



Press Release by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) & Ministry of Culture (MOC) on the Palestinian National Culture Day

To mark the Palestinian National Culture Day on March 13th, PCBS & MOC reviewed the culture of households and individuals based on the Culture Survey Findings for 2023 and administrative data on the status cultural institutions in Palestine.

The Impact of the Israeli Occupation Aggression on the cultural sector in Gaza Strip

In Gaza Strip there are 76 cultural centers registered by the Ministry of Culture, in addition to another group of centers, and associations working partially in the cultural sector. There are three major theaters in Gaza Strip, and 80 public libraries registered as a public library or within the facilities of public and private institutions. There are 15 publishing houses and a center for selling books; In addition, 220 thousands of people were participated in the cultural activities in 2022 that means 10 percent of the total population of Gaza Strip. After the Israeli occupation started the war against the Palestinian people in 7th of October 2023, the Palestinian culture was damaged during the war of the Israeli occupation against our people, 45 Palestinian writers, artists and activists in the field of culture and heritage were Martyred, about 32 centers and cultural institutions, 12 museums were destroyed, and more than 2100 pieces of awards and embroidered pieces were destroyed, about 27 murals were destroyed and more than 8 publishing houses and printing houses, 3 companies and artistic production studios, 9 public libraries, 4 religious, 219 mosques were completely destroyed, 287 mosques were partially destroyed, and 3 churches were destroyed 195 historical buildings, 9 archaeological site, 19 universities and colleges were destroyed.

As for the West Bank, the occupation policies had an impact on the cessation of many cultural activities due

to the repeated invasions and various massacres committed in different regions. The soap festival in the city of Nablus, which was scheduled to be organized in April as part of the Ministry of Culture's preparations to register soap on the World Heritage List, was canceled due to the invasion of the city, and all celebrations of National Heritage Day were cancelled. Jerusalem institutions have also been subjected to attempts to dismantle them and make them unable to continue, not only to fight cultural action, and to prevent the arrival of funds to these associations, such as preventing the arrival of funding to the Jerusalem Heritage Youth Forum Association and closing bank accounts, as happened with the Al-Hakawati Theater. The occupation authorities are working to put in place everything that would Keeping these associations inactive and completely stopping their activities through stifling administrative and legal methods. On the other hand, the occupation forces in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, which is threatened with confiscation, are building an amphitheater for celebrations, a site for organizing various performances, and a theater. They also do not impose any of these taxes and restrictions on Israeli associations in the city.

Real Stories are the Most Traditional Cultural Themes Discussed within Palestinian Households

76% of households in Palestine tell stories about real life and 63% tell folktales. In addition, 54% of the households talk about sayings and proverbs, 53% talk about political issues, 43% tell comedy traditional tales, 40% talk about wise sayings and proverbs, 39% talk about myths, and 31% talk about folkloric poetry and songs.

3 out of 10 Households in Palestine have a Home Library

28% of households in Palestine have a home library (24% in the West Bank and 34% in Gaza Strip). Whereas, this percentage in Palestine was 27% in 2014.

2 out of 10 Individuals Aged 10 Years and above Read Books not Including Preparation for Lectures or Exams



21% of the individuals aged 10 and above read books (not including preparation for lectures or exams); 19% in the West Bank and 24% in Gaza Strip and the percentage was 15% among males compared with 26% among females. Whereas, this percentage in Palestine was 33% in 2014.

A Noticeable Decrease in Percentage of Households Obtain Daily Newspapers in 2023 Compared with 2014

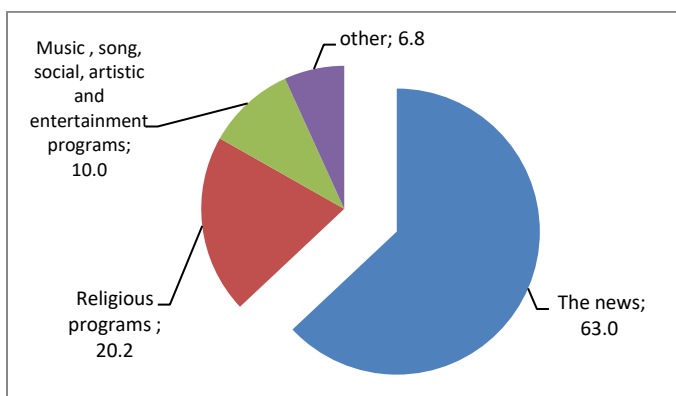
5% of the Palestinian households obtain daily newspapers; 6% in the West Bank and 3% in Gaza Strip, compared with 20% in 2014.

Findings also showed that 11% of individuals aged 10 years and above in the Palestinian society read newspapers; 12% among males and 10% among females, and the percentage was 6% in the West Bank compared with 18% in Gaza Strip.

41% of Palestinian Households listen to Radio Stations

The percentage of households who listen to radio stations was 41%, including 31% in the West Bank and 57% in Gaza strip. With regard to the household’ first choice program to listen, news ranked the highest followed by religious programs.

Percentage Distribution of Households Who Listen to Radio Station by Preferred Type of Program, 2023



*Other include programs: children, documentary, educational, scientific, and environmental, heritage, cultural, political affairs (political dialogues and interviews), sports, and medical.

Findings for 2023 also indicated that the percentage of individuals (10 years and above) who listen to radio in Palestine was 25%; 28% among males and 21% among females.

More than Half of Individuals (10 years and above) Listen to the Voice of Palestine Radio Station

51% of the individuals aged 10 years and above listen to the Voice of Palestine, compared with 55% in 2014. Findings of the survey, 2023 revealed that 18% of the households that have a TV watch Palestine TV Channel on a daily basis; 17% in the West Bank and 18% in Gaza Strip, compared with 39% in 2014.

Using the Computer or Internet is the Most Practiced Activity during Free Time

71% of individuals (10 years and above) in Palestine have free time (64% in the West Bank and 82% in the Gaza Strip). 40% of the individuals aged 10 years and above used the computer or internet in their free time (42% among males and 38% among females); 33% watched television and videos (30% among males and 36% among females); 9% meet with friends and relatives and attend social occasions (10% among males and 8% among females); 6% read newspapers, books and magazines (4% among males and 8% among females); and 5% practice sports and play games (9% among males and 2% among females) and 7% performed other different activities.

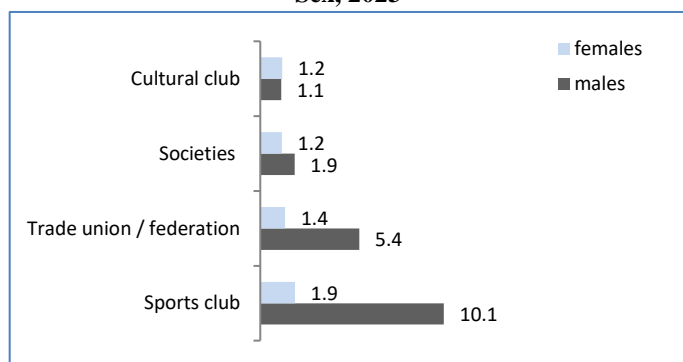
Survey findings showed that 40% of the individuals aged 10 years and above in school or university during the scholastic year 2022/2023 engaged in memorizing the Quran, 39% engaged in sport activities, and 29% engaged in academic and technological activities. In addition, 24% of the individuals practiced health and environmental activities, also 24% engaged in debating, creative writing and reading, and 19% engaged in scout activities and voluntary work.



Disparity in Percentages of Membership to Sport Clubs between Males and Females

Survey findings showed that 6% of the individuals aged 10 years and above are members of sport clubs (10% among males and 2% among females), 3% are members of trade union/syndicate, and 2% are members of societies. In 2014, 7% were members of sport clubs, 5% were members of societies, and 4% were members of unions.

Percentage of Individuals (10 Years and above) who are Members in Public Institutions by Type of Institution and Sex, 2023



More than Half of Individuals (18 years and above) Agree that University is more Important for Females than for Males

Regarding the extent of the positive view among members of the Palestinian society towards gender equality, the results of the survey indicated that 52% of individuals (18 years and above) agree that university is more important for females than for males, while the percentage of individuals (18 years and above) who agree to that women are better than men as political leaders is 19%, and the percentage of individuals (18 years and above) who do not agree that men should be given more opportunities to work than women when job opportunities are few is 23%.

Contribution of Ministry of Culture in Supporting Cultural Activities in 2023

In 2023, there was 8 awards was awarded for Literature, Arts and Humanities that cost is 55 thousands USD. Supporting around eighty cultural projects.

Organizing around 525 cultural events, including heritage seminars, launching, supporting 150 public libraries in the West Bank.

During the year 2023, the Ministry of Culture launched the "Ashprig" project collaboration with UNESCO to support and improve skills of persons who work in cultural field.

390 Arabic and foreign publishing institutions, and 150 Arab writers participated in the Palestine International Book Fair 2023.

The Ministry of Culture organized the Palestine Forum for the Arabic Novel and implemented 30 cultural events in camps in the diaspora and inside Palestine as part of strengthening the national narrative in Palestine. The Palestinian Ministry of Culture worked to include the Palestinian Dabke on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, during the 18th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), during its meeting in Kasane/Botswana in the period from 4 -9 December 2023, work is underway to include the municipal soap file on the representative list of intangible cultural heritage for this year.

35 training courses was organized in the field of traditional industries and held six events to promote traditional industries.

The Sources:

1. **Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2024.** Household Culture Survey, 2023. Main Findings. Ramallah-Palestine.
2. **Ministry of Culture 2024.** Directorate of Planning & Project Management. Database of Administrative Records, 2023. Ramallah – Palestine.

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