

## **Executive Summary**

### **Tourism sector**

The tourism sector employs around 54,904 in 2,933 enterprises. 83% of these are located in the centre, 11% in the north, and 6% in the south. 41% are privately owned, and are classified based on the number of workers. So 44% of them are small size, employing 1-5 workers, 22% are medium size, employing 6-10, and 34% are classified as large with 11 workers and more.

21% of these enterprises reported an increase in demand for their services, while the majority reported a drop in demand, between 2017 and 2019.

The demographic profile of the sector is dominated by male staff, at a rate of 90%, with female participation confined to 10%. 79% of the workers are locals, and 21% expatriate.

The most highly sought-after jobs include, waiters at a rate of 13%, chefs at a rate of 7%, kitchen sink cleaners at a rate of 5.4%, heads and supervisors of cleaning in offices, hotels and other institutions at rate of 5.3%, cleaners and assistants in hotels, offices and other institutions at a rate of 4.2%, security at a rate of 3.7%, bookings and reservations at a rate of 3.4%.

The principal demand in 2017-2019 for male staff hires was for waiters, cleaners, janitors, assistant cleaners in hotels, offices and other institutions, travel bookings, chefs, dishwashers, and housekeeping. Demand for female staff was principally for waiters, travel bookings clerks, sales, receptionists, housekeeping and chefs, besides marketing and promotion, executive secretaries and administrators.

The growing need for hiring was linked to the 43-49% rate in staff mobility.

The skills and knowledge in highest demand include, e-ticketing, etiquette and customer service, first aid, operating cleaning machines, the food menu and the ability to answer related questions about the menu, cleanliness and hygiene, detergents, kitchen management, operating and maintenance of kitchen equipment, hotel booking and e-

reservations, food and individual health and safety standards and requirements.

Most employers in the sector shy away from hiring females, mainly because of a lack of need for employing women from the corporate perspective. However the demand for female staff is expected to rise to 3,528 jobs, particularly in the central region.

As for workers with physical challenges, they number 292, constituting 0.5%, with concentration in the central region. Employers do not favour hiring them. But around 382 enterprises reported their that they are intending to off 659 jobs as for reservations officers, cleaners and assistants in hotels, offices and other institutions, salespersons and a kitchen sink cleaners.

72% of the tourism enterprises did not report encountering difficulties in recruitment, compared to 28% enterprises, mostly private ones, who report experiencing difficulties in recruitment. These are mainly due to deficiency in skilled and academically qualified labour, and scarcity of positive values and attitudes towards work.

As for the most common methods used in recruiting, personal contacts prevailed at a rate of 56%, followed by newspaper announcements in newspapers and on websites at a rate of 31%. Hiring through employment agencies, job fairs and national campaigns organized by the Ministry of labour were the least common, and rated a meagre 3%.

As for the challenges impacting the sector, 24% of employers reported that elevated taxation is adversely impacting its performance, 20% referred to the laws and regulations, and 16% pointed to the procedures and the bureaucracy impeding investments.

The number of training programs reached 15, with 10,111 participants in 2014-2016. Of these 29% completed the program for travel reservations, 14% for travel guides, 11% for dessert chefs 11%, 11% for head waiters. 76% of these graduates were in the central region, 11% in the north, and 13% in the south. 79% of these graduates were males and 21% females.

52% of these students are graduates of the Vocational Training Corporation, 12% are graduates of the community colleges of Al-Balqa

University, 8.5% are graduates of the Ministry of Education vocational education schools, 7% are graduates from Ammon Applied University College, public and private universities as well as other institutions.

As for the availability of training programs for persons with physical challenges, only one training program for chefs offered by the Royal Academy for Culinary Arts accommodates 2 trainees. So far, training providers do not display interest in providing capacity building programs for the physically challenged.

Skills upgrading courses vary from one education and training providers to another, where a total of

4,583 male and female students participated in 17 training programs between 2014-2016.

A surplus in demand has been estimated to have reached 5,896, which points to the inability of the employment market to have it fully absorbed. The gap between demand and supply in the tourism sector indicates that the training programs required by employers are more specialised and customised, compared to the generic training currently provided. Training providers need to focus more on the occupations with over-supply. Training for jobs in excess demand, needs to be condensed, into quick courses; fit for purpose, as for cleaners, assistants and kitchen dishwashers. The current mismatch is indicative of a misalignment between the labour market demands, and the skills training available.

Accordingly it is necessary to recommend providing training programs in technical skills and knowledge, such as in the following: e-ticketing, etiquette and customer service, first aid, operating cleaning machines and equipment, the menu and the ability to answer related questions, personal hygiene and food safety, cleaning methods, the role of each culinary section, and anticipating demand and related costing, kitchen tools and equipment and related maintenance, e-travel arrangements and e-hotel reservations.

A gap exists in the demand for female hires, reaching 2,369. The same applies for an excess in demand for hiring persons with physical challenges, particularly in the central region. This is particularly the case

for jobs in travel arrangements and booking, translators, cleaners and assistants in hotels, offices and other institutions, waiters, kitchen sink dishwashers, sculptors and excavators.

Thus it is recommended that the TVET Council takes the leads in setting up national teams, to develop sectoral policies for training and employment, for the workforce engaged in tourism. And that training providers review and upgrade their programmes to better respond to the needs of the private enterprises, as by integrating practical skills and entrepreneurship in all programs, cancel redundant programs, develop new programs in response to labour market demands.

Further recommendations include nationalising the labour force, giving prominence to the tourism sector in government policies, as a primary engine of economic growth, developing a tourism database to support conducting related studies on enhancing the performance of the tourism sector and its relationship to the labour supply and demand.