

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)

On the Occasion of the International Youth Day, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Issues a Press Release Highlighting the Situation of the Youth in the Palestinian Society

“The Youth of Palestine hanging between Hope and Resilience: Facing Unprecedented Challenges on the International Youth Day”

The United Nations General Assembly, in its Resolution No. 54/120 of 1999, approved the declaration of August 12th as the International Youth Day, as they are essential partners in change, and with the aim of raising awareness and shedding light on the challenges and problems facing young people all over the world.

The world celebrates the International Youth Day of 2025 under the theme "Engaging Youth in Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals," emphasizing the vital role of youth in achieving a prosperous, sustainable, and just future. But while people around the world celebrate youth empowerment and expanding their participation, Palestinian youth, particularly in Gaza Strip, are facing one of the most violent and protracted humanitarian crises of modern times.

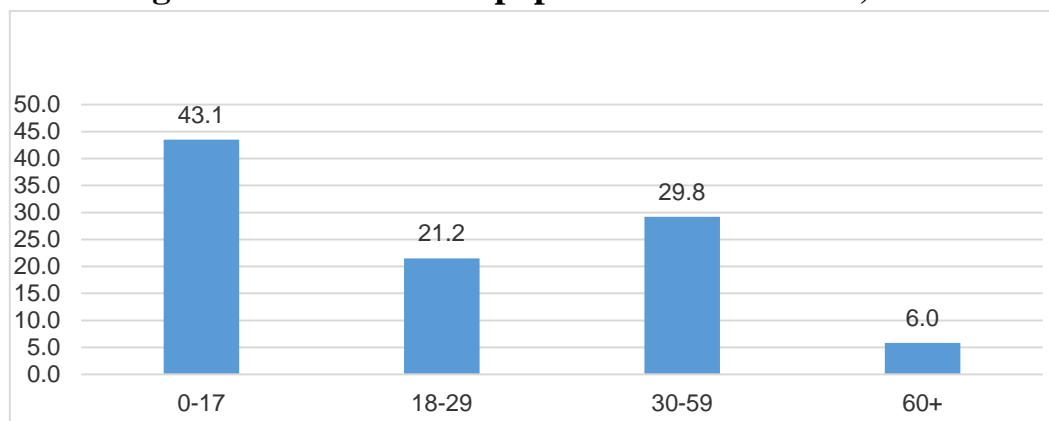
Youth are the cornerstone of the Palestinian society... despite targeting

The Palestinian youth aged 18-29 constitute approximately 1.2 million young men and women, representing 21% of the total Palestinian population by mid-2025 (22% in the West Bank and 21% in Gaza Strip). These figures show that more than one-fifth of the Palestinian society is young people, making them a fundamental pillar of any future development or national response to crises.

The sex ratio among young people reached approximately 104 males for every 100 females, reflecting a relatively balanced gender distribution within this group.

However, despite the numerical and demographic weight they represent, young people are the most affected by the Israeli aggression, whether through direct targeting or through the repercussions of the aggression on their opportunities for education, employment, and development.

Percentage distribution of the population in Palestine, mid of 2025



A war of genocide in Gaza Strip... human losses and catastrophic displacement

Since October 7th, 2023, the Israeli occupation forces have been waging a war of genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza Strip along with committing massacres and destruction of buildings, facilities and infrastructure there, in light of the lack of basic health and food services, with more than 61 thousand martyrs and about 2 million Palestinians left their homes out of about 2.2 million Palestinians who were residing in Gaza Strip on the eve of the Israeli occupation aggression. However, the longer-term damage resulting from this aggression, which will have negative and profound economic, demographic, social, and psychological impacts that will affect most groups of the Palestinian people in Gaza Strip, and the expectations indicate that it will last for longer periods after the end of the war.

Unprecedented Decline in Population and Youth in Gaza Strip

Under the ongoing Israeli aggression since October 7th, 2023, Gaza Strip has witnessed an unprecedented population decline, due to the high number of martyrs and missing persons, and thousands of Palestinians have also left Gaza Strip since the beginning of the aggression, along with a sharp decline in birth rates.

According to recent population estimates, the population of Gaza Strip has decreased to approximately 2,129,724 people, representing a decrease of 6% compared to the population estimates of mid-2024. The decline continues to reach 2,114,301 people, with a gap of 10% compared to the original estimates of mid-2025.

Recent data also show a decline in the number of youth (aged 18-29) by an estimated percentage of 6% compared to the population estimates for 2025, as a result of the direct and systematic targeting of this group by the Israeli occupation forces. This portends dangerous demographic shifts in the structure of the Palestinian society.

The Palestinian youth are paying the heaviest price in a merciless aggression

Amid the ongoing Israeli aggression against Gaza Strip, shocking figures continue to emerge, embodying the scale of the humanitarian catastrophe, particularly among young people. Since the start of the Israeli aggression on October 7th, 2023, more than 61,000 Palestinians have been martyred, representing 2.7% of the total population of Gaza Strip based on the estimates of mid-2023, where the toll of youth martyrs reached about 24% (26% males and 22% females).

Nearly 100,000 Palestinians have also left Gaza Strip since the beginning of the brutal Israeli aggression on October 7th, 2023, fleeing death and destruction. At a time when 2.1 million people are living under the brunt of a catastrophic famine, the worst in the history of the region. Data also indicate that 133 Palestinians have died of starvation, including 87 children, due to the lack of food and water and the complete collapse of the health sector.

Meanwhile, the number of injured persons rose to more than 145,000, 70% of whom were women and children, in addition to approximately 11,000 missing persons whose fate remains unknown.

In the West Bank, the situation was no less painful; the number of martyrs there reached 1,030, 75% of whom were under the age of 30. This confirms that the Palestinian youth are being directly targeted across the Palestinian lands as part of a systematic policy of destroying the future demographic structure.

The Israeli aggression threatens the future of the demographic structure of Gaza Strip

The ongoing Israeli aggression has led to serious demographic shifts in Gaza Strip, most notably its direct impact on the age structure of the population, especially among young people, due to a significant decline in fertility and birth rates.

These shifts are linked to intertwined factors, including a decline in new marriages to extremely low levels, couples' reluctance to have children due to the catastrophic conditions, and concerns for the health of mothers and children amid the complete collapse of the health system and basic services.

In the same context, the population pyramid in Gaza Strip is expected to be distorted as a result of the systematic Israeli targeting of children and youth, which will directly impact its age base. This impact is expected to extend for many years to come, due to the decline in the number of expected births resulting from the loss or displacement of the young population capable of reproduction.

Palestinian Students at the Heart of Targeting: Thousands Martyred and Injured due to the Israeli Aggression

Since the Israeli aggression on Gaza Strip on October 7th, 2023, until July 8th, 2025, more than 17,000 school and university students were martyred, in one of the most significant educational disasters in modern Palestinian history.

The number of Palestinian school students martyred reached 16,124 (16,019 in Gaza Strip and 105 in the West Bank). The number of Palestinian school students injured reached 24,614 (23,913 in Gaza Strip and 701 in the West Bank).

In higher education institutions, 1,191 students were martyred (1,156 in Gaza Strip and 35 in the West Bank). While 2,577 students were injured (2,351 in Gaza Strip and 226 in the West Bank).

As part of the systematic targeting of the education sector, 367 school students and 401 university students were arrested, all from the West Bank, reflecting the extent of the oppression targeting students at all levels of education.

These figures confirm that the Palestinian education system has become the focus of the Israeli military targeting, in an attempt to destroy the future of future generations and deprive them of their most basic rights to education and safety.

88 thousand male and female students in Gaza Strip were deprived of their right to university education

As a natural reaction to the continuous bombing and violent raids on Gaza Strip and the death toll among students and staff and the destruction of the infrastructure of a significant number of universities, all higher education institutions in Gaza Strip have been closed since the beginning of the aggression and about 88 thousand male and female students were deprived of going to their universities, while about 39 thousand male and female students were deprived of their right to take the General Secondary Certificate Examination in Gaza Strip this year.

A high level of education is met with stifling unemployment among the Palestinian youth

Although education is the most important investment for Palestinians at both the individual and societal levels, the return on this investment faces significant challenges, most notably rampant youth unemployment.

Data of 2024 indicate that for every 100 young men and women aged 18-29 in the West Bank, 19 hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Figures show that young women are more educated, with 25 out of every 100 young women holding a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to only 14 young men.

However, unemployment poses the most significant obstacle facing these young people. Unemployment rates in the West Bank in 2024 reached approximately 49% among women and 38% among men. The highest unemployment rates were recorded among graduates with an intermediate diploma or higher, reaching 42%, with a striking gender disparity (27% for men compared to 55% for women).

In Gaza Strip, the crisis appears more severe. According to the Labor Force Survey for the fourth quarter of 2024, the overall unemployment rate reached approximately 69%, while the youth aged 15-29 recorded catastrophic unemployment rates of up to 80%, in light of the ongoing blockade, aggression, and destruction of Gaza Strip economic infrastructure.

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