

# Labour Force Surveys: An overview

## Outline

- **Overview of current situation**
- **Discrepancies with ILO**
- **Further topics in LFS-s**
- **Other challenges**

# Data Sources

- All countries (save Lebanon) have had 1-2 censuses since 1990  
Limited labor force data & slightly different definitions (reference period)
- Most have LFS or household surveys with labor force questions  
E.g. Lebanon: living conditions survey and post-war living conditions survey ('07) included a module on labor force
- Lack of longitudinal LF surveys for most countries
- Limited use of administrative data
- Problems:
  - Lack of time series in most countries
  - Incomparability of data collected :  
Different years & different definitions/standards

# Source of data used

The following presentation is built upon:

- Online , closed and open ended questionnaire in excel format sent by ESCWA to member countries, gathering information on: Additional topics in LFS, sample design, employment /unemployment definition and calculation method, background information, classifications used, periodicity, response rates, date of the first survey et...

**-10 Countries responded** to the questionnaire : Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Qatar, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Oman

**-4 Countries did not respond** to the questionnaire : Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Sudan, Yemen

- For Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, information were gathered from their National Statistical Offices websites.
- For Yemen, the source used is: FINAL REPORT (1999 Labour Force Survey Results)

# Labor force surveys

Country	Title	Date of first survey	Geographic Coverage	Latest Periodicity
<b>Algeria</b> (Office National des Statistiques)	Survey on employment and unemployment	1998	Whole country	Annual
<b>Tunisia</b> (INS)	National Employment Survey	2005	...	Annual
<b>Morocco</b> (Direction de la Statistiques)	National Survey of urban economically active population	2000	Urban areas	Continuous/Annual
<b>Egypt</b> (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics)	Labor Force Survey	1957	Nationals	Quarterly (since 2007)
<b>Syria</b> (Central Bureau of Statistics)	-Labor Force Survey -Manpower Survey (2006-2010)	1983	Nationals	Bi-annual (since 2008)

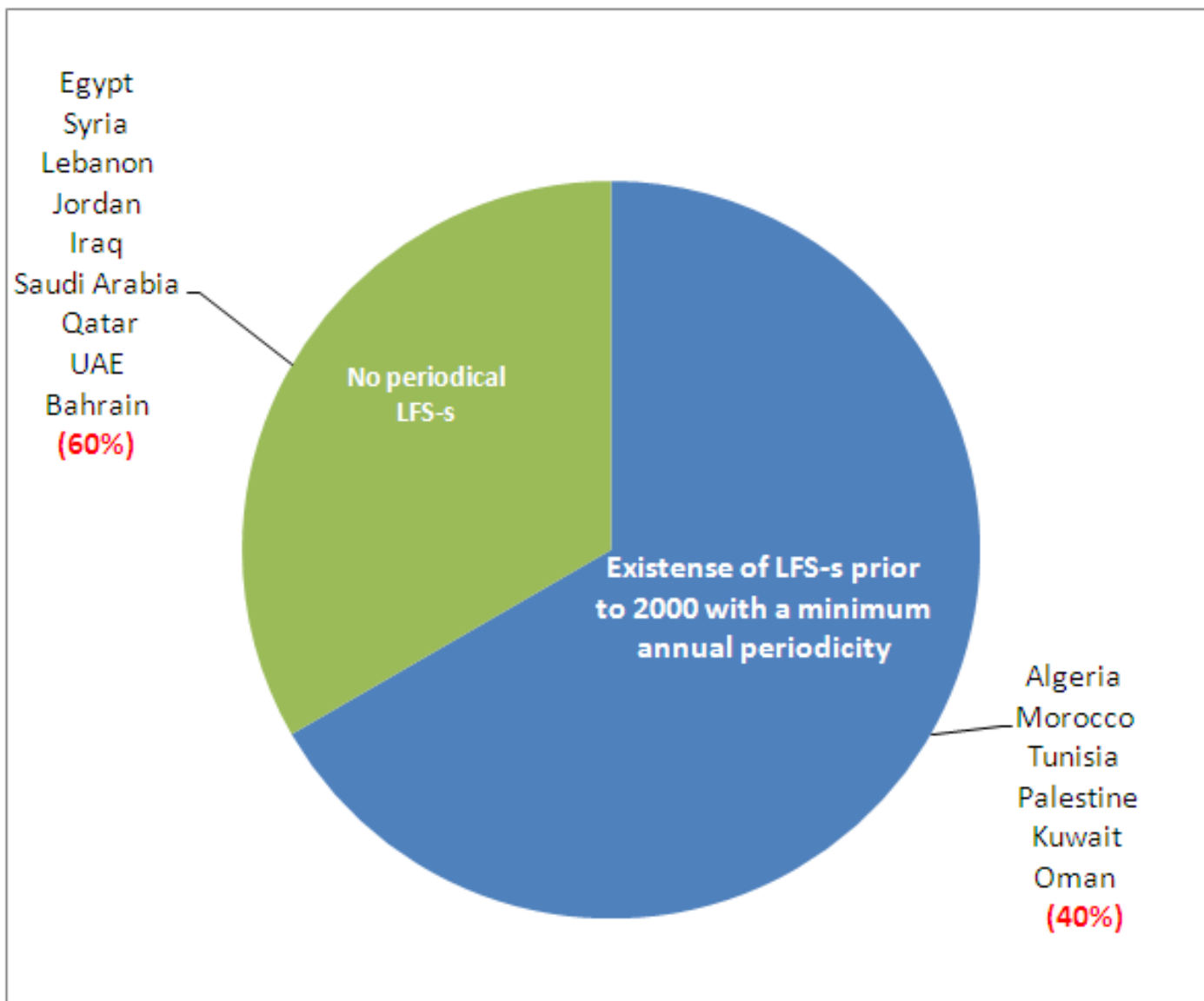
# Labor force surveys

Country	Title	Date of first survey	Geographic Coverage	Periodicity
<b>Jordan</b> (Department of Statistics)	Employment and Unemployment Survey	1966	Nationals and non-nationals	Quarterly (since 1999)
<b>Palestine</b> (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics)	Labor Force Household Survey	1995	Nationals	Continuous/Quarterly
<b>Lebanon</b> (Central Administration for Statistics)	Living conditions survey	2004	Whole country, excluding Palestinian camps	Ad-hoc
<b>Iraq</b> (Central organization for statistics and Information Technology)	-labor Force Survey -Living Conditions Survey (2004)	2011	Nationals and non-nationals	Annual

# Labor force surveys

Country	Title	Date of first survey	Geographic Coverage	Periodicity
<b>Kuwait</b> (Central Statistical Office)	Labor Force Survey	1973	Nationals and non-nationals	Annual
<b>Saudi Arabia</b> (Central Department of Statistics and Information)	-Labor Force Survey -Manpower Survey (1999)	1977	Nationals and non-nationals	Bi-annual (since 2007)
<b>Qatar</b> (Qatar Statistics Authority)	Labor Force Survey	2001	Nationals and non-nationals	Annual
<b>Yemen</b> (Yemen Central Statistical Office)	Labor Force Survey	1999	Urban/Rural	Ad-hoc
<b>Oman</b> (Ministry of National Economy)	Labor Force Survey	1996	Nationals and non-nationals	Periodic (period not specified)

# Existence of LF time series since 2005



# Specific topics covered in the surveys

## Indicators

## Countries

**Duration of unemployment**

Algeria-Egypt-Iraq-Jordan-Kuwait-Lebanon-Morocco-Palestine-Qatar-Saudi Arabia-Syria-Oman

**Hours of work**

Egypt-Iraq-Jordan-Kuwait-Lebanon-Morocco-Palestine-Qatar-Saudi Arabia-Syria

**Wages**

Egypt-Iraq-Jordan-Kuwait-Lebanon-Morocco-Palestine-Qatar-Saudi Arabia-Syria-Oman

**Underemployment**

Egypt-Iraq-Jordan-Lebanon-Morocco-Palestine-Syria

**Employment in the informal sector**

Egypt-Iraq-Jordan-Palestine-Qatar

**Social security and health insurance**

Egypt-Iraq-Lebanon-Saudi Arabia

**Date of the first employment**

Egypt-Lebanon-Syria

**Work entitlements**

Egypt-Iraq-Palestine

Source: ESCWA questionnaire, as for Algeria, Morocco information were gathered from the ILO website ([http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p\\_lang=en](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p_lang=en)), and for Tunisia, from INS (Institute of National Statistics)



# Occupation and Industry classifications used by countries

Country	Industry Classification	Occupation classification
Algeria	Nomenclature des activités et produits - NAP	Statut général du travailleur – SGT (adapted from ISCO-1968)
Egypt	ISIC 4	ISCO 88
Iraq	ISIC 3	ISCO 08
Jordan	ISIC 4	ISCO 08
Kuwait	ISIC 3	ISCO 88
Lebanon	ISIC 3.1	ISCO 88
Morocco	ISIC 3	ISCO 88
Palestine	ISIC 3	ISCO 88
Qatar	ISIC 4	ISCO 88
Syria	دليل التصنيف العربي المعياري للمهن 2008	دليل التصنيف العربي المعياري للمهن 2008
Saudi Arabia	ISIC 3	ISCO 88
Tunisia	ISIC 3	ISCO 88
Yemen	...	...
Oman	ISIC 3.1	الدليل المهني الخليجي

Source: ESCWA questionnaire, as for Algeria, Morocco information were gathered from the ILO website ([http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p\\_lang=en](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p_lang=en)), and for Tunisia, from INS (Institute of National Statistics)

- The majority of countries have adopted ISIC (3 or 4) and ISCO (08 or 88 )classifications.
- Nearly all countries have background information in their LFS-s, e.g. age, sex, marital status, education.
- Discrepancy across labor force categories re some background information, for example getting only information from the employed ....

# Discrepancies in definitions/concepts: Employment & unemployment

Country	Employment		Unemployment	
	Age	definition	Age	definition
<b>Algeria</b>	15+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ all persons who have worked or been engaged in an economic activity for pay, in cash or in kind, either one day or one week during the month preceding the survey reference date</li> <li>➤ including family workers and apprentices</li> </ul>	15+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All persons who are out of work, of working age, able to work, and who have stated that they are seeking employment</li> </ul>
<b>Morocco</b>	15+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ participated in the production of goods and services at least one hour during 24 hours that preceded the interview.....</li> <li>➤ Paid and unpaid apprentices and trainees, if they participate in the firms production</li> </ul>	15+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ without work, were available for work and were seeking for a job, including the discouraged workers.</li> </ul>

Source: ESCWA questionnaire, as for Algeria, Morocco information were gathered from the ILO website ([http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p\\_lang=en](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p_lang=en)), and for Tunisia, from INS (Institute of National Statistics)

# Discrepancies in definitions/concepts: Employment & unemployment

Country	Employment		Unemployment	
	Age	definition	Age	definition
<b>Tunisia</b>	15+	➤ Persons participated in the production of goods and services at least one hour during 24 hours during a reference week...	15+	➤ not working during the week of reference , seeking a job during the month preceding the day of the interview, and being available for work within two weeks following the reference date.
<b>Egypt</b>	15+	➤ Persons who were engaged in a production or service activity, for one hour or more during the reference week, or had a formal job attachment but were temporary absent from work during .....	15-64	➤ without work, were available for work and were seeking for a job during the week preceding the day of the interview, even if having a job contract for the future, including the discouraged workers.

Source: ESCWA questionnaire, as for Algeria, Morocco information were gathered from the ILO website ([http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p\\_lang=en](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p_lang=en)), and for Tunisia, from INS (Institute of National Statistics)

# Discrepancies in definitions/concepts: Employment & unemployment

Country	Employment		Unemployment	
	Age	definition	Age	definition
<b>Iraq</b>	12+	➤ All persons who have worked or been engaged in an economic activity for pay, in cash or in kind, including employers, family workers or individual workers, working for at least one hour during the week preceding the survey reference date	12+	➤ All persons who have not worked at least one hour during the week preceding the survey reference date.
<b>Jordan</b>	15+	➤ All persons who have worked in public or private sector, working for at least one hour during the week preceding the survey reference date	15+	➤ All persons who are out of work, of working age, able to work, seeking employment, and have not worked during the reference period.

Source: ESCWA questionnaire, as for Algeria, Morocco information were gathered from the ILO website ([http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p\\_lang=en](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p_lang=en)), and for Tunisia, from INS (Institute of National Statistics)

# Discrepancies in definitions/concepts: Employment & unemployment

Country	Employment		Unemployment	
	Age	definition	Age	definition
<b>Kuwait</b>	15+	➤ Persons participated in the production of goods and services during a reference week (the survey week)...	15-64	➤ All persons who are out of work, of working age, able to work, seeking employment, and have not worked during a reference week (the survey week)...
<b>Lebanon</b>	10+	➤ All persons who have worked or been engaged in an economic activity for pay, in cash or in kind, at least one hour the week preceding the survey reference date...	10-64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Not worked during the week before the survey date</li> <li>➤ Able and ready to work in the 2 weeks after the survey date</li> <li>➤ Actively sought work in the 4 weeks before the survey date</li> </ul>

Source: ESCWA questionnaire, as for Algeria, Morocco information were gathered from the ILO website ([http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p\\_lang=en](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p_lang=en)), and for Tunisia, from INS (Institute of National Statistics)

# Discrepancies in definitions/concepts: Employment & unemployment

Country	Employment		Unemployment	
	Age	definition	Age	definition
<b>Palestine</b>	15+	➤ All working age group that have worked or been engaged in an economic activity for pay, in cash or in kind, including employers, family workers or individual workers.	15+	➤ All persons who are out of work, of working age, able to work, actively seeking employment, and have not worked during the reference period.
<b>Qatar</b>	15+	➤ All persons who have worked or been engaged in an economic activity for pay, in cash or in kind.	15+	➤ All persons who are out of work, of working age, able to work, seeking employment, and have not worked during the reference period.

# Discrepancies in definitions/concepts: Employment & unemployment

Country	Employment		Unemployment	
	Age	definition	Age	definition
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	15+	➤ All persons who have worked or been engaged in an economic activity for pay, in cash or in kind, including employers, family workers or individual workers, working for at least one hour during the week preceding the survey reference date, employees on sick leave are also included.	15+	➤ All persons who are out of work, of working age, able to work, seeking employment, and have not worked during a reference week .
<b>Syria</b>	15+	➤ Persons participated in the production of goods and services for at least one hour the week preceding the survey reference date...	15+	All persons who are out of work, of working age, able to work, seeking employment, and have not worked during a reference period .

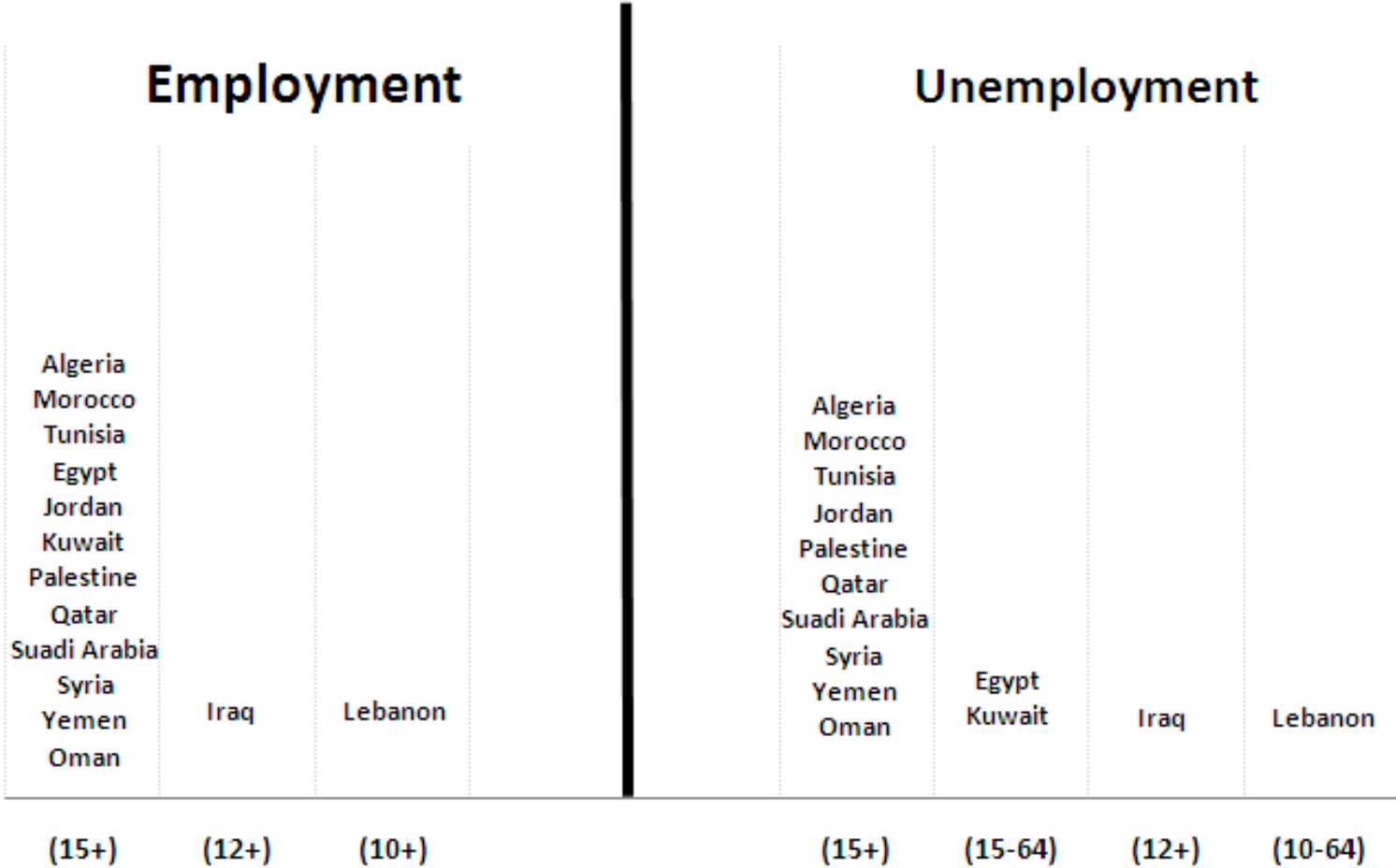


# Discrepancies in definitions/concepts: Employment & unemployment

Country	Employment		Unemployment	
	Age	definition	Age	definition
<b>Yemen</b>	15+	➤ All persons who have worked or been engaged in an economic activity for pay, in cash or in kind, including employers, family workers or individual workers, working during (duration not specified) the week preceding the survey reference date.	15+	➤ All persons who are out of work, of working age, able to work, seeking employment, and have not worked during the week preceding the survey reference date.
<b>Oman</b>	15+	All persons who have worked or been engaged in an economic activity for pay, in cash or in kind, including employers, family workers or individual workers, working for at least one hour during the week preceding the survey reference date	15+	All persons who are out of work, of working age, able to work, seeking employment, and have not worked during the week preceding the survey reference date.

# Issues of comparability

- Different Age groups



# Issues of comparability

## •Survey Design

- Periodicity** of the surveys vary between annual (6 countries), bi-annual (2 countries), quarterly (3 countries), and as in the case of Lebanon and Yemen, ad-hoc.
- Response rates** for the majority of countries are above 90%
- Population coverage** varies between nationals (3 countries), nationals/non-nationals (6 countries), urban (1 country), urban/rural (1 country), and whole country excluding some geographic areas (1 country).

# Issues of comparability

- **Different reference period for employment/unemployment definition**
  - **Reference period for working**
    - **“have worked at least 1 hour in the week preceding the survey”**  
(8 countries)
    - **“either one day or a week during the month preceding the survey**  
(1 country)
    - **“at least one hour during 24 hours that preceded the interview”**  
(1 country)
    - **Not specified** (4 countries)

## Further topics in LFS-s

- **Underemployment (7 countries)**
- **Employment in the informal sector (5 countries)**
- **Social security and health insurance (4 countries)**
- **Date of the first employment (3 countries)**
- **Work entitlements (3 countries)**
- **Longitudinal data**

# Other challenges

- **Budget constraints:**

In conducting regular (yearly) labor force survey

- **Dissemination of data:**

Collected survey data are partially published

- **Lack of metadata for some countries**

**THANK YOU**