

PERCEPTION OF REFUGEES IN JORDAN



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Survey - June 2023

Acknowledgements

Research for this study was led by Yousef Kakish at Headway Jordan.

Our sincere appreciation goes to the respondents who volunteered their valuable time to participate in the data collection. It should be noted that Headway was brought in by UNHCR to conduct Wave VI of the Perception of Refugees survey which interviewed 3,265 Jordanians. Previous three waves of this survey were carried out by Nama Strategic Solutions from October 2020 to November 2021, while later waves starting in July 2022 were conducted by Headway Jordan, and reflected interviews of over 3,000 Jordanian women and men each, the last one in November 2022 (Wave V).

In addition, UNHCR in Jordan extends its appreciation to its donors for their continued support in funding the refugee response in Jordan and for contributing to this research.



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Executive summary

This study intends to capture and understand the perceptions of Jordanians towards refugees in Jordan and gauge their sympathy level towards refugees.

To answer the study's objectives, 3,265 Jordanian woman and men living in five governorates (Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, Mafraq and Karak) were interviewed in May/June of 2023.

The percentage of Jordanians surveyed in this wave of the survey (Wave VI) showed high levels of sympathy towards refugees escaping conflict and prosecution at 96 per cent as in the previous wave in November 2022 when they reached 95 per cent. Furthermore, Jordanian women were more sympathetic towards refugees than males by three per cent, and the younger generation showed higher sympathy levels towards refugees than the older age groups.

With regards to the captured sympathy levels towards people coming to Jordan seeking better economic opportunities, those sympathy levels remained almost like the previous wave with one per cent increase. The sympathy levels were highest in Amman and Zarqa, as 42 per cent of residents in Amman expressed very sympathetic feelings towards economic migrants, while residents in Karak reported the lowest sympathy levels at ten per cent.

As in November 2022, most Jordanians (81 per cent) expressed positive views towards refugees living in Jordan. However, there were some regional differences as Mafraq and Karak residents showed higher negative views towards refugees than people in other governorates.

Over 90 per cent of Jordanians believed that Jordan is hosting a very high number of refugees, and 89 per cent stated that Jordan has done more than its fair share in supporting refugees living in the country compared to 80 per cent in wave V late in 2022. Moreover, 12 per cent more Jordanians than in the previous wave were of the view that the response of the Jordanian government towards the refugee crisis was sufficient.

With regards to the support provided to refugees in Jordan, 60 per cent of Jordanians in the current survey believed that refugees in Jordan received more support than citizens of the country while in November 2022 the percentage stood at 58. Furthermore, more Jordanians (61 per cent, compared to 53 per cent) said that the resources spent for refugees in Jordan was high, and slightly less than half of respondents agreed that the international community still needs to do more to support the refugees living in Jordan.

Many Jordanians surveyed (58 per cent) responded that the number of refugees in Jordan was increasing, and like last wave's findings almost all Jordanians said that refugees came from Syria, and over half of the respondents said that refugees in Jordan came from Iraq. In this wave of the survey, nine per cent more respondents than half a year ago reported that refugees came from Sudan.

Views on the economic impact on Jordanians due to refugees remained constant with the survey half a year earlier as 44 per cent responded that their household economics were impacted, with more men than women reporting an impact on their economic situation, and the same was witnessed in the data of respondents who are over 45 years of age, additionally, most respondents reported that this economic impact was a negative one.

In relation to the inclusion of refugees in the national systems of Jordan, a high number of Jordanians (78 per cent) supported it. The support to inclusion was found higher among younger Jordanians. People who were not supportive of the inclusion based their opinion on the view that this inclusion added more pressure on the Jordanian economy and infrastructure, which would in turn impact the quality of life for Jordanians. Additionally, they stated that priority should always be given to Jordanians.

With regards to recent developments in the Syria crisis; more Jordanians in this wave (70 per cent) versus 65 per cent in November 2022 agreed that Syrians will return to their home country. Moreover, 62 per cent stressed that the return decisions should be solely in the refugee's hand, although more males than females (by seven per cent) showed higher acceptance of any government decision to send refugees home. Additionally, 69 per cent projected a positive impact on the Jordanian economy if refugees returned.

Lastly, when asked about support required by the international community to refugees, financial assistance was the top answer at 44 per cent, with education and health services following.

Background and methodology

Background

Since the start of the crisis in Syria in 2011, around 6.8 million people have fled Syria seeking safety in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt and beyond, with most of the refugees between the ages of 18 and 59 years.

Syrian refugees have sought asylum in more than 130 countries, but the vast majority live in neighboring countries, including Jordan where most Syrian refugees live in host communities.

As the conflicts await solutions, about 64 per cent of Syrian refugees are living on less than three Jordanian Dinars (about 4 US\$) a day.

In October 2020, UNHCR regularly tries to gauge Jordanians' perception of refugees in Jordan through surveys. Six waves of the survey were conducted from October 2020 to June 2023, this report details the findings of the last wave.

Survey Methodology

A quantitative approach was adopted to elicit the required information areas through telephone interviews with Jordanians (18 years of age and above) across five governorates in Jordan (Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, Mafraq, and Karak). The sample was distributed by governorate, gender, and age in accordance with the published national population figures, and respondents were chosen randomly through "Random Digit Dialing", with quota control measures on key demographics.

A structured questionnaire was used to collect opinions from respondents, the questionnaire was developed by UNHCR, finetuned and scripted by Headway Jordan, with an average interview length of 12 minutes. 3,265 telephone interviews were conducted by 23 trained enumerators from 16 May to 5 June 2023.

Once all data was collected and quality was ensured, the raw data was cleaned and validated for missing values and inconsistencies, coding of close ended questions was done automatically by the data collection system during scripting of the questionnaire, and the data was later tabulated in terms of frequencies, cross tabulation, and weighing for specific questions.



Photo: © UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari

Demographics of respondents

The present survey captures the views of 3,265 Jordanians as a form to represent the Jordanian community as a whole. The number of respondents were almost identical to the previous wave which was 3,277.

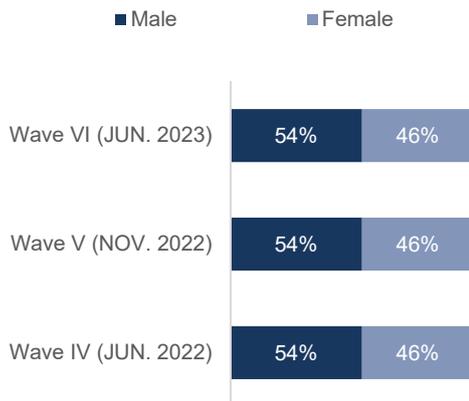
1,755 (54 per cent) males participated in the study compared to 1,510 (46 per cent) females across five governorates (Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, Mafrqa, and Karak).

The strongest age group reflected in this survey was 25-34 years old with 27 per cent (888 respondents), followed by 18-24 year olds at 23 per cent. 691 respondents were 35 to 44 years old (21 per cent), and the remaining sample came from the groups in the age brackets of 45-54 (476, 15 per cent), 55-64 (247, 8 per cent), and over 65 years old (198, 6 per cent).

Gender

Figure 1. Gender of respondents

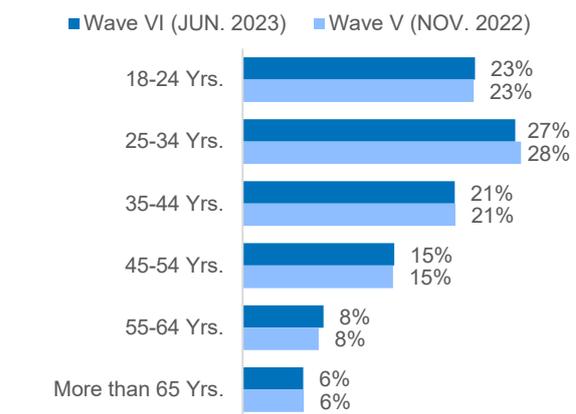
Percentage of respondents



Age

Figure 2. Age of respondents

Percentage of respondents



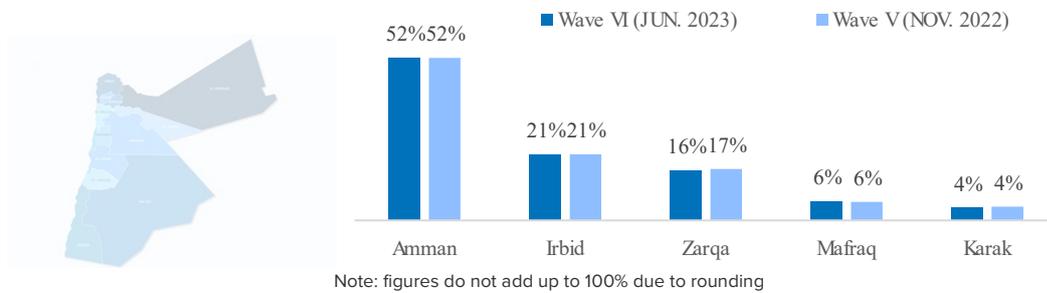
Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Region

1,692 respondents were residents of Amman (52 per cent), 701 living in Irbid (21 per cent), while residents of Zarqa, Mafraq, and Karak were 525, 211, and 136, respectively.

Figure 3. Region

Percentage of respondents

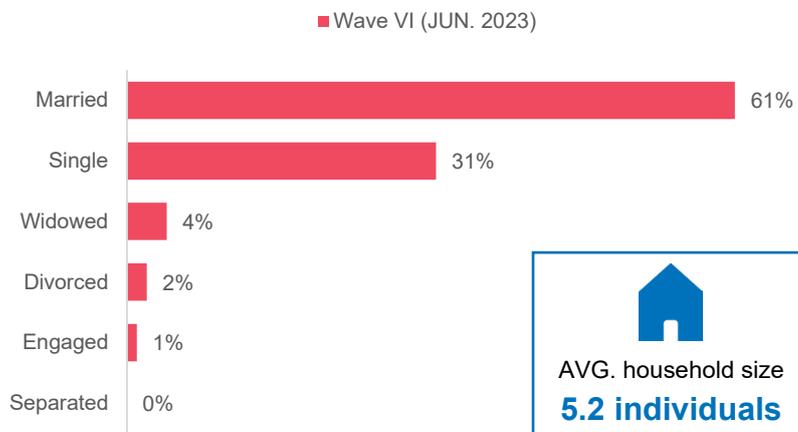


Marital status

The average household size was 5.2 persons per home, and the marital status of 61 per cent of the sample was married, 31 per cent was single, and the remaining were either widowed, engaged, divorced, or separated.

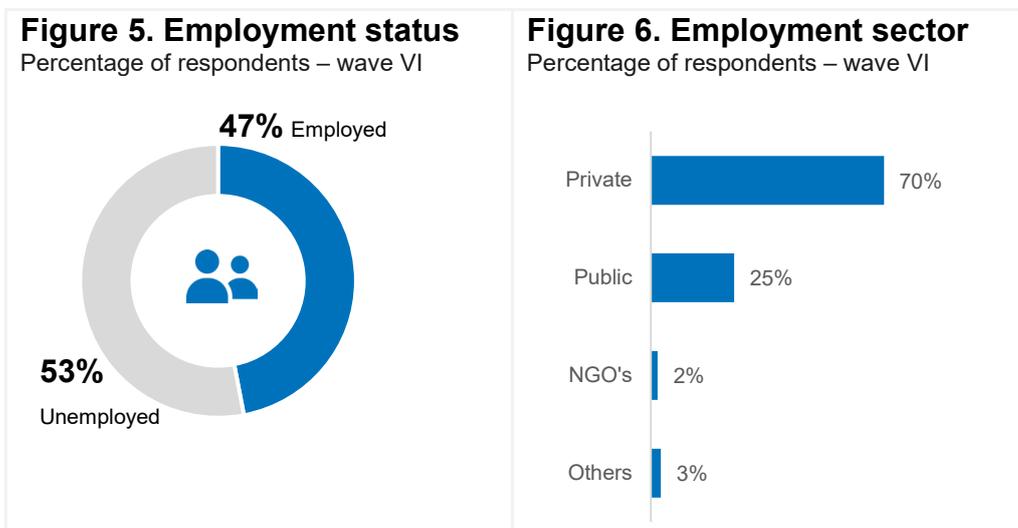
Figure 4. Marital status of respondents

Percentage of respondents – wave VI



Employment status

Employed respondents represented 47 per cent (1,547) of the sample, of which 1,077 were working in the private sector, 393 in the public sector, and 24 employed by NGOs.

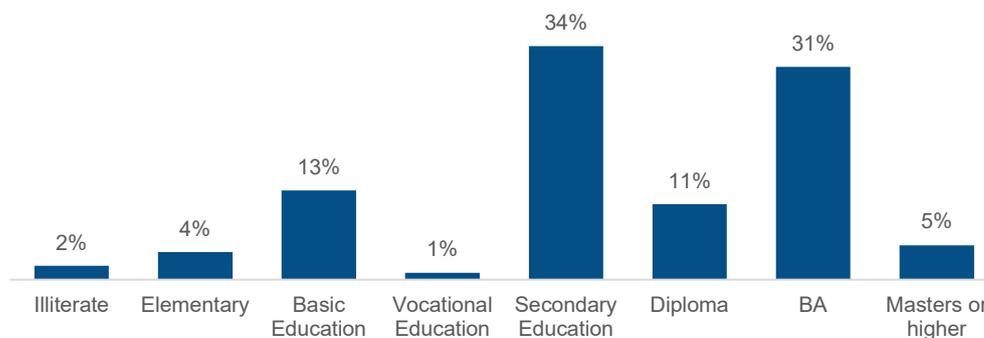


Education level

81 per cent of respondents completed at least secondary education (2,641), and 47 per cent held a diploma certificate or higher.

Figure 7. Education level of respondents

Percentage of respondents – wave VI

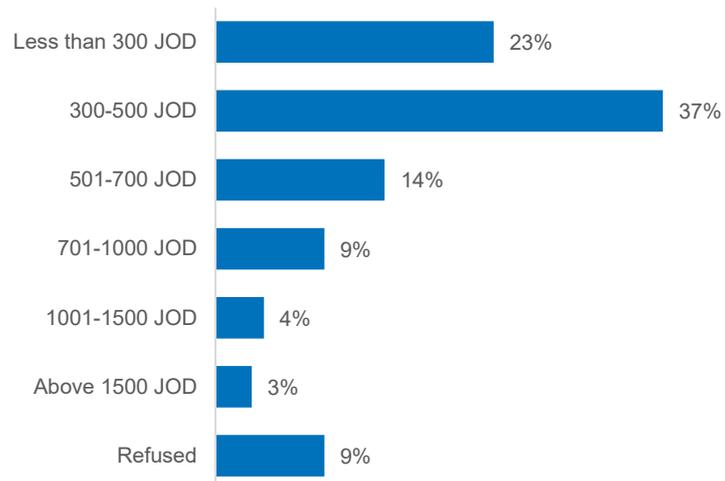


Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Monthly household income

Figure 8. Monthly household income

Percentage of respondents – wave VI



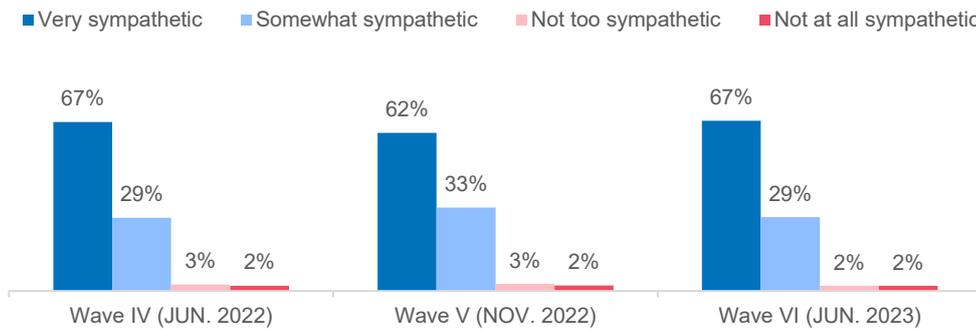
Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Sympathy levels and views towards refugees

Sympathy levels towards people who come to Jordan to escape conflict and persecution

Sympathetic responses towards people escaping conflict and persecution were at 96 per cent, as 67 per cent stated they were very sympathetic towards refugees with an increase of 5 per cent since November 2022, and unsympathetic respondents stood at four per cent with a decrease of one per cent from last wave.

Figure 9. Sympathy levels towards refugees escaping conflicts
Percentage of respondents



Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Jordanian women were more sympathetic towards refugees than males, with the recorded sympathy levels among females at 97 per cent while the stated sympathy levels of men were at 94 per cent. Furthermore, the sympathy levels among the younger age groups were higher than the older age groups.

Table 1. Sympathy levels towards refugees escaping conflicts – gender

Percentage of respondents – wave VI

	MALE	FEMALE
Very sympathetic	65%	69%
Somewhat sympathetic	29%	28%
Not too sympathetic	3%	1%
Not at all sympathetic	3%	1%

Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

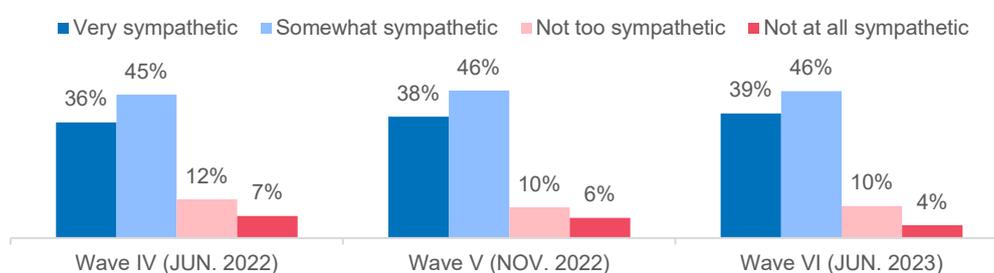
Sympathy levels towards people who come to Jordan to seek better economic opportunities

The sympathy levels towards people coming to Jordan for better economic opportunities remained almost like in the previous survey, as 39 per cent of respondents reported being very sympathetic and 46 per cent said being somewhat sympathetic. Furthermore, in comparison to November 2022, there was a two per cent decrease in respondents who stated they were not very sympathetic towards people coming to Jordan to seek better economic opportunities.

Male respondents presented less sympathy levels to people coming to Jordan seeking better economic opportunities than women.

Figure 10. Sympathy levels towards people coming to seek better economic opportunities

Percentage of respondents



Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Sympathy levels were highest in Amman and Zarqa, as 42 per cent of residents in Amman expressed very sympathetic feelings towards people coming to Jordan for better economic opportunities. Meanwhile, more Jordanians in Karak (ten per cent) than the rest of the governorates, said they were not at all sympathetic.

Table 2. Sympathy levels towards people coming to seek better economic opportunities – governorate

Percentage of respondents – wave VI

	Amman	Irbid	Zarqa	Mafraq	Karak
Very sympathetic	42%	35%	37%	37%	38%
Somewhat sympathetic	45%	48%	51%	43%	42%
Not too sympathetic	9%	11%	8%	13%	11%
Not at all sympathetic	3%	5%	4%	7%	10%

Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

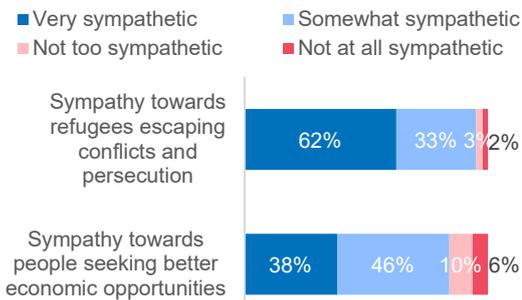
Sympathy levels towards refugees – summary of this wave compared to the previous one

While sympathy towards people coming to Jordan (either seeking conflict or seeking economic opportunities) continued to increase, sympathy levels towards people escaping conflict continued to be significantly higher than the same towards people seeking better economic opportunities (95 vs. 84 per cent respectively).

Wave V

Figure 11. Sympathy levels compared

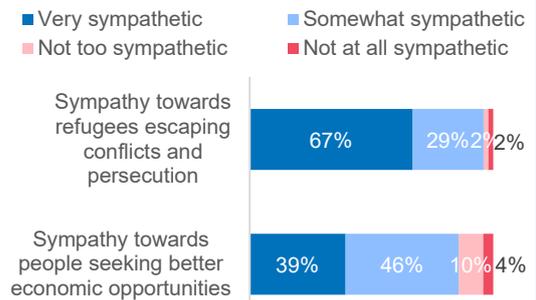
Percentage of respondents



Wave VI

Figure 12. Sympathy levels compared

Percentage of respondents



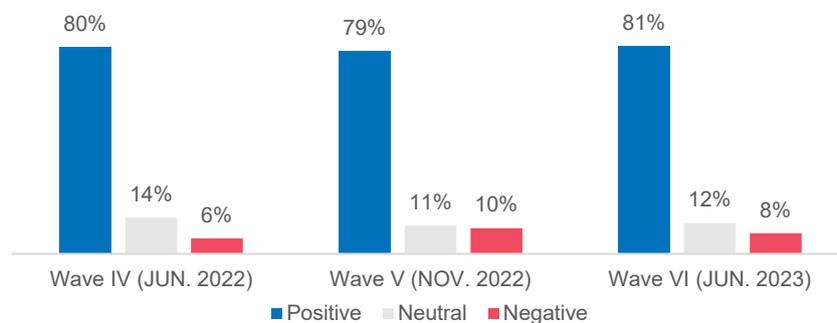
Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Opinions about refugees (positive, neutral, negative)

The perception of refugees among Jordanians remained mostly positive and was 2 per cent higher than in the previous survey, additionally, the negative perception of refugees decreased by two per cent. Respondents under the age of 35 had more neutral views regarding refugees, meanwhile, more women than men stated that they held positive views of refugees.

Figure 13. Perceived views towards refugees

Percentage of respondents

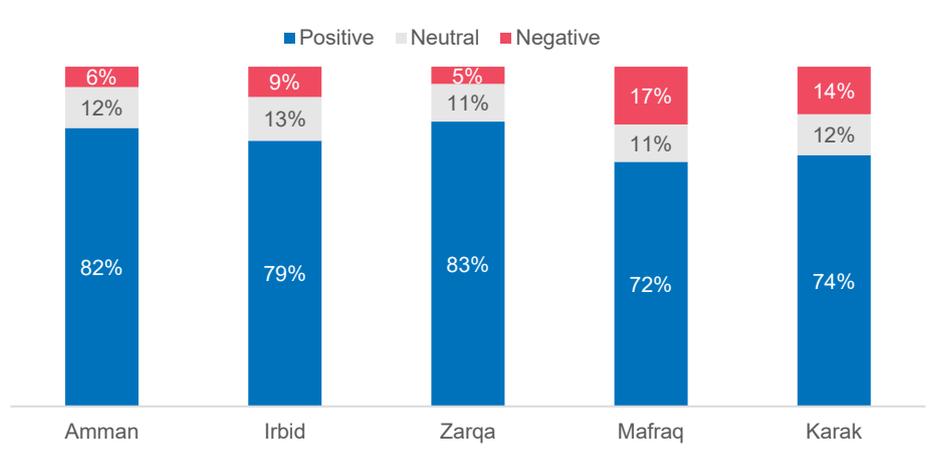


Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

In Mafraq and Karak, the negative views towards refugees were higher compared to other governorates, while in Zarqa the positive views were higher (83 per cent) than in the rest of the governorates in the study.

Figure 14. Perceived views towards refugees – governorate

Percentage of respondents



Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Perception & attitude towards refugees

General perceptions & attitudes towards refugees

93 per cent of Jordanians in this survey said that the number of refugees Jordan is hosting was very high. This view was stronger among residents of Irbid and Mafrqa than among respondents of any other governorate.

Jordanians interviewed cited that Jordan has done more than its fair share in supporting refugees in Jordan, while close to half of respondents (48 per cent) believed that the international community still needed to do more to support refugees in Jordan, with more men agreeing with this than women.

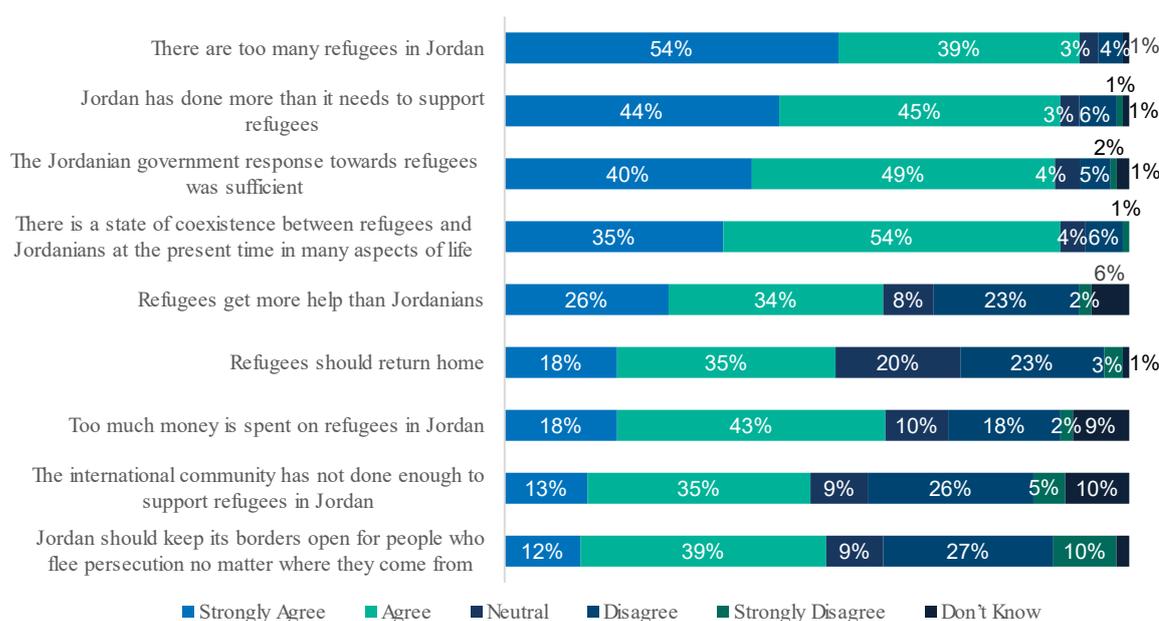
60 per cent of respondents were of the view that the support given to refugees is more than what Jordanians receive. However, more youth (18-24 years old) disagreed with this statement than respondents in the older age groups. Furthermore, more youth disagreed that refugees should return to their homeland.

With regards to resources spent on refugees, 61 per cent of Jordanians agreed that the financial means spent on refugees in Jordan were too high.

Half of the respondents (51 per cent) presented an agreement towards keeping the country's borders open for people fleeing persecution no matter where they come from, and 89 per cent of Jordanians said that there was a state of coexistence between Jordanians and refugees living in Jordan.

Figure 15. Perceptions & attitudes towards refugees

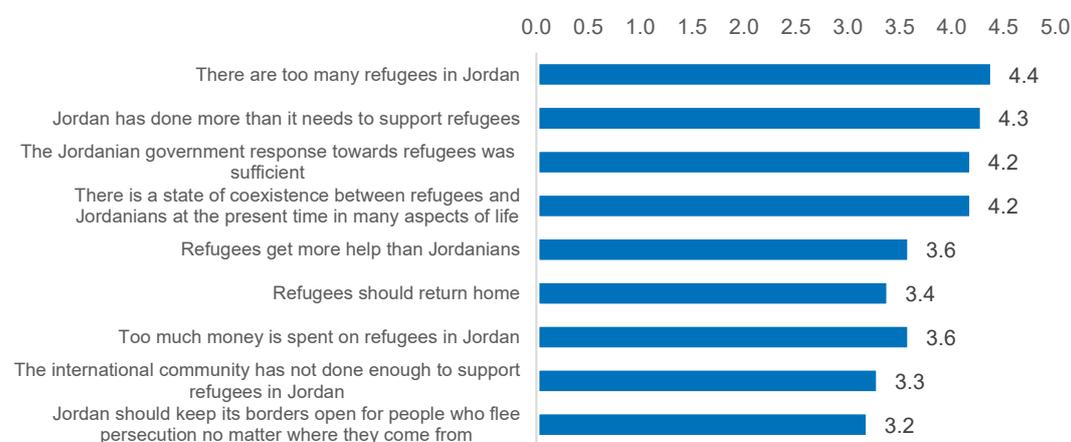
Percentage of respondents



Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Figure 16. Perceptions & attitudes towards refugees

Main scores (out of 5)



General perceptions & attitudes towards refugees – Summary comparison with survey of November 2022

In this survey more respondents agreed that Jordan has done more than what is needed to support refugees living in Jordan than in the previous one in November 2022, with males voicing stronger than women.

A higher percentage of respondents in this wave believed that the amount of financial assistance given to refugees was higher than what it is supposed to be, with more respondents in Mafraq stating agreement than residents in other governorates.

The younger generation believed less than older age groups that refugees in Jordan should leave the country and return home.

Furthermore, the agreement level towards Jordan's response to the refugees' crisis being sufficient was higher in this wave than in the survey half a year earlier, in November 2022; this agreement level was higher among Mafraq residents.

Table 3. Perceptions & attitudes towards refugees – comparison with survey wave V in November 2022

Percentage of respondents

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	DK
There are too many refugees in Jordan	Wave V	57%	34%	4%	2%	-	2%
	Wave VI	54%	39%	3%	4%	-	1%
Jordan has done more than it needs to support refugees	Wave V	39%	41%	8%	7%	1%	4%
	Wave VI	44%	45%	3%	6%	1%	1%
Refugees get more help than Jordanians	Wave V	28%	30%	12%	19%	3%	8%
	Wave VI	26%	34%	8%	23%	2%	6%
Too much money is spent on refugees in Jordan	Wave V	19%	34%	14%	18%	3%	12%
	Wave VI	18%	43%	10%	18%	2%	9%
Refugees should return home	Wave V	22%	33%	24%	16%	3%	2%
	Wave VI	18%	35%	20%	23%	3%	1%
The international community has not done enough to support refugees in Jordan	Wave V	14%	32%	11%	23%	7%	13%
	Wave VI	13%	35%	9%	26%	5%	10%
Jordan should keep its borders open for people who flee persecution no matter where they come from	Wave V	10%	30%	16%	23%	16%	3%
	Wave VI	12%	39%	9%	27%	10%	2%
The Jordanian government response towards refugees was sufficient	Wave V	33%	44%	8%	7%	1%	6%
	Wave VI	40%	49%	4%	5%	1%	2%
There is a state of coexistence between refugees and Jordanians at the present time in many aspects of life	Wave V	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wave VI	35%	54%	4%	6%	1%	*

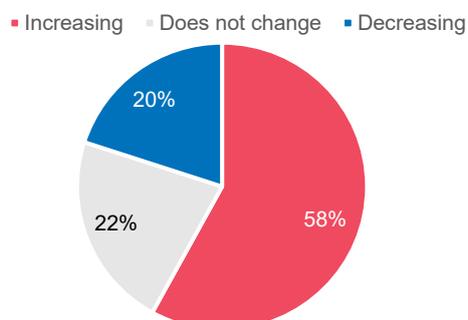
Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Perceptions on the numbers of refugees in Jordan

While 22 per cent of Jordanians did not see that the number of refugees in Jordan had changed, 58 per cent said that the number of refugees in Jordan increased and 20 per cent said it decreased.

Figure 17. Jordanians' opinion on the changes on the numbers of refugees coming to Jordan

Percentage of respondents



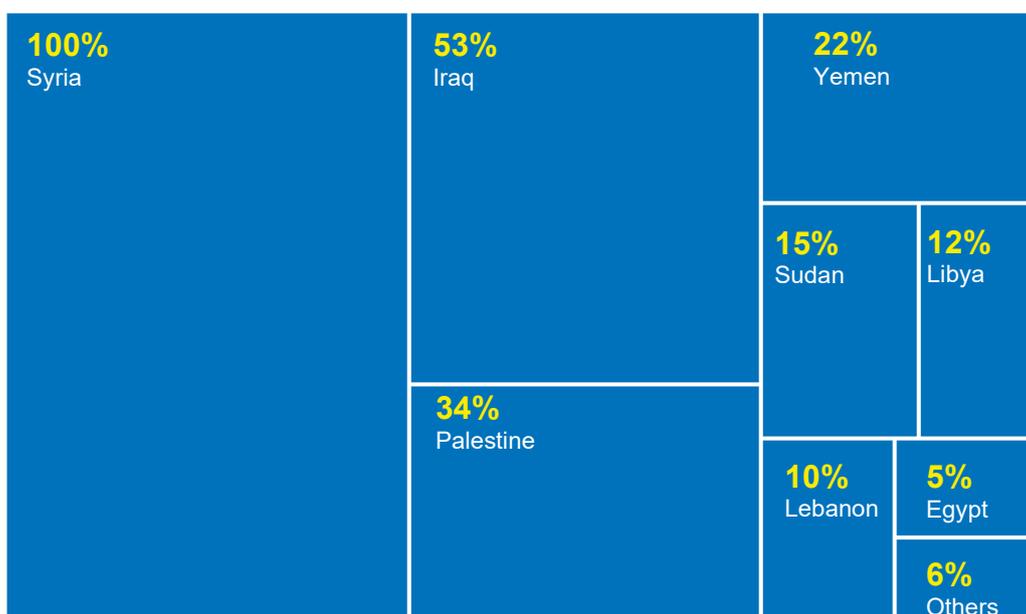
Refugees' country of origin

When respondents were asked about their knowledge on where refugees were coming from, 100 per cent knew they came from Syria. 53 per cent also said refugees came from Iraq, and 34 per cent said that refugees originated from Palestine.

In this survey, more respondents (15 per cent) reported that refugees came from Sudan than six months earlier, in November 2022 (six per cent).

Figure 18. Perceptions on where refugees are coming from

Percentage of respondents stating the refugees' country of origin – wave VI



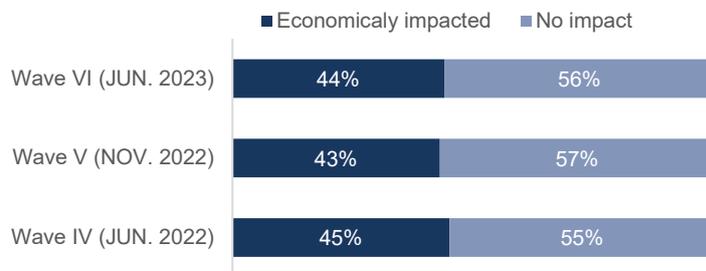
Perception on the impact of the refugee crisis

Respondents' views on the economic impact due to refugees

Refugees had no economic impact on Jordanians' household according to 56 per cent of respondents, yet more men than women responded that their economic situation was impacted due to the refugee crisis, the same observation was seen among respondents who were over 45 years of age.

Figure 19. Personal/Household's economic impact due to refugees

Percentage of respondents

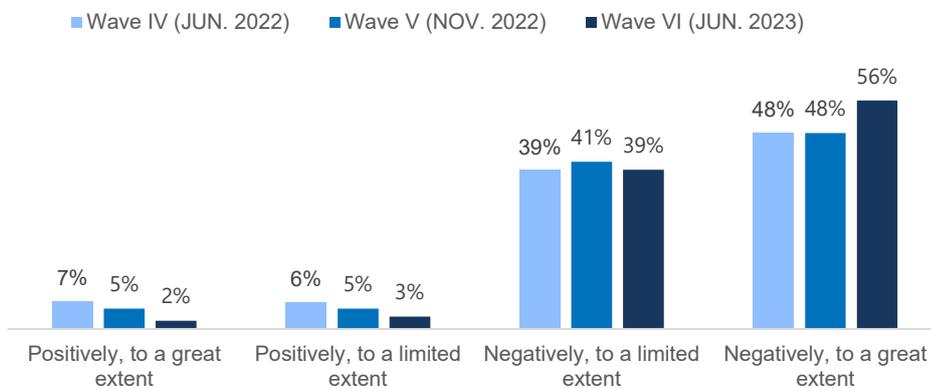


How they were affected...

Most respondents who reported that they were economically impacted due to the refugee crisis stated that the impact on their economic situation was negative, a view which is stronger in this survey than in the previous one.

Figure 20. Economic impact levels

Respondents who were economically impacted



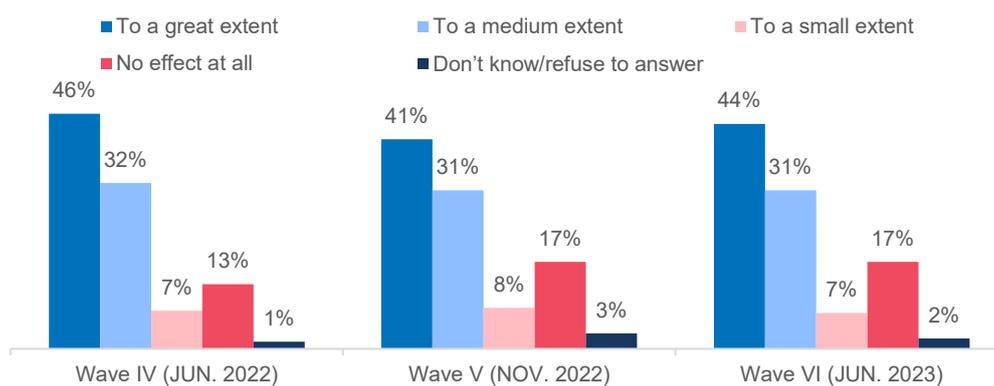
Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Perception on the impact of refugees on employment prospects

Similar results to the previous wave of the perception survey were found with regards to the extent of impact on employment prospects: Over 40 per cent of respondents declared being impacted to a great extent and over 30 per cent of respondents to a medium extent. This impact is perceived to be higher among citizens of Mafraq.

Figure 21. Perceived impact on employment prospects

Percentage of respondents



Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Inclusion & support

Perceptions on refugee inclusion

In this wave of the survey which was conducted in May and June 2023, 3 per cent more respondents said they supported the inclusion of refugees in the Jordanian community than six months earlier. The highest support came from the younger generation and women.

Figure 22. Perceptions on the inclusion of refugees

Percentage of respondents



Table 4. Perceptions on the inclusion of refugees – Age

Percentage of respondents – wave VI

	18-24 Yrs.	25-34 Yrs.	35-44 Yrs.	45-54 Yrs.	55-64 Yrs.	More than 65 Yrs.
Yes	84%	80%	77%	73%	72%	75%
No	16%	20%	23%	27%	28%	25%

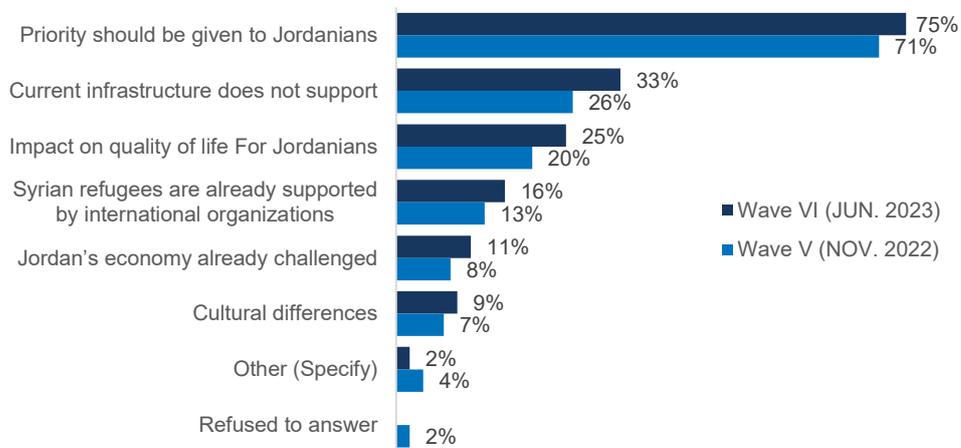
Residents of Amman and Zarqa were more supportive to the inclusion than other governorates in the study.

Reasons for not supporting refugee inclusion

Among respondents who were not supportive of refugee inclusion, similar reasons were given in this survey than half a year earlier. They cited opinions regarding priorities (to be given to Jordanians) and the pressure on the country’s infrastructure and economy.

Figure 23: Reasons for not supporting the inclusion of refugees

Percentage of respondents who do not support inclusion of refugees

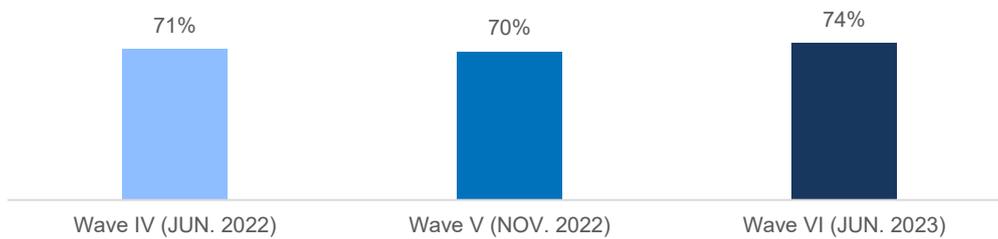


Jordanians supporting refugees

4 per cent more Jordanians than six months earlier declared they were supporting refugees in Jordan. More men than women reported that they had previously helped refugees.

Figure 24. Jordanians supporting refugees

Percentage of respondents reported to have supported refugees



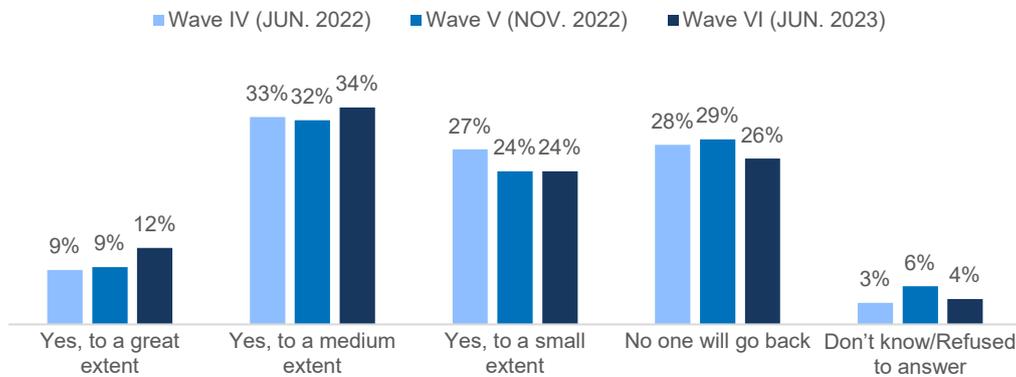
Return intentions

Perceptions of the return intentions of Syrian refugees

A similar percentage of Jordanians as in a previous survey expressed their view that Syrian refugees will return to Syria. 26 per cent said that Syrian refugees would not return, compared to 29 per cent in previous wave of the survey.

Figure 25. The effect of recent developments on Syrian refugees' return intentions

Percentage of respondents

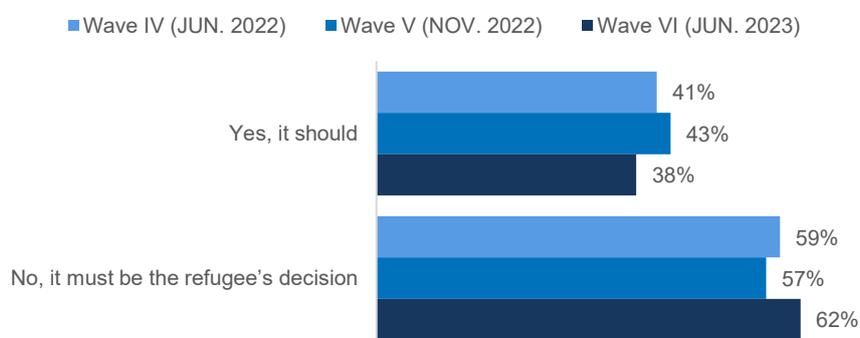


Perceptions on government role in sending refugees back home

More than half of Jordanians believed that refugees should be able to decide on whether they want to return to their countries or stay in Jordan. 7 per cent more men than women said that sending refugees back home is the government's role, while young Jordanians (18-35 years of age) believed more than older age groups that only the refugees themselves can decide whether to return or not.

Figure 26. Perceptions on government role in sending refugees back home

Percentage of respondents



Note: figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding

Table 5. Perceptions on government role in sending refugees back home – gender

Percentage of respondents – wave VI

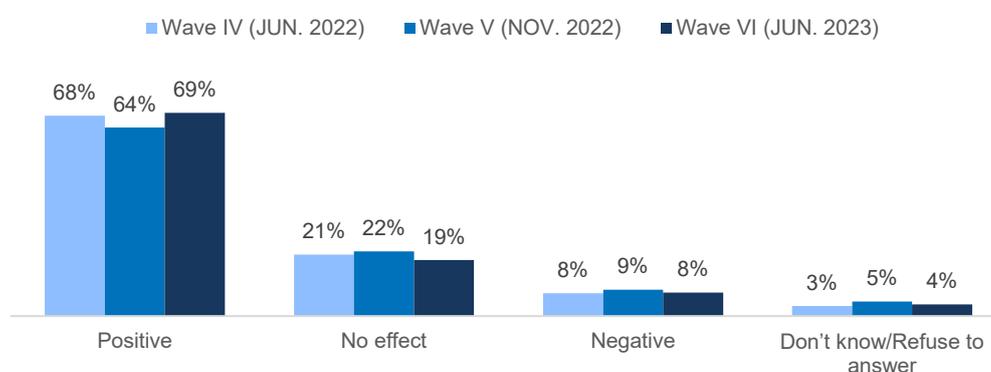
	Male	Female
Yes, it should	42%	35%
No, it must be the refugee's decision	58%	65%

Perceptions on the economic impact due to refugees return

69 per cent in this survey, compared to 64 per cent six months earlier, would expect a positive economic impact from the return of refugees. This expectation was stronger among women than among men.

Figure 27. Perceptions on economic impact due to refugee return

Percentage of respondents



Perception of international support to refugees

Perceptions of the support needed from the international community for refugees and Jordanians

Financial assistance, education, and health support were the aspects of refugee support by the international community in Jordan mentioned the most. Jordanians responded that the international community should support employment of Jordanians and assist in the development of Jordan’s economy.

Figure 28: What is needed from the international community to better support refugees

Percentage of respondents

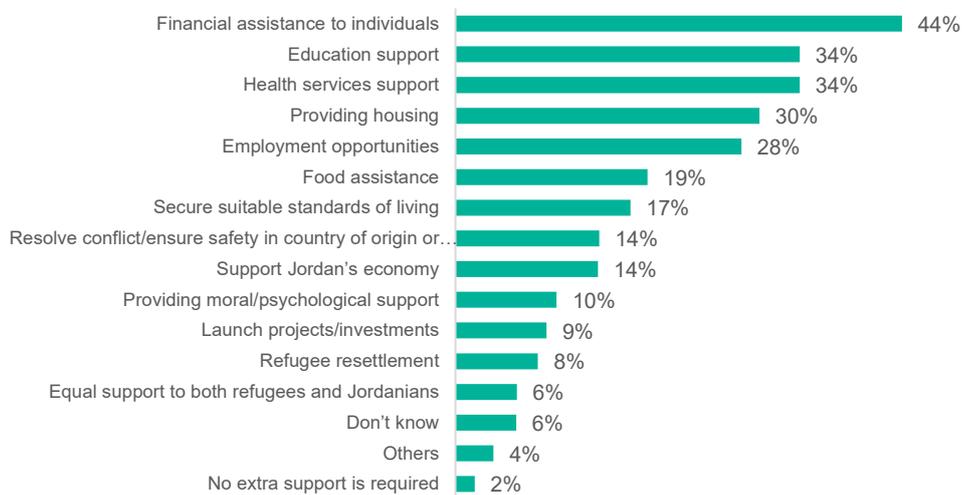
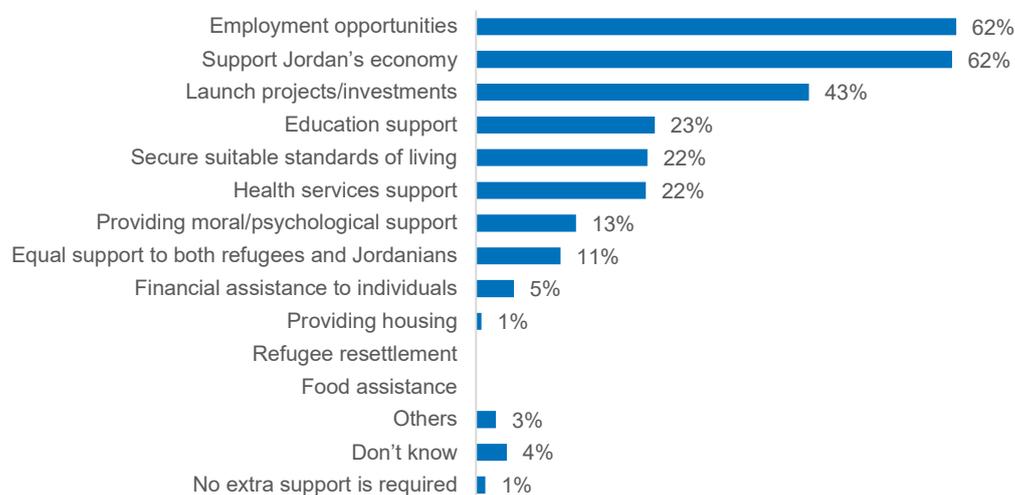


Figure 29: What is needed from the international community to better support Jordanians

Percentage of respondents



Conclusion

The findings of this survey concluded that Jordanians' sympathy levels towards refugees who escaped from their home countries due to conflicts remained high and almost identical to the previous wave of the survey in November 2022. Furthermore, the sympathy levels towards people coming to Jordan seeking better economic remained high as well, however it was slightly higher than half a year earlier.

While most respondents had a positive view towards refugees, negative views decreased since the previous wave of the survey.

Most Jordanians believed that the number of refugees in Jordan is very high, and that Jordan has done more than it is supposed to do for supporting refugees. Additionally, Jordanians believe that the government responded sufficiently to the refugee crisis.

While more than half of respondents perceived that refugee received more support than Jordanians, almost half of the respondents agreed that Jordan should allow people to enter Jordan if they were escaping unrest in their countries.

Slightly fewer than half of the respondents in this wave reported that their economic situation was impacted negatively by the refugee crisis, furthermore, many Jordanians believed that the refugee crisis had a large impact on Jordanians' employment prospects.

With regards to the return intentions of Syrian refugees after the recent developments in the crisis in Syria, many Jordanians believed that Syrians would return home, with over half of the sampled Jordanians agreed that the decision of returning should be in the hands of the refugees only. Furthermore, many Jordanians believed that the economic impact of refugee return would be positive.

A high agreement was seen on the views that financial, education, health support was required from the international community to improve the lives of refugees in Jordan. In addition, the international community should increase employment opportunities and support to the Jordanian economy.

About UNHCR

UNHCR, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (the UN Refugee Agency), is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights, and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities, and stateless people.

UNHCR in Jordan is present in three main offices across the Kingdom (Amman, Irbid and Mafrq) and is co-managing Jordan's two main refugee camps for Syrians, Azraq and Zaatari.

UNHCR works closely with the Government of Jordan and numerous national and international partners and agencies to provide protection and assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as to Jordanian communities affected by the refugee influx. In addition, UNHCR works on solutions for refugees.

About Headway

With a vision to be a leading insights' provider in Jordan and the region, Headway was established to capitalize on over two decades of market research experience by professionals who are passionate about market research to support the success of organizations by translating data into valuable and actionable insights. Headway's mission is to provide you with the most scientific and accurate insights to support our clients to lead the way.

PERCEPTION OF REFUGEES IN JORDAN

Wave VI Survey

June 2023



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