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# Migration Facts Palestine



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**Introduction** The Israeli-Arab wars in 1948-49 and 1967 caused the Palestinian exodus which saw respectively about 725,000 and 250,000 Palestinians to flee their homeland, mainly to neighboring countries. Palestinians have also experienced high rates of outward labor migration, mainly to the Gulf and neighboring states. These flows were largely composed of medium and highly-skilled individuals, often accompanied by their families. The Oslo agreements resulted in the opposite phenomenon: namely, the return of around 100,000 dispersed Palestinians to the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) in the 1990s. However, the political impasse, the security chaos and the worsening of socio-economic conditions have led to new waves of outward flows – particularly of young and well educated individuals - in the 2000s and migration to the Arab states seems to have risen. It is impossible for the PA to develop any policy for managing the mobility particularly as Palestinians are not allowed to access Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv; Jordan carefully controls the transit of Palestinians through its territory; Egypt closed until recently its borders with the Gaza Strip (Rafah); and circulating within the oPt is extremely difficult.

Demographic-Economic				
Outward Migration			Inward Migration	
<b>STOCK</b>				
<b>Palestinian emigration stocks – year 2011 (a)</b>			<b>Immigration stocks in Palestine – year 2004 (d)</b>	
<b>Total emigrants:</b> 1,008,065 (official figures)			<b>Total immigrants:</b> 230,930 (6.1% of total resident pop.)	
<b>Five top countries of residence:</b>			<b>Five top countries/regions of birth:</b>	
<b>Country of residence</b>	<b>Official figures</b>	<b>UNRWA figures</b>	<b>Gulf countries:</b> 70,297	
Syria (b)	467,596	486,946	<b>Jordan:</b> 50,350	
Lebanon (c)	195,258	436,154	<b>1948 Areas:</b> 46,976 (e)	
Jordan (b)	115,190	1,979,580	<b>Egypt:</b> 16,676	
Saudi Arabia	94,617	-	<b>Israel:</b> 9,868	
Egypt	31,900	-		
<b>Sex:</b>		<b>Age group:</b>		<b>Age group:</b>
Males: 55.2%		Less than 15: 24.1%		Less than 10: 4.3%
Females: 44.8%		15-64: 67.2%		10-59: 74.5%
		65+: 8.8%		60+: 21.2%
<b>Level of education (year 2006):</b> primary or below (20.6%); secondary (30.2%); tertiary (14.2%)			<b>Notes:</b> (d) Immigrants are defined according to the country of birth criterion. (e) 1948 Areas includes the parts of historical Palestine now known as Israel, as defined after the 1948 war. <b>Source:</b> Palestinian population census (2007).	
<b>Occupation (year 2006):</b> professionals (21.9%); legislators, senior officials and managers (17.6%); service workers and shop market sales workers (14.2%)			<b>Israeli settlers in Palestine, 1985-2011 (selected years)</b>	
<b>Notes:</b> (a) Palestinian emigrants are defined according to the country of birth (best option) or country of nationality criterion according to countries of residence. The vast majority of Palestinians in Syria and Jordan are not migrants but second and third generation Palestinian refugees – refugees in relation to 1948; (b) Palestinian refugees in Lebanon include an unknown proportion of persons whose ancestors found refuge in Lebanon but are currently living outside Lebanon.			<b>Year</b>	<b>West Bank</b>
<b>Source:</b> destination countries' sources (population census/population register/household survey). Data on the distribution of Palestinian migrants by level of education and occupation had been taken from the DIOC-OECD Database.			<b>Gaza Strip</b>	<b>E. Jerusalem</b>
			<b>Total</b>	
			<b>1985</b>	44,100
			<b>1990</b>	78,600
			<b>1995</b>	133,200
			<b>2000</b>	192,976
			<b>2005</b>	258,988
			<b>2010</b>	322,796
			<b>2011</b>	337,285
<b>FLOWS</b>				
<b>Outflows of Palestinian migrants in the period 2005-2009</b>			<b>Inflows of Palestinian return migrants in the period 2005-2009</b>	
<b>Total outflows:</b>			<b>Total inflows:</b>	
32,848			30,411	
<b>2005</b>	5,841		<b>2005</b>	7,077
<b>2006</b>	5,205		<b>2006</b>	6,054
<b>2007</b>	7,290		<b>2007</b>	5,000
<b>2008</b>	7,390		<b>2008</b>	5,854
<b>2009</b>	7,122		<b>2009</b>	6,426
<b>Source:</b> Migration Survey 2010 - PCBS			<b>Source:</b> Migration Survey 2010 - PCBS	

## Legal and political framework governing migration and mobility

### General legal references

- Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, 1994
- Interim Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, 1995
- Presidential Decree n°16/2006 Regulation of the Public Administration of the Crossing Points and Borders
- Council of Ministers' Decision n°244/2005 on VIP Passports
- Labour Code n°7 of 2000

### General regulations on circulation, entry and exit

Entry, stay and exit are dependent on the Israeli authorities, but also subject to the PA regulations in area A. Israel retains full control over borders, civil registry, family reunification, entry and stay visa issuance, and circulation of residents and non-residents between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Each Palestinian has to have an identity number (issued by Israel) and a travel document (issued by the Palestinian Authority, PA). Gaza Strip Palestinians need a permit handed out by the Israeli authorities to stay in the West Bank and vice-versa. Israeli citizens fall under Israeli jurisdiction, wherever they are.

### General regulations on citizenship

Persons considered as foreign by Israel are generally considered as Palestinian by the Palestinian Authority. The "Palestinian citizens" of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank who hold the corresponding identity card are thus considered "foreign residents" by Israel and come under PA jurisdiction. Any other individual, be s/he of Palestinian origin, refugee or of another nationality, if s/he does not hold an identity card of the Gaza Strip or the West Bank, is considered a "non-citizen". The Palestinians from East-Jerusalem are considered as foreign residents in Israel and hold special identity cards. The PA has not adopted a nationality law yet. The Palestinian Charter and the Declaration of Principles recognize that any Palestinian has the right to (later) Palestinian citizenship.

#### Outward Migration and Mobility

##### Visa

Exit visas are delivered by the Israeli authorities. Palestinians are not allowed access to Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv. Palestinian holders of an identity document including those with foreign citizenship must pass through border posts reserved for Palestinians. The Allenby bridge (Jericho) is the only crossing point for West Bank Palestinians wishing to reach Jordan and travel further afield. It is fully controlled by Israel. Gaza Strip Palestinians have two crossing points: the first one links the Gaza Strip to Israel (Eretz) and a permit has to be issued by Israel, also for a possible transit by the West Bank; the second one is Rafah from where Palestinians can get to Egypt.

##### Rights

Palestinians' rights and stay conditions vary considerably in time and space. In Syria, they enjoy equal rights with nationals, except regarding estate ownership and political matters, but the Palestinians who fled from Iraq after 2003 do not enjoy the same treatment. In Jordan, Palestinians from the West Bank obtained citizenship until 1988; Palestinians from the Gaza Strip who fled after 1967 were not treated in the same fashion. Generally, Palestinians enjoy the same rights as foreign nationals, with some variances either more favorable (e.g in Egypt till 1978), or less favorable (e.g access to work in Lebanon till the 2010 reform; access to citizenship in Egypt despite the 2004 reform).

##### Irregular Migration

The construction of the Separation Wall by Israel has limited irregular migration to and from Palestine.

##### Diaspora

Creation in 2007 of a Department of Palestinian Expatriates. A large part of the Palestinian diaspora has obtained second citizenship. Since 1994, over 500 Palestinian expatriates have participated in UNDP programme TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals) in order to contribute to the development of Palestine.

#### Inward Migration and Mobility

##### Visa

Entry visas are delivered by Israeli authorities. To enter, non-residents need a temporary visitor permit. Palestinians entering the territory must have their Israel-issued identity numbers in their passports.

##### Labour

Granting work permits to non-Palestinian workers. Four conditions: 1) the absence of competition with national workers; 2) the need for a foreign worker instead of a national; 3) the relevant qualifications and experience; 4) a condition of reciprocity may be imposed by the Ministry of Labor. If application accepted, a license is granted for 1 year. Domestic workers not covered by Labour Law.

##### Rights

Right of residence is transmitted by one of both resident parents, upon registration. Those not considered as residents since 1967 or after Oslo (on the basis of the negotiated *returnees* list) can become residents only through family reunification if agreed to by Israel. Family reunification dependent on Israeli measures, though theoretically falls under general jurisdiction of Palestinian civil affairs. Reunification for first degree relatives (spouses and minor children) of residents (with ID number).

##### Irregular Migration

Israeli Military Order n°1650 of 2009: any person who irregularly enters into or stays without permit in the West Bank will be considered an infiltrator and may be punished with a seven-year prison sentence.

##### International Protection

Palestinian refugees in Palestine come under the UNRWA mandate and are granted identity documents. They are subject to Israeli occupation. They enjoy equal rights to other Palestinians. Refugee status is transmitted by descent. Case-Law related to refugees in the Gaza Strip/West Bank considers that they do not have a right of estate ownership in camps. They lose the use of housing if they leave.