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# CIRCULAR MIGRATION IN JORDAN 1995-2006

*Fathi Arouri*

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**CARIM Analytic and Synthetic Notes 2008/35**

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**Circular Migration Series**

*Demographic and economic module*

Cooperation project on the social integration  
of immigrants, migration, and the movement  
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**CARIM**  
**Euro-Mediterranean Consortium**  
**for Applied Research on International Migration**

**Analytic and Synthetic Notes – Circular Migration Series**  
**Demographic and Economic Module**  
**CARIM-AS 2008/35**

**Circular Migration in Jordan, 1995-2006**

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This publication is part of a series of papers on Circular Migration written in the framework of the CARIM project, and presented at two meetings organised by CARIM in Florence: *The Role of Circular Migration in the Euro-Mediterranean Area* (17 - 19 October 2007), and *Circular Migration: Experiences, Opportunities and Constraints for Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries* (28 - 29 January 2008).

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## **CARIM**

The Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM) was created in February 2004 and has been financed by the European Commission. Until January 2007, it referred to part C - “*cooperation related to the social integration of immigrants issue, migration and free circulation of persons*” of the MEDA programme, i.e. the main financial instrument of the European Union to establish the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Since February 2007, CARIM has been funded as part of the AENEAS programme for technical and financial assistance to third countries in the areas of migration and asylum. The latter programme establishes a link between the external objectives of the European Union’s migration policy and its development policy. AENEAS aims at providing third countries with the assistance necessary to achieve, at different levels, a better management of migrant flows.

Within this framework, CARIM aims, in an academic perspective, to observe, analyse, and predict migration in the North African and the Eastern Mediterranean Region (hereafter Region).

CARIM is composed of a coordinating unit established at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS) of the European University Institute (EUI, Florence), and a network of scientific correspondents based in the 12 countries observed by CARIM: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and, since February 2007, also Libya and Mauritania. All are studied as origin, transit and immigration countries. External experts from the European Union and countries of the Region also contribute to CARIM activities.

The CARIM carries out the following activities:

- Mediterranean migration database;
- Research and publications;
- Meetings of academics;
- Meetings between experts and policy makers;
- Early warning system.

The activities of CARIM cover three aspects of international migration in the Region: economic and demographic, legal, and socio-political.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: [www.carim.org](http://www.carim.org)

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## **Abstract**

Jordan is both a sending and a receiving country for migration. The common sense believes that it is for the interest of the economy and labour market in Jordan to encourage labour emigration to ease the unemployment problems and to increase workers remittances. At the same time, Jordan also adopted an open door policy for unskilled foreign labour force.

Through very recent data from the employment survey of the Ministry of Labour, the author describes broadly the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the non-Jordanian workers in Jordan with a work permit. These data does not provide much information on circularity. However, many foreign workers are assimilated to circular migrants as they leave to their countries for few or even many months every year.

On the other hand, there are not a lot of comments on Jordanians abroad due to the lack of data. Some of these emigrants, mainly those working in the Arab Gulf countries, might be covered by the definition of circular migration. Their importance for the country is obvious through their remittances corresponding to almost one fifth of the Jordanian GDP. They seem to earn relatively high incomes because they are well educated.

Most of non-Jordanians working in Jordan are young and single male Egyptians with very low educational levels. Foreign males are working in sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and construction while the majority of the females, mainly from non-Arab Asian countries, are working in the personal and social services sector. Moreover, foreigners are working in low paid jobs and low paid sectors with low monthly earning.

Related to circularity, last data (2006) indicate that almost one tenth of non-Jordanians are in Jordan for the first time and one half for the second time. Almost one fifth of work permits issued originates from new invitations and one half is renewed for those who already worked, at least, one year in Jordan.

Preliminary results of the very recent "Arrivals and Departures Survey" and "Iraqis in Jordan survey" have been presented but are less informative on circularity. The first survey informs on citizenship, residence and purpose of visit for travellers. The author noticed that by putting additional information gathered from different sources together, one can collect coherent and more or less comprehensive information on circular migration in Jordan.

## **Résumé**

La Jordanie est à la fois un pays d'accueil et de départ pour la migration. Selon la perception du sens commun, l'émigration du travail est bénéfique pour l'économie et le marché du travail jordaniens puisque elle sert à soulager les tensions liées au chômage et augmente les transferts migratoires. Au même temps, la Jordanie a aussi adopté une politique de porte ouverte pour l'accueil des travailleurs étrangers non qualifiés.

Moyennant des données récentes de l'enquête emploi du ministère du travail, l'auteur décrit largement le profil démographique et socio-économique des travailleurs étrangers en Jordanie. Ces données n'informent pas assez sur la circularité. Toutefois, presque tous les étrangers travaillant en Jordanie peuvent être assimilés à des migrants circulaires puisque ils reviennent dans leurs pays d'origine pour quelques mois annuellement.

Sur un autre plan, il n'y a pas beaucoup d'information sur les émigrés jordaniens à cause d'absence de données. Une partie de ces émigrés, surtout ceux qui travaillent dans les pays arabes du Golf, peuvent être classés comme étant circulaires. Leur importance pour le pays se voit clairement à travers leurs transferts qui correspondent à presque un cinquième du PIB. Ceci s'expliquerait par leurs revenus élevés grâce à leurs hauts niveaux d'éducation.

La plupart des travailleurs étrangers en Jordanie sont des jeunes hommes, célibataires d’Egypte avec un niveau d’éducation très bas. Les hommes étrangers sont occupés dans des secteurs comme l’agriculture, l’industrie et le bâtiment alors que la majorité des femmes, venues en majorité des pays non arabes d’Asie, travaillent dans le secteur des services personnels et sociaux. Par ailleurs, les étrangers exercent dans des secteurs et travaux de bas salaires.

Les dernières données (2006) indiquent que presque un dixième des travailleurs étrangers en Jordanie s’y sont rendus pour la première fois et presque la moitié pour la deuxième fois. Presque un cinquième des permis du travail sont délivrés suite à une invitation et la moitié suite au renouvellement pour ceux qui ont déjà travaillé au moins une année en Jordanie.

Les résultats préliminaires de l’enquête récente sur « les arrivées et les départs » et « les irakiens en Jordanie » ont été présentées sans être assez informatives sur la circularité. La première informe sur la nationalité, la résidence et l’objet de la visite pour les voyageurs. L’auteur rappelle la nécessité de rassembler les informations collectées par diverses sources pour reconstituer une base de données sur la migration circulaire en Jordanie.



## **1. Introduction**

The concept of circular migration has become common only very recently as the adoption of measures facilitating the circulation of workers and people has been advocated as an appropriate action for balancing migration flows between countries.

As a new concept, circular migration needs to be clarified and better employed as a way of understanding and benefiting from the circulation of workers between countries or group of countries.

Although the term "Circular Migration" is new, circular migration is not, of course, new. It was present in migratory movements between Maghreb countries, on the one hand, and Northern and Western European countries, on the other, before the introduction of restrictive migration legislation in Europe in the mid 1970s. Recently, circular migration is emerging again within specific programs in European countries, programs designed to develop legal migration by recruiting seasonal workers directly from the sending countries.

However, even if there is a relatively long experience of different forms of circular migration; empirical research has barely focused on its positive and negative effects on the developments of the countries, either in the short or the long term.

Circular migration may provide a solution to labour market imbalances in some countries. This is especially true of those countries where, under the pressure of public opinion in destination countries, some believe that the only way to reduce the negative effects of foreign immigration on their countries is to control their borders and restrict access to their countries, though the labour market in some of these countries still needs additional workers. This is one of the main reasons why migration takes place irregularly, either by illegal entrance or by short-term immigrants overstaying their allotted time instead of through the use of temporary work contracts.

International migration may, in the future, not be based only upon temporary flows. This is because both sending and receiving countries need permanent flows of population. Receiving countries need migrants because their population is ageing and the sending countries because their population is still young and growing rapidly.

However, circular migration for sending countries could be less disruptive than long term (or definitive) migration. One of the most important questions is how circular or temporary migration can become a process which contributes to the development of the countries of origin.

## **2. Circular migration in Jordan**

Circular migration in Jordan is a very recent phenomenon, and as far as the author knows, there is no empirical research on circular migration in Jordan, its size, types, and actual and optimal lengths of stay, main characteristics and its positive and negative effects on the Jordanian economy. Some of the Jordanians working abroad (especially those working in the Arab Gulf States) and all non-Jordanians working in Jordan might be covered by the definition of circular migration in Jordan.

As for recent illustrations, the Department of Statistics in Jordan DOS conducted, very recently, "Arrivals and Departures Survey for the Purposes of Tourism 2006/2007" (DOS, 2007). This survey covered the period July 2006-June 2007.

The preliminary results of the Arrivals and Departures Survey showed that the total number of arrivals to Jordan during the survey period was about 9.9 million people, and the number of residents arriving in Jordan was about 2.5 million people representing 25% of the total number of arrivals there. From the total number of arrivals residing in Jordan 81% were Jordanians, 16% were non-Jordanian Arab nationals, and 3% were non-Arab foreign nationals.

The Arrivals and Departures Survey showed that the main purposes of trips abroad by residents in Jordan was that of visiting relatives and friends, 40%, for recreation and leisure, 22%, for business, Umrah and Haj trips respectively 9% and 12%.

The total number of departures from Jordan during the survey period was about 9.4 million persons. The number of non-residents was about 7 million representing 75% of the total number of departures from Jordan. About 72% of the non-resident adult departures were Arab nationals, 16% foreign nationals and 12% were non-resident Jordanians.

Out of the non-resident departures, 51% were overnight tourists, 42% transit and 5% were one-day visitors. The main purpose of the overnight tourists are visiting relatives and friends (46%), recreation and leisure (24%), business (11%) and medical treatment (6%). The highest residence rate in Jordan was for tourists coming for study (51 days) and visiting relatives (17 days).

Although the Arrivals and Departures Survey in Jordan 2007 is one of the most recent and important studies concerning movement in and out of the country, as we can see, it has no data related directly to circular migration to or from Jordan.

This paper discusses international labour force migration in Jordan and some of the related subjects which might shed light on circular migration in Jordan such as:

- Types of international labour force migration in Jordan,
- Non-Jordanians working in Jordan,
- Jordanians living and working abroad,
- International labour migration and unemployment in Jordan,
- Remittances.

### **3. Types of international labour-force migration in Jordan**

#### **3.1. General considerations**

The Jordanian labour force, owing to the high level of unemployment and poverty, began to emigrate from Jordan in the early 1950s; individual workers looking for better work opportunities, specially in the Arab Gulf countries. This type of migration was very helpful for the Jordan economy easing unemployment and providing Jordan's economy with a very important source of income represented by the remittances of Jordanians working abroad.

By 1973, owing to the implementation of extensive projects in Jordan and to the out-migration of Jordanians to the Gulf States, which were also witnessing a period of economic boom, the demand for a Jordanian labour force had sharply increased. This affected Jordan's economy in many ways such as:

- i. Decreasing unemployment,
- ii. Increasing labour wages in Jordan because of the increasing demand for labour,
- iii. Increasing labour remittances from Jordanians working abroad,
- iv. The high Gulf-States's demand for a skilled Jordanians labour force made it necessary for Jordan to import labour force from neighbouring Arab countries such as Egypt and Syria.

There is very little, if any, data available for the Jordanian labour force working abroad: though at least some of them are circular migrants. And as many non-Jordanians living and working in Jordan

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of the Arrival and Departure Survey, non-residents are those who were on a visit to Jordan for any purpose except for the purposes of an income-generating interest or special work.

are Palestinians from the Palestinian territories, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, living in Jordan since 1967, and they do not need any type of work permit, the only group which might come under the definition of circular migration and where we have data are those non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan.

### **3.2. The special case of Iraqis in Jordan**

Starting from the early 1990s, and, above all, because of the Gulf wars, many Iraqis came to Jordan as refugees, starting with relatively few in the early 1990s but growing dramatically from the year 2003. Only very little data, though, is available about Iraqis in Jordan, their numbers, geographic distribution and main demographic and other characteristics.

Upon the request of the Government of Jordan, The Norwegian Research Institute (FaFo), with the collaboration of the Department of Statistics in Jordan (DOS), the Ministry of Planning in Jordan (MOP), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), conducted a survey of Iraqis in Jordan (FaFo, 2007).

The FaFo Study on Iraqis in Jordan 2007, their number and characteristics, conclude that there are between 450.000 and 500.000 Iraqis residents in Jordan as of May 2007:<sup>2</sup> 77% of them having arrived in Jordan in 2003 or later, with the highest volume of movement of population taking place in 2004 and 2005.

The migration of Iraqis to Jordan is predominantly a migration of families. On average, there is a predominance of women in the Iraqi population in Jordan. They are on average older than the Jordanian population with a mean age of 29.5 years (24 for Jordanians). 70% of them are in working age (15+) years; while 25% of Iraqi women aged 15-50 have given birth in Jordan during the last 5 years.

Iraqis in Jordan are well-educated and 22% of Iraqis adults are in work. 60% of them work for someone else, 30% of Iraqi men are employers. And 25% of the households own the dwelling that they are currently residing in.

It is clear from the results of the Iraqis in Jordan Survey (2007) that the number and the main characteristics of the Iraqis in Jordan is substantially different from what we might have expected, which means that while it represents a significant problem for the Jordanian economy and labour market it is less than we had expected.

This paper discusses, briefly, the non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan, their numbers and main characteristics, by using data available from the Ministry of Labour Annual Reports.

### **4. Non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan**

Before the announcement of the results of the 2004 Population and Housing Census, the only figures available concerning non-Jordanians working in Jordan was that of non-Jordanian workers holding work permits published regularly by the Ministry of Labour (Table No 1). From this table we can see that the number of non-Jordanians holding work permits increased from only 4 thousand in the year 1976 to 289.7 thousand in the year 2006.

The 2004 Population Census results show that the total number of the labour force in Jordan in the year 2004 was 1.454.074 persons (1.262.765 Jordanians and 191.307 non-Jordanians). The number of non-Jordanians is, however, much smaller than the number provided by the Ministry of Labour (MOL) for the same year which was 218.8 thousand. This means that there are differences between the data

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<sup>2</sup> Many estimates of the number of Iraqis in Jordan before the results of the FaFo-2007 study have been put forward with numbers as high as one million or 750.000 representing 18% of the total population.

about non-Jordanians working in Jordan, owing mainly to the fact that some non-Jordanians living in Jordan, especially Palestinians from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank living in Jordan since the year 1967, do not need to have a work permit to work in Jordan, while some non-Jordanians are working in Jordan without having work permits from the Ministry of Labour.

This paper makes use of the MOL statistics to study circular migration in Jordan, its size and main characteristics. It is worth mentioning at the outset, that the Ministry of Labour in Jordan is the sole agency responsible for organizing the labour market in Jordan. Therefore this source of data represents one of the most important sources for the labour market in Jordan.

Although some of the non-Jordanians working in Jordan are working without work permits, for security reasons, all non-Jordanians in Jordan enter the country legally. Nationals from many Arab countries can enter Jordan without visas, but they need work permits to work. This section discusses the main characteristics of non-Jordanians, holding work permits and working, in Jordan.

**Table No 1. Non-Jordanian workers holding work permits in Jordan by sex, 1983-2006(000)**

Year	Male	Female	Total	Year	Male	Female	Total
1983	51.9	6.6	58.4	1995	88.1	6.3	94.3
1984	143.8	9.7	153.5	1996	36.5	6.5	43.0
1985	91.4	10.0	101.5	1997	111.4	5.1	116.5
1986	86.1	11.8	97.9	1998	108.3	5.7	114.0
1987	68.0	11.8	79.8	1999	147.6	6.6	154.2
1988	52.8	10.3	63.0	2000	101.9	8.6	110.6
1989	39.6	8.0	47.6	2001	...	...	136.6
1990	30.7	6.9	37.6	2002	112.6	14.6	127.1
1991	24.0	6.1	30.1	2003	123.2	25.1	148.4
1992	88.8	7.7	96.4	2004	185.0	33.8	218.8
1993	44.8	8.2	53.0	2005	228.6	31.7	260.4
1994	35.3	7.0	42.3	2006	244.9	44.8	289.7

Source: Ministry of Labour (MOL), Annual Report, Several Years

#### 4.1. Non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan by Age, Sex and Marital Status

With table No 1 we see that the majority of non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan are males, 81.5% in 2006. There is no data available about non-Jordanians holding work permits in Jordan by age, but the results from the 2004 population and housing census shows that 64.2% of the non-Jordanians economically active in Jordan are in the age group 20-39, and only 5.2% of them are in the age group 50 years and over.

**Table No 2. Distribution of non-Jordanians living in Jordan 15+ years of age economically active by age and sex from the 2004 population and housing census in Jordan**

Age	Males	%	Females	%	Total	%
15-19	7889	5.5	2695	5.7	10584	5.5
20-24	24200	16.8	15152	32.2	39352	20.6
25-29	33415	23.2	11970	25.4	45385	23.7
30-34	29213	20.3	8915	18.9	38128	19.9
35-39	19896	13.8	4117	8.7	24013	12.6
40-44	13152	9.1	1871	4.0	15023	7.9
45-49	7135	4.9	927	2.0	8062	4.2
50-54	4450	3.1	496	1.1	4946	2.6
55-59	2560	1.8	242	0.5	2802	1.5
60-64	1200	0.8	104	0.2	1304	0.7
65+	653	0.5	80	0.2	742	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>144239</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47068</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>191307</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Department of Statistics (DOS), 2004 Population and Housing Census, 2006, Amman – Jordan

Although this data represents non-Jordanians economically active in Jordan, it is not very far from the age distribution of non-Jordanians holding work permits in Jordan (Table No 2).

To have a more comprehensive picture of the demographics of non- Jordanians holding work permits in Jordan, it is worth mentioning that 93.9 % of them are single (table No 3). This means that the majority of non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan are young single males.

**Table No 3. Distribution of Non-Jordanian workers holding work permits by Sex and Marital Status in Jordan in the Year 2006**

<b>Martial Status</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Single</b>	228121	<b>93.1</b>	44033	<b>98.3</b>	272154	<b>93.9</b>
<b>Married</b>	16796	<b>6.9</b>	726	<b>1.6</b>	17522	<b>6.0</b>
<b>Divorced</b>	18	<b>0.0</b>	15	<b>0.0</b>	33	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Widow</b>	8	<b>0.0</b>	7	<b>0.0</b>	15	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>244943</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>289724</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 2006, Amman – Jordan

#### 4.2. Non-Jordanians holding work permits by sex and nationality

With table No 4, we see that the majority of the Non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan are Egyptians, 69.6%, and next the non-Arab Asian countries 27.9%. We also find that the majority of males were Egyptians 82.2% and next from the non-Arab Asian countries, 15.1%. At the same time the overwhelming majority of females were from non-Arab Asian countries, 97.5%. This means that the Jordanian labour market is attractive for the male labour force from neighbouring Arab countries, and for female workers from non-Arab Asian countries.

**Table No 4. Distribution of Non-Jordanian workers holding work permits by Sex and Nationality in Jordan in the Year 2006**

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Egypt</b>	201381	<b>82.2</b>	210	0.5	201591	<b>69.6</b>
<b>Syria</b>	3023	<b>1.2</b>	75	0.2	3098	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Other Arab Countries</b>	1179	<b>0.5</b>	449	1.0	1628	<b>0.6</b>
<b>Iraq</b>	1492	<b>0.6</b>	153	0.3	1645	<b>0.6</b>
<b>Pakistan</b>	1550	<b>0.6</b>	145	0.3	1695	<b>0.6</b>
<b>India</b>	4957	<b>2.0</b>	174	0.3	5131	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Philippine</b>	1849	<b>0.8</b>	10905	24.4	12754	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	7994	<b>3.3</b>	9685	21.6	17679	<b>6.1</b>
<b>Other Asian(Non-Arab Countries)</b>	20848	<b>8.5</b>	22762	50.8	43610	<b>15.1</b>
<b>European Countries</b>	452	<b>0.2</b>	136	0.3	588	<b>0.2</b>
<b>U.S.A.</b>	126	<b>0.1</b>	24	0.0	150	<b>0.1</b>
<b>African Countries</b>	28	<b>0.0</b>	45	0.0	73	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Other Countries</b>	64	<b>0.0</b>	18	0.0	82	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>244943</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>289724</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 2006, Amman - Jordan

### 4.3. Non-Jordanians holding work permits by sex and educational level

Table No 5 indicates that the educational level of non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan is low: 84.1% of them (82.5% males, 92.9% females) in the year 2006 were illiterate, 87.4% of them (85.4% males, 98.6% females) with less than secondary educational levels. It is worth noting that 11.4% of them had Intermediate Diploma (13.4 % males, 0.9% females). But that only 0.8% of them (0.9% males, 0.4% females) had Bachelor degree or better. This mean that only a small part of the non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan are well-educated, while the majority of them are poorly educated and work at low occupational levels in agriculture, construction and the service sector.

**Table No 5. Distribution of non-Jordanian workers holding work permits by sex and educational level in Jordan in the year 2006**

<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Illiterate</b>	202183	<b>82.5</b>	41600	<b>92.9</b>	243783	<b>84.1</b>
<b>Read and Write</b>	4500	<b>1.8</b>	2361	<b>5.3</b>	6861	<b>2.4</b>
<b>Elementary</b>	1597	<b>0.7</b>	106	<b>0.2</b>	1703	<b>0.6</b>
<b>Preparatory</b>	771	<b>0.3</b>	70	<b>0.2</b>	841	<b>0.3</b>
<b>Vocational Apprenticeship</b>	124	<b>0.1</b>	2	<b>0.0</b>	126	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	772	<b>0.3</b>	85	<b>0.2</b>	857	<b>0.3</b>
<b>Intermediate Diploma</b>	32722	<b>13.4</b>	389	<b>0.9</b>	33111	<b>11.4</b>
<b>Bachelor</b>	1704	<b>0.7</b>	77	<b>0.2</b>	1781	<b>0.6</b>
<b>High Diploma</b>	19	<b>0.0</b>	1	<b>0.0</b>	20	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Master</b>	65	<b>0.0</b>	17	<b>0.0</b>	82	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Ph.D</b>	481	<b>0.2</b>	73	<b>0.2</b>	554	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>244943</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>289724</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 2006, Amman - Jordan

### 4.4. Non-Jordanians Holding Work Permits and Working in Jordan by Sex and Economic Activity

With table No 6 we find that the majority of males are working in the agriculture sector (27.8%), next the manufacturing sector (25.2%), then the construction sector (18.1%), the whole sale and retail trade, and restaurants and hotels (13.9%) and only then, finally, personal and social services (11.4%). On the other hand, the majority of female workers (79.7%) are working in the personal and social service sector with 18.1% of the female workers in 2006 working in the manufacturing sector. This data is a reflection of the educational level of non-Jordanians working in Jordan where the jobs in these sectors do not demand a highly-educated or a highly-qualified labour force, especially for females, as the majority of them are working as house workers in the personal service sector.

**Table No 6. Distribution of Non-Jordanian workers holding work permits by Sex and Economic Activity in Jordan in the Year 2006**

<b>Economic Activity</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Agriculture and Hunting</b>	68170	<b>27.8</b>	168	<b>0.3</b>	68338	23.6
<b>Mining and Quarrying</b>	2934	<b>1.2</b>	6	<b>0.0</b>	2940	1.0
<b>Manufacturing</b>	61636	<b>25.2</b>	8103	<b>18.1</b>	69739	24.1
<b>Electricity, Gas and Water</b>	202	<b>0.1</b>	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	202	0.1
<b>Construction</b>	44241	<b>18.1</b>	23	<b>0.1</b>	44264	15.3
<b>Wholesale and Retail</b>	34160	<b>13.9</b>	499	<b>1.1</b>	34659	12.0

<b>Trade and Restaurants and Hotels</b>						
<b>Transportation ,Storage and Communications</b>	1930	<b>0.8</b>	27	<b>0.1</b>	2002	0.7
<b>Finance and Real Estate</b>	3671	<b>1.5</b>	207	<b>0.5</b>	3878	1.3
<b>Personal and Social Services</b>	27999	<b>11.4</b>	35703	<b>79.7</b>	63702	22.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>244943</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>289724</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 2006, Amman – Jordan

#### 4.5. Non-Jordanians Holding Work Permits Working in Jordan by Sex and Vocational Classification

Table No 7 reveals that 29.1% of the male non-Jordanian workers are working as agricultural workers and 19.9% of them as construction workers, this while 78.4% of the non-Jordanians female workers are working as house service workers. These figures are consistent with the previous figures in Table No 6.

**Table No 7. Distribution of Non-Jordanian workers holding work permits by Sex and Vocational Classification in Jordan in the Year 2006**

<b>Vocational Classification</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Agriculture Workers</b>	71182	29.1	171	0.4	71353	24.6
<b>Construction Workers</b>	48643	19.9	25	0.0	48668	16.8
<b>Cleaning Workers</b>	14729	0.6	87	0.2	14816	5.1
<b>Loading and Unloading Workers</b>	20583	8.4	6	0.0	20589	7.1
<b>House Service</b>	6165	2.5	35113	78.4	41278	14.2
<b>Others</b>	77306	31.6	9378	20.9	86684	29.9
<b>Bakery</b>	6336	2.5	0.0	0.0	6336	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>244943</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>289724</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 2006, Amman – Jordan

#### 4.6. Non-Jordanians Holding Work Permits and Working in Jordan by Sex and Job Categories

As we mentioned above, [I have slightly changed the meaning here but the sentence made no sense] given the low educational levels of the non-Jordanians working in Jordan it is hardly surprising that the majority of them are working in low job categories, where 53.6% of male workers are unskilled and production workers, 29.1% agriculture workers, 15.2% service workers and only 1.1% of them are professional workers or technicians. On the other hand, we see that non-Jordanian female workers are concentrated in the personal service sector, with 79.9% of them working as service workers. And, as in the case of males, a reasonable proportion of female workers are working as production workers and only 0.9% of them are professionals and technicians (Table No 8).

**Table No 8. Distribution of Non-Jordanian workers holding work permits by Sex and Job Categories in Jordan in the Year 2006**

Job Categories	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Professionals and Technicians	2903	1.1	422	0.9	3325	1.1
Seniors and Management Workers	1128	0.5	76	0.2	1204	0.4
Clerks	119	0.0	48	0.1	167	0.1
Sales Workers	923	0.4	11	0.0	934	0.3
Service Workers	37257	15.2	35797	79.9	73054	25.2
Agricultural Workers	71204	29.1	171	0.4	71375	24.6
Un-skilled and Production Workers	131409	53.6	8256	18.4	139665	48.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>244943</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>289724</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 2006, Amman – Jordan

#### 4.7. Non-Jordanians Holding Work Permits and Working in Jordan by Monthly Earnings

Given the characteristics of the non-Jordanian emigrant workers we have looked at so far, it is to be expected that they are working in low-earning jobs. From table No 9 we see that 40.9% of non-Jordanian workers are working with less than 100 JD per month (JD=1.4\$), 57.3% with monthly earnings from 100 to 150 JD and only 0.7% of them are working with 500 JD or more. This means that, though wages in Jordan are relatively low compared with wages in the neighbouring Arab Gulf countries, non-Jordanians working in Jordan, generally, are working in low-paid jobs and low-paid sectors with low monthly earning compared with Jordanian nationals (Table No 10).

**Table No 9. Non-Jordanian workers holding work permits and working in Jordan by Monthly Earning (JD) in the Year 2006**  
(JD=1.4 \$)

Monthly Earning	Total	%
Less than 100	118589	40.9
100-150	166131	57.3
150-200	1087	0.4
200-250	546	0.2
250-300	550	0.2
300-350	231	0.1
350-400	230	0.1
400-450	91	0.0
450-500	289	0.1
500 and over	1980	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>289724</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 2006, Amman – Jordan

**Table No 10. Employed Jordanians Age 15+ years by Sex and Monthly Earning from Work in Jordan, (JD as it was in February 2007)**

Monthly Earning	Male %	Female %	Total %
Less than 100	6.7	11.7	7.5
100-199	44.7	40.4	44.0
200-299	29.7	34.5	30.4
300+	19.0	13.4	18.1
total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Department of Statistics, Employment and Unemployment Survey, First Round, February 2007, Amman – Jordan

#### 4.8. Non-Jordanians Holding Work Permits and Working in Jordan by Governorate

Table No 11 shows that the majority of non-Jordanians (73.7%) working in Jordan are in the medial region of the country, 51.7% of them in the Amman governorate only. This is to be expected, as this area is the most important in the country, economically and demographically. The second area is the northern area of the country at 18% with 11.5% of them in the Irbid governorate. Although, the southern region of the country is a very important region economically, including the Aqaba port (the only port in the country) only 8.2% of non-Jordanian workers are in the southern governorates and only 0.8% of them are in Aqaba governorate.

**Table No 11. Distribution of Non-Jordanian Workers Holding Work Permits by Governorate in 2006**

Governorate	Total	%
Amman	149768	<b>51.7</b>
Madaba	6566	<b>2.2</b>
Irbid	33334	<b>11.5</b>
Jerash	4049	<b>1.4</b>
Ajloun	1857	<b>0.6</b>
Balqa	30705	<b>10.6</b>
Karak	11823	<b>4.1</b>
Ma'an	7835	<b>2.7</b>
Zarka	26782	<b>9.2</b>
Mafraq	13133	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Tafela</b>	1661	<b>0.6</b>
<b>Aqaba</b>	2211	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>289724</b>	<b>%100</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 2006, Amman – Jordan

#### 4.9. Non-Jordanians Holding Work Permits and Working in Jordan by Sex and Work Permit Status

8.9% of the work permits issued in 2006 were issued for the first time (Table No 12). 45.6% were for workers who were working in Jordan 2005, 23.1% for those who had changed their work place and 21.6% of them for work invitation for new non-Jordanians to work in Jordan in 2006 (62.620 workers).

This means that the number of non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan is still increasing, where the number of new invitations represents 21.6% of the total number of work permits issued in the year 2006, 45.6% of them being for non-Jordanians who had already been in Jordan for, at least, one year and who renewed their work permits to work in Jordan for 2006.

**Table No 12. Distribution of Non-Jordanian workers holding work permits by Sex and Work Permit Status in Jordan in the Year 2006**

Work-Permit Status	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
For the first Time	19497	8.0	6233	13.9	25730	8.9
Renewed	115751	47.3	16339	36.5	132090	45.6
Changing Work Place	65674	26.8	1246	2.8	66920	23.1
In Place of the Lost	15	0.0	0.0	0.0	15	0.0
Returned	1913	0.8	409	0.9	2022	0.7
For Social Security Benefits	1124	0.5	203	0.5	1327	0.5
Work Invitation	41270	16.8	20350	45.4	62620	21.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>244943</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>289724</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, Annual Report 2006, Amman – Jordan

## 5. Jordanians Working Abroad

As we mentioned earlier, the Jordanian labour force started to emigrate from Jordan to many countries, including, the U.S, the European nations, Australia and the Arab Gulf states from the early 1950s. Unfortunately, very little work and information about Jordanian workers abroad is available. The Ministry of Labour in Jordan started a project to collect information about the Jordanian labour force working abroad during the period 1983-1987.

The data published by the Ministry of Labour referred to the numbers of the Jordanian labour force in Arab states by country during that period as in Table No 13. The majority of the Jordanian labour force at that time where in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Since that time, especially after the second Gulf War in 1990, much of the Jordanian labour force in the Arab Gulf states, especially Kuwait, returned back to Jordan, only gradually returning to work in the Arab Gulf states in the late 1990s.

**Table No 13. Jordanian Labour Force in the Arab States in 1983, 1986 & 1987 (000)**

Country	1983	1986	1987
Saudi Arabia	160	160	161
Kuwait	80	81	81
Qatar	7.5	8	8.3
United Arab Emirates	10	10.5	10.8
Bahrain	3	3	3
Oman	5	6	6
Libya	3	3	3
Iraq	1.5	2	2
Other Arab Countries	1.0	2	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>271.2</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>277.2</b>

Source: DOS, Statistical Year Book, 1993, Amman – Jordan

Jordanians started to emigrate towards EU countries, North and South America, Australia, and New Zealand, in early 1950s. Some recent studies (UN- ESCWA 2007) estimated the number of Jordanians (15+ years) emigrants in a number of EU countries in the year 2000 using data from receiving countries at 72.296 (61.3% of them were males) the majority of them (72.1%) are young emigrants

younger than 45 years of age (Table No 14) and they generally prefer to emigrate to Germany (Table No 15).

**Table No 14. Age Distribution of Jordanians Emigrants (15+ Years) in a number of EU countries in the year 2000**

Age Group	%
15-24	12.6
25-34	27.7
35-44	31.8
45-54	16.4
55-64	6.4
65+	5.0
Total	100

Source: U.N. –ESCWA, Annual Report for Population and Development, No 3, International Migration in the Arab Region: Challenges and Opportunities, ESCWA, Beirut, August 2007

**Table No 15. Jordanians Emigrants Trend towards Some EU Countries (Different years according to the receiving countries Statistics) 2000**

Country	Number
France	933
Spain	1297
Italy	2011
Germany	10435
The Netherlands	833
Belgium	-
Greece	672
<b>Total</b>	<b>16181</b>

Source: U.N. –ESCWA, Annual Report for Population and Development, No 3, International Migration in the Arab Region: Challenges and Opportunities, ESCWA, Beirut, August 2007

Although, it is very important for any reasonable study of the labour force market in any country to have as much information as possible about labour force migration, we unfortunately lack such information in Jordan.

In Jordan there are many specialists and politicians who believes that it is in the interests of the Jordanian economy and labour market to encourage labour migration to Arab countries, specially to the Arab Gulf states to ease high unemployment in Jordan and to increase remittances which provide the Jordanian economy with a reasonable amount of its needs from foreign currency.

## 6. Circular Migration and Unemployment in Jordan

Jordan has since its establishment adopted an open-door policy towards the out migration of its labour force in order to ease related unemployment issues and to increase workers remittances, which was and still is one of the most important sources of foreign currency in Jordan. Starting from early 1970s, Jordan became one of the primary sending and receiving labour-force countries in the Arab region. The Jordanian government also adopted an open-door policy towards international labour force migration to Jordan in order to deal with shortages in the labour force market of unskilled and semiskilled labour forces, especially in some economic sectors such as agriculture and construction, a consequence of the high demand for Jordanian labour from the Arab Gulf states from the early 1970s to the late 1980s.

As we can see from tables No 16 and No 17 the unemployment rates in Jordan started to increase sharply from late eighties, especially among females. All data available points to the fact that while the unemployment rate in Jordan was increasing the number of non-Jordanians working in Jordan was increasing in parallel. To find a solution to the increasingly unemployed Jordanian labour force, one policy is to control the Jordanian labour force market by putting constraints on the non-Jordanians working in Jordan while, at the same time, adopting a replacement policy, which means replacing non-Jordanians working in Jordan by unemployed Jordanians.

This policy of the labour substitution, to have any chance of success, needs to take into account that the non-Jordanians working in Jordan are, in general, less educated, working mainly in low paid occupational jobs, in difficult work conditions, working longer working hours, in agriculture, construction and the service sectors. Therefore, in order to make this policy work, we need to adopt suitable policies to encourage unemployed Jordanians, who are well educated and more qualified, to compete with non-Jordanian workers, in these economic sectors, in these occupations and in these work conditions.

**Table No 16. Unemployment Rates (%) in Jordan 1968-2006**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate %</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate %</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate %</b>
<b>1968</b>	9.9	<b>1988</b>	8.9	<b>1998</b>	15.0
<b>1972</b>	14.0	<b>1989</b>	10.3	<b>1999</b>	14.4
<b>1973</b>	11.1	<b>1990</b>	16.8	<b>2000</b>	13.7
<b>1975</b>	3.0	<b>1991</b>	18.8	<b>2001</b>	14.7
<b>1976</b>	1.6	<b>1993</b>	18.8	<b>2002</b>	15.3
<b>1980</b>	2.0	<b>1994</b>	15.0	<b>2003</b>	14.5
<b>1981</b>	3.9	<b>1995</b>	14.2	<b>2004</b>	12.5
<b>1982</b>	4.3	<b>1996</b>	12.0	<b>2005</b>	13.4
<b>1986</b>	8.0	<b>1997</b>	14.5	<b>2006</b>	14.4
<b>1987</b>	8.3				

Source: DOS, Employment and Unemployment Survey, several surveys, Amman – Jordan

**Table No 17. Unemployment Rates among Jordanian Labour Force 15+ Years of Age by Sex from Selected Surveys from 1993 to 2006 (%)**

<b>Survey Title</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Employment and Unemployment and Income Survey 1993</b>	16.8	36.7	19.7
<b>Employment and Unemployment and Income Survey 1994</b>	13.6	29.4	15.8
<b>Employment and Unemployment and Income Survey 1995</b>	13.0	29.1	15.3
<b>Employment and Unemployment and Income Survey 1996</b>	11.3	21.9	12.8
<b>Employment and Employment Survey 1997</b>	11.7	28.5	14.4
<b>Employment and Employment Survey 1998</b>	12.1	26.1	14.4

<b>Employment and Employment Survey 1999</b>	9.8	21.6	11.6
<b>Employment and Employment Survey 2000</b>	12.3	21.0	13.7
<b>Employment and Employment Survey 2001</b>	13.7	20.6	14.7
<b>Employment and Employment Survey 2002</b>	14.0	21.9	15.3
<b>Employment and Employment Survey 2003</b>	13.4	20.8	14.5
<b>Employment and Employment Survey 2004</b>	11.8	16.5	12.5
<b>Employment and Employment Survey 2005</b>	12.3	19.7	13.4
<b>Employment and Employment Survey 2006</b>	12.5	24.9	14.4

Source: DOS, Statistical Year Book, 2005, Amman – Jordan. DOS, Employment and Unemployment Survey, (First Round), 2006, Amman- Jordan.

## 7. Circular Migration and Remittances in Jordan

One of the main benefits for the sending countries of a migrant labour force is to receive remittances from their migrant labour force. Remittances in many countries, including Jordan, play a very important role in economic development, where they represent a reasonable share of the country's foreign currencies and its national income (Table No 18).

**Table No 18. Top Ten Remittances Receiving Countries (2006)**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Remittances in \$ billions</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Remittances as % of GDP</b>
India	25.7	Moldova	38.0
Mexico	24.7	Tonga	31.0
China	22.5	Guyana	22.0
Philippines	14.9	Haiti	21.0
France	12.6	Lebanon	21.0
Spain	8.9	Tajikistan	20.0
UK	7.3	Honduras	20.0
Belgium	7.2	Jordan	20.0
Germany	6.7	Bosnia & Herzegovina	20.0
Bangladesh	5.5	Armenia	19.0

Source: Omet, Ghassan, The Development Role of Jordanian Remittances, The Third Conference on Scientific Research in Jordan, 17 November 2007, Amman-Jordan

Arabs and Non-Arab emigrants in the Gulf countries transfer more than 26 billion US dollars per year to their home countries, representing 8% of the GDP of these countries, while migrants in the US transfer 23 billion US dollars per year to their countries. KSA is the second largest source of transfers in the world (the average annual transfer per emigrant per year is 8885 \$), (UN. – ESCWA 2007).

At the same time, Arab countries received, in the year 2004, about 21.6 billion US dollars as transfers from Arab emigrants abroad. These transfers went, in order of magnitude, to Lebanon, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Algeria, Tunisia, Sudan, Yemen and Syria (UN-ESCWA 2007).

Regarding the issue of remittances, the Arab region can be divided into two groups: net positive receiving remittances countries (including Jordan) and net negative receiving remittances countries (including the Arab Gulf states) (Table No 19).

**Table No 19. Net Workers' Remittances (\$ billions), 1996-2006**

Country	1996-99	2000-03	2004	2005	2006
Egypt	3.4	3.2	3.0	4.3	4.5
Jordan	1.5	1.8	2.1	2.2	2.5
Lebanon	0.5	-0.1	0.3	0.3	0.4
Morocco	2.0	2.9	4.2	4.7	5.2
Tunisia	0.7	1.0	1.4	1.4	1.4
Algeria	1.0	1.1	2.5	2.0	2.5
Syria	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.9
Yemen	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1
Bahrain	-0.7	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1	-1.2
Kuwait	-1.5	-1.9	-2.4	-3.3	-3.4
Libya	-0.2	-0.6	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8
Oman	-1.5	-1.6	-1.8	-2.3	-1.9
Qatar	-1.2	-1.5	-2.2	-2.2	-2.3
Saudi Arabia	-15.2	-15.3	-13.6	-14.3	-15.0
United Arab Emirates	-3.5	-4.0	-4.6	-5.4	-6.0

Source: Omet, Ghassan, The Development Role of Jordanians' Remittances, The Third Conference on Scientific Research in Jordan, 17 November 2007, Amman-Jordan

Table No 20 reveals that the annual transfers from Jordanians abroad increased from 533.8 million US dollars during the period 1975-1979 to 2357.9 million US dollars for the period 2000-2004, (UN-ESCWA 2007).

**Table No 20. Average Annual Received Remittances in Jordan in Five Time Periods between 1975-2004 (million US \$)**

Period	Annual Received Remittances
<b>1975-1979</b>	<b>533.8</b>
<b>1984</b>	<b>1053.6</b>
<b>1989</b>	<b>1055.6</b>
<b>1994</b>	<b>950.4</b>
<b>1995-1999</b>	<b>1559.9</b>
<b>2000-2004</b>	<b>2357.9</b>

Source: U.N. –ESCWA, Annual Report for Population and Development, No 3, International Migration in the Arab Region: Challenges and Opportunities, ESCWA, Beirut, August 2007

Owing to the limited natural resources in Jordan, and the high population growth rate (the net population growth rate during the last five years averaged 2.7%), the Jordanian economy has relied traditionally on the external debt, foreign aid and remittances in managing its economic affairs (Table No 19).

**Table No 21. Some Features of the Jordanian Economy, 2001-2005**

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Mean
<b>Remittances as a % of GDP</b>	20.2	20.1	19.4	18.1	17.1	18.98
<b>Exports as a % of GDP</b>	21.3	22.9	23.2	28.5	28.5	24.88
<b>External Debt as</b>	78.1	78.9	74.8	65.5	55.5	70.56

<b>a % of GDP</b>						
<b>Grants as a % of GDP</b>	6.8	6.2	10.8	8.2	5.5	7.50
<b>FDI as a % of GDP</b>	1.5	0.8	4.3	5.7	12.1	4.88

Source: Omet, Ghassan, 2007. The Development Role of Jordanians Remittances, The Third Conference on Scientific Research in Jordan, 17 November 2007, Amman-Jordan.

Jordan, since the early 1970s, has been a sending and receiving country for migrants. Hundreds of thousands of non-Jordanians working in Jordan send remittances to their countries. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of Jordanian workers working outside Jordan are sending their savings as remittances to Jordan.

Remittances of emigrants differ from one receiving country to another. They differ also according to migrants' characteristics: age, sex, educational and occupational levels, temporary or permanent migration. Remittances differ also between the first, second or any subsequent generations.

In the case of Jordan, there are major differences between the qualifications of the Jordanian labour force working abroad and non-Jordanian workers working in Jordan. Jordanians working abroad are more educated and better qualified. These differences are reflected in the large gap between receipts and transfers of workers' remittances in Jordan (See Table No 22).

From table No 22, we can see that the receipt remittances increased from 763.7 million JD (1076.8 million \$) representing 20.68% of GDP in Jordan in 1994 to 1782.7 million JD (2513.6 million \$) representing 17.6% of GDP in Jordan in 2006, with an average annual growth rate of 7.3% during the period 1994-2006.

The payment remittances for the same period increased from 65.0 million JD (91.65 million \$) representing 1.76% of GDP in Jordan in 1994 to 251.1 million JD (354.1 million \$) representing 2.5% of GDP in Jordan in 2006, with annual growth rate equals to 8.8% during 1994-2005.

This means that the gain of the Jordanian economy from labour force migration, by net remittances, increased from 698.7 million JD (985.17 million \$) in 1994 to 1531.6 million JD (2159.6 million \$) in 2006.

**Table No 22. Workers' Remittances in Jordan 1996-2004. (Million JD)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Payments</b>	<b>Net Remittances</b>
<b>1994</b>	<b>763.7</b>	65.0	<b>698.7</b>
<b>1995</b>	<b>871.7</b>	75.0	<b>796.7</b>
<b>1996</b>	<b>1094.8</b>	70.8	<b>1024.0</b>
<b>1997</b>	<b>1173.5</b>	141.8	<b>1031.7</b>
<b>1998</b>	1093.8	146.8	<b>947.0</b>
<b>1999</b>	1179.8	144.6	<b>1035.2</b>
<b>2000</b>	1177.3	123.6	<b>1053.7</b>
<b>2001</b>	1283.3	120.8	<b>1162.5</b>
<b>2002</b>	1362.3	121.3	<b>1241.0</b>
<b>2003</b>	1404.5	141.9	<b>1262.6</b>
<b>2004</b>	1459.6	170.1	<b>1289.5</b>
<b>2005</b>	1544.8	218.4	<b>1326.4</b>
<b>2006</b>	1782.7	251.1	<b>1531.6</b>

Source: Central Bank of Jordan, Annual Reports Over Several Years [or Annual Reports 1994-2006], Amman- Jordan. (JD= 1.41 \$)

## 8. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Department of Statistics in Jordan (DOS) reveals that the total population in Jordan in 2006 was 5600 thousand (51.5% of Jordanians are males), 62.9% of them living in the middle region, 27.8% in the Northern region and only 9.3% of them living in the Southern region.

Total labour force supply in the year 2006 was estimated to be 1308 thousands (967 thousand males, 171 thousand females), the unemployed estimated to be 170 thousand (121 thousand males, 49 thousand females) with the unemployment rate at 13% (11.1% for males, 22.3% for females, Ministry of Labour - Annual Report, 2006).

The number of non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan in the year 2006 was 289724 (244944 males, 44780 females), 36% of them working in the service sector, 25.1% in the manufacturing sector, 23.6% in the agricultural sector, and 15.3% in the construction sector, (Ministry of Labour, 2006).

After this discussion of circular migration in Jordan, we would offer the following conclusions and recommendations.

### 8.1. Conclusions

1. Although the number of non-Jordanian who are working in Jordan and holding work permits has substantially increased during the last years according to the Ministry of Labour Statistics, a result of the policy of the Labour Ministry to organize Jordan's labour market, we believe that the number of non-Jordanians working in Jordan is still higher than the official figures.
2. Although, there is no data available about length of stay among the non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan, either from the Ministry of Labour or from any other data-sources, from our notes we can say that there is no permanent labour force migration to Jordan. And while some non-Jordanians may stay in Jordan for a long period of time, maybe for many years, many of them visit their countries for a few or even for many months every year, especially those who are working in economic sectors such as construction. This is why we would class this type of labour-force migration as circular migration.
3. The majority of non-Jordanians holding work permits and working in Jordan are young males, poorly educated, working in economic sectors, such as agriculture, construction, and the service sector.
4. They are working in low-level occupations, working too many hours, and getting low monthly wages.
5. Although, Jordanian workers working outside Jordan are playing an important role in supporting the Jordanian economy with remittances, and easing the unemployment problem in Jordan, there is little, if any, information available about them.
6. Although there is not much data available about Jordanians working abroad, from the little information available we note that the majority of them are young males, well educated, working in medium and high occupational levels and well paid.
7. International labour-force migration in Jordan affected the unemployment rate in two ways: Jordanian emigrants eased the unemployment rates in Jordan through the second half of the last century, while labour force migration to Jordan, in the same period, especially since the late 1980s, affected unemployment in Jordan negatively.
8. Unemployment rates among females are almost double those among males and a high proportion of the unemployed has high qualifications.

9. As far as remittances are concerned, labour-force migration from Jordan plays an important role in providing the Jordanian economy with much of its foreign currency needs.

## **8.2. Recommendations**

With these conclusions in mind we make the following recommendations:

1. In order to ease high unemployment rate in Jordan, there are two main ways forward:

a- Decreasing the labour force supply by affecting population growth rate (fertility rate, mortality rate and migration rate) and labour force participation rates.

b- Increasing the labour force demand by increasing investment, in order to increase GDP (which means creating more jobs). In the case of Jordan, we recommend the following:

i. Adopting a suitable population policy to determine suitable fertility and migration levels and the proper policies to achieve these goals, (through the National Population Council in Jordan).

ii. Adopting economic policies to encourage both local and foreign investment in Jordan, which is the most realistic way to create jobs and solve the unemployment problem.

iii. Controlling labour-force migration to Jordan through the Ministry of Labour's work permits.

2. Concerning data we recommend encouraging official (through the Ministry of Labour) and private (academic) efforts to collect information about Jordanians working abroad and non-Jordanian workers in Jordan.

3. Encouraging and helping Jordanian the labour force to be more compatible with other labour forces in the region in order to increase the number of Jordanians working outside Jordan.

4. Improving the work conditions in Jordan in order to allow Jordanian workers to compete with non-Jordanian workers in Jordan, especially in the occupations and economic sectors where non-Jordanians are working, such as agriculture, construction and the service sector

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