

# **The gap between supply and demand in the sector of Packaging and Printing Industry**

## **Executive Summary**

This study reveals the current situation of both demand and supply sides and illustrates the gap between them in the Packaging and Printing Industry within the Jordanian Market. The number of establishments in this sector reached (857) by the third quarter of 2023, according to the survey conducted by the Department of General Statistics. These establishments were distributed with (85%) in the central region, around (12%) in the northern region, and (3%) in the southern region.

The majority of establishments in the sector are individual (75%) according to their legal entity. Establishments in the Packaging Printing Industry were classified into three main groups: small-sized establishments (1-4 workers), which represent (60%) and are widespread across all regions of the kingdom, followed by medium-sized establishments (5-19 workers) at 24%, and large-sized establishments (20 workers and above) at (16%).

Most establishments reported a decrease in demand in 2022, while (17%) indicated an increase in demand for their production. Additionally, they anticipated a decrease in demand for their products for the years (2023-2025).

Workers in the sector are predominantly male (89%) compared to only (11%) female. On the other hand, (92%) of workers in this sector are Jordanian nationals, compared to (8%) non-Jordanians. The study shows that the most common occupations are Paper and cardboard machine operators (14%), printing workers (6%), design and printing technicians (6%), packaging and binding workers (5%), and printers (3%) they are the most occupied in the Packaging Printing Industry.

Overall, there is demand for the years (2023-2025) for occupations such as design and printing technicians, printing workers, printing machine operators, paper and cardboard machine operators, packaging and binding workers, and packaging machine operators.

It's needed to be highlighted that the emergence of the need for new workers is due to a (50%) expansion process. Regarding the possibility of substituting local labor for foreign labor, (59%) of establishments are willing to undergo this substitution process, and it is worth mentioning that (53%) of establishments apply a flexible work system in this sector.

The study revealed that the most required skill is the use of technical programs in converting printing graphics (plates), designing according to dimensions, printing measurements, using printing film drawing machines (laser), drawing plates, and artistic experience in determining the dimensions of the plates used in printing, knowing the types of paper and cardboard and classifying them by weight, knowing the strategic stock, and knowing the basics of health and safety in the profession.

Data analysis indicates that the majority of establishments in the sector are not willing to hire females, primarily because the nature of work in this sector does not suit women. The future demand for females is estimated at (626) job opportunities, mainly concentrated in the central region. On the other hand, the number of disabled workers is (98), concentrated mainly in the central region. (105) establishments announced that they would provide (149) job opportunities for disabled people in various occupations,

including design and printing technicians, paper and cardboard machine operators, packaging and binding workers, printing workers, packaging workers, and printing machine operators, with significant demand in the central region specifically for hearing and mobility impaired individuals.

The study results revealed that (23%) of establishments are facing difficulties in hiring, stemming from a shortage of workers with the required skills, in addition to a lack of workers with positive values and attitudes towards work. Regarding the methods used in recruitment, the study showed that direct recruitment through personal contacts is the most commonly used method, accounting for (83%). When asked about the difficulties and challenges facing the Packaging Printing Industry, (23%) of respondents cited tax increases affecting sector performance, while (16%) pointed to laws and regulations regulating labor.

The number of training programs specific to this sector amounted to two training programs, with approximately (112) graduates during the years (2020-2022). The majority of them graduated from the packaging and labeling workers program (30 graduates) at a rate of (27%), followed by the packaging and binding workers program (28 graduates) at (25%), then the design and printing technician program (24 graduates) at (21%). Graduates from training providers are gender-divided, with (86%) males and about (14%) females, graduating from the Vocational Training Corporation and the Royal Geographical Center.

Based on the above, the study concludes that there is a very large numerical gap estimated at around (2305) surplus demand, meaning that the market can absorb (100%) of the supply volume, and it is worth noting the demand volume in the following professions: design and printing technicians, printing workers, packaging and binding workers, printing machine operators, and manual packaging workers that the market can accommodate.

Regarding the technical skills that employers emphasized as necessary for workers in the workplace and in the intended hiring, it became clear that training providers provide the majority of the skills requested by employers to a sufficient degree. Therefore, there is no gap between supply and demand regarding general supportive skills for operation in the Packaging Printing Industry.

The analysis of the gap between supply and demand for females shows a digital gap between what is offered and what is required, estimated at around (610) surplus demands for females, concentrated in the following professions: design and printing technicians, packaging workers, tailors of clothes, fur and hats, printing machine operators, and packaging machine operators. As for the gap between supply and demand for people with disabilities, the survey results revealed that (105) establishments will provide (149) job opportunities in various professions, most notably: design and printing technicians, paper and cardboard machine operators, packaging and binding workers, printing workers, packaging workers, and printing machine operators. This surplus is largely concentrated in the central region for individuals with mobility and hearing impairments.

Based on the above, the study recommends that the Skills Development and Technical Training Authority form national teams responsible for formulating sectoral policies in the field of training Jordanian manpower and employing them in the Packaging Printing Industry. Training providers should review, develop, and expand the required training programs in the sector and integrate life and entrepreneurial skills that support employment as a mandatory component in all their training programs, canceling any unnecessary training programs for the sector's labor market and opening new programs inspired by the high demand in the labor market. Additionally, the study recommends completing the gradual replacement policy of Jordanian labor for foreign labor by the Ministry of Labor.