

Algerian Labour Market Before and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

Le marché du travail algérien avant et après la pandémie de COVID-19

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Abstract:

The economic downturn triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic led to significant job losses, causing a surge in the unemployment rate throughout 2020. Despite considerable progress in controlling the spread of the virus by the end of 2021, the labour market had not yet fully rebounded.

This study assesses the impact of this crisis on key labour market variables, such as unemployment, employment, and highlights on the future of work after the pandemic.

Keywords: unemployment, employment, COVID-19, labour market, work.

Jel Classification Codes: J400

Résumé:

La récession induite par la propagation du COVID-19 a entraîné une forte perte d'emplois, a fait grimper le taux de chômage en 2020. À la fin de 2021, même après des progrès substantiels dans la lutte contre la pandémie, le marché du travail ne s'était pas complètement rétabli. Cette étude évalue l'impact de cette crise sur les variables clés du marché du travail : le chômage, l'emploi, et les faits saillants sur l'avenir du travail après la pandémie.

Mots clés : chômage, emploi, COVID-19, marché du travail, travail

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1. INTRODUCTION

In March 2020, the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic took hold across the entire planet after the discovery of the Virus in China in December 2019.

The dissemination of COVID-19 across the globe prompted a multitude of containment and mitigation strategies, encompassing restrictions on movement and travel, closures of schools, and the postponement of elective medical procedures. Though the specific nature, timing, and scope of these responses varied significantly across countries, and even within them, their effect on labour markets was, inevitably, profound.

The Corona pandemic paralysed Algerian economy, due to the country's falling oil revenues. The Algerian government has announced unprecedented rates of unemployment, as the number of jobless people has been estimated at between 100,000 and 150,000 as a result of the pandemic, whether in direct or indirect jobs, or in temporary jobs.

Similar to other governments throughout the world, the Algerian government is having difficulties achieving a balance between the wellbeing of its citizens and preserving what remains of its productive apparatus.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, this study undertakes a comprehensive examination of the post-pandemic economic landscape, with particular focus on the enduring influence on employment dynamics, and the potential for a robust recovery driven by advancements in productivity. In this context, we evaluate the enduring effects of the pandemic on job demands and the necessary labour qualities.

Therefore, based on the following question, we will attempt to clarify through this study the question of the influence of the Corona crisis on unemployment levels and the strategies Algeria depended on to preserve employment positions in light of the Corona crisis and beyond:

In view of the crisis and its aftermath, how did the Corona pandemic effect Algeria's unemployment rates? And what are the new directions for the post-crisis employment policies?

And based on the following hypotheses:

- The Corona virus has caused great damage to the Algerian economy through its impact on unemployment rates.
- Algeria resorted to taking a set of urgent measures to preserve job positions in order to avoid layoffs and the closure of institutions, through a set of operating mechanisms.
- The COVID-19 pandemic significantly exacerbated existing trends in telecommuting and online shopping, leading to a rapid acceleration in their adoption and development.

The research aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Illustrating the impact of the Corona pandemic on Algeria's unemployment rate.
- Describing the post-COVID-19 unemployment situation.
- Outlining the future of work after COVID-19.

In order to answer the problematic question and validate the hypotheses, the analytical descriptive approach was adopted, which relies on text analysis, data description, and data citation in presenting some of the study's concepts, analyzing its development, and evaluating its effects.

This search was divided into three parts in accordance with the objectives of the study:

- Overview of the labour market and employment in Algeria.
- Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment.
- The Algerian Labour Market in the Post-Pandemic Landscape: Challenges and Opportunities

2. Overview of the labour market and employment in Algeria

Similar to the broader Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, Algeria boasts a substantial youth demographic. With a total of 27.8 million individuals aged between 15-64, they constitute 63% of the Algerian population. Transforming Algeria's demographic advantage into a driver of economic prosperity requires a strategic approach to youth development and employment creation. Despite comprising a substantial share of the population (63%), Algerian youth encounter significant barriers to labour market participation. Unemployment rates of 9.8% for young men and 20.6% for young women highlight the need for effective interventions.

Successfully addressing these challenges promises substantial dividends for both the Algerian economy and society.

2.1 The evolution of the structure of employment and unemployment in Algeria

Over the past three decades, Algeria's labour market has witnessed a remarkable shift. In 1989, the public sector reigned supreme, employing a staggering 54% of the workforce. However, a wave of privatization and economic reforms in the 1990s propelled the private sector forward, gradually eclipsing the public sector's dominance. By 2022, the landscape had irrevocably changed, with the private sector emerging as the dominant force, employing 84% of the workforce, compared to the public sector's diminished 16% (statista, 2022). Decades of state dominance in Algeria's labour market curtailed the growth of self-initiative and entrepreneurship, limiting the diversification and dynamism of the economy. While a slight rise in self-employment to 32.4% in 2019 offers a glimmer of hope, it underlines the missed potential fostered by the state's oversized role. (ETF, 2020).

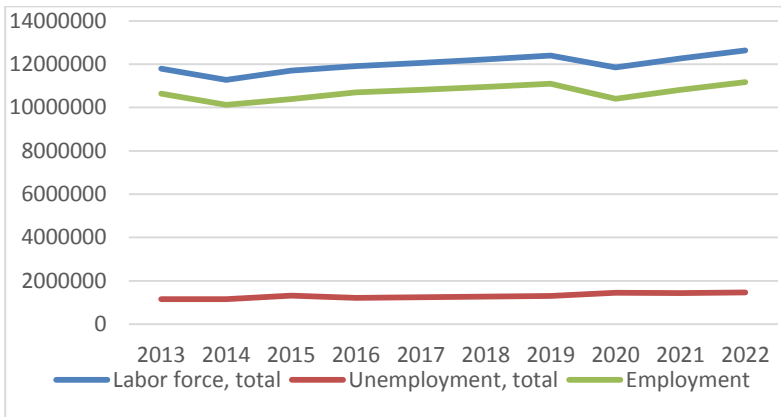
Table N°1: share of employment per economic sector

% of total employment	2005	2010	2015	2021
Employment in industry	26,8	30,4	31,8	31,0
Employment in services	51,9	57,6	58,7	58,6
Employment in agriculture	21,3	12,0	9,6	10,3

Source: World Bank: ILO modelled estimates database

The table provides a comprehensive overview of the evolving landscape of employment distribution across various economic sectors from 2005 to 2021. Over the past 16 years, Algeria's employment landscape has witnessed a remarkable shift. Agriculture, the traditional backbone of the economy, has shrunk dramatically, shedding over half its workforce and now accounting for just 10% of jobs. This decline has been offset by a significant rise in the service sector, which has absorbed almost 60% of workers, while industry has also experienced healthy growth.

Figure N° 2: labour force, employment and unemployment, 2013-2022



Source: World Bank: ILO modelled estimates databas

The employment rate witnessed a decline from 39% in 2013 to 36% in 2022. Notably, there were fluctuations in employment rates over recent years. The activity rate among women experienced a slight increase from 36.6% in 2019 to 37.4% in 2014. However, there was a substantial decrease from 37.4% in 2019 to 34.5% in 2020. Interestingly, it rebounded slightly to 36% in 2022 (figure2).

The table below provides data on the unemployment rate categorized by sex for the years 2013 to 2022. The overall unemployment rate fluctuated during this period, starting at 9.82% in 2013 and reaching its peak in 2020 at 12.648%. In 2022, the unemployment rate slightly decreased to 11.55%.

When considering gender-specific unemployment rates, females consistently experienced higher rates compared to males. In 2013, the female unemployment rate was 16.338%, while the male unemployment rate was lower at 8.319%. Over the years, the gender gap in unemployment rates persisted, with females consistently facing higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts.

Table N° 2: unemployment rate by sex 2013-2022

Unemployment rate %	2013	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total	9,82	11,21	10,495	12,648	11,747	11,55
Female	16,338	16,605	18,679	20,802	20,475	20,299
male	8,319	9,941	8,532	10,211	9,63	9,389

Source: World Bank: ILO modelled estimates database

Individuals with higher levels of education face higher unemployment rates, as evidenced by the data from 2019. In that year, 17.4% of individuals with a high level of education were unemployed, a stark contrast to the 6.8% unemployment rate among those with a lower level of education. This disparity is more pronounced among women, particularly those with higher educational attainment, with an unemployment rate of 20.4% in 2019.

There is a reluctance to embrace private-sector employment, often perceived as lower in quality. As a result, individuals with higher education qualifications may opt to compete for more favorable positions, typically found in the public sector, contributing to the observed unemployment patterns (ETF, 2020).

2.2 Employment policy and institutional setting

Since 1989, tackling unemployment has been a constant focus for the Algerian government, with a series of initiatives implemented through various frameworks. These efforts have ranged from promoting general employment across all sectors to specific programs targeted at youth and entrepreneurship support (Ashley Barry, 2020).

Combating unemployment in Algeria is a collaborative effort. The National Employment Policy spearheads the initiative, with five agencies under The Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social Security (MoELSS) and the Ministry of National Solidarity (MoNS) playing key roles. Other ministries, like Agriculture, SMEs and Handicrafts, and Industry, contribute to specific areas. Additionally, agencies like ANDPME and ANDI lend their expertise, ensuring a multi-pronged approach. (ETF, 2020).

Under the Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social Security (MoELSS) operate three key agencies: the National Employment Agency (ANEM) connects job seekers with opportunities, the National Agency for

Supporting Youth Employment (ANSEJ) fosters entrepreneurship among young people, and the National Unemployment Insurance Fund (CNAC) provides crucial safety nets for those without work. Meanwhile, the MoNS is in charge of the Social Development Agency (ADS) and the National Agency for Management of Micro-credit (ANGEM).

Algeria addresses unemployment through a three-pronged strategy: promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment, offering temporary job placements, and improving skills through training and job-search assistance.

Beyond its core function as a labor market intermediary, ANEM spearheads a targeted youth employment program called DAIP. This initiative offers three distinct contract types tailored to the specific educational qualifications of young job seekers. Graduate Integration Contract (CID), for youth who have completed university or advanced technical training:

- Professional Integration Contract (CIP), for youth who have completed secondary education or vocational training.
- Training Insertion Contract (CFI), for youth who lack educational qualifications.

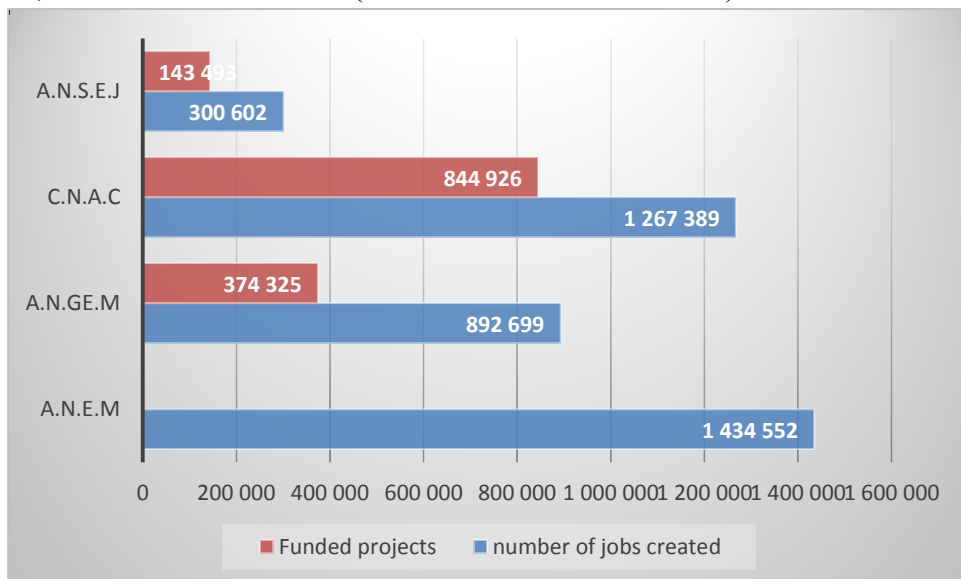
Although overseen by different ministries, NAC, ANSEJ, and ANGEM collectively contribute to a supportive framework for microenterprises in Algeria. CNAC focuses on enabling individuals (30-50 years old) displaced from public sector jobs to establish microbusinesses. Simultaneously, ANSEJ targets the youth demographic (19-35) by providing them with skills and funding to kickstart their entrepreneurial ventures. Complementing these efforts, ANGEM plays a crucial role in facilitating microcredit access for individuals living in poverty, often directed towards raw material purchases, thus fostering the growth of these microenterprises.

The Social Development Agency (ADS) takes a proactive approach to address youth unemployment through initiatives such as the Social Inclusion Activity Mechanism (DAIS). This program is designed to target individuals without formal qualifications, offering them opportunities for temporary employment activities. Through this initiative, participants gain

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valuable work experience, serving as a stepping stone towards formal employment (Ashley Barry, 2020).

Figure N°2: number of jobs created and funded projects by ANEM, ANSEJ, ANGEM and CNAC (Cumulative at 06/30/2018)



Source: database form document: Economic recovery plan 2020-2024.

Through figure 3 relating to the situation of the systems (ANSEJ, CNAC, ANGEM, and ANEM) as of 2018, the following points can be identified:

- The ANSEJ system has created 892699 jobs through 374325 funded projects;
- The projects financed by the CNAC of order 143493, have created 300602 jobs;
- The micro-credit system managed by ANGEM has since its existence enabled the creation of 1267389 jobs by granting 844926 loans, which means an average cost of employment of around 42566 DA and an average loan amount of 63849 DA.

It should be noted that the facilities for young people, by the public services, within the framework of the ANSEJ and the CNAC, allowed, in 2013, the number of projects to increase considerably.

3. Impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the employment situation

A global pandemic unlike any other, COVID-19 sent shockwaves

across the world, forcing governments to implement draconian social distancing measures. These lockdowns, necessary to curb the virus, brought economies to a standstill, leaving businesses shuttered, workers jobless, and essential sectors crippled. The impact on the economy is evident in the turbulent stock market, a surge in claims for unemployment insurance, and the closure of numerous storefronts nationwide.

The COVID-19 restrictions, intended to curb the virus, triggered a cascade of consequences for workers. Reduced work hours and teleworking, while preferable for some, meant income cuts for others. While layoffs and business closures shattered livelihoods and disrupted economic stability.

While some industries bloom with unexpected job openings, hiring freezes have become the chilling norm in others. This leaves many potential job seekers, who might have normally pursued new opportunities or entrepreneurship, in a holding pattern, waiting for the storm to clear. Faced with the complexities of COVID-19's impact on the job market, workers have adopted a myriad of strategies. Some have turned to subsistence farming or alternative income sources, while others grapple with illness or increased family demands, hindering their availability. (ILO, 2020a).

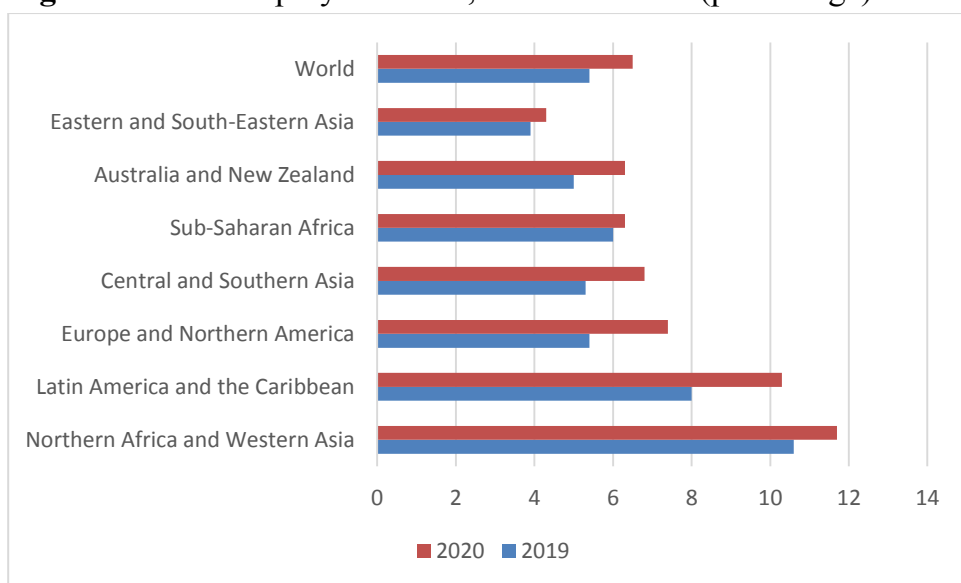
Many individuals are already experiencing reduced pay and loss of income. In response, governments are implementing emergency relief packages and other measures to provide support for those affected by the lockdowns. However, there is growing concern about the disproportionate impacts on more vulnerable groups. This includes individuals with informal jobs or businesses, women with family care responsibilities, migrant workers, manual workers, and those in occupations and industries most affected, among others.

The COVID-19 crisis has significantly disrupted economies and labor markets worldwide. The staggering job losses in emerging and developing countries, as revealed by the ILO's estimate of 400 million full-time jobs lost in just one quarter, demand immediate and targeted action. The 1.6 billion informal economy workers, constituting half of the global workforce, are witnessing job losses in their sectors, and lockdowns have significantly impacted their incomes, rendering them particularly vulnerable

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to the economic fallout of the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating pre-existing inequalities, hitting 1.25 billion at-risk workers, mainly in sectors like retail, hospitality, and manufacturing, the hardest amid the economic downturn. A substantial portion of this workforce is self-employed, involved in low-income informal roles, and lacks access to essential safety nets, rendering them susceptible to income declines and job losses. The pandemic has abruptly disrupted the lives of young people, halting their education and training, reversing their employment prospects, and turning the search for new jobs into a challenging uphill climb. (ILO., 2020b) .

Figure N°3: Unemployment rate, 2019 and 2020 (percentage)



Source : <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/goal-08/>

In 2020, a staggering 33 million people joined the ranks of the unemployed, pushing the global total to 220 million. This human cost, amplified by another 81 million abandoning the workforce entirely, painted a grim picture of the pandemic's devastating impact on livelihoods, with regions like Latin America and Europe witnessing particularly sharp increases in unemployment.

The year 2020 witnessed a staggering surge in job losses, with youth experiencing an 8.7% unemployment rate and women facing a 5.0% rate, in contrast to the 3.7% for adults and 3.9% for men. This highlighted vulnerabilities ingrained in the labor market, with women, often burdened

by childcare responsibilities, more prone to withdrawing from the workforce, exacerbating the existing gender gap in participation (investing in data, 2022).

3.1 Algeria's situation during the epidemic period

The total employment rate decreased from 37.4% in 2019 to 35.1% in 2020, which is likely to be related to the pandemic. Job offers fell sharply at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, with data from the Agence Nationale de l'Emploi (ANEM) indicating that total job offers fell by 84 % between February and April 2020. In March, the authorities mandated government agencies and firms to place half of their workers on leave with full compensation, limiting the number of layoffs.

Figure N° 4: employment and Gross value added by sector 2020



Source: Destatis, Algeria Statistical Country Profile, 2023

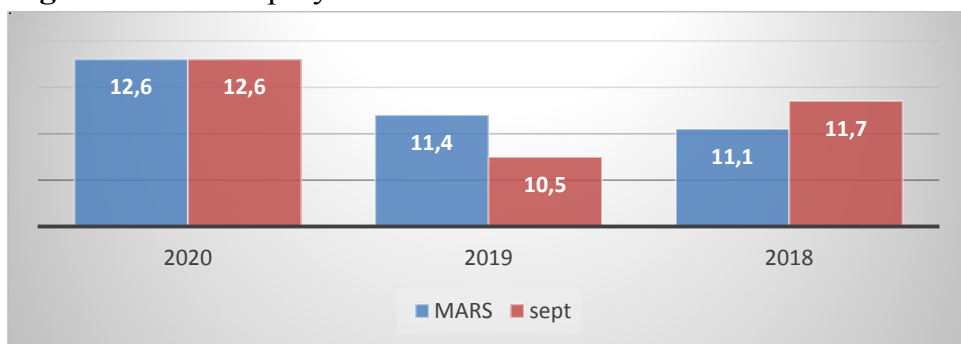
A way to measure the strength of the interaction between economy and labour market is the employment per worker relative to the Gross Value Added (GVA). These values are diverging between sub-sectors. For example, the public administration, education and health (services) sector has the highest share of employment (59.6) with a GVA share of 54.9%, which suggests a low-slung employment intensity. The agriculture sector contributes GVA of 33.5%. The industry sector has the highest GDP value added per worker linked to capital-intensive investments. It employs just 9.7% of total employment, which suggests a GVA share of 14.6%.

According to ONS statistics, the unemployment rate in Algeria reached 11.4% in Mars 2019, compared to 11.7% in September 2018, namely a decrease of 0.3 points. In the aftermath of the COVID 19 pandemic, there was a strong impact on job cut. In 2020, the unemployment

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rate in Algeria reached 12.6%; it has fallen relatively sharply concerning men, from 9.9% in September 2018 to 9.1% in Mars 2019. However, during the same period, women unemployment rate rose from 19.4% to 20.4%. Unemployment rates differ significantly as per age group, including education. 26.9% of young people whose age ranges from 16- to 24-year-old were unemployed in May 2019 compared to 29.1% in September 2018, a fall of 2.2 points.

Figure N°5: unemployment rate 2018-2020



Source: Tradingeconomocs.com

Up to 2019, prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, data reveals that individuals with higher levels of education were significantly impacted by unemployment. In 2019, 17.4% of those with a high level of education were unemployed, compared to 6.8% of those with a lower level of education. The trend was more pronounced among women, especially those with a higher level of education, reaching a rate of 20.4% in 2019. The higher unemployment rates among well-educated workers can be attributed, in part, to a scarcity of opportunities in the private sector and a reluctance to accept positions perceived as lower quality. According to the Employment Survey ONS 2019, the unemployment rate for individuals with higher education is 18%, while it stands at 13.5% for those with vocational education.(ETF., 2021).

According to ANEM data on supply and demand for jobs, it was observed (table3) that the lockdown significantly decreased the number of job offers and applications between 2019 and 2020 (the first eight months). When comparing the top eight from 2019 to 2020, it was found that the number of job offers and applications decreased by 39% and 30%, respectively. All job offers and applications having to go through the

ANEM (since 2006); these data should be relatively representative of the job market, with the exception of its informal part.

In absolute terms, placements made by ANEM fell sharply from 25,969 placements in January 2020 to less than 5,000 placements in April 2020.

Table N°3: Evolution of job supply and demand (ANEM) 2019-2020

2019												
	M01	M02	M03	M04	M05	M06	M07	M08	M09	M10	M11	M12
Registered offer	45 348	41 128	38 068 3	7 632	32 939	33 817	38 228	23 683	36 035	43 982	33 711	32 267
Application Registered	166 876	173714	135 965	147579	102 249	140863	146266	129891	238526	240227	364757	231587
classic employment	33 734	30 797	29 558	27 933	25 750	24 267	29 990	20 313	26 728	32 953	26 232	27 056
Insertion DAIP	5 827	911	626	274	319	73	25	52	4	23	7	23
2020												
Registered offer	35 890	34 485	24 083	5 423	9 542	25 068	21 137	22 223				
Application Registered	213 239	153391	82 391	8 157	18 250	72 356	60 356	75 889				
classic employment	25 969	25 845	18 736	4 383	6 445	17 835	17 821	15 573				
Insertion DAIP	2 785	7 871	1 580	808	357	1 426	407	81				

Source: database form document: Economic recovery plan 2020-2024.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security has implemented an evaluation and surveillance system for the state of application of preventive measures and measures to mitigate the effects of the crisis with enterprises in order to assess the impact at the global level in terms of job losses at the end of June 2020.

It should be noted that only 4% of total enterprises, employing 16,609 workers maintained their activities (i.e. 162 enterprises) during the period covered by the survey. For 30% of the organizations questioned, the recruitment freeze is the first action taken by employers. Only 1% of cases involved decisions on downsizing.

Table N°4: The impact of Covid19 at the level of business activity at the end of June 2020

		Employers		employment	
		Number	%	Number	%
Reduction of activity	2 199	60%	332 932	76%	
Temporary closing	756	21%	52 367	12%	
Total closure	38	1%	4 264	1%	
Total Lost	2 993	88%	389 563	89%	
Total Enterprises	3 660	100%	4401700	100%	

Source: database form document: Economic recovery plan 2020-2024

3.2 Algeria's Policies for the recovery

During this health crisis, public authorities encouraged young initiatives and innovators to take charge of themselves through self-employment in order to achieve self-sufficiency.

The National Microcredit Management Agency has expressed its willingness to grant microcredits to those who wish to set up income-generating activities. As part of the prevention of the Corona virus epidemic, such as the manufacture of masks, gel Sterilization, cleaning products, in addition to food products...etc (Rapport du Secrétaire Général soumis on la 65ème session de la Condition de la femmes, 2021).

This Agency allows new credit applicants to register their applications via the online portal dedicated to microcredit applicants: with the possibility of following the progress of their financing files, via a private space inside the portal without this move and help them with the digital marketing of the products of the funded activities, through an application dedicated to putting the products resulting from the funded activities online, with the aim of marketing them.

As indicated by the ILO in the 'COVID-19 country policy responses' for Algeria, a number of initiatives were taken in 2020 to support businesses, jobs and incomes, namely (ETF., 2021):

- Extending the deadline for filing tax returns and paying duties and taxes.

- Supporting measures for employers, allowing them to pay their social security contributions at all CNAS agencies throughout the country, rather than having to attend the specific agency to which they are affiliated.
- For ‘chifa’ cardholders, a de facto extension of the validity of cards that expired on 31 March 2020, allowing entitled persons uninterrupted access to the coverage of expenses by a social security organization.
- Simplifying the use of the online services of the various organisations under the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security.

As employment support schemes ended in 2020, the results spoke volumes. Over 213,000 individuals benefited from the DAIS program, receiving a combined financial aid of 753 million DA. Additionally, nearly 40,000 potential jobs were spurred by 10,344 microcredits granted by ANGEM.

4. Labour market after COVID-19 pandemic in Algeria

The economic repercussions of COVID-19 have triggered a jobs crisis of unprecedented magnitude, reminiscent of the challenges faced during the Great Depression. This crisis casts a prolonged shadow of poverty and inequality, extending well beyond the peak of the pandemic. To avert the transformation of this economic downturn into a social catastrophe, a prompt and decisive response is imperative. The imperative goal is not only to address the current challenges but to make an urgent investment in building a more resilient and equitable labour market, securing a better future for generations to come.

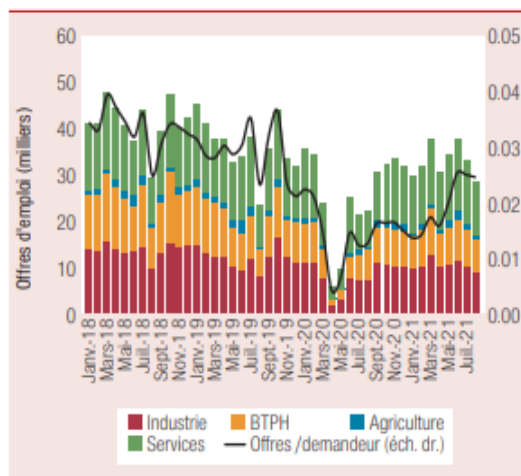
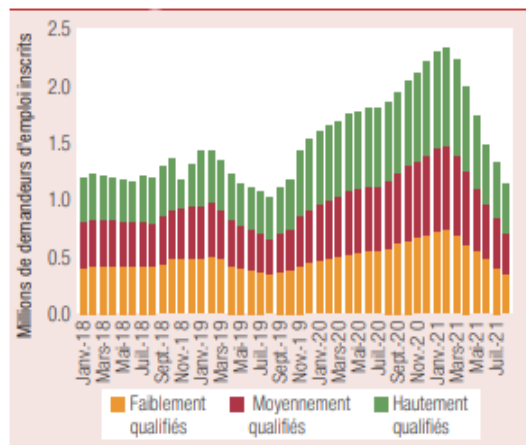
4.1 Labour market trends after the pandemic

Labour market indicators for the second and third quarters point to a gradual exit from the COVID-19-induced recession. After the number of job seekers registered with the National Employment Agency (ANEM) increased for consecutive quarters in all skill categories, it contracted in the 2nd and 3rd quarters of 2021. On the other hand, at the end of the first months of 2021, the number of job offers published by ANEM in 2021 remained 9.9% below the level of the 8th month of 2019, with the largest differences recorded in the agriculture (–21.8%) and construction (–17.7%)

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sectors. Nevertheless, the number of job offers per registered job seeker is improving, although it remains significantly below its pre-pandemic level, suggesting an incomplete recovery in 2021 (Figures 6).

Figure N°7: The total number of registered jobseekers in Algeria 2021



Source : world Bank report : Rapport de suivi de la situation économique de l'Algérie (Redresser l'économie algérienne après la pandémie), 2021.

The official number of job offers suggests a moderate resumption of activity in H1-2022, but it remains below pre-pandemic levels. According to figure 8, job offers rose in Q1-2022 and Q2-2022 (by 17.5 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively). Even though the average number of job offers in H1-2022 stayed 7.1 percent lower than the H1-2021 level and 18.2 percent below the H1-2019 level, the notable decrease in job offers, particularly in the construction sector, can be attributed to the ongoing decline compared to the pre-pandemic conditions, public works, and hydraulics sector (–39 percent) and an only partial restoration of job offers in the industrial sector (–12.5 percent). At the same time, the number of job offers in the more volatile agricultural sector has increased by 30 percent and, in the services sector, has returned to its prepandemic level (+0.6 percent). Meanwhile, the number of registered job seekers increased by 16.3 percent in Q2-2022 to 4.7 million individuals, following the massive hike in registrations in Q1-2022 (+53 percent) in the wake of the announcement that an allocation for first-time job seekers was being established.

Figure N°8: number of job offers and registered in Algeria jobseekers 2018-2022



Source: world Bank report: Algeria Economic Update (Staying the Course for Transition), 2022.

4.2 The future of work after COVID-19

The global labour markets faced significant disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The immediate impacts were abrupt and, in many cases, drastic: A large number of individuals were either furloughed or experienced job losses, while others quickly transitioned to remote work as offices shuttered. Essential workers, operating under new safety protocols to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, continued their roles in hospitals, grocery stores, sanitation services, and warehouses.

The pandemic hastened the ongoing trends of remote work, e-commerce, and automation, potentially requiring up to 25 percent more workers to consider switching occupations than initially estimated (Stephanie Strom, 2021).

The jobs in fields characterized by higher levels of physical proximity are expected to undergo more significant transformations post-pandemic, causing ripple effects across other sectors as business models adapt. The disruptions, both short-term and potentially long-term, in these fields due to

COVID-19 differ. Throughout the pandemic, sectors with the highest overall physical proximity scores, such as medical care, personal care, on-site customer service, and leisure and travel, were most severely affected by the virus. In the longer term, work sectors with higher physical proximity scores are expected to experience continued instability, although proximity is not the sole determining factor:

- The rise of e-commerce and digital transactions has thrown a curveball at the on-site customer interaction arena. Workers in retail stores, banks, and other places defined by frequent face-to-face interactions with strangers are facing a new reality. The shift to digital transactions during the pandemic is anticipated to persist, marking a lasting behavioral change.
- The once-thriving leisure and travel arena, a kaleidoscope of hotels, restaurants, airports, and entertainment venues, faces a future tinged with uncertainty. COVID-19's initial blow morphed into a sustained challenge, with remote work dampening business travel and automation eyeing roles like food service, potentially shrinking the labor demand.
- The computer-based office work arena encompasses offices of various sizes and administrative workspaces found in hospitals, courts, and factories. Work in this arena demands only moderate physical proximity to others and involves a moderate number of human interactions. Being the largest arena in advanced economies, it constitutes approximately one-third of employment, with nearly all potential for remote work falling within its domain.
- Despite the challenges faced by various work arenas during the pandemic, the outdoor production and maintenance sector, encompassing construction sites and farms, remained robust. This resilient arena, marked by substantial physical distance and minimal interaction, plays a crucial role in the economies of China and India, providing employment for a substantial portion of their workforces, ranging from 35 to 55 percent.

4. Conclusion

COVID-19 laid bare pre-existing cracks in the labor market, with

women, the self-employed, informal workers, and those on fixed-term contracts bearing the brunt of the pandemic. Now, as the fight against the virus continues, a stark reality looms – the world awaits a "new normal," one reshaped by inequalities laid bare and demanding a new blueprint for how we work and where society functions. Now is the opportune moment to scrutinize this emerging normality and embark on the mission of constructing a future of work that is safer, fairer, greener, and more adept at mitigating the repercussions of future crises on jobs and incomes. Numerous challenges outlined in the ILO's Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and the OECD's Transition Agenda for a Future that Works for all are even more pertinent in a post-COVID-19 world.

The results obtained through this study are as follows:

The COVID-19 pandemic dealt a devastating blow to Algeria's workforce, triggering an unprecedented surge in unemployment. With social distancing restrictions forcing businesses to shutter their doors, the total unemployment rate skyrocketed from 10.4% in 2019 to a staggering 12.6% in 2020. This translated to a significant decline in the overall employment rate, which plummeted from 37.4% to 35.1% during the same period.

While unemployment rates in Algeria exhibited a partial recovery by the beginning of 2021, returning to pre-pandemic levels, the country's labor market displayed concerning divergence. Despite the apparent stabilization of unemployment, employment levels remained demonstrably lower than pre-pandemic figures. This phenomenon, characterized by rising economic inactivity, suggests complex underlying dynamics within the labor market that warrant further investigation.

The pursuit of an inclusive and resilient post-pandemic recovery necessitates embracing a multi-pronged policy approach characterized by several general orientations. However, the concrete implementation of these orientations must be meticulously tailored to specific national contexts. Recognizing the inherent heterogeneity of national circumstances and their impact on policy efficacy is paramount to successfully the path towards a "Build Back Better" future.

Finally, **the recommendations** that we propose are as follows:

- **Enhancing the institutions of labor.** This necessitates concerted

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efforts on several fronts:

- a. **Enhancing labor conditions:** The reassessment of existing regulatory frameworks to ensure equitable treatment of workers, irrespective of their employment status, and the establishment of adequate working conditions for all workers should constitute an integral aspect of post-crisis recovery strategies.
- b. **Modernizing employment services and fostering flexibility:** Ensuring that public and private employment services incorporate robust digital services and facilitate teleworking arrangements for staff is essential. In a broader context, fortifying the resilience of the labor market demands enhanced institutional capacity to swiftly implement key measures while upholding service quality. This entails having a pre-existing policy infrastructure that can be promptly scaled up in times of crisis.
- Reinforcing employment and social protection systems to encompass all workers and emphasizing risk prevention as much as addressing challenges when they arise.
- Advocating for lifelong learning opportunities for everyone to align with evolving skill requirements. A specific emphasis should be placed on enhancing digital skills, particularly for individuals with limited digital literacy, to augment their capabilities for online work and learning.

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