



Jordan

Information about Jordan's economic situation in numbers

Area: 92,300 sq km

Population: 6.3 million (April 2009)

Literacy rate: 89.9 %

Gross Domestic Product: 16.3 billion USD (2007; estimate 2008: 20.0)

GDP per capita: 2,650 USD (2007; estimate 2008: 3,421)

Rate of inflation: 14.9 % (2008)

Unemployment: 13.5 % (2007; prognosis 2009: 13.5 %)

(Source: gtai - Germany Trade & Invest / Gesellschaft für Außenwirtschaft und Standortmarketing mbH, as of May 2010)

Information on book production in Jordan

Sales

The book industry is not recorded or identified separately in the statistics on industrial production and domestic trade provided by the Department of Statistics in Amman. The Jordanian Publishers Association also does not collect data. Sales can only be estimated indirectly on the basis of surveys of private household spending (Household Expenditure and Income Survey 2002/2003) and in terms of public expenditures (libraries, education).

Private universities invest heavily in electronic media.

Proportion of spending on education per household (2002/2003): 6.2 %

Proportion of spending on culture and sport per household (2002/2003): 2 % (Tobacco: 3.5%)
Total expenditures for books (not including school materials), according to HEIS 2002/2003:
353,000 JOD

Title production / new releases per year

The Jordanian National Library is the authority for documenting title production and it publishes its figures on an annual basis. The statistics on Jordanian book production gathered by UNESCO (data collected only up to 1999) and ALECSO is extremely incomplete and thus unreliable. At the beginning of the 1990s, production was just over 400 titles per year. This more than doubled by 2004 (in 2002, 1,093 titles were published). The primary language is Arabic and only 5 % of books are foreign language titles.

A breakdown by category reveals the following averages over the period from 1992 to 2004 (in percentages):

General knowledge / reference books: 4
Philosophy / Psychology: 2
Religion: 13
Social sciences: 24
Exact sciences: 4
Applied sciences: 11
Art: 2
Language: 4
Literature: 24
History and geography: 12

Average book price (in USD)

All book categories: 8.50
University publications: 10 - 14
Computer books: 17

Fixed book pricing

Due to the poorly developed system of distribution beyond publishers' bookstores, inconsistent pricing for locally produced books is generally not a problem that arises. Exceptions are generally made with respect to specific sales events (like book fairs, for example). The prices of imported books fluctuate and publications from Europe and the USA are sold at a 10-20 % mark-up over the retail price.

Copyright laws

National law from 1992, updated in 1998 in accordance with international criteria.
Berne Convention for the protection of works of literature and art, since July 1999.
World Trade Organisation (TRIPS-WTO), since April 2000.
WIPO Copyright Treaty, since April 2004.
An independent unit of the National Library is theoretically responsible for overseeing the copyright protection of books. The practical focus is currently on electronic storage media, though controls are largely lax.

Licensing statistics

In the decade from 1995 to 2004, only four licenses were sold from Germany to Jordan. Jordan is not listed in the current *Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen 2009*. This low number reflects the self-referential orientation of many Jordanian publishers (particularly those that primarily publish scripts of university lectures, etc., for higher education). It also refers, however, to the importance of directly reading primarily English-language books in Jordan. Licensing statistics are not collected in Jordan, so translations can only be determined by analysing the Jordanian national bibliography. There is no national public funding for translations. Jordanian publishers sometimes participate in requests from foreign cultural institutes and diplomatic missions.

Export / Import

Exports in the category HS 4901 (Harmonized System Code for books, brochures and similar printed products) decreased from 8.9 million JOD in 2001 to 4.2 million JOD in 2004 (1 JOD is equal to 1.4 USD). The decline can be attributed particularly to exports into Iraq. Primary markets - apart from Iraq - include the USA, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Lebanon and Egypt, as well as the smaller Gulf states, including the United Arab Emirates, which are of particular importance.

Imports in the category HS 4901 have exceeded exports since 2002. At 3.2 million JOD, most of the imports in 2004 came from Lebanon, followed by 2.9 million JOD worth of book products from Great Britain and 1.4 million JOD from the USA. Imports from Egypt totalled only 0.62 million JOD, though the quantity purchased from there (in tonnes) was nearly as large as that of the imports from Great Britain.

Number of publishers and bookstores

A total of 525 companies are registered as publishers / distributors in Jordan (as of 2005). However, only 108 of these are members of the Jordanian Publishers Association. Relevant trade directories estimate that there are 250 printing houses, while there are fewer than 70 bookstores. The latter, however, are often general stores with a range of stationery and gift items. Publishing in Jordan is dominated by the private sector. There is public funding of publications to a small extent (for instance, the city government of Greater Amman). Most publishers publish between 10 and 20 titles per year and print runs average around 1,000 copies.

Sales / distribution channels

Books are sold primarily by the publishing house directly and are therefore often only available at the publishing house. Even in urban areas, there are hardly any retail bookstores and the higher-quality businesses mainly sell English-language books (in reverse of the dominance of Arabic-language books produced in Jordan). In regional trade, Jordanian publishers employ the services of agents, who primarily sell on a commission basis. Book fairs draw not only individual readers, but also trade visitors, and their primary purpose is to directly support and promote the retail trade.

Book fair

The Amman International Book Fair takes place every two years and is among the smaller events of its kind in the region. One hundred ninety-three publishers were in attendance at the 10th fair in 2004 (more recent statistics are not available), while an additional 88 companies were represented

by agents. The next Amman book fair will be held from 22 Sept. to 1 Oct. 2010. In addition to this fair, two smaller alternate events (also held every two years) primarily serve the Jordanian market. Jordanian publishers exhibit to a relatively large extent at regional book fairs. Along with Damascus, Beirut and Cairo, the fairs in the Gulf (Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Sharjah) are particularly important sales events.

(As of: May 2010)