

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)

Press Release On the Eve of International Literacy Day, 8th September

On the eve of the International Literacy Day, 8th September 2017, the President of Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics announced that there were about 90 thousands illiterate persons in Palestine aged 15 years and above in 2016. According to the United Nations for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – the illiterate person applies to persons unable to read and write with understanding a simple statement related to one’s daily life.

The illiteracy rate among females is about three and a half times that of males

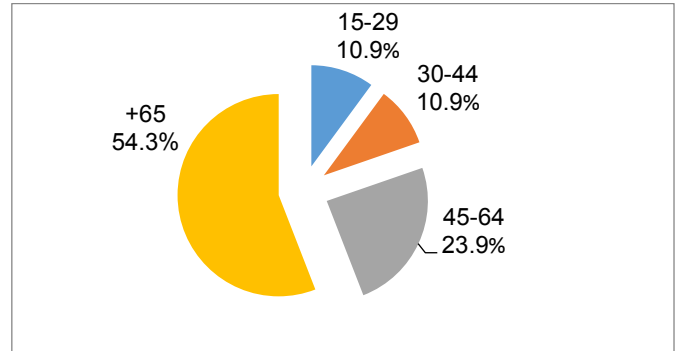
In 2016, the illiteracy rate among persons 15 years and above in Palestine was 3.1% (89.9 thousands illiterate): 3.2% in the West Bank (59.9 thousands illiterate) and 2.8% in Gaza Strip (30.0 thousands illiterate). The illiteracy rate varies considerably between sexes: 1.4% for males (20.6 thousands illiterate) compared to 4.8% for females (69.3 thousands illiterate) in the same year.

In 2016, the illiteracy rate among older persons aged 65 years and above attained 34.8% (48.8 thousands illiterate). The rate was 4.0% in the 45-64 year age group (21.5 thousands illiterate), 1.2% in the 30-44 year age group (9.8 thousands illiterate) and 0.7% among young people aged between 15-29 years (9.8 thousands illiterate) in the same year.

More than half of illiterates are elderly

Around 54% of illiterate persons are aged 65 years and over, while the lowest rate is among persons aged 15-29 years or 30-44 years.

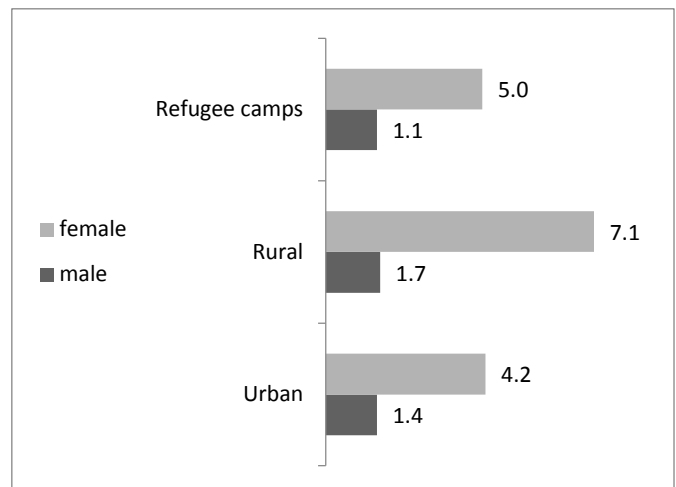
Percentage distribution for illiterate persons (15 years and above) by year age group, 2016

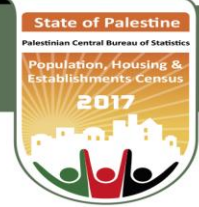


The illiteracy rate is the highest in rural areas compared to other localities

In 2016, the illiteracy rate among rural localities reached 4.4% (23.3 thousands illiterate), while scored 3.0% in the refugee camps (8.5 thousands illiterate) and 2.8% (58.1 thousands illiterate) in urban areas. In 2016, the male illiteracy rate was highest in rural localities, followed by urban areas and refugee camps respectively. Female illiteracy rate was highest in rural localities, followed by refugee camps and urban areas respectively.

Illiteracy rate for persons (15 years and above) in Palestine by locality type and sex, 2016





The highest illiteracy rate was in Jericho and Al Aghwar Governorate

In 2016, the highest illiteracy rate among persons aged 15 years and above was in Jericho and Al Aghwar governorate, scoring 4.9% (1.9 thousand illiterate), followed by in Tubas governorate, scoring 4.2% (1.9 thousand illiterate). The lowest rate was in Jerusalem governorate with 2.2% (4.2 thousands illiterate), followed by Gaza governorate with 2.4% (8.7 thousands illiterate).

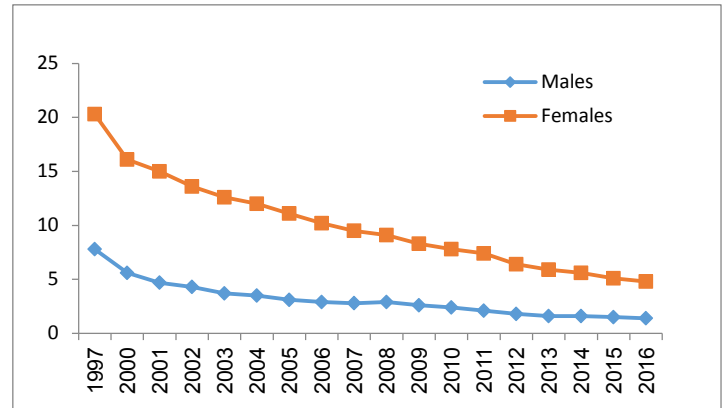
Illiteracy rate and illiterate persons (15 years and above) by governorate, 2016

Gover no rate	Rate	Number in thousands	Gover no rate	Rate	Number in thousands
Jericho and Al Aghwar	4.9	1.9	Nablus	3.0	7.5
Tubas	4.2	1.9	Jenin	2.8	6.0
Ramallah and Al-Bireh	4.1	9.3	Qalqilya	2.8	2.1
Rafah	3.6	4.6	North Gaza	2.8	6.2
Hebron	3.6	17.9	Bethlehem	2.6	3.8
Salfit	3.5	1.7	Deir Al-Balah	2.5	4.0
Khan Yunis	3.3	6.5	Gaza	2.4	8.7
Tulkarm	3.0	3.6	Jerusalem	2.2	4.2

The illiteracy rates reduced in Palestine from 13.9% in 1997 to 3.1% in 2016

Illiteracy rates among persons aged 15 years and above in Palestine fell in the period 1997-2016 from 13.9% to 3.1%. For males, the rate fell from 7.8% in 1997 to 1.4% in 2016, while for females it fell from 20.3% to 4.8% over the same period.

Illiteracy rates for persons (15 years and above) in Palestine by sex for years 1997, 2000-2016



The illiteracy rate in Palestine is one of the lowest in the world

According to UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the illiteracy rate among persons 15 years and above in Arab States was 24.8% (about 64.6 million illiterate) in 2016: for males, 17.4% (23.7 million illiterate) compared to 32.8% for females (40.9 million illiterate). For the same year, the rate was 13.8% (about 750.1 million illiterate) in the world among the same age group: for males, 10.2% (277.2 million illiterate) compared to 17.3% for females (472.9 million illiterate).

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