

The Jordan Times

Recommendations for more gender sensitive Labour Law under study

By Ana V. Ibáñez Prieto - Feb 17, 2018 - Last updated at Feb 17, 2018

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AMMAN — The Lower House Labour Committee is currently reviewing a series of recommendations submitted by a coalition of 11 organisations aimed at amending the Labour Law to make it more gender-sensitive.

“We will continue to review the recommendations for three weeks before we take them under the Dome,” Amman Third District MP Khalid Ramadan told The Jordan Times in a recent interview, explaining that “a temporary amended Labour Law was issued back in 2010, and the objective is now to start the next session of Parliament with a new Labour Law”.

Pay equity among men and women, maternity and paternity leave, daycare for children at the workplace and flexible work arrangements are the main issues addressed in the recommendations submitted to Parliament, according to Gender Equality Consultant at the International Labour Organisation Reem Aslan.

“We are trying to include the principle of pay equity in Articles 2 and 53 of the Labour Law through the National Committee on Pay Equity,” Aslan told The Jordan Times, stressing that “women in Jordan are being paid less than men despite occupying the same position, with pay gaps reaching up to 40 per cent”.

Regarding the paternity and maternity leave, the consultant noted that men suffer from this issue as much as women, pointing out that “as per the current legal framework, fathers do not have the right to paternity leave in the private sector”.

Concerning the flexible work arrangements, Aslan explained that “the concept has been already adopted by the Jordanian government, but is still not recognised by the law, and thus we are still struggling to include it as an article”.

“The labour committees of both Houses of Parliament have already approved to amend Article 72 of the Labour Law in order to guarantee workplace daycares,” Director of the Jordan Labour Watch Ahmad Awad told The Jordan Times, explaining that “the challenge now is not to amend Article 72, but articles related to other issues such as maternity leave, in addition to removing the restrictions imposed on the freedom of association”.

“Even if we had an excellent Labour Law, we would still be unable to implement it on the ground without free and independent trade unions,” Awad continued, expressing “low hopes” for the rest of the amendments to work due to “the imbalance of power between the Lower House Labour Committee and the rest of the House of Representatives”.

For her part, Jordanian National Commission for Women Secretary General Salma Nims told The Jordan Times that “there are a total of 11 articles in dire need of amendment in the Labour Law, but they are not open for discussion”, explaining that “under these circumstances, we decided to explore the articles, which are already open for amendments and study ways to introduce gender-sensitive concepts in them”.

Concerning the proposed amendments, Nims highlighted the need to amend Article 12 related to work permits for non-Jordanians, pointing out that “the law should be modified in a way so that children of Jordanian women married to foreigners have the right to work in Jordan”.