

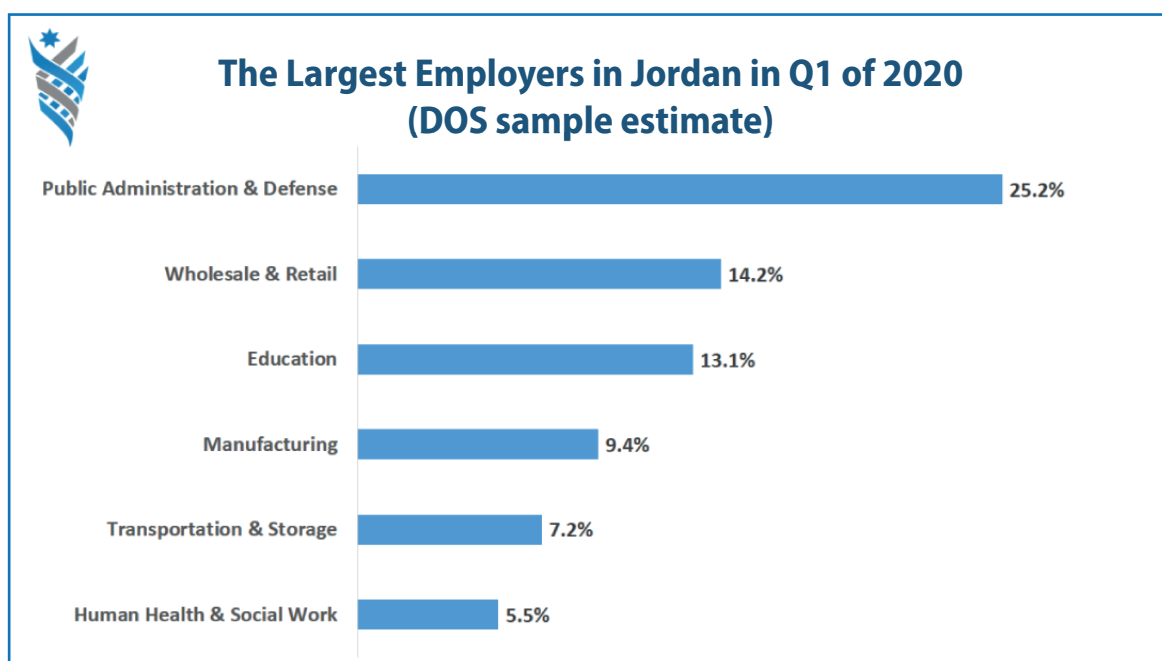
## Tele-Workable Occupations in Jordan: Winners and Losers from the Lockdown

COVID19- has forced Jordanians to adapt to a “new normal”. Indeed, the lockdown has introduced the government, private sector entities, as well as the average working Jordanian to the concept of “working from home”. Within this context, speculation was raised regarding who can manage to work remotely, and what professions require in-person operations.

Several international studies have shown that %50-%37 of the jobs in the OECD countries can be done remotely. In this Nutshell, the JSF, intends to arrive at an estimate of those who can work remotely in the Jordanian economy.

Based on expert opinion surveys, as well as previous studies by the ILO, a study by the University of Chicago, Booth School of Business, NBER, and CEPR (May 2020) has identified every tele-workable job according to the ISCO-ILO classification of occupations. The study indicates that the top three most tele-workable jobs are in computer and Software development (%100), education, training, and library occupations (%98-%85), and in legal occupations (%97-%84). The least tele-workable jobs (at %0) are in building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations, food preparation and serving related occupations, and in construction and extraction occupations.

If we use the University of Chicago’s results and the labor market distribution in Jordan, we can roughly estimate the overall proportion of working Jordanians who can work remotely. For example, the fact that the education sector accounts for about %13 of the employed and %98 of these individuals can work remotely (noting that there is a difference in the nature instruction methods in education between various countries), we can state that  $0.98 \times 0.13$  of Jordanians can work from home. Based on this methodology, we estimate that %20.5 of employed Jordanians can work remotely.



## IN A NUTSHELL

The implication of this relatively low proportion is that a full lockdown can severely harm the Jordanian labor market (%79.5 are not able to telework).

This calls for incentivizing automation and digitalization of the economy. The private sector should have a clear strategy for the rapid transformation of remote work to protect the health and professional safety of its employees if and when, an epidemic occurs in the future. The JSF urges companies to evaluate the efficiency and productive capacity of their employees before and after the transition to remote work. This should facilitate the identification and treatment of any organizational and logistical gaps in their operations, particularly when it comes to reducing futile extra working hours (“hidden overtime”). Such a strategy would also contribute to greater flexibility in the labor market and hence, higher productivity. Finally, the relatively high proportion of those who cannot telework, and their respective sectors, should help the government in identifying the most vulnerable groups in Jordan who may be in dire need for financial support, should a lockdown take place.