



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service



Academic exchange between Jordan and Germany

Individual mobility, institutional cooperation, and
examples of good practice

February 2023



Table of Contents

1 A reliable partnership	4
2 Academic mobility: big numbers, big imbalance.....	5
3 Strong institutional ties in teaching and research	7
4 Learning from each other: examples of good practice.....	8
5 Perspectives and recommendations.....	12



ABOUT THIS PAPER

Target groups

This working paper is meant to provide an overview of the academic exchange between Jordan and Germany. It addresses faculty, managers, decision-makers, and advanced students from universities in Jordan, as well as representatives from education and science policy and from other actors involved in the field of higher education.

Summary

In the past decades, Jordan and Germany have been connected through a longstanding and reliable partnership in a variety of fields, both in higher education and beyond.

The number of students from Jordan studying in Germany has been comparatively high since the 1970s, with a particular increase in the past ten years and a clear disciplinary focus on engineering, law, economics, and social sciences. Mobility in the other direction, however, is still limited, both for students and researchers. This is also reflected in the number of DAAD scholarship holders.

Compared to other countries in the MENA region, both the number of university cooperation agreements and of bi- or multilateral research projects between Jordan and Germany is one of the highest. From 2019 to 2022 alone, the DAAD has funded 66 projects between German and Jordanian partners, in addition to a variety of EU-sponsored programs such as Erasmus+ and PRIMA.

With the German Jordanian University, the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology, and the recently established German Energy Academy in Jordan, this partnership also has a solid institutional background.

To make such cooperation more tangible, five projects between Jordanian and German HEIs will be presented briefly. To conclude, some recommendations and perspectives for the academic exchange between the two countries will be discussed.

1 A reliable partnership

The partnership between Jordan and Germany has been close and fruitful in a variety of areas over the past decades, with 2023 marking the **70th anniversary of their diplomatic relations**. In 2019, the two countries celebrated the 60th anniversary of their development cooperation in the fields of water, waste management, employment, and education. With a trading volume of roughly 700 million euros, the economic ties are substantial, and Germany is Jordan's most important trade partner in Europe. The countries collaborate in the advancement of the Middle East peace process and in countering terroristic threats.^{1,2}

The high relevance and reliability of this partnership are also reflected in the higher education sector. With, at present, **119 partnership agreements** between Jordanian and German HEIs, Jordan ranks first in the MENA region, before Egypt with 109.³

An outstanding example of this partnership is the **German Jordanian University** (GJU), which opened its doors in 2005 and currently counts 4,700 students.

The first milestone, however, was laid almost five decades ago with the establishment of the first DAAD-supported **lectureship for German** as a foreign language at the University of Jordan in 1974. In the following year, the Amman branch of the **German Protestant Institute of Archaeology** (GPIA) was founded to undertake excavations, most prominently in Umm Qais.

The mutual commitment on a political level has been enshrined in the **cultural agreement** of 1979/1982, which, since then, has facilitated the exchange of students and scientists and the conduct of joint research projects. To date, thousands of Jordanians have graduated from a German university, among them more than 1,500 with a scholarship awarded by the DAAD.

In 2012, DAAD opened its Information Center in Amman, which was transformed into a **Regional Office** in 2020, covering Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon.

1,507

is the number of
DAAD alumni in
Jordan in 2022

¹ <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/jordan/227494>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

² <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/360.html>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

³ <https://www.internationale-hochschulkooperationen.de/en/foreign-countries.html>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

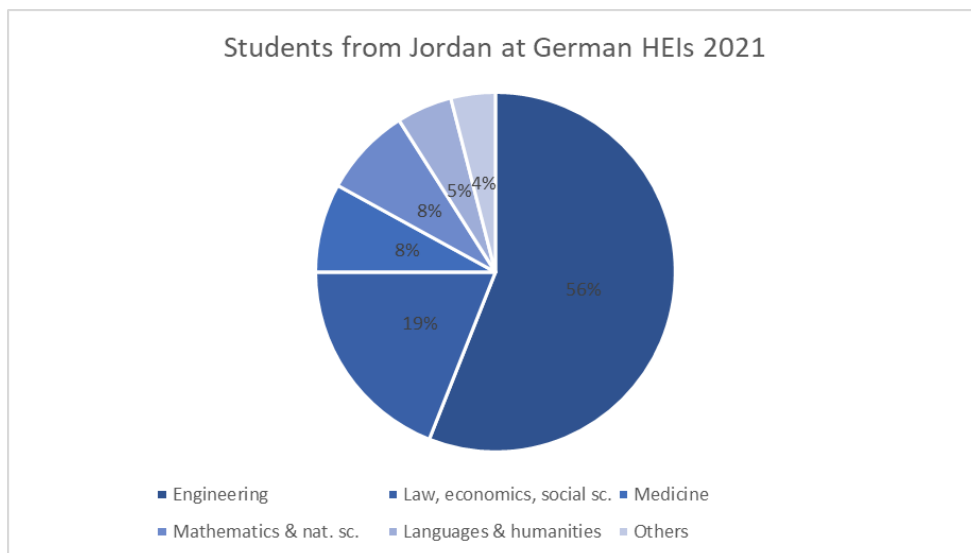
2 Academic mobility: big numbers, big imbalance

In 1975, at a time when Jordan had only a single university and a total of 2 million inhabitants, almost **600 Jordanian students** were enrolled at a German university (491) or university of applied sciences (UAS) (104).⁴

2,300
students from
Jordan studied at
a German
university in 2021

Compared to students from other countries in the region, such as Lebanon (184), Iraq (238), or Egypt (731), their share was surprisingly high.⁵ Even though the numbers and composition of international students in Germany have changed dramatically over the past decades, this tendency remains. In 2021, more than **2,300 students from Jordan** studied in Germany, with an almost equal distribution between universities (1,127) and UASs (1,172). For comparison, their overall number is still higher than for students from Iraq (1,780) or Lebanon (1,733), but significantly below the number of Egyptian students (7,480).⁶

Fifty-six percent of these students are enrolled in the field of **engineering**, followed by **law, economics, and social sciences** (ca. 19%), **medicine** (8%), **mathematics and natural sciences** (ca. 8%), and **languages and humanities** (ca. 5%). This clearly reflects both the popularity of certain disciplines at Jordanian HEIs and the good reputation of German HEIs in these disciplines among Jordanians.⁷



⁴ https://www.statistischebibliothek.de/mir/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/DEHeft_derivate_00056365/FS-11-4-1-1975.pdf, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

⁵ Comparisons with other countries in the region are drawn throughout this publication to increase the informative value of the numbers mentioned and to put them into a larger context. It is not intended to insinuate any kind of competition or ranking among these countries, neither regarding the DAAD funding nor in general.

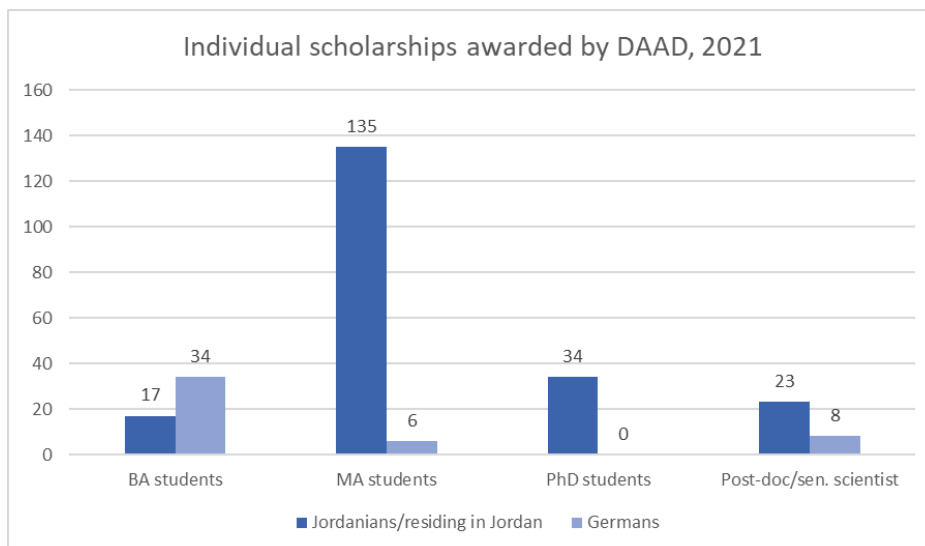
⁶ <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/301225/umfrage/auslaendische-studierende-in-deutschland-nach-herkunftslandern>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

⁷ https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/pdfs_nicht_barrierefrei/infos-services-fuer-hochschulen/kompetenzzentrum/dokumente/jordanien_daad_1%C3%A4nderbericht_2021.pdf, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

The **increase in the number of students** from Jordan in Germany has been particularly high in the past ten years, when it has more than doubled. During this period, the share of Jordanians enrolled at a UAS has risen to over 50%, which is considerably higher than the percentage of other international students who choose to study at German UASs (28%).⁸ One explanation of these observations might be the steadily increasing number of students at German Jordanian University, all of whom spend a mandatory year in Germany. GJU is modeled alongside the German UAS approach and has a large network of partner UASs in Germany.

Student mobility in the opposite direction is limited. According to the latest numbers issued by the Ministry of Higher Education, only 89 students from Germany studied at a Jordanian university in 2019/20, most of them enrolled in a public university at the undergraduate level. Compared to 2010, however, their number has increased almost tenfold. The number of German exchange students at GJU (one-semester stays) totaled 84 in the academic year 2021/22.⁹

A similar **imbalance** can be observed regarding DAAD-funded persons: In 2021, DAAD awarded 209 individual scholarships to Jordanians or persons residing in Jordan, both for stays in Germany and for studies in Jordan in the framework of an in-country or third-country program, including the EU-funded EduSyria MA program (111 students).¹⁰ Most of them were studying on the MA level (135), followed by PhD students (34), senior scientists (23), and BA students (17). The number of Germans supported for a stay in Jordan was 48, with 34 on the BA and 6 on the MA level; 8 were senior scientists.



⁸ <https://www.wissenschaft-weltoffen.de/en>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

⁹ Sources: Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research; German Jordanian University, via e-mail.

¹⁰ <https://edu-syria.eu/>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

3 Strong institutional ties in teaching and research

The intensity of the academic exchange between Jordan and Germany is reflected not only in individual mobility but also in cooperation on an institutional level.

In 2022, the German Rectors Conference (HRK) listed **119 partnership agreements** between Jordanian and German universities, the highest number in the MENA region. Even though many of them can be attributed to the German Jordanian University, other Jordanian HEIs also provide solid ties with German counterparts, among them the University of Jordan (12), Yarmouk University (8), the Jordan University of Science and Technology (5), Philadelphia University (2), Al Al-Bayt University (1), the University of Petra (1), and Tafila Technical University (1).¹¹

119
university
partnerships
between Jordan
and Germany are
listed in 2022

In addition to these institutional partnerships, a large number of German-Jordanian or multilateral **research projects** have been conducted in the past years, especially in the fields of climate change and adaptation, water resource management, and logistics. Twelve of these, such as “CapTain Rain,” “MEWAC,” “JOINLOG,” or “SALAM2,” are still ongoing.¹² Furthermore, the German Research Foundation (DFG) lists a total of 45 funded research projects in the past 20 years in areas highly relevant to Jordan, such as archaeology, tourism, chemistry, biology, and agricultural sciences. Here, again, Jordan is one of the leading countries in regional comparison.¹³

Furthermore, the DAAD has been supporting German-Jordanian university cooperation in a variety of programs (see section 4). From 2019 to 2022 alone, **66 projects between Jordanian and German universities** were funded in no less than 25 scientific disciplines. Among those, engineering, business administration, and social work are the most prominent, in addition to 12 projects with an interdisciplinary approach. On the German side, a total of 24 partner institutions were involved, mostly universities of applied sciences and technical universities, such as TU Chemnitz, TU Berlin, TH Köln, UAS Würzburg-Schweinfurt, UAS Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, and UAS Magdeburg-Stendal.

Cooperation between Jordanian and German HEIs is also largely supported by the **European Union**. To date, a total of 17 projects led by a Jordanian university have been conducted, 11 of them involving a German partner institution. Almost all these projects were (10) or still are (7) funded within key action 2, “Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices,” as capacity-building measures.

¹¹ <https://www.internationale-hochschulkooperationen.de/home.html>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

¹² https://www.kooperation-international.de/laender/asien/jordanien/projekte-jordanien/page/1/?no_cache=1, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

¹³ <https://gepris.dfg.de/gepris/OCTOPUS?task=showSearchExtended>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

Most of the projects were coordinated by the Jordan University of Science and Technology, the University of Jordan, and Mu'tah University.¹⁴

Under the umbrella of the Horizon-funded *PRIMA initiative*, covering four key areas linked to food production and water management, both German and Jordanian universities participate in a substantial number of projects, as well.¹⁵

In the context of the Jordanian-German Energy Partnership, the *German Energy Academy in Jordan* was launched recently as a training institution focusing on capacity building in renewable and clean energy in the region, including the setup and operation of renewable-energy and energy-efficiency equipment, as well as general skills such as entrepreneurship, digital skills, and languages. The partners involved are Al Hussein Technical University, the German Jordanian University, the NEPCO Training Center, the Amman Chamber of Industry, the German Solar Industry Association, and Niiversity. It is facilitated by the German cooperation agency GIZ.

Finally, Jordan and Germany have cooperated closely in the establishment of the synchrotron light source *SESAME*, which was inaugurated in 2017 close to Salt as the first of its kind in the whole Middle East. The most recent step, in June 2022, was the opening of SESAME's fourth beamline, HESEB, developed by the German Helmholtz Association. Germany is one of the 19 international observers, and Jordan is one of the 8 member states.

4 Learning from each other: examples of good practice

In the past 15 years, DAAD has supported higher-education partnerships between Germany and the Arab region in a variety of region-specific programs. In 2006, the program *Higher Education Dialogue with the Muslim World* was launched with the aim of strengthening cultural ties and mutual understanding through scientific cooperation.

Since 2011, the *German Arab Transformation Partnership* has accompanied the social and political changes in the region by fostering academic exchange, capacity building, and reform processes in teaching, research, and societal outreach. These efforts will be continued in the follow-up program *Ta'ziz Partnership* from 2022 onward.

In the program *HAW.international*, German universities of applied sciences (HAWs) are supported in their internationalization activities. The program *SDG Partnerships* supports teaching and research projects related to sustainable-

¹⁴ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-programme-guide>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

¹⁵ https://prima-med.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/PRIMA_booklet_2020.pdf, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

development goals. The **EPOS program** provides scholarship for development-related master's programs.¹⁶

The following profiles provide some examples of good practice, to make the idea of Jordan-German cooperation more tangible.

Project:	Leadership and Advocacy in Social Work and Health Care Professions
Partners:	University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg (GER) University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg-Stendal (GER) Al-Balqa Applied University, Salt (JOR) German Jordanian University, Amman (JOR) An-Najah National University, Nablus (PAL)
Duration:	Feb 2022–Dec 2022
Description:	<i>This project analyzed leadership and advocacy skills for social-work and health-care professions. “Leadership” means promoting and managing change (Colby/Hopkins 2019) with power deriving from hierarchical positions, whereas “advocacy” refers to the ability to systematically influence the political, economic, and social environment. The project explored how executive leaders and managers in social work and health care understand their professional role between efficiency orientation and the core values of their professions. To discuss the concepts of leadership and advocacy in a culturally heterogeneous environment, participating students and faculty developed practical projects in the field of migration, family support, labor-market integration, and care. Activities included three online workshops, a summer school in Neubrandenburg, and the final conference in Amman. The findings of the practical projects with a focus on key skills for social-work and health-care professionals will be published in a final report.</i>
Website:	https://www.hs-nb.de/fachbereich-soziale-arbeit-bildung-und-erziehung/organisation-und-struktur/internationalisierung-des-fachbereichs-sbe/
Funding program:	Higher Education Dialogue

Project:	JUICEE – Developing Jordanian Universities’ Innovation Capacities and Entrepreneurship Education
Partners:	Saarland University (GER) Hashemite University (JOR) University of Jordan (JOR) Yarmouk University (JOR)
Duration:	Jan 2021–Dec 2022

¹⁶ These programs are funded by the German **Federal Foreign Office** (Higher Education Dialogue with the Muslim World, German Arab Transformation Partnership, Ta'ziz Partnership), the **Federal Ministry of Education and Research** (HAW.international) and the **Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development** (SGD Partnerships, EPOS).

Description:	<i>This project worked to improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem at Jordanian universities and for this purpose developed an introductory obligatory course on entrepreneurship aimed at helping students from all fields develop an entrepreneurial mindset. This course was piloted at the Jordanian universities and improved. Using train-the-trainer methodologies, it focused on building capacity within the Jordanian universities, as well as on training academics from Syria to be able to conduct the courses at their respective universities in Syria.</i>
Website:	https://www.juicee.eu
Funding program:	Higher-education cooperation with Jordan and Lebanon to support Syrian academics

Project:	SAXEED.ECO
Partners:	TU Chemnitz (GER) Jordan University of Science and Technology (JOR) Yarmouk University (JOR) University of Mostaganem (ALG)
Duration:	Jan 2022–Dec 2025
Description:	<i>Within the framework of SAXEED.ECO, a project for environmentally friendly solutions, a "Sustainable Lab" will be established at each partner university in Jordan and Algeria. In this lab, students from the partner universities will be able to develop, test, and implement their project ideas in the fields of renewable energy, water scarcity, and waste recycling and bring them to the market (i.e., create start-ups) through the support of incubators available at the universities. In addition, practice-oriented technical courses in these areas will be developed (e.g., installation and maintenance of solar systems). These courses will be regularly offered to students at the partner universities even after the end of the project.</i>
Website:	n/a
Funding program:	SDG Partnerships

Project:	Bilingual – Virtual – International: UAS.international@Furtwangen
Partners:	Furtwangen University of Applied Sciences (GER) German Jordanian University (JOR)
Duration:	Jan 2021–Dec 2024
Description:	<i>This project establishes virtual guest lectureships with GJU and 6 other partners. Following a virtual opening event with all partners and bilateral online and face-to-face consultations, it will enable the offering</i>

of a course in computer-aided thermal engineering that is also open to students from GJU. Designed as an online computer lab, it is intended as a supplement to earlier lectures in engineering thermodynamics, fluid mechanics, and heat transfer.

The lab will be held in German but can also be described as bilingual, as the tutorials, manuals, and user interface of EES (the software that will be used) are all in English. Students will be able to ask questions in German or English.

Also planned is the establishment of more such courses in both directions, i.e., courses offered by HFU staff that are also open to students from one or more partner universities and vice versa. This will enrich the course offerings of all participating partners and give students the chance to gain some “internationalization at home” through taking online courses from partner universities.

Website: <https://www.hs-furtwangen.de/studium/internationales/partnerhochschulen-und-projekte/haw/>

Funding program: HAW.international

Project: **IWRM MSc Joint Exchange Program with focus on the Middle East and Northern Africa region (MENA)**

Partners: TH Köln (GER)
German Jordanian University (JOR)

Duration: *The project funding duration was from 2006 to 2014 for the establishment of the study program. Since 2015, the program is running without external funding. In 2022, about 50% of the program participants received an EPOS scholarship by DAAD.*

Description: *The program aims to support the individual advancement of young professionals to become effective decision makers and change agents in the water sector in the MENA region to contribute to solve different sets of problems and societal challenges. This concept of the IWRM MENA program is designed in response to the high demand of different societies in the MENA region for highly qualified water professionals. They can tackle the multiple problems of water resources management through a holistic approach that considers technical and socio-economic problems of resource use and integrate management issues of all water-related subsectors.*

Website: <https://www.iwrm-master.info/de/iwrm-mena/>

Funding program: Development-Related Postgraduate Courses Program (EPOS)

5 Perspectives and recommendations

As the recent developments in individual mobility and institutional cooperation show, German-Jordanian relations in higher education are of great importance. Despite certain imbalances that have been addressed above, they represent a solid basis for future cooperation, on both individual and institutional levels. Key areas such as climate change, water, energy, entrepreneurship, applied teaching and research, and topics related to digitalization and inclusive education especially might be centers of interest both for Jordanian and German HEIs.

To facilitate the outreach and networking among interested researchers and institutions on both sides, the DAAD organizes regular thematic events and matchmaking formats. These do not exclusively address the German-Jordanian context, but they also involve neighboring countries such as Iraq and Lebanon to enhance regional cooperation in higher education.

In addition, the following steps might be helpful to establish cooperation with a German university.¹⁷

Step 1: Determine your cooperation objective

The objective should be clearly defined at the beginning of a cooperation endeavor. This includes:

- The field(s) of expertise involved, bearing in mind areas of shared and own interest.
- The academic level, whether study, research, or teaching.
- The goals to attain, such as increasing the number of German students and researchers at a given institution or vice versa, complementary study programs, collaborative research projects, etc.
- The basis on which the contact is established with the prospective partner, such as existing cooperative endeavors, visits, or fellowships for students, researchers, and teachers.
- The intended duration of the cooperation.

Step 2: Identify potential German partners

There are various paths to embark on to identify potential partners. For example, scientific journals that publish articles written by German researchers in their field of specialization can offer an initial contact. Another way would be to identify in your own institutions former DAAD scholarship holders or graduates of German HEIs and make use of their direct contact with German researchers.

¹⁷ <https://www.daad-jordan.org/en/university-cooperation/university-landscape-general-advice-for-cooperation/>, retrieved on Jan 23, 2023.

In addition, the following websites provide comprehensive information on institutional profiles and the German higher education and research landscape:

- **Higher Education Compass:** Provides information and links to all public and state-recognized HEIs; discusses study and research possibilities as well as international cooperation agreements.
- **German Research Institutions (GERiT):** Directory of the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the DAAD with over 23,000 institutions listed, both HEIs and non-university research institutes.
- **Study in Germany:** Official portal of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) regarding university studies, addressed to international students.
- **Research in Germany:** Information about innovation and research in Germany. Facilitates understanding of the German research system and the financing opportunities available.

Step 3: Reach out to German universities

- Identify the person in charge of the internationalization department, the researcher or academic with whom you wish to establish cooperation, or the dean of the faculty in question.
- Draft an email in English or in German. The email should introduce your institution and explain the interest in cooperating with the counterpart, clearly and directly stipulating the cooperation objective sought.
- Maintain contact after the first email. Follow up on the specification of priorities and guidelines proposed for cooperation, as well as other aspects as deemed necessary.

Imprint

Publisher

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)
German Academic Exchange Service
Kennedyallee 50
53175 Bonn
Germany
www.daad.de

Contact person

Benjamin Schmäling
Director DAAD Regional Office Amman
Samir Al Refai St. 39
P.O. Box 840458
11181 Amman
Jordan
schmaeling@daad.de
www.daad-jordan.org

Published online on www.daad-jordan.org and in the DAAD working paper series on
<https://www.daad.de/de/der-daad/was-wir-tun/fortbildung-expertise-und-beratung/analysen-studien/daad-arbeitspapiere-und-blickpunkte/#Arbeitspapiere2019>

February 2023

Published as a digital publication on the internet.

© DAAD – All rights reserved