

The State of, and Prospects for Telework in Transitional Economies: the Case of Jordan

Abstract

This thesis seeks to investigate the actual use of, and potential use for telework, in semi-industrialised countries, using Jordan as a case study. The study centred on two surveys – one of employers and the other of employees; it covers mainly the private sector and key organisations of the public, parastatal and not-for-profit organisations.

It was found that there was considerable potential for telework in Jordan, and indeed, that this form of work organisation is already widely practiced in a range of public and private sector organisations. Moreover, managers in a very much larger group of firms were favourably disposed to telework. In part, this is due to the government's active promotion of high-tech commercial activity, and its increased emphasis on training and education in ICT. On the one hand, exposure to telework is likely to promote its further dissemination – people are more likely to experiment with telework if they have been exposed to its practice. On the other hand, the use of telework can be facilitated by sustained governmental policy interventions in three areas: through further raising awareness of telework, by broadening access to training - not only among scholars and school leavers, but amongst mature employees – and through facilitating the reduction in the costs of remote network access and the availability of broadband. The latter entails not only the expansion of the physical communications infrastructure, but active management of the process of deregulation, to ensure adequate competitive pressures to reduce prices, and an ability to intervene in the event of market failures.