

Jordan

Type of Government: Constitutional Government.

Head of State: King Abdullah II

Capital City: Amman

Ideology: One of the most liberal Middle Eastern countries, with close ties to the West

Region: Middle East

Neighbours: Iraq, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Syria



DEMOGRAPHICS

- **Population:** 6.5 million (Slightly smaller than Israel). Very low population growth (ranked 182nd of 233) but one of the lowest death rates in the world (ranked 222nd of 226).
- **Religion:** Sunni Muslim 92% (the official state religion), Christian 6%, and a small minority of Shia Muslim.
- **Age:** Median age of 22, life expectancy of 80 (comparatively high)
- **Ethnicities:** 98% Arab, 1% Circassian, 1% Armenian. Jordan also hosts many ethnic refugees
- **National Language:** Arabic, but English is widely understood among the upper and middle classes.



ECONOMY

- Low regional GDP of US\$ 38.24 billion (105th worldwide, but just below North Korea).
- World Bank Classification: Middle-Income Economy; considered an “emerging market,”
- Poverty Rate: 14.2% below line, but unemployment at 12.5% (relatively low for the region)
- GDP growth was 2.8% (2012 est.) maintained from 2.6% (2011 est.) and 2.3% (2010 est.)
- Inflation rate: 4.8% (2012 est.)
- Jordan's economy is among the smallest in the Middle East, with insufficient supplies of water, oil, and other natural resources, underlying the government's heavy reliance on foreign assistance. Other economic challenges for the government include chronic high rates of poverty, inflation, and a large budget deficit.

Major Industries

- Services 77%
- Industry 10%
- Agriculture 3% of GDP

Exports

- **Major Trading Partners:** China, India, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and United States.
- Value of exports was around \$7.9 billion US, which was part of the recent large government deficit

Imports

- In 2011 the total value of imports was US\$18.46
- All crude oil and petroleum is imported due to lack of reserves

Natural Resources

- A notable absence of arable land
- Water supply limited
- With no substantial coal reserves, hydroelectric power, large tracts of forest or commercially viable oil deposits, Jordan relies on oil imports for all its energy production

MILITARY

Size: 110,700 active troops, 65,000 reservists

The Jordanian Armed Forces are considered one of the most well trained and organised forces in the region, and enjoys strong support from the US, UK and France.

Army: 1400 Light and Medium Tanks, 2600 armoured vehicles, and 621 artillery units. The military, whilst well organised, lacks necessary resources to modernise most equipment

Air Force: 12,000 service people and around just over 200 aircraft.

Navy: Jordan possesses only a limited navy, only 27 naval patrol boats, as it is generally landlocked besides 26 km of coastline in the Gulf of Aqaba.



POLITICS

Domestic politics

- Vast legislative and executive powers lie with King, who serves as Head of State, Commander-in-Chief, and appoints the Prime Minister, Cabinet and regional Governors.
- Religion based political parties have been banned in Jordanian politics since 2012.
- The Jordanian legal system is derived from French civil law, Sharia law, and tribal traditions.

Foreign Policy Concerns

- Jordan has followed a pro-Western foreign policy and maintained close relations with the United States, United Kingdom, and France.
- Jordan is one of two Arab nations to have made peace with Israel,
- Strong supporter of UN peacekeeping – the largest contributor in the region
- Currently hosting 2.7 million refugees from Palestine, Iraq and Syria
- The Syrian conflict is one of the most pressing foreign issues facing Jordan

More Information

Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jordan>

CIA: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

BBC: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14631981

Latest news from the New York Times (<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/jordan/>)

The Economist (<http://www.economist.com/topics/kingdom-jordan>)

The Guardian (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/jordan>), and

Al-Jazeera (<http://www.aljazeera.com/category/country/jordan>),