



Society & Living Conditions

12.1 General Social Features

	West Bank	Gaza	WBGS (Average)
No. of households (2017)	594,458	334,710	929,168
Type of household (% , 2017) One person:	5.6	3.2	4.7
Nuclear:	85.3	82.5	84.3
Extended:	7.8	14.1	10.1
Composite:	0.2	0.2	0.2
Type of household (% , mid-2014) – Urban:			73.9%
Rural:			16.7%
Camp:			9.4%
Average household size (persons, 2017):	4.8	5.6	5.1
Average housing density (persons/room, 2017):	1.2	1.6	1.4
Women (15-49 yrs.) married to - a relative	42.2	47.9	44.3
- non-relative	57.8	52.1	55.7
Polygamous marriages (% , 2014):	3.2	5.84	4.3
Median age at first marriage (women, 2017)	19	19	19 years
Median age at first marriage (men, 2017)	25	24	24 years
Marriages registered (Sharia & churches, 2017)	29,977	17,241	47,218
Crude Marriage Rate (2017):	10.5	9.2	10.0
Divorces registered (2017):	5,326	3,242	8,568
Crude Divorce Rate (2017):	1.9	1.7	1.8
People aged 60+ (2017)	5.9%	4.3%	5.2%

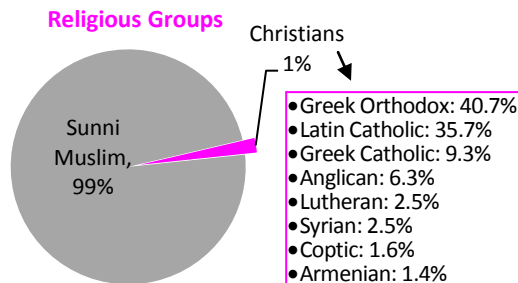
Sources: PCBS, *Vital Statistics*, pcbs.gov.ps; PCBS, *Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2017: Census Final Results Summary*, May 2018; PCBS, *The Palestinian Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014*, Dec. 2015.

■ Religion

Muslims: Sunni Islam, representing the Malki Shafe'i, Hanafi, and Hanbali schools: **99%**.

Christians: Prior to 1948, 135,547 Christians lived in Palestine, comprising 7.9% of the population (British Mandate's Survey of Palestine, 1946). Today's estimate is **46,850 (or 1%)**, including 1,138 in Gaza (PCBS, *Preliminary Results of the Population, Housing & Establishments Census 2017*, February 2018). According to the Israeli CBS, 133,600 'Arab Christians' lived in Israel in 2017.

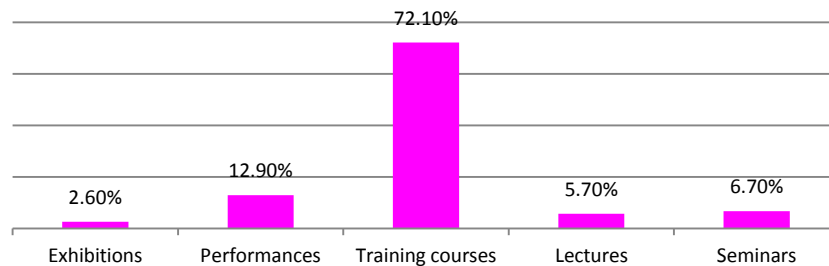
In 2017, there were 3,138 **mosques** in the WBGS (WB: 2,111, GS: 1,027) (PCBS, *Culture Statistics*). In 2011, there were 162 **churches** (WB: 159, GS: 3) (PCBS, *Statistics on Culture*, 2011).



Sources: PCBS, *Preliminary Results of the Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2017*, February 2018. Christian denominations (in Box): Al-Qass Collins, Kassis & Raheb. *Palestinian Christians in the West Bank - Facts, Figures & Trends*. Bethlehem: Diyar, 2012.

■ Culture

- In 2017, there were 625 **cultural centers** operating in Palestine (WB: 545, GS: 80), most of them in the Nablus governorate with 82, followed by Bethlehem with 87. Together, these centers provided over 9,000 **activities** in which 515,000 people participated. Activities included:



Source: PCBS, *Review of the Status of Cultural Institutions in Palestine*, 13 March 2018.

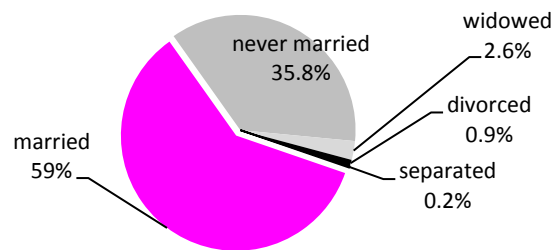
- In 2017, 32 **museums** operated in Palestine (WB: 27, GS: 5), attracting some 358,000 visitors (81.8% of them Palestinians), as well as 15 **theaters** (WB: 12, GS: 3), performing 238 **plays** (*Ibid.*).
- Palestine has currently four **cultural sites** inscribed in the **UNESCO List of World Heritage** in Danger - The Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (since 1981), Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (since 2012), Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (since 2014), and Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town (since 2017)- while the following 13 sites are on the tentative list (last revised 28 October 2015):
 - Ancient Jericho: Tell es-Sultan (4/2/2012)
 - Anthedon Harbour (2/4/2012)
 - Baptism Site "Eshria'a" (Al-Maghtas) (28/10/2015)
 - El-Bariyah: wilderness with monasteries (2/4/2012)
 - Mount Gerizim & the Samaritans (2/4/2012)
 - Old Town of Nablus & environs (2/4/2012)
 - QUMRAN: Caves and Monastery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (2/4/2012)
 - Sebastia (2/4/2012)
 - Tell Umm Amer (2/4/2012)
 - Throne Villages (6/6/2013)
 - Umm Al-Rihan forest (2/4/2012)
 - Wadi Gaza Coastal Wetlands (2/4/2012)
 - Wadi Natuf & Shuqba Cave (06/06/2013)

■ Women

- Women account for **49.2%** of the total Palestinian population of 4.88 million (PCBS, *Population, Housing & Establishments Census 2017, 2018*).
- In 2017, 10% of all Palestinian households were headed by females (WB: 10.4%, GS: 9.4%) (PCBS, *Population, Housing & Establishments Census 2017, 2018*).
- In 2017, 873 cases of **violence against women** were documented in the West Bank, mostly affecting women in the 30-49 age group (43.5%). Some 81.6% of the cases of reported violence were against married women and in 55.8% of the cases the perpetrator was the husband (WHO, *Right to Health 2017*, October 2018).
- Some 20.5% of all females got **married before the age of 18** (WB: 19.9%, GS: 21.6%) as well as 10.8% of women aged 20-24 (WB: 8.5%, GS: 13.8%) (*Ibid.*).



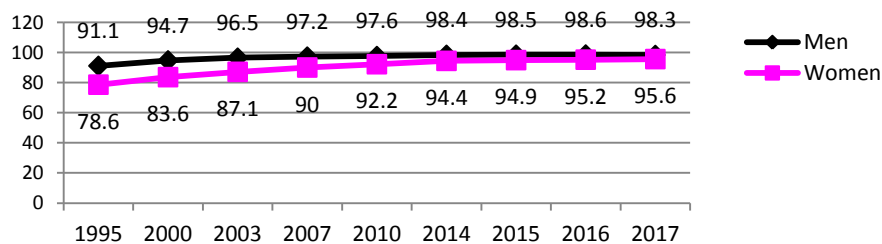
Marital Status of Women Aged 18+ Years



Source: PCBS, *Preliminary Results of the Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2017*, February 2018.

- The **literacy rate** of women has improved considerably over the last two decades, but is still lower than that of men:

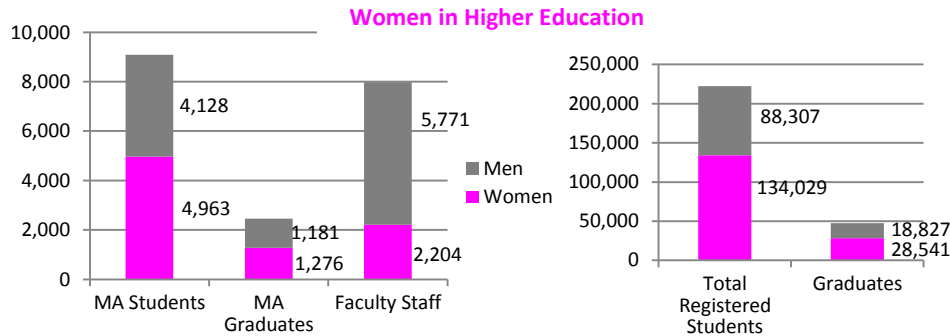
Literacy Rate of Palestinian men and Women (15+ Years), 1995-2016



Source: PCBS, *Press Release on International Women's Day*, 8 March 2018.

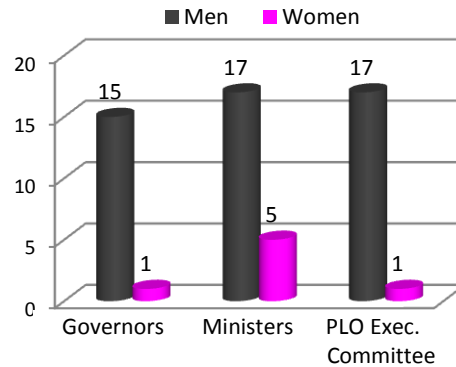
- In the school year 2017/2018, women constituted **50.5%** of all **school students** and 59.8% of the **staff at schools**. Some 62.4% of **school teachers** are female (Ministry of Education, 2017/18).
- **Female enrolment** in high schools was 80.4% for the year 2016-2017, compared to 60.5% of male enrolment (PCBS, *Press Release on International Women's Day*, 8 March 2018).
- Of the 32,187 Palestinians above 10 years who held an **MA degree** in 2017, 35.8% were women, as were 13% of the 7,827 holding a **PhD** (PCBS, *Population, Housing & Establishments Census 2017, 2018*).

- More women than men **enroll in higher education** and hold a university degree. In 2017/18, 60.3% of all **students** registered at institutes of higher education were female as were 54.6% of those studying towards an **MA**, 60.3% of all graduates and 52% of those graduating with an MA. However, women made up only 27.6% of all academic faculty staff (*Ibid.*).



Source: Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2017/2018 Statistics

- The **female labor force participation rate** was 19% in 2017, compared to 10.3% in 2001, and 71.2% male participation. The **female unemployment rate** was 47.4% compared to 22.3% for men. Of female youth (15-29 years) 65.8% were unemployed, as were 53.8% of those with 13+ school years (PCBS, *Press Release on the Eve of the International Women's Day*, 8 March 2018). For more details on **women's work** see page 418.
- Only 1.2% of the firms in the WBS have a **female top manager** (compared to 5.4% in the MENA average and over 10% in Israel) and only 2.5% have a **majority female ownership** (MENA: 3.4%, Israel: 3.1%) (World Bank, *Enterprise Surveys*, <http://www.enterprisesurveys.org/data/explore-topics/gender>).
- Women are **underrepresented in decision-making bodies** as well as with regard to **public roles** or senior administrative and political posts:



- only one of 18 **PLO Executive Committee** members, 7 of 143 **PLO Central Council** members, 5 of 22 **ministers** and one of 16 **governors** (Ramallah/Al-Bireh) are female. Thanks to the quota system used, women comprise 12.9% of the **PLC** members and 21.2% of the members of **local authorities**. In 2016, they represented 42.7% of the **civil servants**, but only 11.3% were **Director Generals** (PCBS, *Press Release on International Women's Day*, 8 March 2018). In **comparison**, in 2016, the average proportion of women in parliaments in the Middle East/ North Africa was 16% and worldwide 23% (World Bank data on Social Development, <http://wdi.worldbank.org/table/1.5>).

- The situation is similar in **political parties**: in the most recent Fatah elections (August 2009), not one woman was elected to the main governing body (Central Council), while in the legislative body (Revolutionary Council) only 11 of 120 members are female (Azzouni, Suheir, "Palestine - Palestinian Authority & Israeli-Occupied Territories," in *Women's Rights in the Middle East & North Africa: Progress Amid Resistance*, NY, 2010).
- **Women's low representation** across all sectors is also evident from the following table:

Women Representation in Various Sectors

Registered physicians ¹	16.3%	Diplomats (PLO Ambassador) ²	5.8%
Registered dentists ¹	34.0%	Ministers ¹	12%
Registered nurses ¹	49.1%	Deputy Minister ¹	16.2%
Registered pharmacists ¹	58.1%	Public Sector/Director General) ²	11.3%
Medical Association member	13.6%	Public Sector/civil servants ²	42.7%
Dental Association member	27.3%	PLC members ²	12.9%
Registered Engineers ²	32.2%	Local Council members ²	21.2%
Journalists / Editors ¹	25/10%	Civil Police personnel ³	3.7%
Registered Lawyers ²	33.4%	Military justice system personnel	2%
Employees in Banks	28%	Public prosecutors (Attorney General) ³	21%
Members in sports clubs	2.3%	Shari'a court judges	7.2%
Members in societies	3.2%	Legal judges ²	17.3%
Members in youth movement	0.4%	Student council members ²	12.4%
Researchers	22.6%	Members in political parties	0.7%

Sources: ¹PCBS, *Women and Men in Palestine: Issues and Statistics 2016*, 2016; ²PCBS, *Press Release on International Women's Day*, 2018; ³ *Justice and Security Monitor – A Review of Palestinian Justice and Security Sector Data 2011-2016*, Sawasya UNDP/UN Women Joint Programme, July 2018; PCBS.

■ Children & Youth

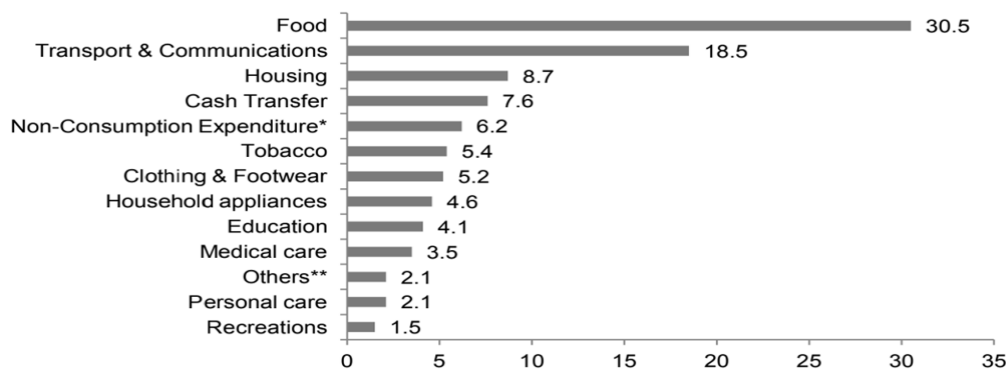
- **Children** (0-17 years) represent 47% of the Palestinian population (WB: 47.5%, GS: 48%) (PCBS, *Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2017: Census Final Results*, July 2018).
- **Youth** (15-29 years) represented 29.2% of the total population. The **sex ratio** among youth is 104.5 males to 100 females (PCBS, *International Youth Day*, 12 August 2018).
- In 2017, 35.3% of the youth (15-29 years), were **enrolled in education**: 80.7% of the 15-17 years age group, 42.4% of the 18-22 years old ones, and 7.1% of those 23-29 years (PCBS, *International Youth Day*, 12 August 2018).
- For **children/youth and work** see p. 419.
- In 2015, 19.6% of **youth** (15-29 years) participated in some kind of **volunteer work**, 6.3% were members in **sports clubs**, and 3% in **civil, cultural or other associations**, whereby the participation of females was significantly lower than that of males (PCBS, *Palestinian Youth Survey 2015*, Feb. 2016).
- Only 0.7% of the Palestinian youth hold **decision-making positions** (legislators and senior management employees) (PCBS, *International Youth Day*, 12/08/2018, August 2018).
- At the end of September 2018, **270 Palestinian minors** were held in **Israeli prisons** as security detainees and prisoners, 50 of them younger than 16 years (<http://www.addameer.org/statistics>).
- Detained Palestinian children are being **abused** by Israeli forces, "routinely" **interrogated** without the presence of their parents, subjected to unnecessary force in the arrest and detention, and held in unsafe conditions (http://www.addameer.org/the_prisoners/children).
- In 2016, the PA's **Public Prosecution** received 1,747 cases involving **juveniles** (a total of 2,108 children, 2,053 of them boys and 55 girls). Some 11% of the cases involved felonies and 89% misdemeanors. Over 50% of juvenile cases were related to assault and theft; there were four cases of homicide, one of rape, and 45 cases relating to indecent assault or acts (*Justice and Security Monitor – A Review of Palestinian Justice and Security Sector Data 2011-2016*, Sawasya UNDP/UN Women Joint Programme, July 2018).
- Out of total 2.5 million Palestinian people **in need**, are 1.3 million children (UN OCHA Humanitarian HRP, 2018).
- **Chronic malnutrition** affects 7.4% of children between 6-59 months (WFP Palestine Country Brief, 9/2018).



12.2 Household & Living Conditions

- In 2017, the average **housing density** was **1.4** persons per room (WB: 1.2, GS: 1.6), the **average household size** 5.1 persons (WB: 4.8, GS: 5.6) (PCBS, *Population, Housing & Establishments Census 2017*, 2018).
- The **average monthly of per capita expenditure** was 169.5 JDs (WB: 220.1, GS: 91.2) in 2017, 30.5% of which was spent for food and 18.5% for transport/communications. Compared to 2007, expenditure for food, clothes, household appliances, and personal care decreased while that for transport/communications, cash transfers, education, and smoking increased. The **average monthly expenditure of household** was 934.9 JDs (WB: 1,143.6 JD, GS: 556 JD) (PCBS, *The Palestinian Expenditure and Consumption Survey 2017 – Press Report on the Levels of Living in Palestine*, 15 April 2018).

Per Capita Expenditure on Commodities and Services, 2017 (%)



* Such as gifts, wedding costs, interest on loans, transaction fees, fines and insurances. ** Including taxes, alcoholic beverages, social protection, other non-food expenditure. *Source:* PCBS, *Household Expenditure and Consumption Survey: Main Findings of Living Standards in Palestine (Expenditure, Consumption and Poverty)*, 2017, May 2018.

- In 2017, 15% of West Bankers and 79% of Gazans received some form of **assistance**. Aid accounted for almost 30% of **expenditure** and for 45% of total **income** of the **poor in Gaza** (World Bank, *Economic Monitoring Report to the AHLC*, Sept. 2018).
- In 2018, 2.5 million Palestinians were expected to be in need of **humanitarian assistance** and **protection** (OCHA, *oPt Humanitarian Bulletin*, December 2017).
- Some 1.3 million people – or **22.5%** of the Palestinian population (in Gaza: 39%) – are **food-insecure** and in need of **food assistance** (WFP Palestine, <http://www1.wfp.org/countries/state-palestine>).
- In mid-2018, the **Social Security Institution** was established; based on the Social Security Law No. 19 (2016) it is to administer the first comprehensive **social security** system in Palestine, covering all private sector workers and their family members (previously only public-sector employees had social protection benefits for retirement, disability, death, employment injury, and maternity) and boost compliance with the 2012 **Minimum Wage** Law.

Recommended Research Sources:

<http://www.pcbs.gov.ps> (Statistics on Gender & on Living Standards)

<http://www.alzaytouna.net/english/books/AmINotaHuman-2-Woman.pdf>

El Feki, S., Heilman, B., Barker, G., eds., *Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) – Middle East & North Africa: Executive Summary*. UN Women & Promundo-US, 2017.

Nakhleh, Khalil & Elia Zureik, eds., *The Sociology of the Palestinians*. London: Croom Helm, 1980.

PCBS, *Women and Men in Palestine: Issues and Statistics*, various years.

PCBS, *Palestinian Family Survey, 2010*, Final Report, October 2013.

PMO, *State of Palestine & UNFPA, Palestine 2030: Demographic Change: Opportunities for Development*, 2016.

UNFPA & Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Youth in Palestine – Policy and Program Recommendations to Address Demographic Risks and Opportunities*, October 2017.