) than Jordanians (17 percent) who were employed before the crisis had lost their jobs permanently.

- ▶ **Informal employment is widespread, mainly among Syrian refugee respondents**
- ▶ **Few workers have been working during the lockdown - and one third of Syrians lost their jobs**

11. 95 percent of the Syrian households reported a decrease in their household income, compared to 90 percent of the Jordanian households.
12. The median monthly income prior to the lockdown was 368 Jordanian Dinars (approximately USD 519). In March, it had fallen to 215 Jordanian Dinars (approximately USD 303).
13. Income loss is more pronounced for Syrian refugees; whose average income fell below the set monthly minimum wage of 220 Jordanian Dinar (about approximately USD 310).
14. Two thirds of respondents (65 percent) agreed with the statement that their duties, including household and childcare responsibilities, increased during lockdown. A higher share of women (74 percent) than men (59 percent) reported that their duties had increased.
15. 9 percent of the Syrian households had savings, compared to 8 percent of the Jordanian households.

▶ **Household income has decreased, particularly among Syrian refugees working in informal arrangements**

▶ **Women's performance of household and childcare duties during lockdown have increased**

## In Brief

- ▶ **Formalization and decent work are the most effective measures to support and protect all workers before, during and after crisis situations.**
- ▶ **As part of the urgent response to address the needs and vulnerability of those employed in the informal economy, it is recommended that the responsive mechanisms established by the Government of Jordan to mitigate the impact of COVID 19, be continually reviewed to ensure that they are inclusive and "leave no-one behind."**
- ▶ **There is a need to address pre-existing labour market challenges, mainly that of high informality, through an inclusive and gradual transition from an informal to a formal economy, which takes into consideration the concerns of both workers and employers.**
- ▶ **A large number of workers voiced concerns about measures taken at the workplace to minimise occupational health risks. Employers should take active measures to minimise the health risks of COVID-19 for their workers and provide improved protective and preventives measures at the workplace.**

