

Society & Living Conditions

1. General Social Features

	West Bank	Gaza	WBGS (Average)
Type of household (%) (2017) One person:	5.6	3.0	4.7
Nuclear:	85.3	82.8	84.3
Extended:	7.8	13.9	10.1
Composite:	0.15	0.2	0.2
Type of household (2017) Urban:	71.5%		
Rural:	23.6%		
Camp:	4.9%		
Average household size (persons, 2021):	4.7	5.6	5.0
Average housing density (persons/room, 2020):	1.4	1.7	1.5
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, 2020)	21.3	20.7	21
Median age at first marriage (men, 2020)	25.9	25.5	25.7 years
Marriages registered (Sharia & churches, 2020)	20,493	20,728	41,221
Crude Marriage Rate (per 1,000, 2020):	6.7	10.1	8.1
Divorces registered (2020):	4,558	3,448	8,006
Crude Divorce Rate (per 1,000, 2020):	1.5	1.7	1.6
People aged 60+ (mid-2022)	6.2%	4.7%	5.5%

Sources: PCBS, *Vital Statistics*, pcbs.gov.ps; PCBS, *Population, Housing & Establishments Census 2017*; PCBS, *Palestinian Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, 2015*; PCBS, *Housing Unit Conditions, 2020*; PCBS, *Press Release on International Population Day, 11 July 2022*; PCBS, *Press Release on International Day of Older Persons, 1 October 2022*.

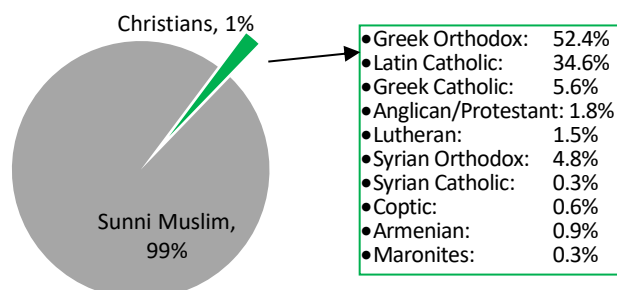
■ Religion

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). The Israeli **1967** census in the OPT counted 42,494 Christians. The **2017** Palestinian census estimated their number at **46,850** (or 1% of the total population), including 8,558 in Jerusalem and 1,138 in Gaza (PCBS, *Census 2017*). In 2021, the Israeli CBS counted 139,600 'Arab Christians' inside Israel.

In 2021, there were 3,616 **mosques** in the WBGS (WB: 2,386, GS: 1,230) (PCBS, *Culture Statistics*). In 2011, there were 162 **churches** (WB: 159, GS: 3) (PCBS, *Statistics on Culture, 2011*).

Religious Groups and Christian Denominations

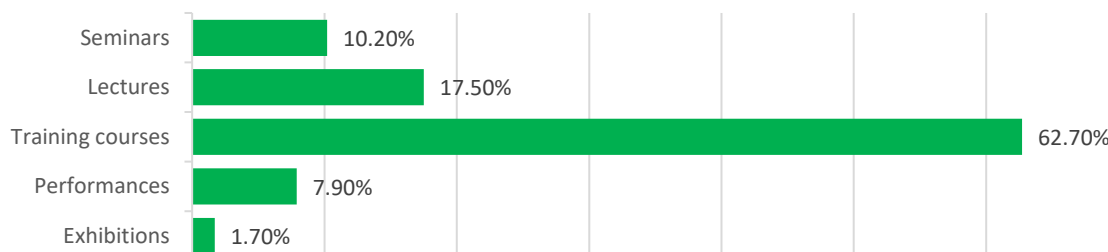


Source: PCBS *Census 2017*.

Christian denominations (in Box): PCBS, quoted in Sabella, Bernard, "Palestinian Christians Centennial Historical & Demographic Developments," May 2020.

■ Culture

- In 2021, there were 577 **cultural centers** (up from 528 in 2020) operating in Palestine (WB: 505, GS: 72); together they provided some 7,000 **activities** (up from 4,700) in which 437,000 people participated, 48% of whom online. Activities included:



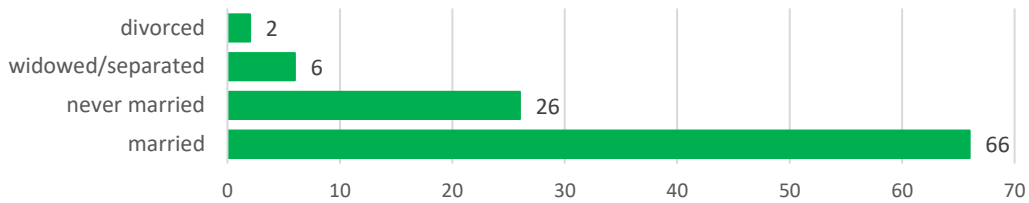
Source: PCBS & MoC, *Press Release on the Occasion of the Palestinian National Culture Day*, 13 March 2022.

- In 2021, 31 **museums** operated in Palestine (WB: 26, GS: 5), attracting some 114,000 visitors (up from 26,000 in 2020 but still far from the 388,000 in 2019), as well as 17 **theaters** (WB: 14, GS: 3), performing 370 **plays** (up from 96 in 2020) attended by 33,000 (in 2019, it was 90,000) (*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 (in brackets: date of submission):
 - Ancient Jericho: Tell es-Sultan (20/10/2020)
 - Anthedon Harbour (2/4/2012)
 - Baptism Site Eshria'a (Al-Maghtas) (28/10/2015)
 - El-Bariyah: wilderness with monasteries (2/4/2012)
 - Hisham's Palace/Khirbet Al- Mafjar (20/10/2020)
 - 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)
- The Islamic World Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ISESCO) included four Palestinian sites in its heritage list in 2021 of: Hisham's Palace in Jericho, the villages of Al-Karasi (including Abwein, Arraba, Beit Wazan, Burqa, Deir Ghassan, Dura, Jama'in, Kur, Ni'lin, Ras Karkar, Deir Istiya, Sebastia, Sanur), Anthedon in Gaza (Khirbet Al-Balakhiya: the old port of Gaza), and the Old City of Nablus and its environs.

■ Women

- Of the total population, **women constitute 49.2%** (or 2,63 million) in mid-2022 (PCBS, *Press Release on International Women's Day*, 8 March 2022).
- In 2021, 11% of all Palestinian **households** were **headed by women** (WB: 12%, GS: 10%) (PCBS, *Press Release on International Population Day*, 11 July 2022).
- On 5 November 2019, the PA passed a **law** setting the **minimum age for matrimony at 18** for both genders in an effort to reduce rates of **early marriage** (before it was 15 years for females and 16 for males in the West Bank and in Gaza 17 for females and 18 for males). The percentage of women **married before the age of 18** has declined from 24% in 2010 to 11.9% in 2021 (WB: 4.3%, GS: 19.3%) and those **married before the age of 15** from 2.1% to 0.7% (PCBS, *Press Release on the Palestinian Child Day*, 5 April 2022 and on *International Women's Day*, 8 March 2022).
- Some 66% of **women** aged 18+ years are **married**, 26% have never married, 6% are widows and 2% are divorced:

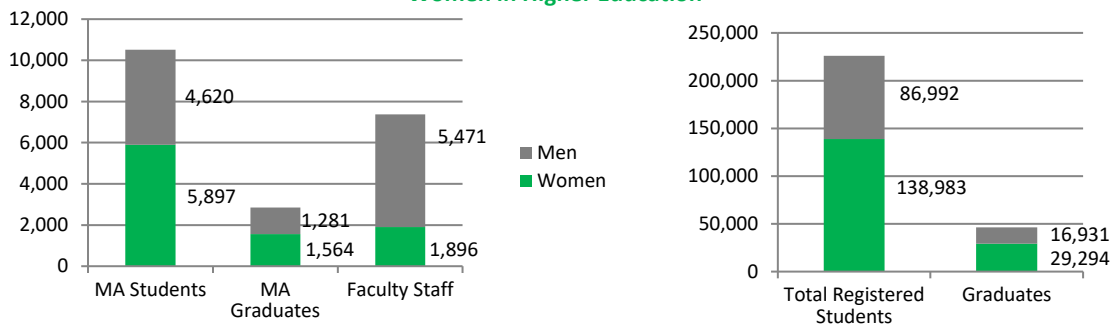
Marital Status of Women Aged 18+ Years (%)



Source: PCBS, Press Release on the Eve of International Women's Day, 8 March 2020.

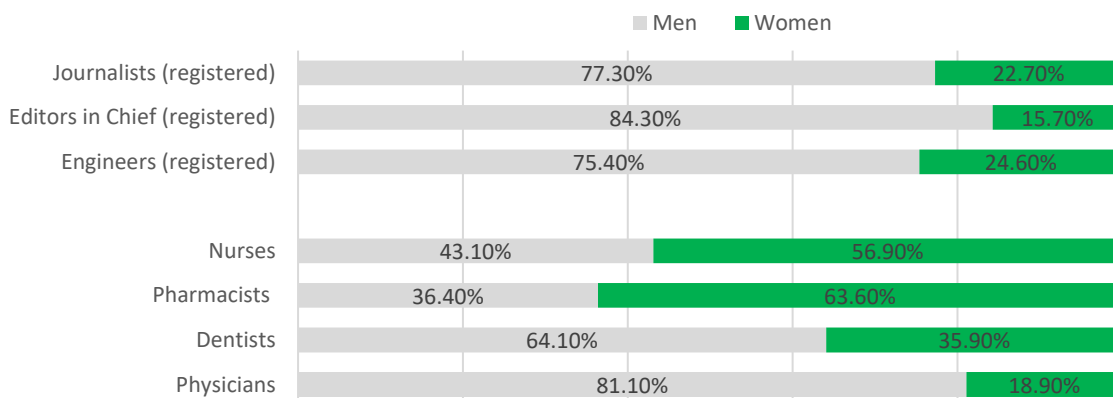
- The **illiteracy rate of women** has declined considerably over the last three decades – from 21.4% in 1995 to 3.5% in 2021, but is still higher than that of men (1.2%) (PCBS, Press Release on International Population Day, 11 July 2022).
- In all educational stages - from pre-elementary to higher education - **female net enrollment** is higher than that of men. In the school year 2021/22, females constituted **50.5%** of all **school students** (Ministry of Education, 2021/2021 Statistics).
- More women than men **enroll in/graduate from higher education institutions**. However, women made up only 25% of all academic **faculty staff** (Ministry of Education, 2021/2021 Statistics):

Women in Higher Education



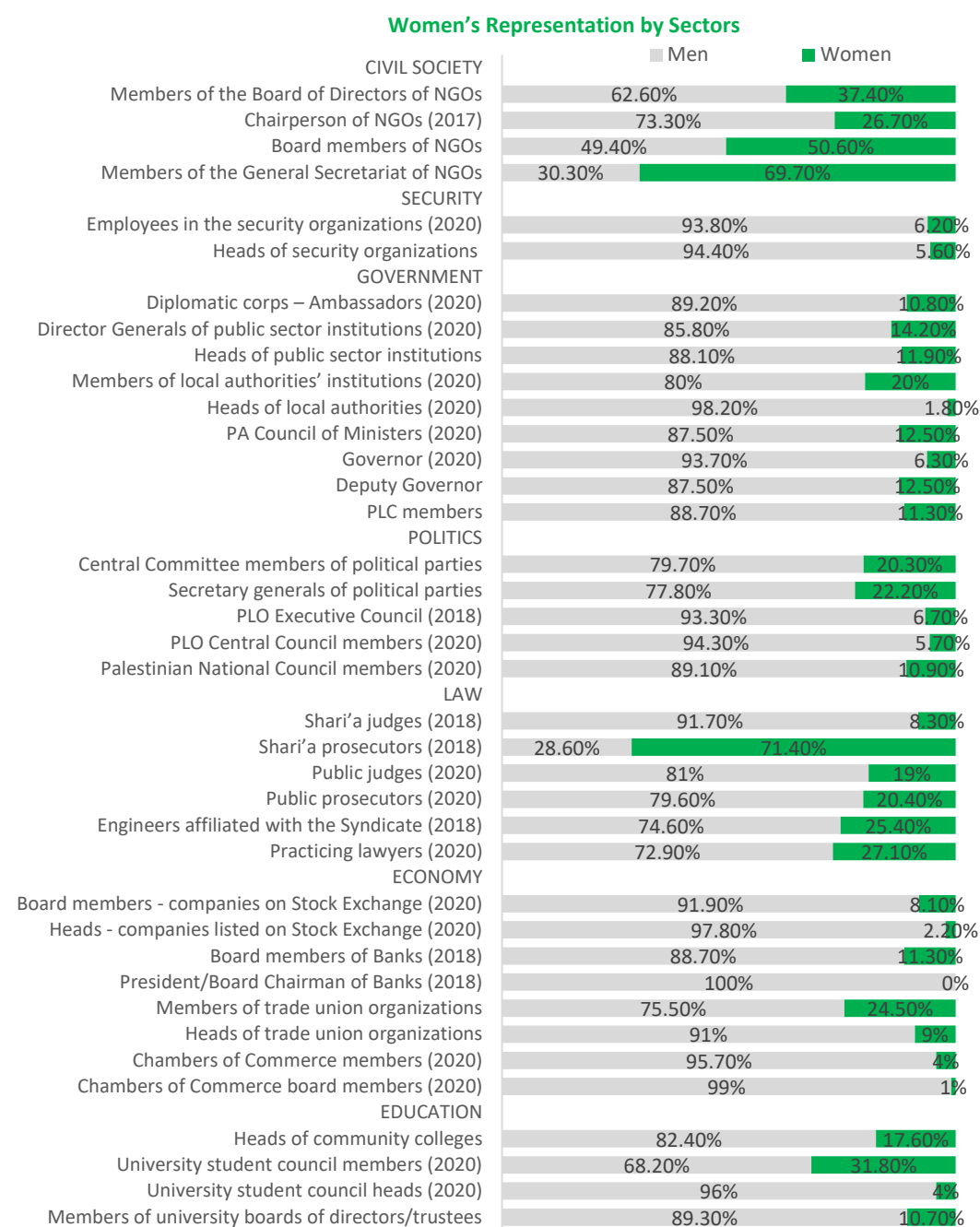
Source: Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2021/2022 Statistics

- The **female labor force participation rate** was 18.3% in mid-2022, compared to 69.7% among men (PCBS, Labor Force Survey, Q2-2022). For more details on **women's work** see page Factsheet on Economy.
- Women remain **underrepresented** in senior **decision-making** positions. Only 3 out of the 22 **PA government ministers** are **female** (Mai Kaileh - Health, Rola Maayya - Tourism, and Amal Hamad - Women's Affairs). Women accounted for 26% of the **candidates** and 22% of those **elected** in the **2021 local elections**.
- Although more women attain higher education, they are underrepresented in many **professions**:



Source: PCBS, Women and Men in Palestine - Issues & Statistics, 2021.

- **Women’s low representation** across all sectors is also evident from the following table:



Sources: PCBS, *Women in Decision-Making Positions*, 2020; PCBS, *Women and Men in Palestine - Issues & Statistics*, 2021.

- 59.3% of currently married or ever married women (15-64 years) in Palestine were **exposed to violence** “at least once” by their husbands in any form (WB: 52.3%, GS: 70.4%), mostly to psychological violence (57.2%), followed by economic (20.5%), physical (18.5%), and sexual (9.4%) violence. Young (20-24 years), unemployed, and less educated women are **most** exposed to husbands’ violence. (PCBS, *Violence Survey in the Palestinian Society*, 2019, July 2022).
- As of mid-September 2022, 32 **female prisoners** were held in Israeli prisons (Addameer). According to the PLO’s Palestinian Prisoners Committee, over 17,000 women have been **arrested** by Israel **since 1967**, most of them during the first and second Intifadas. In **2021**, 184 women were **arrested** by Israel and 48 were **killed** (PCBS, *Press Release on the Eve of the International Women’s Day*, 8 March 2022).

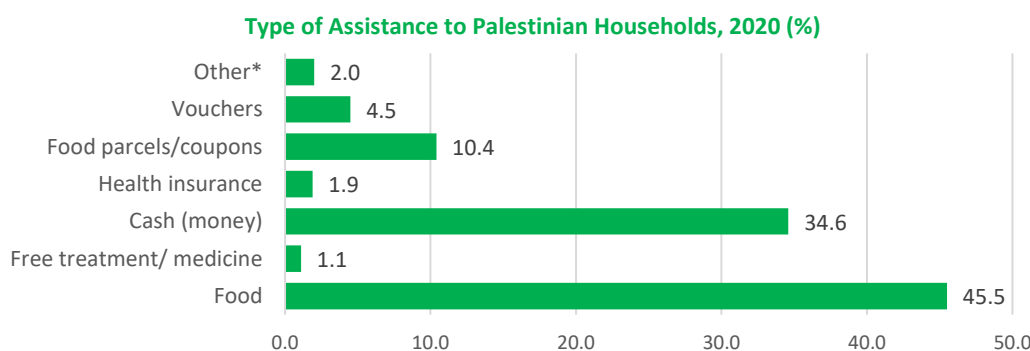
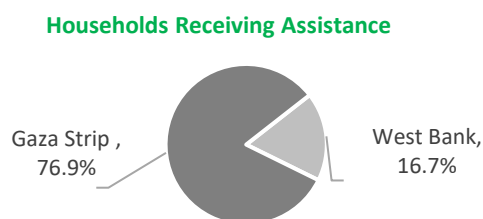


■ Children & Youth

- In mid-2022, **children aged 0-14 years** constituted 38% of the total population (WB: 36%, GS: 41%) (PCBS, *Press Release on International Population Day*, 11 July 2022).
- In mid-2022, **children under the age of 18** comprised 43.9% of the total population (WB: 41.7%, GS: 47.3%) (PCBS, *Press Release on Palestinian Child Day*, 5 April 2022).
- Youth (18-29 years) represented **22%** (or 1.17 million) of the total population in **mid-2022**. The **sex ratio** among youth is 105 males to 100 females (PCBS, *Press Release International Youth Day*, 11 August 2022).
- 18% of the 18-29-year-olds **held a BA degree** or higher (women: 20%, men: 13%), but their **unemployment** was with 53% the highest (PCBS, *Press Release on International Youth Day*, 2022).
- For **children/youth and work** see Factsheet on Economy.
- As of September 2022, **180 Palestinian minors** were held in **Israeli prisons**, 20 of them under 16 years. Detained Palestinian children are often being **abused** by Israeli forces, “routinely” **interrogated** without their parents present, subjected to force in arrest and detention, and held in unsafe conditions (<http://www.addameer.org>).
- Between 2000 and September 2022, **2,220 children** have been **killed** as a result of Israeli military or settler violence, including 547 aged 0-8 years (excluding children involved in hostilities). The majority (1,709) was killed in **Gaza**. In **2022**, 22 children were killed as of September (for details and updates see: https://www.dci-palestine.org/child_fatalities_statistics).

2. Household & Living Conditions

- The average **housing density** is 1.5 persons per room (WB: 1.4, GS: 1.7) and the **average household size** 5 persons (WB: 4.7, GS: 5.6) (PCBS, *Housing Unit Conditions*, 2021).
- In 2020, 40.9% of Palestinian households or any of their members received **assistance** (WB: 16.7%, GS: 76.9%), which was the **main source of income** for 12.7% of the Palestinian households. Most of it came from UNRWA (37.6%), followed by governmental institutions (36.1%) and international agencies (7.4%), and most of it was in the form of food (PCBS, *Socio-Economic Conditions Survey, 2020 - Main Findings*, August 2021).



* Including clothes, jobs, water, martyrs' compensation, electricity, housing.

Source: PCBS, *Socio-Economic Conditions Survey, 2020 - Main Findings*, August 2021.

- By July 2022, some 1.79 million Palestinians are currently **food insecure**, of which 1.1 million severely; 90% of them are Gazans (WFP Palestine Country Brief, July 2022).
- UNICEF reports some 2.1 million Palestinians in **need of humanitarian assistance** by mid-2022, including 930,000 children (UNICEF, *State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Report No. 1*, Aug. 2022).



Recommended Research Sources:

<http://www.pcbs.gov.ps> (Statistics on Gender & on Living Standards)
<https://fanack.com/palestine/society-of-palestine/>

Acaps, *PALESTINE - Social impacts of the humanitarian situation*, Thematic Report, 19 October 2021.

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ESCWA, *Social and Economic Situation of Palestinian Women and Girls, July 2018-June 2020*, UN, 2021.

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

PCBS, *The Status of the Rights of Palestinian Children*, November 2022.

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Samaroo, Dima, *The Political Participation of Palestinian Women in Official and Non-Official Organizations in Limited Horizon*, ICSR, 2018.

UNRWA, *Gender Bulletin* (monthly newsletter).