

**PCBS Issues a Press Release**  
**On the Occasion of the International Day of Information Society, May 17**

**The Palestinian ICT sector contributes 8.5% to the GDP.**

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) issued a press release in the occasion of the Information Society Day, May 17. The main features of the knowledge- based economy in the Palestinian Territory are as follows:

**Access and use of information and communications technology ICT in economic enterprises**

According to the results of the business ICT survey, 2007, 21.3% of the total enterprises in the Palestinian Territory used computers in 2007, of which 23.1% were in the West Bank compared to 16.3% in Gaza Strip. The percentage of enterprises using the Internet reached 12.7% of the total enterprises, of which 67.8% were among enterprises using computers, (68.0% in the West Bank and 67.3% in Gaza Strip). The percentage of enterprises that have both commercial transactions electronically via the Internet or networks was 2.1% of the total enterprises. The survey results also showed that 62.4% of the total expenditures on ICT were for both fixed and mobile communications, followed by expenditure on computers of 9.9%. Next was expenditure on both the purchase of hardware and electronic equipment and maintenance of machinery and electronic equipment, at 8.2 % for each. This was followed by expenditure on the Internet and networks at 6.1%, and then expenditure on the purchase of software by 3.8%. The percentage of expenditure on training of personnel in the enterprises on technology and its use reached 0.7%, followed by expenditure on the implementation of studies and research related to technology at 0.4% of the total expenditure on ICT.

It is estimated that the number of workers in economic enterprises who were specialists in the field of information and communication was ten thousand employees, representing 3.5% of the total employed in economic enterprises. The number of students in tertiary specialized in these areas was five thousand students, representing 3.0% of the total students in the year 2008.

**The contribution of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector to the national economy**

The Palestinian telecommunications sector has developed significantly over the past eight years. The total value-added of this sector in 2007 was three times the value of 2000, reaching US \$ 330 million in 2007, with annual average growth rate of 30%. With regard to activities related to the computer, the total value-added was five times the value of 2000, to reach US \$16 million in the year 2007, with annual average growth rate of 76%. The total value-added of research and development activities was five times the value-added of 2000, reaching US \$3.5 million in the year 2007, with annual average growth rate of 46%. The three

mentioned economic activities contribute a share of 8.5% to GDP, almost (8.0%) from the telecommunications sector.

### **Research and Development**

Statistics showed that the number of researchers in research and development in the West Bank was 981 in 2007, representing 280 researchers in Full-Time Equivalent (defined as 90.0% of the total number of working hours in the year on research and development), of which 187 were males and 93 were females.

### **Access and use of ICT among households and individuals**

Studying the trend rates of prevalence of information technology in the Palestinian society, ICT is expected to double during the next five years. Infrastructure and access to information technology developed significantly from 2000 to 2006. The percentage of households owning a computer was 33.0% in 2006, three times the figure in 2000. Availability of Internet service in the house increased ten times (15.9%) in 2006 compared with 2000. Households owning a mobile phone in the year 2006 increased two times (81.0%) in 2007 compared with the year 2000.