



Education

(See also “Education” in Jerusalem Factsheet)

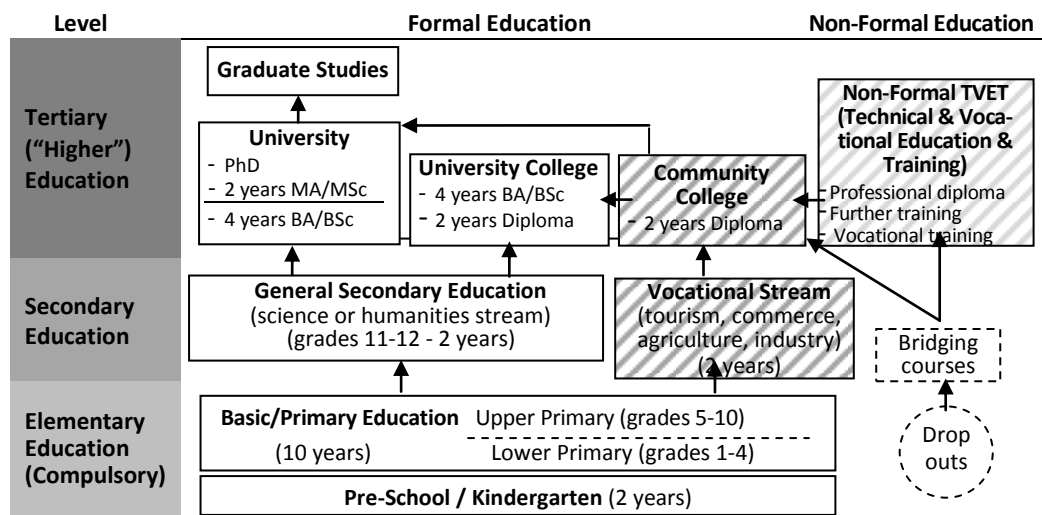
■ Facts & Figures

- The first **Palestinian national curriculum** was launched in 2000, replacing the Jordanian and Egyptian ones in use since 1967. On 6 April 2017, President Abbas ratified the first **Palestinian Law for Education and Higher Education** to replace the Jordanian law in the West Bank and the Egyptian law in the Gaza Strip and make way for a reformed education system based on enrooting and developing knowledge, instead of traditional rote learning and indoctrination. The fully re-structured curriculum, which intends to prepare students better for the job market, thus incorporating **new** (e.g., time management, presentation, leadership) and **vocational** (e.g., in the fields of IT, environment, hospitality) **skills**, was introduced in the 2017/18 school year.



- **Education System:** Compulsory basic education covers 10 years (grades 1-10) in a common education system, divided into the *Preparation Stage* (grades 1-4) and the *Empowerment Stage* (grades 5 to 10). Secondary Education (grades 11 and 12), which is not obligatory, is separated into a *literary* or a *science* stream and has also a few vocational secondary schools offering courses in commerce, agriculture, technology, industry, and hospitality. Grade 12 ends with the General Secondary Educational Certification (**Tawjihi**) exam. Students need to pass this examination in order to be eligible to enroll into universities and colleges.

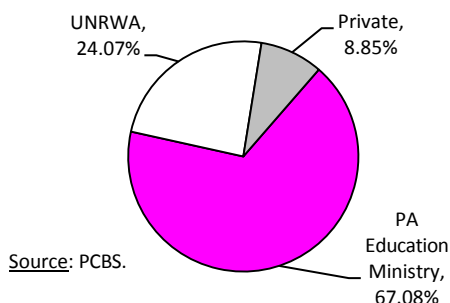
Education System in Palestine*



* Hatched boxes = Vocational Training. Source: Torino Process 2010 – Occupied Palestinian Territories, European Training Foundation, 2010; Ministry of Education, *Education Strategy 2014-2019-Palestine 2020: A Learning Nation*, 2014.



Main Education Providers
(% of schools overseen)



- In 2017, 54.2% of Palestinian children aged 3-5 attended **kindergartens** (PCBS, *Population, Housing & Establishments Census 2017, 2018*), which is considered very low.
- The **illiteracy rate** among Palestinians 15+ years has dropped from 13.9% in 1997 to 3.3% (95,450 people) in 2017 (female: 5%, male: 1.7%; WB: 3.6%, GS: 3%), which is very low (Arab States average: 24.8%). Among those 65+ years old 34.6% are illiterate, as are 4.5% of those 45-64 years, 1.3% of the 30-44 years and 0.6% of the 15-29 years old. The rate in urban localities is 3.1%, in rural areas 4.8%, and in refugee camps 3.3% (PCBS, *Press Release on the Eve of International Literacy Day*, 6 Sept. 2018).

Education Sector at a Glance:

Number of kindergartens (2017/18)	1,795
Children enrolled in kindergartens	150,850
Number of Schools (2017/18)	2,998
- Basic stage	1,795
- Secondary stage	1,201
Pupils enrolled in schools (2017/18)	1,253,238
- female (50.5%)	632,641
Classes (2017/18)	41,100
Number of teachers (2017/18)	56,668
Pupil-Teacher ratio (2017/18):	22.1
Illiteracy rate (15+) (2017)	3.3%
Repetition rate primary (2016/17):	1.07%
Repetition rate secondary (2016/17):	0.57%
Drop-out rate primary (2016/17):	0.71%
Drop-out rate secondary (2016/17):	2.44%
Tawjihi (2018) - Students taking exam	72,604
- Students passing	48,420 (66%)
Net enrolment - Pre-primary*	48.98%
Net enrolment rate - Primary*	91.7%
Net enrolment rate - Secondary*	83.2%
Gross enrolment ratio - Tertiary*	42.3%
Primary to secondary transition rate*	98.8%
Vocational education (15-24 year-olds)*	0.37%

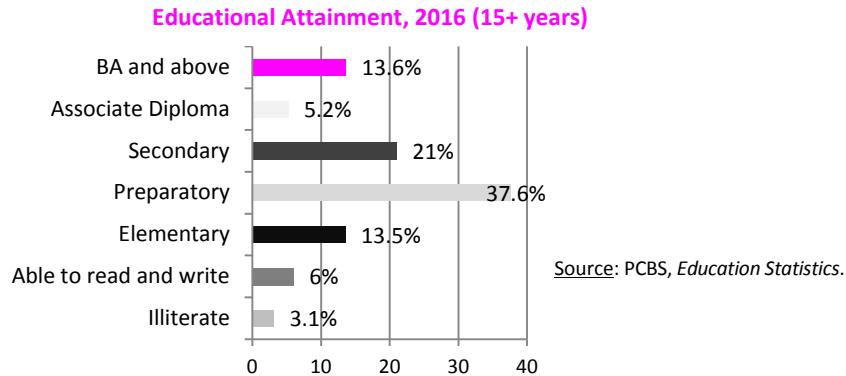
Sources: Ministry of Education, Statistical Yearbook 2017/18.
*UNESCO Institute for Statistics (data.uis.unesco.org) (2017 data).

Basic & Secondary Education: Schools & Students by Supervising Authority, 2017/2018

		West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Private	Stud./Class	22.7	21.9	22.6
	Classes	4,481	813	5,294
	Schools	368 (m: 33, f: 23, co-ed: 312)	57 (m: 12, f: 7, co-ed: 38)	425
	Students	101,702 (of which f: 42,815 =42.1%)	17,837 (of which f: 6,738 =37.8%)	119,539
UNRWA	Stud./Class	33.4	39.9	38.8
	Classes	1,444	6,791	8,235
	Schools	95 (m: 35, f: 48, co-ed: 12)	275 (m: 117, f: 69, co-ed: 89)	370
	Students	48,238 (of which f: 28,621 =59.3%)	271,022 (of which f: 131,366 =48.5%)	319,260
Government	Stud./Class	26.7	38.7	29.5
	Classes	21,045	6,526	25,571
	Schools	1,806 (m: 685, f: 666, co-ed: 455)	397 (m: 174, f: 160, co-ed: 63)	2,303
	Students	561,966 (of which f: 290,892 =51.8%)	252,473 (of which f: 132,209=52.4%)	814,439
Total	Stud./Class	26.4	38.3	30.5
	Classes	26,970 (of which 6,185 co-ed)	14,130 (of which 2,904 co-ed)	41,100
	Schools	2,269 (m: 753, f: 737, co-ed: 779)	729 (m: 303, f: 236, co-ed: 190)	2,998
	Students	711,906 of which f: 362,328 =50.9%	541,332 (of which f: 270,313 =49.9%)	1,253,238

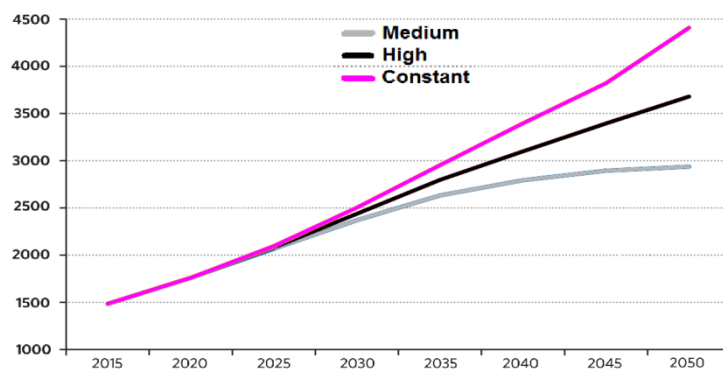
Source: Ministry of Education, 2017/2018 Statistics.

- In 2017/2018, 78.5% of all schools had a **library**, 77.5% a **computer lab** (averaging 23.2 students per computer), 73.8% a **science lab**, 69.5% **counselors** (on average 607 students per counselor), and 93% of all schools were connected to the **internet** (Ministry of Education, 2017/2018 Statistics)
- Some 218 schools had an **evening shift** (WB: 8, GS: 210), concerning 163,633 students (*Ibid.*).
- In 2017, 8.4% of those 15+ years **did not complete any stage of education** (PCBS, *Population, Housing & Establishment Census 2017, 2018*). In 2016, the figures for **educational attainment** were as follows:



- In 2016/2017, the overall **drop-out rate** was 0.92% (girls: 0.78%, boys: 1.06%; WB: 1.03%, GS: 0.76%). It was higher in secondary (2.44%) than in basic stage (0.71%) (Ministry of Education, 2017/2018 Statistics).
- Although the overall **transition rate** from **basic** education to **secondary** education is with 88% (85.3% male; 90.5% female) relatively high, almost a third of students, mostly male, drop out before completion, resulting in a **gross enrollment rate in secondary education** of 70% (60% male; 80% female) (USAID, *West Bank and Gaza Inclusive Growth Diagnostic*, May 2017).
- As of June 2018, education contributed **7.3%** to the **GDP** (excl. Jerusalem) (WB: 6.5%, GS: 9.7%) (PCBS, *Quarterly National Accounts*, Q2-2018) and **employed 11.5%** of the work force (WB: 10.7%, GS: 13.3%) (PCBS, *Labor Force Survey*, Q2-2018).
- **Projection:** It is estimated that maintaining the current ratios, **1,650 new schools** (WB: 750, GS: 900) will be required in Palestine by **2030** as well as an additional 32,000 **teachers** (WB: 9,000, GS: 23,000). (Prime Minister's Office, State of Palestine & UNFPA, *PALESTINE 2030: Demographic Change: Opportunities for Development*, December 2016).

Projection of the number of pupils and students (thousands), 2015-2050 (three scenarios)



Source: Prime Minister's Office, State of Palestine & UNFPA, PALESTINE 2030: Demographic Change: Opportunities for Development, December 2016.

■ Vocational Education & Training

- After 10th grade of basic education, only a small (but growing) number of Palestinian students choose the **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)** track for grades 11-12. The major streams for TVET are **industrial, agricultural, commercial, and tourism**. There are 76 **TVET institutions** operating in the OPT, 56 of them run by PA Ministries of Education, Labor, and Agriculture in addition to more than 200 cultural centers that conduct TVET training as part of their charitable or other work. Still, the proportion of students that enter TVET is very small, in part because they are unaccredited, usually unpaid, and not developed in close collaboration with the private sector (ILO, *The Occupied Palestinian Territory: An Employment Diagnostic Study*, 2018).

■ Higher Education

- Over 50% of school graduates in the West Bank enroll in **tertiary education** (the MENA average is only 30%) (USAID, *West Bank and Gaza Inclusive Growth Diagnostic*, May 2017).
- The **top five fields** in which 20-29 year-olds **graduated** (intermediate **diploma** or **BA**) in 2017 were Business Administration (27%), Teacher Training/Education Sciences (15%), Health (10%), Humanities (9%), and Social and Behavioral Sciences (8%). The **unemployment rate** of the graduates (20-29-year age group) rose to 56% (WB: 41%, GS: 73%). (PCBS, Press Release on *Educational Fields and Labor Market for Persons aged 20-29 Years in 2017, 2018*).
- **Post-secondary/tertiary education** is offered in universities, university/technical colleges (mainly 4-year programs), and community colleges (mainly 2-year diploma courses in technical and commercial fields). In 2017/18, 222,336 students were enrolled in institutions of **higher education**, 60.3% of them women (Ministry of Education & Higher Education, 2018).
- In 2017, 19.4% of the Palestinians 10 years or older held an **educational degree above secondary education**, while 0.95% had a M.A. degree and 0.2% a Ph.D. (PCBS, *Population, Housing & Establishments Census 2017, 2018*).



Higher Education Institutions, Students and Graduates, 2017/18

No. of Accredited Higher Education Institutions	48 (WB: 31, GS: 16 - plus 1 Open University)
Total Registered Students (2017/18)	222,336 (female: 134,029 = 60.3%)
- Studying towards an MA degree	9,091 (female: 4,963 = 54.6%)
Total Graduates (2017/18)	47,368 (female: 28,541 = 60.3%)
- Graduating with an MA degree	2,457 (female: 1,276 = 52%)
Total Academic Faculty Staff (2017/18)	7,975 (female: 2,204 = 27.6%)
Community Colleges (up to diploma)	18 (WB: 12, GS: 6)
- Students enrolled	11,317 (female: 5,832)
- Graduates	3,369 (female: 1,935)
University Colleges (up to BA)	15 (WB: 10, GS: 5)
- Students enrolled	16,957 (female: 8,225)
- Graduates	3,055 (female: 1,562)
Universities (up to MA)	14 (WB: 9; GS: 5)
- Students enrolled	140,438 (female: 84,618)
- Graduates	29,079 (female: 16,544)
Open University (up to BA)	1 (22 branches – WB: 17, GS: 5)
- Students enrolled Open Univ.	53,514 (female: 35,391)
- Graduates	11,842 (female: 8,419)

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

Recommended Research Sources:

<http://www.pcbs.gov.ps> (education statistics) <http://www.mohe.pna.ps> <http://www.unicef.org/oPt>
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/bfc/office-in-ramallah> <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en.html>

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), *Overview of the Higher Education System – Palestine*, European Union, February 2017.

Mapping Vocational Education and Training Governance in Palestine, European Training Foundation, 2014.

Ministry of Education, *Statistical Yearbook 2017/2018*, March 2018.

Ministry of Education & Higher Education, *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2017-2022*, April 2017.

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Rigby, Andrew, *Palestinian Education: The Future Challenge*, Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1995.

RecoNow, *The Higher Education System in Palestine, National Report*, May 2016.

UNICEF, *State of Palestine Country Report on Out-Of-School Children*, July 2018.

UNICEF, *oPt Monthly Updates*.