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MYSEA

Mediterranean Youth, NEETs and women advancing Skills,
Employment and Awareness in the blue and green economy

Country Territorial Analysis

Lebanon





Beirut

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Introduction

This research is conducted in the framework of the EU-funded project MYSEA, Mediterranean Youth, NEETs and women advancing Skills, Employment and Awareness in the blue and green economy. The project's aim is to increase the employability of young people, women and NEETs in the industries of the agri-food and waste sectors through the development of training oriented to both of them and by strengthening the local governance and sector-skills alliances between economic actors and TVET institutions to align the education curricula with sector's needs.

The Territorial Analysis is a document produced by every Partner Country, involved in the MYSEA project (Italy, Greece, Lebanon, Tunisia and Jordan) to describe the national context and summarize the findings from the national questionnaires and interviews. The situation analysis represents the reference to finalize the Cross Border Analysis and to design the Skills Development Agenda Scheme based on the Countries experience and requirements in order to develop cross border training curricula and improve common skills among the Mediterranean citizens.

This summary examines the territorial analysis of the MYSEA project in Lebanon. It offers concise insights into the key factors influencing the labor market's demand and supply of skills in the blue and green economies, particularly in waste management and agribusiness subsectors.

The information provided is based on the results of 268/250 questionnaires filled by youth; 104/100 questionnaires filled by economic actors; 21/20 questionnaires filled by TVET institutions; 25/25 interviews administered to economic actors in agrifood and waste management stakeholders; and 28/25 interviews conducted with TVET employees/managers.

“The 2014-2020 ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). The Programme objective is to foster fair, equitable and sustainable economic, social and territorial development, which may advance cross-border integration and valorise participating countries' territories and values. The following 13 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, and Tunisia. The Managing Authority (MA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French. For more information, please visit: www.enicbcmmed.eu.”





Background

Lebanon is blessed with an abundance of sun, wind, water, and great enablers such as favorable and diversified climate (e.g. tropical, subtropical), natural resources, strategic location, topography, skilled entrepreneurial talents, high level of education, affordable and available human capital, culinary culture, historical heritage, a large and connected diaspora, etc.

Compared with the Middle East average, Lebanon ranks significantly lower for the strength of its institutions, infrastructure, and macroeconomic environment, and lower for market size and innovation.¹

Lebanon's political system is afflicted by nepotism, cronyism, sectarianism, and a lack of cooperation and coordination among various public bodies, etc. These issues affect all sectors, including the blue and green ones.

Lebanon's current situation is plagued with the financial crisis, foreign currency shortages, the devaluation of the Lebanese Pound, corruption and an unfriendly system to businesses, Central Bank reserves are going dry, and shortages in goods and materials in the market are increasing. The loss of purchasing power hence is dramatic and mostly felt by those who earn in Lebanese Lira and have no other sources of income in foreign currencies. According to UNHCR 55% of the country's population is now trapped in poverty and struggling for bare necessities.

Since November 2019, Lebanon has been enduring multiple crises, including a massive explosion in Beirut's port, rising political instability, and the COVID-19 global pandemic, all of which endangered residents' basic rights. The Lebanese political class has failed to adequately address any of these crises, some of which were of their own making.

Furthermore, the Lebanese currency has lost more than 80% of its value since, eroding people's ability to access basic goods, including food, shelter, and healthcare. The COVID-19 pandemic compounded poverty and economic hardship.

Despite having the highest proportion of arable land in the Arab world with more than 200,000 hectares (494,000 acres), the agriculture sector is hampered by ineffective land utilization, suboptimal agribusiness trade, an inadequate regulatory framework, being underfunded, underdeveloped, and hindered by a lack of modern equipment and inefficient production techniques. Consequently, the agribusiness subsector is affected by the problems in the sector.

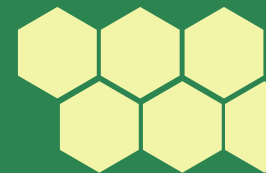
The blue sector is also succumbing to the same problems. The mismanagement of the waste subsector has plunged the country into a sea of garbage that is interfering with people's right to health and a healthy environment. The failure is due to a combination of corruption, poor governance, and weak infrastructure.²

¹ ESCWA (2020) Regional Initiative for Promoting Small-scale Renewable Energy Applications in Rural Areas of the Arab region (REGEND), <https://archive.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/publications/files/report-baseline-study-lebanon-english.pdf>.

² Human Rights Watch (2020) Lebanon: Huge Cost of Inaction in Trash Crisis, <https://www.hrw.org/node/375346/printable/print>.



The Agribusiness Subsector



The agriculture sector is the economic lifeline of rural areas in Lebanon. It generates 3% of the country's GDP and employs 11% of the active labor force in the formal and informal sectors, of which 5% are engaged in agribusiness-related activities.

Women account for a substantial proportion of the agricultural labor force. They perform informal work and the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work within families and households in rural areas. Because of the lack of censuses and gender-disaggregated data, it is difficult to give accurate information on the role of women in agriculture. However, the FAO and the UN estimated the women's workforce in the agriculture sector to be 43% in 2021.³

64.3% of Lebanon's total land area is classified as agricultural (32% globally), but only 39% of agri-land is currently being utilized. 14% of agricultural land is used for high value-added products. A limited part of agricultural land is currently being cultivated for high economic value products despite its eligibility.⁴

71% of agri-land holdings are less than one hectare. This fragmentation has an adverse impact on efficiency, which in turn limits the land's productivity and the positive returns of economies of scale.

In 2018, agricultural products accounted for 22% of Lebanon's exports and 18% of its imports.⁵ The main agricultural products are vegetables, fruits, wheat, and tobacco. In 2016, agricultural exports made up 24% of the exports, which included live animals, fruits, cereals, and prepared foodstuffs. More than half of these exports were destined for the GCC countries.⁶

The agro-food industry is among the most important industrial sectors in the country. 18.2% of Lebanese industrial enterprises are related to agro-food processing. It employs a workforce of approximately 21,000.

The sector faces great challenges, including but not limited to structural barriers (e.g. land degradation, ineffective land utilization, desertification, fragmentation, extreme weather events, and water scarcity). Other major obstacles facing the sector include:

- Unfavorable trade agreement frameworks with many top-performing trading partners and inefficient trade agreements currently in place offer minimal restrictions and safeguards for local produce.
- Limited food safety and quality standards, including unclear standards and weak oversight on food safety, with a fragile inspection system and lack of compliance with international quality concerns and export-related standards.
- A few beneficial initiatives are hampered by a lack of coordination with other government bodies and minimal promotion, thus diminishing their impact.
- Limited routes accessible to international markets for exports and a heavy reliance on imported products compete with local produce.

- Lack of an incentivizing agribusiness policy framework to encourage further investment, production, employment, local market development, and exports.

- The limited availability of funding options dedicated and tailored to agribusiness is further exacerbated by the current financial crisis.⁷

Another disadvantage is the transfer and adaptation of new technologies in the sector. They are still in their early stages, necessitate large investments, and are limited to individual initiatives.⁸

Youth harness negative perceptions towards agriculture as a way of life. In 2019, the number of students who are in Agricultural Technical Schools is at 211, compared to 55,022 students at public schools.⁹

³ FAO and the UN (2021), Role of women in agriculture in Lebanon, <https://lebanon.un.org/sites/default/files/03-2021/Briefing20%note20%-20%Women20%in20%agriculture20%English.pdf>.

⁴ More Capital (2020) Agri-Business in Lebanon Sector Perspective, <https://www.morecapital.com/Library/Assets/Gallery/Publications/LB20%Agri-Business20%Perspective20%.pdf>.

⁵ ESCWA (2019) Press Release: Technology in the Lebanese agriculture sector and support for small-scale farmers, <https://www.unescwa.org/news/technology-lebanese-agriculture-sector-and-support-small-scale-farmers>.

⁶ IDAL (2017) Agriculture Sector 2017 Factsheet, https://www.investinlebanon.gov.lb/Content/uploads/SideBlock/171010012459018~Agriculture20%factsheet2017_20%.pdf

⁷ More Capital (2020) Agri-Business in Lebanon Sector Perspective, <https://www.morecapital.com/Library/Assets/Gallery/Publications/LB20%Agri-Business20%Perspective20%.pdf>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ ESCWA (2019) Press Release: Technology in the Lebanese agriculture sector and support for small-scale farmers, <https://www.unescwa.org/news/technology-lebanese-agriculture-sector-and-support-small-scale-farmers>.

¹⁰ ILO and FAO (2020) Skills Development for Inclusive Growth in the Lebanese Agriculture Sector-Policy Brief. Beirut, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_774620.pdf.





The Waste Management Subsector

Lebanon adopted its first law on solid waste management (SWM) in September 2018, but its implementation has been stalled.¹⁰

For decades, Lebanon's waste management system has been highly centralized. The government awards contracts for waste collection, street cleaning, and landfill management in and around Beirut to firms that are typically affiliated with political elites. Critics have blasted this system for being expensive, opaque, and poorly regulated.¹¹

Currently, about 85% of solid waste goes to open dumps or landfills. Municipal unsorted waste is routinely sent to some 900 open-air dumps to be burned, creating a public health hazard.¹² The amount of toxins and diseases that this practice is introducing into the homes and bodies of the Lebanese people is utterly horrifying, and the same goes for the ecosystem.

In 2017, Human Rights Watch stated that residents of areas where waste was being dumped and burned reported health problems including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, coughing, throat irritation, skin conditions, and asthma.¹³

Lebanon spends US \$154.50 per ton on managing solid waste. By comparison, Algeria, Jordan, and Syria spend \$7.22, \$22.8, and \$21.55, respectively. In 2014, the cost of environmental degradation from improper SWM was \$66.5 million.¹⁴

¹⁰ More Capital (2020) Agri-Business in Lebanon Sector Perspective, <https://www.morecapital.com/Library/Assets/Gallery/Publications/LB20%Agri-Business20%Perspective20%.pdf>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² ESCWA (2019) Press Release: Technology in the Lebanese agriculture sector and support for small-scale farmers, <https://www.unescwa.org/news/technology-lebanese-agriculture-sector-and-support-small-scale-farmers>.

¹³ ILO and FAO (2020) Skills Development for Inclusive Growth in the Lebanese Agriculture Sector-Policy Brief. Beirut, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--arabstates/--ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_774620.pdf.

¹⁴ Ibid.

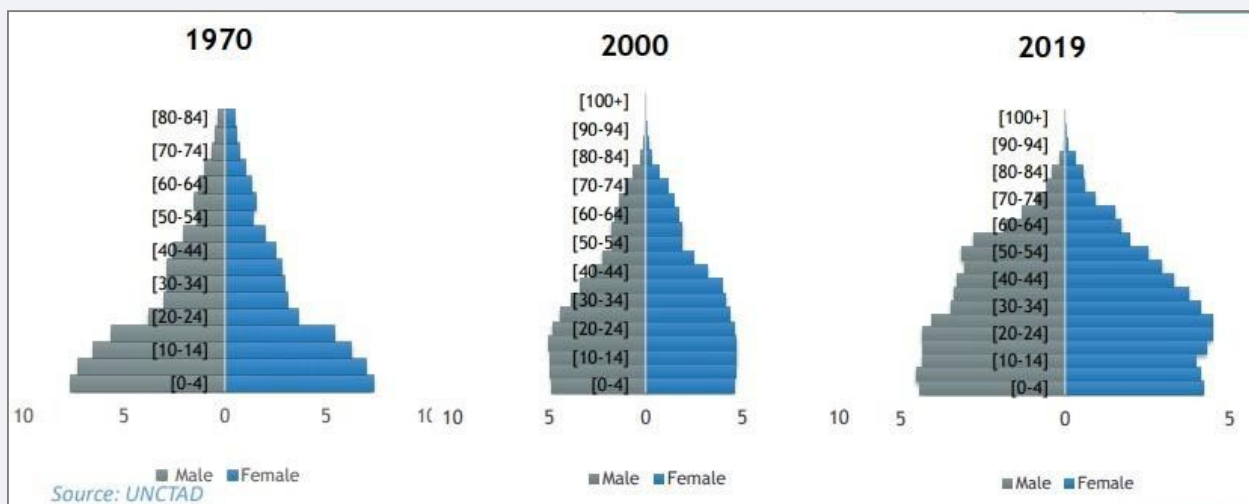


Characteristics of the labor market related to the Lebanese Labor Force



Demographic information on the Lebanese population is scarce. There has not been a census since 1932, consequently the exact demographic composition of the country's citizens is not fully known. However, estimated total population residing in the country was 6.1 million in July 2019 of which 80% are Lebanese and 20% are Palestinian and Syrian refugees.¹⁵

Lebanon has the highest life expectancy and the lowest fertility rate among countries in the MENA region,¹⁶ causing a gradual fall in the dependency ratio in 2020 (total dependency ratio: 48.4; youth dependency ratio: 37.2; elderly dependency ratio: 11.2).¹⁷



Lebanon has had very uneven population growth over the past 50 years, and it's currently growing at 1% per year. Its urbanization rate is rapidly growing and is expected to reach 86% in 2020. In the last three decades, Lebanon's demography has shifted towards higher age brackets due to a decrease in fertility rates.

International migration is another factor that affects the demographic changes, future births, competitiveness, labor, and religious diversity in the country. More than 1.5 million people emigrated from Lebanon between 1975 and 2011. An estimated number of over 96,000 Lebanese left the country overseas between 2020 and 2021.¹⁸

¹⁵ Central Administration of Statistics (2019) Labor Force and Household Living Conditions Survey (LFHLCS) 2019–2018, p. 4, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_732567.pdf.

¹⁶ ILO (2020) Lebanon Labor Market Profile, Danish Trade Union Development Agency, p. 12. <https://www.ulandssekretariatet.dk/wp-content/uploads/06/2020/LMP-Lebanon-2020-Final.pdf>.

¹⁷ Index Mundi (2020) Lebanon Dependency ratios, https://www.indexmundi.com/lebanon/dependency_ratios.html.

¹⁸ Ikram Saab (2022) The Lebanese are emigrating..., 10 February, <https://rb.gy/i530mg>.

Lebanon suffers from a gap between labor force demand and supply. [1] There are also “high unemployment rates, especially among university graduates, a non-unified description or classification of skills for jobs vs. curriculum..., as well as local students’ preference for academic post-graduate degrees rather than vocational and technical education.”¹⁹

Lebanon has a higher-than-average unemployment rate of more than 30%.²⁰ Most sectors in Lebanon have an employment elasticity below one (some even below 0.5), indicating that an increase in output by 1% increases employment by less than 0.5%.²¹

Over 350,000 jobs were lost between October 2019 and June 2020, and 1/5 of the companies have closed so far²² and counting.

Youth unemployment in Lebanon in 2019 reached 23.3%.²³ This rate has since increased. The youth labor underutilization rate reached 26%, with a consistently higher rate among females compared to males.²⁴

Women’s unemployment rate increased from 14.3% before 2019 to 26% by September 2020. This translates to a 63% increase—from 81,200 to 132,500—in the number of women unemployed—or 51,300 more women unemployed in June 2020 as compared to 2018/2019.²⁵ Women face discrimination in taxation and social benefits. For instance, married women pay more income tax than men since they are treated as single and are paid 27% less than men in the same position, despite labor laws prohibiting this discriminatory practice.²⁶ As the crisis protracts, women will continue to experience acute reductions in labor force participation and employment.

Difficult transitions are among the main causes behind the large number of NEETs and the fact that Lebanon has the highest percentage of transitioned youth (28.0%) in the ME region. Higher educational attainment provides a generally better chance of completing the transition both into the labor market and into stable employment.²⁷ Prior to the current crisis, it took a young person an average of 11 months from graduation to attain his/her first job, which is a short time in comparison with other countries in the region.²⁸

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Security Council Report (March 2021) Monthly Forecast, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/03-2021/lebanon5-1701-.php>.

²¹ ESCWA (2020) Workshop on Employment Creation in the Lebanese Formal Private Sector, June, https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/event/materials/lebanon_workshop_arabic_.2020-10-6.pdf.

²² Ibid.

²³ ETF (2021) Youth in Transition in The Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/03-2021/youth_in_semed.pdf.

²⁴ ILO, Ralitzia Dimova, Sara Elderand and Karim Stephan (2016) Labor market transitions of young women and men in the Middle East and North Africa, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_536067.pdf.

²⁵ UN-Women, Nisreen Salti and Nadine Mezher (2020) Women on the Verge of an Economic Breakdown: Assessing the differential impacts of the economic crisis on women in Lebanon, <https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/10/2020/report-women-on-the-verge-of-an-economic-breakdown-in-lebanon#view>.

²⁶ Lynn Mounzer (2021) Working Women and Post-COVID Lebanon, Wilson Center, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/working-women-and-post-covid-lebanon>.

²⁷ Ralitzia Dimova, Sara Elderand Karim Stephan, ILO, 2016, Labor market transitions of young women and men in the Middle East and North Africa, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_536067.pdf.

²⁸ Ibid.

There is a qualification mismatch among young employed people (15–24 years old), as well as all employed people (15+ years old), in the form of over-education and, to a lesser degree, in the form of under-education. According to these results, the level of education and training of about 31.5 per cent of young people in employment was higher than the requirements to perform their jobs. The rate of over-education was higher among young men (32.6%) and lower among young women (29.7%). Qualification mismatches in the form of under-education (i.e., the percentage of young people with a level of education and training below that required to perform their jobs) was about 22.9 per cent among young men and slightly lower at 18.8 per cent among young women.²⁹

Lebanon does not have a labor market information system and labor market data is not methodically collected as such labor market data and figures are outmoded and unreliable, particularly in terms of estimating the supply and demand for skills in each economic sector.

The growing gap between labor supply and demand in the market is due to several factors, including rigid labor regulations, skill mismatch, and poor governance structures.³⁰

In Lebanon, skill training systems lack systematic and ongoing efforts to align skill supply with market demand. Curricula, programs, and assessment methods at skills training centers are outdated. The latter is partially due to the absence of partnership and collaboration between TVET institutions and the private sector. The 2018-2022- Technical and Vocational Education and Training National Strategic Framework recognized this deficiency and identified measures to rectify it.³¹ None of the measures were implemented.

²⁹ Central Administration of Statistics (2019) Labor Force and Household Living Conditions Survey -2018 2019, <http://www.cas.gov.lb/images/Publications/Labor20%Force20%and20%Household20%Living20%Conditions20%Survey2019-202018%.pdf>.

³⁰ UNESCO, Enhancing Institutionalized Partnerships between TVET Institutions and the World of Work in Lebanon, 2020, https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/report_lebanon-ppp_2020_-_final.pdf.

³¹ Ministry of Labor, National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocational Education and Training in Lebanon 2018 ,2022-2018, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_633487.pdf.



MAJOR FINDINGS

RESULTS FOR THE PRIMARY BENEFICIARIES:

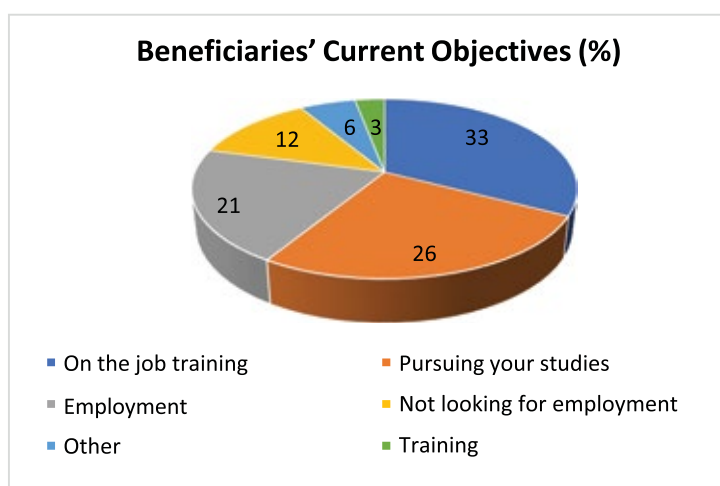
This section provides the results of the data analysis of the primary beneficiaries. Two hundred and sixty-eight YW-NEETs (268) responded to the survey.

General Information on the Participating Beneficiaries

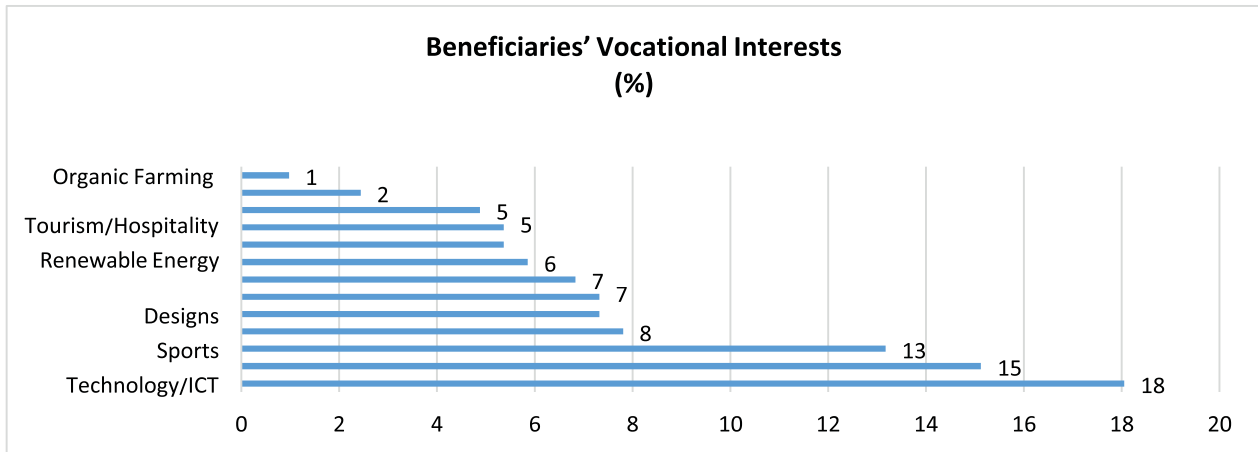
- 64% were aged 18-34, 30% between 35-54, 18% between 45-64.
- 75% were female and 25% male.
- 44% are holders of university degrees, 18% have T&V education, 25% have high school degrees, and 13% have elementary education.
- 37% are competent at taking initiatives and at having an entrepreneurial spirit, while 37% are able to communicate in a foreign language, 23% are adept at science and technology, 22% in marketing, 21% in social and civic efficacy, and 15% in innovation and the ability to create new products.

Three-quarters are unemployed and only half had some income in the past 12 months. 74% are currently unemployed, 31% have never worked, 30% are unemployed but have previously worked, and 26% are currently employed. As for their earnings in the past 12 months, 49.6% affirmed their earnings. 27% engaged in self-employment in the past year.

Over a third want to improve their skills and competencies. 33% want to improve their skills/competencies through on-the- job training, 26% aspire to continue their studies, and 21% want jobs. Only 17% took training in the past 12 months.



Less than 10% are interested in vocational training in agribusiness and waste management, respectively. 18% showed interest in social services, 15% in business, 13% in technology/ICT, 8% in agribusiness, 7% in sports, science, and design respectively, 6% in waste management, and 5% in renewable energy, health care, and tourism/hospitality respectively.



Over half declined job offers due to low salary and a similar number believe that personal contacts influence finding satisfactory jobs. 54% declined the job because of the low pay, 24% because the job did not match their qualifications, 11% were awaiting better offers, and 8% were not covered by a contract or social insurance.

60% ranked personal contacts as a way to find a satisfactory job; 37% said luck; 34% said education; 20% skills; and 16% recommendation.

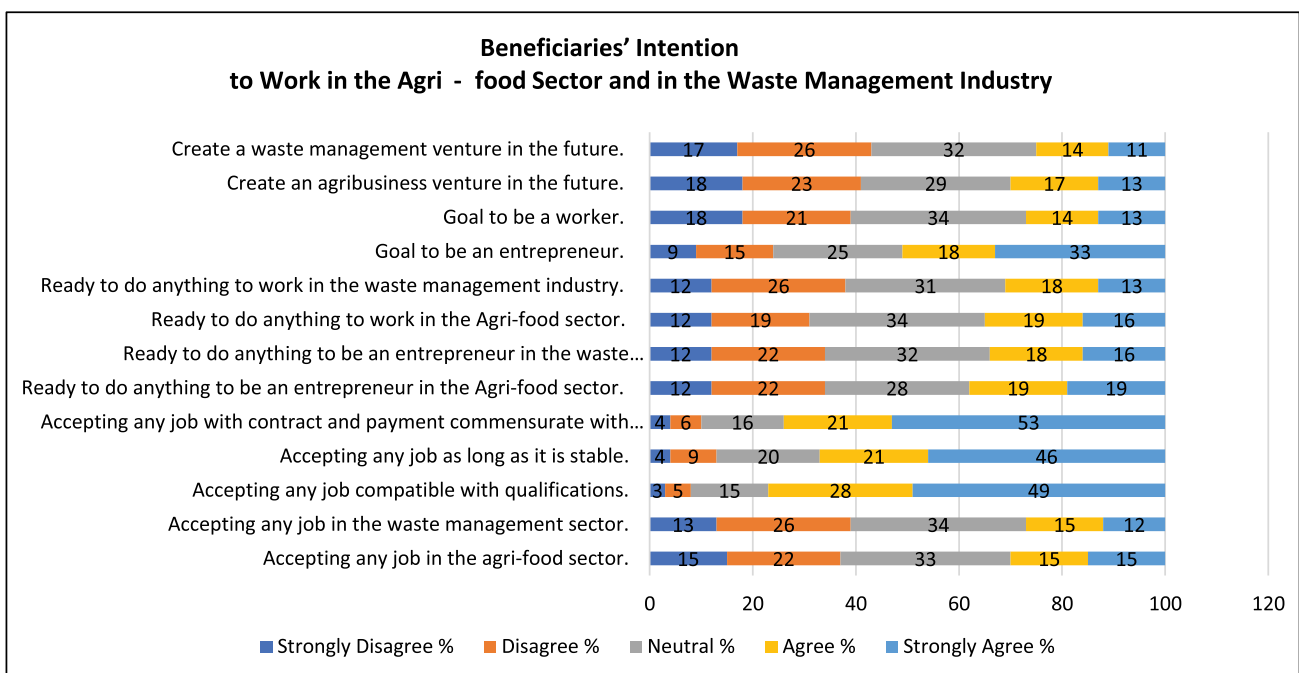
Over three-quarters lack knowledge about the Circular Bio-Based Economy (CBBE).

Over three-quarters said that Lebanon had not adopted waste management policies.

90% are committed to recycling and believe that sorting at the source is the first step.

70% said that Lebanon does not have an employment policy for YW-NEETs and that they themselves are incapable of suggesting ways to promote the inclusion of these groups in the labor market.

30% said that they might accept any job in the agri-food sector and 27% said that they would accept any job in the waste management sector.



RESULTS FROM THE ECONOMIC ACTORS' SURVEY (EAS) AND THE ECONOMIC ACTORS' INTERVIEWS (EAI)

This section provides the results of 104 self-administered surveys and 25 interviews.

General Information on the Participating Economic Actors

- 60% work in the agribusiness subsector and 38% in the waste management sector.
- 35% are producers of food/crops respectively, 20% use organic farming, 16% grow orchards, 15% are in agriculture, 13% grow vineyards, and 10% produce dairy products.
- 50% are engaged in conventional farming.
- 55% deals with domestic waste, 25% deals with industrial waste, 8% organic waste, 5% agricultural waste, and 3% medical waste.

General Information on the Interviewed Economic Actors

- 11 out of 25 are micro-businesses, five SMEs, two are MEs, four are medium-high, two are large-low, and one is large-high. 15 out of 25 are linked to the agri-food sector (e.g. dairy products, produce, wine and spirits, apple chips, packaging material), 10 are in the waste management sector. The specialization ranges from domestic/residential waste management and municipal waste, commercial and institutional waste, to industrial, process, and medical waste, to construction and demolition.
- The 10 waste management economic actors have as main activities waste recycling, followed by waste collection and storage, waste transportation, waste reuse, waste treatment and waste removal, and landfill disposal.
- The 15 agri-business economic actors produce dairy products, agricultural produce, wine and spirits, recycled material, apple chips, dried food, fresh and cut ready vegetables, agri-food, food and beverage, carton rolls and sheets, and food boxes.

75% of EAS respondents stated that they are not hiring at the moment, while 60% of the EAI interviewees are hiring.

Both the EAS respondents and the EAI interviewees said that applicants are more women than men.

75% of the EAS respondents and 75% of the EAI interviewees, respectively, said that their employees' skills meet their expectations.

The majority of both EAS respondents and the EAI interviewees are interested in improving the skills of their staff.

The majority of both the EAS respondents and the EAI interviewees would like the training to be in quality control, waste management, procurement, digital marketing, communication and use of technology, financial management, agri-food production, crisis management, drying fruits, and culinary art.

The majority of both the EAS and EAI believe that the agribusiness and waste management subsectors present opportunities for new job profiles.

Half of the EAS respondents did not know about the CBBE concept, while half of the EAI interviewees knew about it.

The majority of the EAS respondents and the EAI interviewee agreed that Lebanon lacks any sustainability policies or actions to implement a sustainable food chain.

50% of the EAS respondents and 68% of the EAI interviews said that Lebanon does not implement policies for waste management.

Almost all of the EAS respondents and the EAI interviewees will commit to recycling through reducing, reusing, recycling, and repurposing/upcycling.

Both the EAS respondents and the EAI interviewees said that the labor market needs skilled labor in marketing, agronomy, waste management, innovation/new products, environmental awareness, and initiative/entrepreneurship.

EAS respondents said that the labor market is in need of specialized people in waste management. These specializations include: domestic waste, industrial waste, organic waste converted into animal feed, agricultural waste, and medical waste.

EAS respondents indicated that there has not been any change in demand for skills in the last 5 years. However, the EAI interviewees said that they have seen such changes in demand, especially in waste management, marketing, innovation, and creating and offering new products.

85% of the EAS respondents and 68% of the EAI interviewees said that Lebanon lacks employment policies for YW-NEETs.

SURVEY RESULTS FOR THE TVET INSTITUTIONS' SURVEY AND INTERVIEWS

In this section, we provide the results of the TVETs' self-administered survey (21/20) and the conducted interviews with 28/25 TVETs. 18/21 of the TVET respondents were public institutions, two (2) were private, and one was for profit. As for the interviewed TVETs, 25 were public and three (3) were private. The twenty-eight institutions were located in various districts of the country.

18 of the TVET respondents are public institutions. Two (2) are private, and one is for profit, while the TVETs interviewed were composed of 22 public and three private ones. The Lebanese government is the main source of financing for the public TVETs, while the private ones are privately funded, and the one for profit provides services for some profit margin.

Surveyed and interviewed TVETs provide technical training, job-oriented education, e- learning education, continuing professional training, and vocational training.

The sectors served by the surveyed and interviewed TVETS are: commerce and management, engineering, business, education, manufacturing, technology, and hospitality.

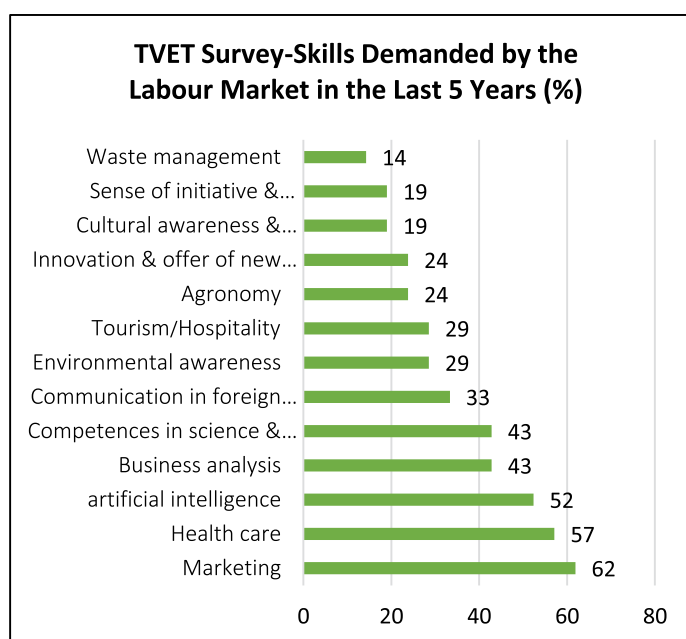
40 TVET institutions have both male and female beneficiaries between the ages of 18 and 24. Three (3) serving members between the ages of 18 and 24. One (1) caters to women over the age of 24. Students have mainly secondary school education, followed by BA/BS degrees, and TVET degrees (e.g. TB, BT, TS, etc.).

50% of the TVETs' applicants are unemployed people motivated to find jobs.

Some TVET programs are very beneficial for those who do manual work or for those who need motivation to enter the labor market. No self-employment support programs exist. **Most TVETs said that their programs and curricula lag behind the industrial job market's demand, particularly in regards to technological skills. Others indicated that TVET education does not adequately prepare students for the demands of the labour market. Yet others indicated that there is a need to train the teachers to better prepare the students for the job market.**

TVET institutions reported a lack of reliable methods for identifying skills gaps and matching skill demand and supply. Furthermore, there is a lack of credible and fair cross-border mechanisms for the recognition of skills.

TVET institutions said that jobs demanded by the labor market in the past five (5) years are mainly in marketing, health care, artificial intelligence, business analysis, science and technology, product innovation and introduction of new products, business evaluation, agronomy, and waste disposal.

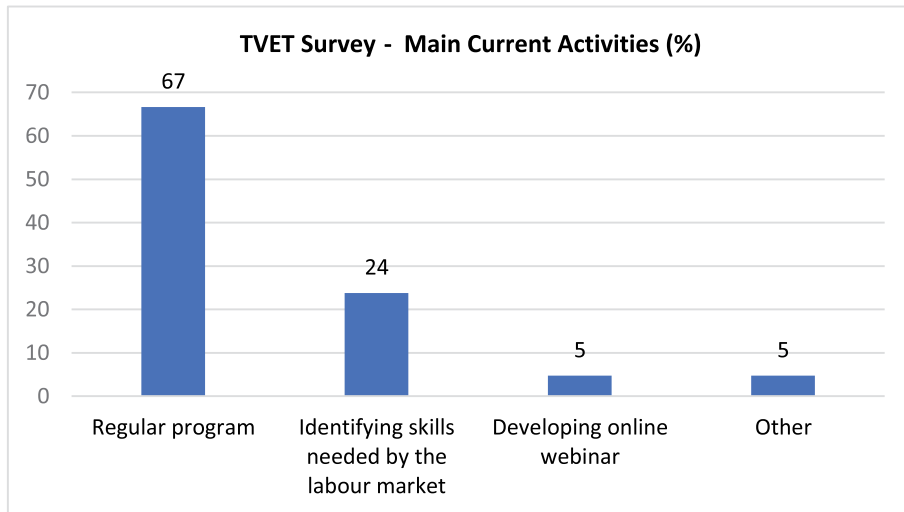


TVETs interviewed identified the following as hard-and soft-skills demanded by employers: communication, critical thinking, creativity, information technology, use of social media, digitization, initiative and entrepreneurship, fluency in a foreign language, and teamwork.

TVETs indicated that all sectors lack a skilled workforce. They emphasize, however, that the main sectors affected by this shortage are: agribusiness, tourism and hospitality, industrial, manufacturing, computer-aided intelligence, and waste disposal.

Half of the surveyed TVETs were ignorant of the Circular Biobased Economic Concept. However, two-third were familiar with the sustainability concept and over half said that the effect of sustainability principles did not affect the design of the training courses.

65% of the TVET institutions continued to offer their regular programs, 24% identified labor- market skills to incorporate into their programs, and 5% developed online webinars.



80% of TVET institutions surveyed said gender balance in training offered was achieved.

The majority of the TVETs disclosed that Lebanon does not adopt social inclusion policies or priorities for YW-NEETs employment. Priorities for YW-NEETs are mostly facilitated by civil society. They agreed that Lebanon has not, in the last three years, made any effort to reduce unemployment and/or initiate any interventions to create jobs or support the employment of YW-NEETs.



SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE SURVEYED AND THE INTERVIEWED



The following are the suggested recommendations by the beneficiaries, the economic actors, and the TVET institutions.

ON THE MACRO LEVEL

- Introduce serious reforms to reduce corruption, nepotism, cronyism, and unaccountability.
- Standardize policies and their related regulatory measures in all sectors of the economy.
- Stabilize the exchange rate.
- Restructure the value chains to introduce equity and increase opportunities.
- Use less fossil fuel to implement a sustainable food chain.
- Capitalize on Lebanon's water, climate, and land resources in the agricultural sector.
- Benefit from the waste produced by creating jobs through recycling, reusing, and upscaling.
- Support exports and open new markets.
- Institute a quota system (e.g., affirmative action) for women and youth.
- Introduce support systems to retain married women and female care-givers in the labor market.

ON THE SECTORAL LEVEL

Agriculture/Agribusiness

- Reclamation of arable land.
- Set up an agricultural calendar.
- Found agricultural pharmacies, which provide job opportunities for the highly skilled (e.g., agricultural engineers) and for skilled and unskilled labor to support better farming.
- Establish fish ponds (e.g., northern Lebanon due to the availability of land and human resources) to create job opportunities in the field of fish farming and related industries.
- Set up agricultural banks to support farmers and agribusiness ventures through low-interest loans.
- Develop and enlarge the beekeeping sector.
- Involve women in the beekeeping sector.
- Develop the olive oil mills for better quality and waste impact reduction.
- Offer various schemes to support organic and bio-fertilizers, bio-pesticides, etc.
- Set up agricultural extension courses.
- Assist farmers' cooperatives.
- Provide assistance and secure low-interest loans for women farmers and self-employed women in the agri-business field.

Waste Management

- Enact liability measures for polluters.
- Generate electrical power from landfills and solar and wind energy, etc.
- Reduce imports to encourage local innovation and recycling.
- Establish recycling plants and train YW-NEETs for employment in recycling, reusing, and upscaling waste.
- Conduct waste management workshops at the municipal level.
- Sort at the source.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

- Overhaul the legal and regulatory framework to allow for the inclusion of YW-MEETs in the labor market.
- Revamp and modernize public TVETs and their curricula to improve, among other things, efficiency.
- Restructure the lead public TVET-related entities to play a more active role in developing and implementing strategies in the sector.
- Enhance coordination between the Ministry of Education and other public and private stakeholders for efficiency.
- National sectoral strategies should focus on innovation, sustainable development, and available human resources.
- Reduce rigidity in the curricula and equip and permit TVETs to respond to job market requirements.
- Policies to legally protect wages and set the minimum pay structures for TVET graduates.
- Develop partnerships with the private sector and local and international NGOs.
- Encourage women to specialize in new branches of science.
- Establish a reliable Market Information System to assess labor market needs, adapt curriculum accordingly, and reduce mismatches between labor demand and supply.
- Include transversal skills in the TVET curricula such as creativity, critical thinking, leadership, negotiation, problem-solving, social networking, idea generation, start-up, and time-management skills.
- Involve the private sector in the strategic planning and decision-making for TVET curricula.
- Sign agreements with the private sector for the provision of work-based learning opportunities. Hire TVET educators with the needed qualifications and practical experience.
- Raise awareness of youth, parents, and society about the existence of TVET centers and programs and the potential of TVET education for job opportunities.
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Contact Information:

CIES Onlus

Development Information
and Education Center

mysea.coordination@cies.it

cies@cies.it

www.enicbcmmed.eu/projects/mysea

