

The Palestinian Strategic Report

2014 – 2015

Ch.7



The Palestinian Demographic Indicators

2014 – 2015



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The Palestinian Demographic Indicators 2014–2015¹

Introduction

Statistical studies on Palestinian people face real difficulties, which stem from the dispersion of Palestinians inside their country and in exile (half of the Palestinians live outside their historic land); occupation of their land, exploitation of their resources and disruption of their potential. In this chapter, we do our best to achieve the highest possible levels of accuracy concerning data related to the Palestinian people.

1. The Palestinian Population Worldwide

The Palestinians worldwide were estimated by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) at 12.366 million in 2015 compared to around 12.096 million in 2014, an increase of 2.23%. In 2014, the increase was by 2.44%, compared to 2013, where the total number of Palestinians was estimated as 11.807 million.² This means that the total number of Palestinians has increased nine fold since 1948.

¹ This study is the approved English translation of the Demographic Indicators section of chapter seven of *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2014–2015*, edited by Dr. Mohsen Mohammad Saleh. It is a statistical and analytical study of various demographic indicators of the Palestinian people in 2014–2015. The Arabic version of this Report was released in 2016, and the draft of this section of this chapter was written by ‘Abdullah ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Najjar, the director general of the Censuses Directorate in the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) in Ramallah.

² See PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2013* (Ramallah: PCBS, December 2013), http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_PCBS/Downloads/book2028.pdf; PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2014* (Ramallah: PCBS, December 2014), <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Downloads/book2096.pdf>; and PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2015* (Ramallah: PCBS, December 2015), <http://pcbs.gov.ps/Downloads/book2176.pdf>

Note: According to available data, published by PCBS, population growth of Palestinians in the Diaspora was –2.1% in 2011, while in 2012 it became 3.1%, then in 2013 it decreased to 1.6%, while it settled in 2014 and 2015 to be 2.1%. These numbers confuse researchers, for it is impossible for the number of Palestinians to decrease in one year by 2.1%, and then in the next year to increase by 3.1%. It seems that the PCBS can be efficient with high precision in the WB and GS, while in the Diaspora numbers are provided by host countries or are estimated by researchers. Discrepancies and confusion are manifested when PCBS re-estimated the numbers of recent years without adapting the estimates for the years that preceded, thus the growth did not take its gradual logical form. As for the Palestinian population in Jordan, their estimation is a dilemma for researchers, and statistics vary drastically.

Based on place of residence, Palestinians are categorized into Palestinians living in historic Palestine, which includes the territories occupied in 1948 and 1967, and those in the Diaspora. Palestinians in historic Palestine are estimated at 6.221 million representing 50.3% of the Palestinians worldwide. Of these, 4.75 million Palestinians, amounting to 38.4% of Palestinians worldwide, live in territories occupied in 1967, while 1.471 million Palestinians live in territories occupied in 1948 (Israel), forming around 11.9% of Palestinians worldwide (see table 1/7).

Palestinians in the Diaspora were estimated to number 6.145 million at the end of 2015, amounting to 49.7% of the Palestinians worldwide. These Palestinians are mostly concentrated in neighboring Arab countries, notably Jordan, which was home to around 3.892 million Palestinians at the end of 2015, 31.5% of Palestinians worldwide. Palestinians in other Arab countries are estimated at 1.568 million, thus forming 12.7% of Palestinians worldwide, and they are mostly present in neighboring Arab countries including Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and the Gulf countries. Palestinians in foreign countries total an estimated 685 thousands, 5.5% of Palestinians worldwide (see table 1/7).

At the end of 2014, Palestinians worldwide were estimated to number 12.096 million, of whom 4.616 million were living in the WB and GS, in addition to around 1.463 million Palestinians in territories occupied in 1948, compared to 6.017 million living abroad; 3.775 million in Jordan and 1.567 million in other Arab countries. Their number in foreign countries was estimated to be 675 thousands (see table 1/7).



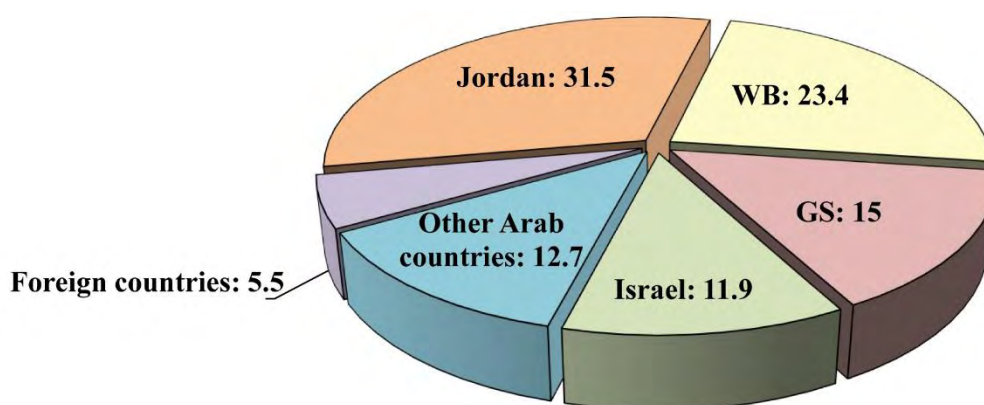
Table 1/7: Palestinian Population Worldwide Estimate According to Place of Residence at the End of 2014 and 2015 (thousands)³

Place of residence		2014		2015	
		Population estimate	Percentage (%)	Population estimate	Percentage (%)
Palestinian territories occupied in 1967	WB	2,826.4	23.4	2,898.9	23.4
	GS	1,790	14.8	1,850.6	15
Palestinian territories occupied in 1948 (Israel)*		1,462.5	12.1	1,471.2	11.9
Jordan**		3,774.9	31.2	3,891.9	31.5
Other Arab countries		1,566.6	12.9	1,567.8	12.7
Foreign countries		675.3	5.6	685.4	5.5
Total		12,095.7	100	12,365.8	100

* For the Palestinian population in the 1948 occupied territories; the number does neither include the Palestinians in the 1967 occupied territories, including Jerusalem, nor does it include Arab Syrians, Lebanese or non-Arab Christians or those classified as “Others.” In contrast, Israeli statistics have shown figures different from those of the PCBS, as the Israeli CBS estimated the number of Arab Palestinians in the 1948 occupied territories at around 1.757 million in 2015. If we deduct the number of citizens in East Jerusalem, that is 324 thousands (based on 2014 statistics) and the number of citizens in the Golan Heights, which is about 25 thousands, then the number of 1948 Palestinians totals 1.41 million.

** The number of Palestinians in Jordan are based on PCBS statistics in 2009 which were 3,240,473, and on the 3.1% annual growth rates during the period 2009–2015, issued by the Jordanian Department of Statistics (DoS), http://census.dos.gov.jo/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/02/Census_results_2016.pdf

Palestinian Population Worldwide Estimate According to Place of Residence at the End of 2015 (%)



³ See PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2014*; and PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2015*.

2. The Demographic Characteristics of Palestinians

a. The WB and GS

The number of Palestinians in the WB and GS at the end of 2015 was estimated at 4.75 million of whom 2.899 million lived in the WB (61%) and 1.851 million in the GS (39%).

Estimates for 2015 show that 42.8% of Palestinians in the WB and GS were refugees descending from the territories occupied in 1948, a total of 2.033 million refugees. Around 787 thousand refugees were found to be living in the WB, thus constituting 27.1% of total WB Palestinians, while in GS their number reached 1.246 million refugees, 67.3% of the total Gazan population.

Table 2/7: Palestinian Total and Refugee Population in the WB and GS 2014–2015⁴

Year	Place of residence	Total population		Refugee population	
		Estimate	Percentage (%)	Estimate	Percentage (%)
2014	WB	2,826,408	61.2	772,208	27.3
	GS	1,790,010	38.8	1,216,759	68
	WB & GS	4,616,418	100	1,988,967	43.1
2015	WB	2,898,927	61	787,059	27.1
	GS	1,850,559	39	1,245,796	67.3
	WB & GS	4,749,486	100	2,032,855	42.8

The Palestinian community in the WB and GS is young, with those aged under 15 estimated to constitute 39.4% of the population at the end of 2015. However, there is stark difference between the WB and GS, as 37% of the population in the former is aged under 15 years compared to 42.8% in the latter. Conversely, the elderly (65 years and over) constitute only a small percentage of the total population, estimated at 2.8%, with 3.2% in the WB and 2.4% in the GS (see table 5/7).

Males in the WB and GS were estimated at 2.413 million at the end of 2015 compared to 2.336 million females, with a sex ratio 103.3 males per 100 females. In the WB, there were 1.473 million males compared to 1.426 million females with a sex ratio 103.3. In the GS, males amounted to 940 thousands compared to 910 thousand females, with a sex ratio of 103.3.⁵

⁴ See *Ibid.*

⁵ See PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2015*.



Data showed that the dependency rate (number of dependent persons per 100 individuals at work age, 15–64 years) in the WB and GS decreased from 100.6 in 2000 to 73 in 2015. However, the dependency rate in the WB is lower than that in the GS and it decreased in the former from 94.3 in 2000 to 67.4 in 2015, whereas in the latter it decreased from 112.8 in 2000 to 82.7 in 2015.⁶

Data also showed a slight increase in median age (age that divides the population into two numerically equal groups, i.e., half the population is below that age and half above it) in the WB and GS during 2000–2015, where it ranged between 16.4 years in 2000 and 19.8 years in 2015. Comparing WB and GS figures during the same period shows a difference in median age, which increased in the WB from 17.4 years in 2000 to 20.9 years in 2015, and in the GS from 14.9 years in 2000 to 18.2 years in 2015.⁷

Demographic estimates also show that the Crude Birth Rate (CBR) in the WB and GS will decrease from 31.9 births per thousand population in 2015 to 29 births in 2020. In 2015, CBR in the WB was estimated at 29 births compared to 36.6 in GS.⁸

Available data shows that the Crude Death Rate (CDR) in the WB and GS is relatively low when compared to the rates in other Arab countries. CDR is also expected to decrease in the WB and GS from 3.6 deaths per thousand population in 2015 to 3.4 deaths in 2020. In addition, a slight difference is noted when comparing CDR in the WB and GS. Thus, while CDR is expected to decrease from 3.7 deaths per thousand population in 2015 to 3.5 deaths in 2020, in the WB, it is expected to decrease from 3.4 deaths per thousand population in 2015 to 3.1 deaths in 2020 in the GS. This shows an improvement in the quality of life and access to medical care in addition to improved health awareness and development of health services.⁹

The natural population growth rate in the WB and GS was 2.9% in 2015 with 2.6% in the WB and 3.4% in the GS. Growth rates are expected to maintain the same level in the coming years. This is because the continued improvement in health levels, the decrease in the mortality rate, and the high fertility rates will lead to an increase in the natural population growth rate, which would necessitate suitable economic and social policies to accommodate the expected increase.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

Fertility in the WB and GS is considered high compared to fertility rates in other countries given early marriage, especially for females, and the desire to have children as part of the customs and traditions prevailing in Palestinian society.¹⁰

There are indicators that the fertility rate of Palestinian women has decreased, especially since the 1990s. Based on the results of the Palestinian household survey in 2014, there was a decrease in the total fertility rate in the WB and GS where there were 4.1 births per woman over 2011–2013 compared to 6 in 1997. Comparing WB with GS shows an increased fertility rate in the GS compared to the WB during 1997–2013; where in the WB there were 3.7 births per woman over 2011–2013 compared to 5.6 births in 1997, while in GS there were 4.5 births per woman over 2011–2013 compared to 6.9 in 1997.¹¹

The total fertility rate is noted to be high in the WB and GS when compared to Arab countries. In 2014, the fertility rate in Jordan reached 3.5 births per woman compared to 3.5 in Egypt and 2.1 in Tunisia. Thus, the WB and GS are considered to have high fertility rates.¹²

Due to the decreased mortality rate in the WB and GS, life expectancy has increased reaching 73.5 years in 2015 (72 years for males and 75 years for females). However, there was a difference between WB and GS figures where life expectancy in the WB reached 73.9 years in 2015 (72.4 years for males and 75.3 years for females) compared to 72.9 years in the GS (71.5 years for males and 74.4 years for females). The increase in life expectancy is due in part to improved health levels and a gradual decrease in mortality rates among infants and children.¹³

Available data for 2014 showed a decline in the average household size in the WB and GS compared to 2000, where it decreased from 5.2 persons in 2014 compared to 6.1 persons in 2000. In the WB, average household size decreased to 4.9 persons in 2014 compared to 5.7 in 2000, while in the GS it decreased to 5.7 persons in 2014 compared to 6.9 in 2000.¹⁴

It is noted that the annual growth rate is high in all GS governorates compared to the WB. The highest is in North Gaza governorate, then in Rafah followed by Dayr al-Balah, whereas the highest annual growth rate in the WB is in the Tubas and Hebron governorates.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*



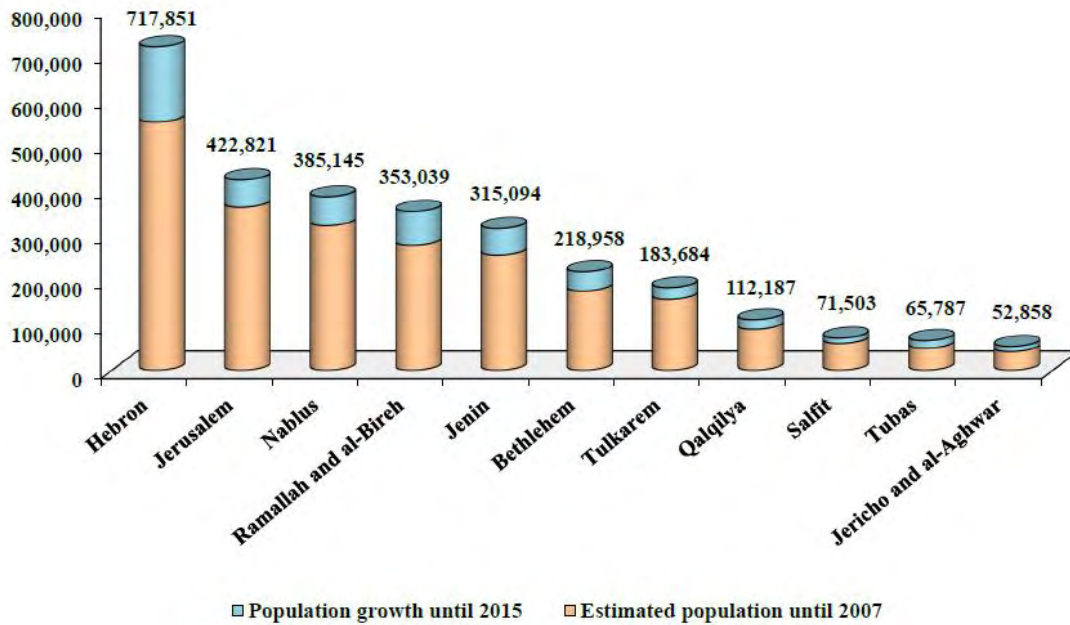
The Palestinian population is distributed into 16 governorates, 5 of which are in GS and 11 in the WB. Figures for 2015 show that Hebron is the largest governorate in terms of population, estimated at 15.1% of the total population in the WB and GS combined, followed by Gaza governorate with 13.4% and Jerusalem governorate with 8.9%. Figures also show that Jericho and al-Aghwar is the least populated governorate with 1.1% of the total population in the WB and GS. The following table shows the estimated population count in the WB and GS governorates based on PCBS figures.

Table 3/7: Estimated Population Count by Governorate, 2007 and 2015¹⁵

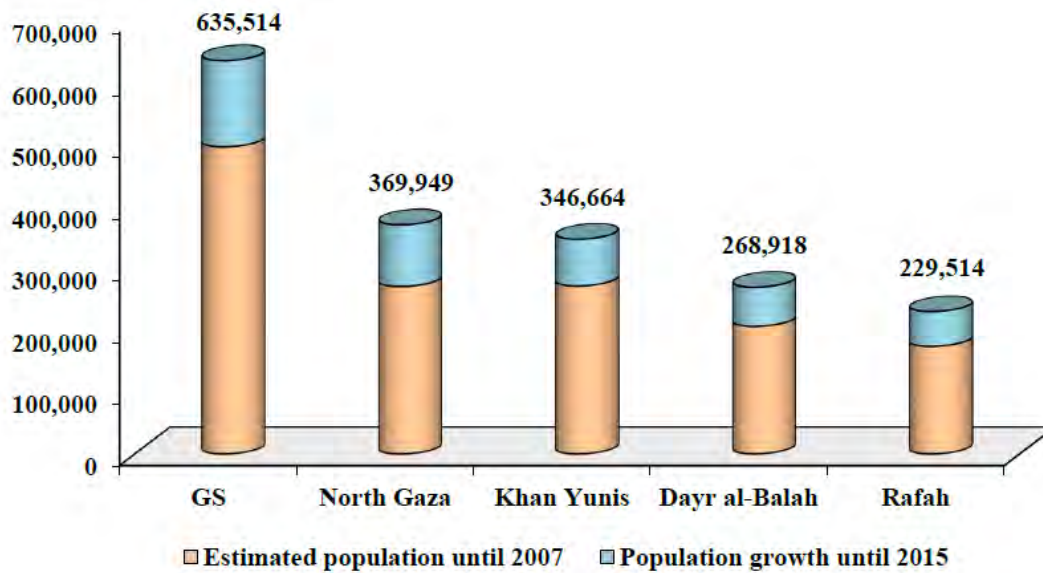
Governorate	2007	2015	Annual growth rate 2007–2015
WB	2,345,107	2,898,927	2.7
Jenin	256,212	315,094	2.6
Tubas	48,771	65,787	3.8
Tulkarem	158,213	183,684	1.9
Nablus	321,493	385,145	2.3
Qalqilya	91,046	112,187	2.6
Salfit	59,464	71,503	2.3
Ramallah and al-Bireh	278,018	353,039	3
Jericho and al-Aghwar	41,724	52,858	3
Jerusalem	362,521	422,821	1.9
Bethlehem	176,515	218,958	2.7
Hebron	551,130	717,851	3.4
GS	1,416,539	1,850,559	3.4
North Gaza	270,245	369,949	4
Gaza	496,410	635,514	3.1
Dayr al-Balah	205,534	268,918	3.4
Khan Yunis	270,979	346,664	3.1
Rafah	173,371	229,514	3.6
Total (WB & GS)	3,761,646	4,749,486	3

¹⁵ PCBS, *The Population, Housing and Establishment Census–2007, Press Conference on the Preliminary Findings, (Population, Buildings, Housing Units and Establishments)* (Ramallah: PCBS, February 2008), http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/census2007_e.pdf; and PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2015*.

Estimated Population Count in WB Governorates 2015



Estimated Population Count in GS Governorates 2015



The Demographic Impact of the 2014 Israeli War on GS

According to the PCBS survey on the demographic impact of the 2014 Israeli war on GS, about 9% of GS families were displaced due to the Israeli aggression.¹⁶ Moreover, the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor reported that 100 thousand Palestinians became shelterless due to the destruction of their homes.¹⁷ Over 300 thousand Palestinians were displaced due to Israeli shelling.

b. The Palestinian Territories Occupied in 1948 (Israel)

There were an estimated 1.471 million Palestinians in Israel at the end of 2015 compared to around 1.463 million in 2014. Available data regarding Palestinians residing in Israel in 2014 shows that those aged under 15 years totaled 34.8%, while those aged 65 years and over amounted to 4.2%.¹⁸

Available estimates for 2014 show the total fertility rate for Palestinians residing in Israel at 3.2 births per woman, which is higher than the general fertility rate in Israel of 3.1 births per woman. Available data also shows that the average Palestinian household size in Israel reached 4.7 persons in 2014. Moreover, CBR and CDR were estimated at 23.8 births and 2.8 deaths per thousand respectively, while the infant mortality rate was 6.3 deaths per thousand live births. However, these figures do not include Arab citizens in the Syrian Golan Heights or citizens in J1 of Jerusalem governorate. They also exclude Lebanese Arabs who moved to live temporarily in Israel. The Israeli authorities consider all these categories within its population and within the Arab population as a whole.¹⁹

c. Jordan

Palestinians living in Jordan were estimated at 3.892 million at the end of 2015 compared to 3.775 million at the end of 2014, and most of them hold Jordanian citizenship, i.e., Jordanians citizens of Palestinian descent (see table 1/7).

According to 2010 data, the average Palestinian household size in Jordan was 4.8 persons, while the annual growth rate reached 2.2%. The total fertility rate

¹⁶ In a Speech Delivered to Mark the One Year Aftermath of the 2014 Aggression on Gaza Strip, Ms. Awad Announces the Results of the Survey on the Impact of the Israeli Aggression in 2014, PCBS, 6/10/2015, <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/512/default.aspx?tabID=512&lang=en&ItemID=1513&mid=3171&wversion=Staging>

¹⁷ Israeli Assault on Gaza in Numbers, site of Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, 28/8/2014. (in Arabic)

¹⁸ PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2015*.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

among Palestinian women in Jordan was 3.3 births per woman, and CBR was 29.2 births per thousand people. The infant mortality rate in Palestinian refugee camps (RCs) in Jordan was 22.6 deaths per thousand live births, while mortality rate among children aged under 5 years was 25.7 deaths per thousand live births for the same year.²⁰

Based on UNRWA figures, the total Registered Persons (RPs) in Jordan was 2,212,917 as of 1/1/2015 compared to 2,154,486 as of 1/1/2014. The RPs in Refugee Camps (RPCs) as a percentage of the total RPs was around 17.4% as of 1/1/2015.²¹

d. Syria

According to UNRWA figures, the total RPs in Syria was 591,780 as of 1/1/2015 compared to 569,645 as of 1/1/2014. Worthy of mention is that these figures do not include the Palestinians who were displaced to Syria in 1967 and 1970, since most of them are not registered with UNRWA.²²

The suffering of Palestinian refugees in Syria has increased as a result of the ongoing crisis there. In March 2016, UNRWA estimated that 280 thousand Palestinian refugees were internally displaced.²³ In addition, around 114 thousand Palestinian Refugees From Syria (RPS) had to go abroad, as follows:

Table 4/7: UNRWA's Figures of RPS Abroad March 2016 (thousands)²⁴

Country	Lebanon	Jordan	Egypt	Gaza	Turkey & Europe	Total
RPS	42	17	4	1	50	114

According to UNRWA, 95% of refugees registered with UNRWA in Syria are in need of sustained humanitarian assistance, meaning 430 thousand refugees kept depended on the food and cash aid offered by UNRWA to meet their basic needs.²⁵

²⁰ See *Ibid.*

Despite the fact that the numbers are from PCBS report of 2015, the latter did include updated ones, where Jordan figures are still those of 2010.

²¹ See UNRWA in Figures, 1/1/2014, http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/2014_01_uif_-_english.pdf; and UNRWA in Figures, 1/1/2015, http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/unrwa_in_figures_2015.pdf

²² See *Ibid.*

²³ Syria Regional Crisis, Emergency Appeal, 2016, UNRWA, http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/2016_syria_emergency_appeal.pdf

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*



Most Palestinian RCs in Syria have been damaged or destroyed, especially those lying in areas witnessing armed clashes. This led to the displacement of residents to more secure areas. Those who stayed in RCs suffered from siege and lack of services and basic food needs. The most prominent of these was al-Yarmouk RC, and according to UNRWA, its population declined to 18 thousand Palestinians, and this number is likely to decrease due to the siege and the military battles inside. When casting light on the numbers of victims, detainees and missing people, the amount of suffering and targeting of Palestinians in Syria becomes clear. Up to 12/5/2016, 2,912 Palestinian victims were documented, 258 missing and 945 detained.²⁶

According to the most recent available data regarding Palestinian refugees in Syria, those aged under 15 years amounted to 33.1% of the total, while those aged 65 years and over amounted to 4.4% in 2009. Data shows that in 2010 the average Palestinian household size in Syria was 4.1 persons, while the annual growth rate was 1.6%. The total fertility rate among Palestinian women in Syria reached 2.5 births per woman in 2010, whereas CBR was 29.2 births per thousand population. The infant mortality rate for Palestinians in Syria was 28.2 deaths per thousand live births, while the mortality rate among children aged under 5 years reached 31.5 deaths per thousand live births in 2010.²⁷

e. Lebanon

According to UNRWA figures, the total RPs residing in Lebanon was 493,134 as of 1/1/2015 compared to 483,375 as of 1/1/2014, with a 2% annual growth rate. The RPCs as a percentage of the total RPs was 50.6% as of 1/1/2015. At the time of writing, UNRWA has not published any data concerning the refugees in 2016, however, if we consider the same annual growth, total RPs would be 502,997.²⁸ It should be noted that the actual number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is much fewer than the number of UNRWA RPs. Field studies indicate that it is just under 300 thousand only; as many Palestinians immigrated to different countries especially to western Europe and the Gulf states, keeping their UNRWA IDs and records.

²⁶ Charts category, site of Action Group for Palestinians of Syria, 12/5/2016, <http://www.actionpal.org.uk/en/statistic-and-charts/3/8/map/statistic-tables-and-charts-of-victims-detainees-and-missing-people>

²⁷ See PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2015*.

Despite the fact that the numbers are from PCBS report of 2015, the latter did include updated ones, where Syria figures are still those of 2010.

²⁸ See UNRWA in Figures, 1/1/2014; and UNRWA in Figures, 1/1/2015.

Available data regarding Palestinians in Lebanon in 2011 show that 31.1% of refugees are under 15 years of age while 6.1% are 65 years and over. The sex ratio was estimated at 98.2 males per 100 females. Data also estimates unmarried Palestinian females in Lebanon (12 years and over) at 43.7% of the Palestinian population, those married at 52.2%, divorced at 2.3% and widowed at 1.7%.

According to PCBS figures, the average household size was 4.4 persons in 2011, while the fertility rate among Palestinian women in Lebanon reached 2.8 births per woman. Infant mortality rate for Palestinians in Lebanon was 15 deaths per thousand live births, while the mortality rate among children aged under 5 years was 17 deaths per thousand live births for the same year.²⁹

f. General Comparisons Among Palestinians

By comparing some of the major demographic indicators summarized in table 5/7, the following can be discerned:

- The percentage of Palestinians aged under 15 years is highest in GS and lowest in Lebanon.
- The dependency rate in Jordan is highest, followed by that of the Palestinian population in GS, then Israel and then the WB. Syria and Lebanon see the lowest dependency rate.
- The percentage of Palestinians aged 65 years and over is highest in Lebanon, then Jordan and lowest in GS.
- CBRs are highest in GS, then in Jordan and Syria, followed by the WB then Lebanon, and the lowest are in Israel. This rate is consistent with the general trend of births in the past years, where GS remained the area with the highest rate of the CBRs, which leads to demographic pressure on the besieged GS, which has a limited capacity.
- CDRs remained high in the WB and GS, reaching 3.6 deaths per thousand in 2015. This was due to Israel and its racist policies pursued over decades, especially the killing of Palestinians.
- The natural population growth rate (the difference between birth and death rates) remained the same in the PA territories, yet it remained high in the GS as compared to the WB.

²⁹ See PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2015*.

Despite the fact that the numbers are from PCBS report of 2015, the latter did include updated ones, where Lebanon figures are still those of 2011.



Table 5/7: Selected Demographic Indicators of Palestinians by Residence³⁰

Indicator	WB 2015	GS 2015	WB & GS 2015	Israel 2014	Jordan 2010	Syria 2010	Lebanon 2011
% of individuals under 15 years	37	42.8	39.4	34.8	35.9 (2007)	33.1 (2009)	31.1
% of individuals 65 years and over	3.2	2.4	2.8	4.2	5.2 (2007)	4.4 (2009)	6.1
Dependency rate (per 100 individuals 15–64 years)	67.4	82.7	73	77.9 (2007)	84 (2007)	59.7 (2007)	62.1 (2007)
Sex ratio (males per 100 females)	103.3	103.3	103.3	102.7	–	100.4 (2009)	98.2
CBR (births per 1,000 population)	29	36.3	31.9	23.8	29.2	29.2	25.8 (2010)
CDR (deaths per 1,000 population)	3.7	3.4	3.6	2.8	–	2.8 (2006)	–
Total fertility rate (births per woman)	3.7 (2011–2013)	4.5 (2011–2013)	4.1 (2011–2013)	3.2	3.3	2.5	2.8
Natural population growth rate	2.6 (mid 2015)	3.4 (mid 2015)	2.9 (mid 2015)	2.2	2.2	1.6	2.2 (2010)
Average household size (individuals per house)	4.9 (2014)	5.7 (2014)	5.2 (2014)	4.7	4.8	4.1	4.4

³⁰ See Mohsen Mohammad Saleh, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2012–2013* (Beirut: al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies and Consultations, 2015), p. 332; PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2015*; and PCBS, *Statistical Yearbook of Palestine 2015, No. 16* (Ramallah: PCBS, December 2015), <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Downloads/book2173.pdf>

3. The Palestinian Refugees

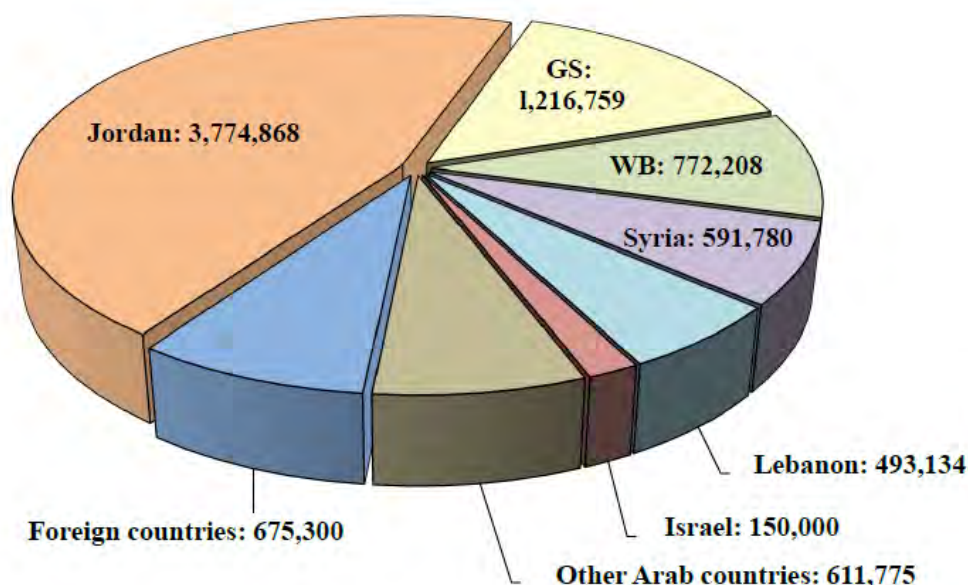
It worth noting that Palestinian refugees are not only those living outside Palestine, they also include around 1.989 million refugees living in Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, in addition to 150 thousand refugees who were expelled from their lands but remained living in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1948 (Israel). According to 2014 estimates, the total number of Palestinian refugees is 8.286 million, 68.5% of the total Palestinian population. There is a lack of reliability in calculating some figures due to changes of country of residence or citizenship; however, this will be of marginal impact due to the large overall number of Palestinian refugees.

Table 6/7: Palestinian Refugees Worldwide; Population Estimates in 2014³¹

Region	WB	GS	Israel*	Jordan	Lebanon	Syria	Other Arab countries	Foreign countries	Total
Refugee population estimates	772,208	1,216,759	150,000	3,774,868	493,134	591,780	611,775	675,300	8,285,824

* Approximate number.

Palestinian Refugees Worldwide; Population Estimates in 2014



³¹ See PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2014*; and UNRWA in Figures, 1/1/2015.



It should be noted that UNRWA estimates were limited to Palestinians who have registered as refugees in UNRWA's five areas of operation: WB, GS, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Thus, these estimates do not accurately reflect the actual number of Palestinian refugees worldwide. Moreover, these estimates do not include many residents of UNRWA's five areas, who have no need to register and benefit from UNRWA's services. They also exclude 330 thousand Palestinians who fled after the 1967 war. In addition, some refugees have been forced to leave Palestine under various conditions (other than war) and were prevented from returning later on. Therefore, UNRWA estimates are incomplete, and we should deal with these numbers as the actual figures.

In 2013, UNRWA provided updated statistics regarding the number of refugees in the areas of its operation where recent digitization of UNRWA's registration records enables it "to present more detailed beneficiary statistics". UNRWA classified those registered with it into two categories, labeling them "Registered Refugees (RRs)" and "Other Registered Persons (RPs)." The latter category includes those eligible to receive the Agency's services according to the UNRWA website. It is likely that these include beneficiaries who do not qualify for UNRWA's definition of the Palestinian refugee, which is a limited definition that does not cover all categories of refugees.

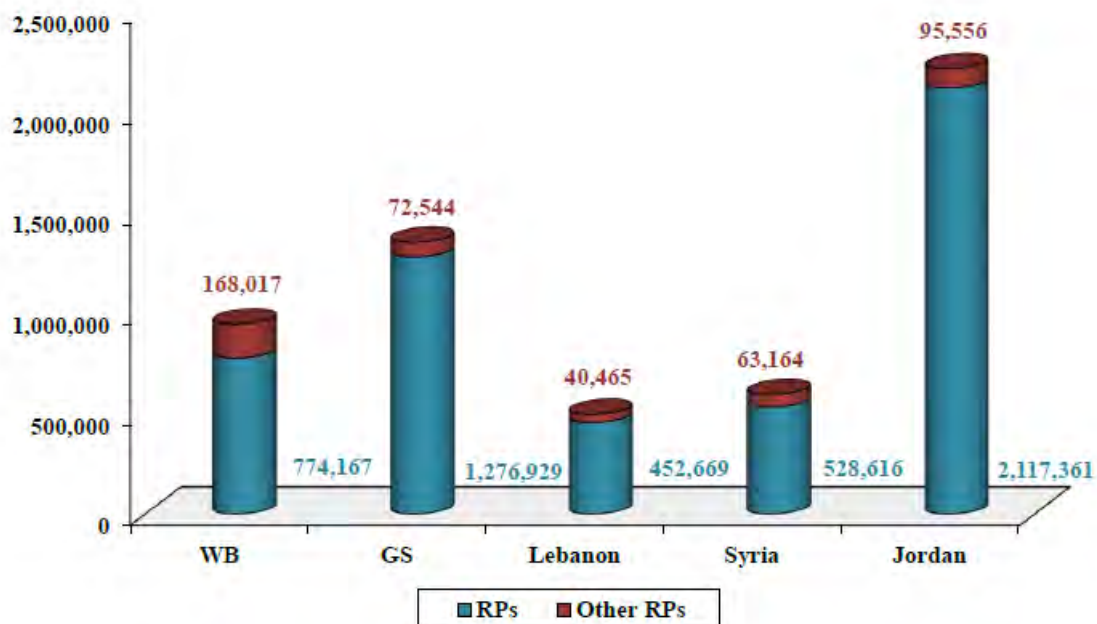
The total RPs in UNRWA's five regions of operation are estimated at 5.589 million as of 1/1/2015, 2.213 million (39.6%) of whom live in Jordan, 2.291 million (41%) in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 (1.349 million (24.1%) in GS and 942 thousand (16.9%) in WB), in addition to 1.085 million (19.4%) in Syria and Lebanon. The total of RPCs has reached 1.603 million (28.7%), and it is noted that the percentage of RPCs in Lebanon and the GS is the highest of all the regions.

Table 7/7: UNRWA-RPs According to Their Area of Operation as of 1/1/2015³²

Area	RRs	Other RPs	Total RPs	Official camps	RPCs	RPCs as % of RPs
WB	774,167	168,017	942,184	19	228,560	24.3
GS	1,276,929	72,544	1,349,473	8	560,964	41.6
Lebanon	452,669	40,465	493,134	12	249,410	50.6
Syria*	528,616	63,164	591,780	9	178,666	30.2
Jordan	2,117,361	95,556	2,212,917	10	385,418	17.4
Total	5,149,742	439,746	5,589,488	58	1,603,018	28.7

* All Syria figures represent a working estimate as the situation in Syria remains volatile.

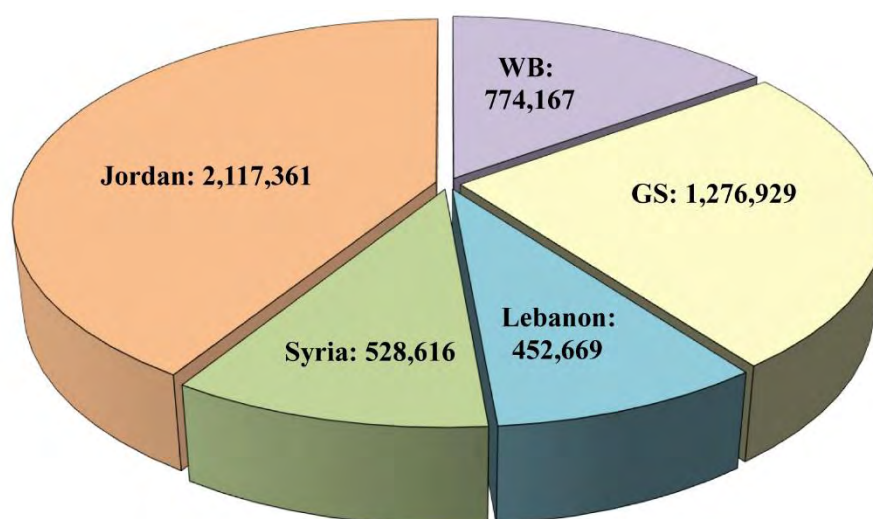
UNRWA's Figures as of 1/1/2015



³² UNRWA in Figures, 1/1/2015.



UNRWA-RRs by Area as of 1/1/2015



The results of the Labor Force Survey in 2014 showed that the participation rate in labor force among refugees aged over 15 years, who live in WB and GS was 45.7% against 45.8% for non-refugees.

Female participation of refugees living in the WB and GS reached 20.9% against 18.4% for non-refugees.³³

There is a clear difference in unemployment rates between refugees and non-refugees, as unemployment rate among the former reached 33.7% while the latter was 22.3%.³⁴

4. Demographic Growth Trends

Despite the relative decrease in the natural growth rate among the Palestinian population, this rate remains high when compared to other populations including the Israelis. Based on PCBS estimates, Palestinians in historic Palestine amounted to around 6.22 million at the end of 2015, while Jews reached 6.34 million according to Israel's CBS estimates.

Based on annual growth rates which amount to 2.9% for Palestinians in the WB and GS, 2.2% for Palestinians in territories occupied in 1948 (Israel), and 1.9% for Jews, the number of Palestinians and Jews in historic Palestine will be equal in 2018; where each will number around 6.7 million should growth rates remain

³³ On the Eve of the International Day of Refugees, PCBS, 20/6/2015, <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/512/default.aspx?tabID=512&lang=en&ItemID=1421&mid=3171&wversion=Staging>

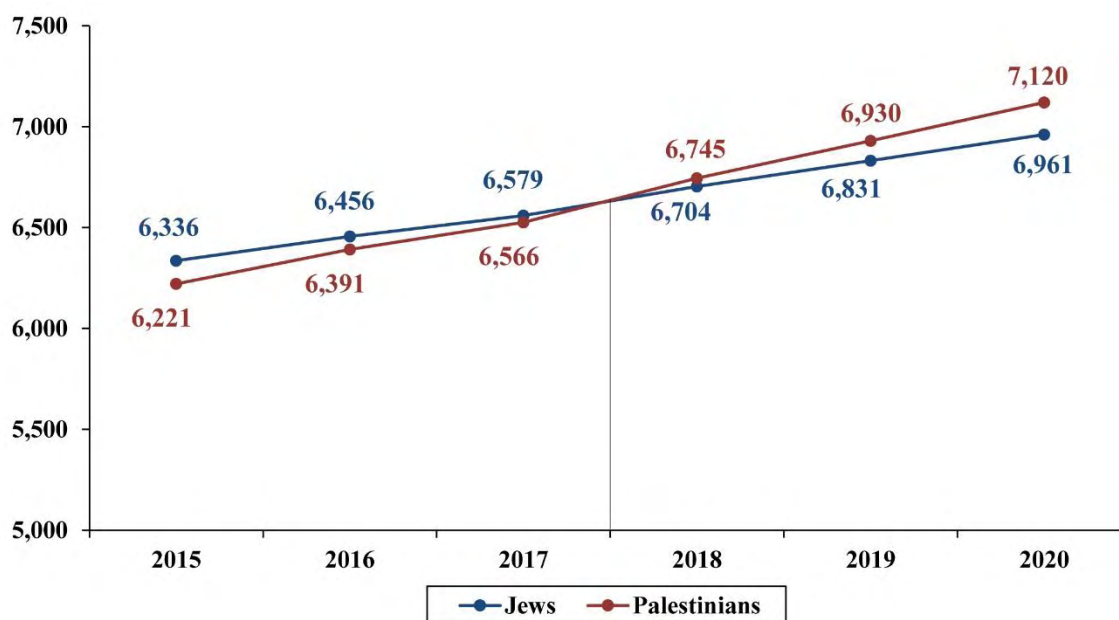
³⁴ Ibid.

unchanged. Jews living in Palestine will comprise 49.4% of the population in 2020, where they will amount to 6.96 million compared to 7.12 million Palestinians.

Table 8/7: Estimated Population Count of Palestinians and Jews in Historic Palestine 2015–2020 (thousands)³⁵

Year	Palestinians			Jews
	WB & GS	Palestinian territories occupied in 1948 (Israel)	Historic Palestine	
2015	4,750	1,471	6,221	6,336
2016	4,887	1,504	6,391	6,456
2017	5,029	1,537	6,566	6,579
2018	5,175	1,570	6,745	6,704
2019	5,325	1,605	6,930	6,831
2020	5,479	1,640	7,120	6,961

Estimated Population Count of Palestinians and Jews in Historic Palestine 2015–2020 (thousands)



³⁵ For the number of Palestinians in 2015, see PCBS, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2015*; as for the number of Jews in 2015, see CBS, <http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/yarhon0116/pdf/b1.pdf>



5. Palestinians Outside Palestine and the Right of Return

Palestinians outside Palestine continued to hold events and activities that assured their inalienable historical rights of Palestine, the importance of preserving the right of return, and that reminded younger generations of the importance of clinging to their lands and right of return.

The 13th Annual Palestinians in Europe Conference entitled “The Palestinians of Europe and their National Project,” convened in Berlin, Germany on, 25/4/2015. Thousands participated in the conference, where delegations came from across Europe and further afield. This conference was held during the 67th anniversary of the Palestinian *Nakbah* (catastrophe), in the presence of Palestinian leaders and public figures from Palestine and abroad, in addition to the presence of Arab, Muslim, and European public figures, and representatives of institutions and sectors who are in solidarity with Palestine. The conference was organized by General Secretariat of the Palestinians in Europe Conference, the Palestinian Return Centre (PRC), and the Palestinian Assembly in Germany in cooperation with Palestinian organizations from Germany and Europe.

The conference issued a final statement, which asserted all Palestinian rights, especially the right of return and stressed that “Palestinian people will not accept any compromise or a political resolution that does not guarantee their full inalienable rights.” In addition, the conference called on European countries to comply with their policies that support justice and human rights, and “to cancel all trade, commercial, cultural cooperation with Israel.” Moreover, the conference urged parties “to craft a Palestinian strategy that employs all legal and possible tools and mechanisms to expose the Israeli occupation and its inhuman practices against the innocent civilians in Palestine.”³⁶

Despite the suffering of the Palestinian refugees in al-Yarmouk RC in Syria, the remaining refugees there marked *Nakbah* day on 15/5/2015 by marching through the streets of the camp. The rally was attended by hundreds of people who raised Palestinian flags and Palestinian cities, towns and RC names, asserting their right to return.³⁷

³⁶ Final Statement - The 13th Palestinians in Europe Conference, Berlin, 25/4/2015, <http://bit.ly/2bspOB1>

³⁷ Site of Arabs 48, 15/5/2015.

In Lebanon, the Global Palestine Right of Return Coalition conducted its 14th meeting in Beirut on 17–20/3/2016 in Mar Elias RC. This meeting was the product of an initiative of the Center for Refugee Rights (Aidoun) in cooperation with the members of the Coalition from Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Europe, where all participants asserted their right to return.³⁸

Moreover, Gathering of Palestinians in Diaspora in Europe commemorated the 40th anniversary of Land Day in Berlin, Germany, where the Chairman of the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens of Israel Muhammad Barakeh, participated.³⁹

The UN granted the PRC, special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council in 1/6/2015. The PRC managed to attain its membership after five years of Israel hindering its membership, under the false pretext that PRC supported violence and “terrorism.” The Centre was granted its status by a recorded vote of 12 in favor to three against (Israel, the US and Uruguay) with three abstentions (Greece, India, Russian Federation) and one absent member (Burundi).⁴⁰

³⁸ Ma'an News Agency, 23/3/2016, <https://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=836564>

³⁹ *Al-Ayyam* newspaper, Ramallah, 3/4/2016.

⁴⁰ Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations Recommends 10 Groups for Special Status With Economic and Social Council, Defers Action on 43 Others, United Nations, 1/6/2015, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ecosoc6695.doc.htm>



التقرير الاستراتيجي الفلسطيني

2015-2014

الفصل السابع

المؤشرات السكانية الفلسطينية

2015-2014

