**Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)**

**Press Release on the Results of the Labour Force Survey**

**First Quarter (January – March, 2023) Round**

**About One Fourth of the Participants in the Labour Force in Palestine are Unemployed in the First Quarter of 2023**

**The number of employed persons decreased by 13 thousands in the 1st quarter of 2023**

The number of employed persons (excluding workers abroad)decreased from about 1.159 million in the 4th quarter of 2022 to about 1.146 million in the 1st quarter of 2023, by 1.1%. This decrease is due to the decrease in the number of employed persons from Gaza Strip by 2.6% in the 1st quarter, 2023, where it also decreased in the West Bank by 0.6% in the same period.

Moreover, the number of employed persons in Israel during the 4th quarter 2022 and 1st quarter of 2023 decreased by about five thousands. The number of employed persons in Israel reached about 125 thousand employed persons in the 1st quarter of 2023 compared to about 130 thousand employed persons in the 4th quarter of 2022. In addition, the number of employed persons in Israeli settlements decreased from 29 thousands in the 4th quarter of 2022 to 28 thousands in the 1st quarter of 2023.

The number of employed persons in Israel and Israeli settlements working in construction activity decreased by about 5 thousands. . Moreover, the number of employed persons in the activity of agriculture decreased by about 2 thousands. On the other hand, the number of employed persons in transportation and storage activity, communication, manufacturing and mining activities increased by about 1 thousand employed persons.. Whereas the number of employed persons in commerce and hotels activity and other activities1 remained the same

The average daily wage for wage employees in Israel and Israeli settlements remained at the same average of about 284 NIS during the 4th quarter of 2022 and the 1st quarter of 2023.

**A decrease in the number of employed persons in the local market during the 4th quarter of 2022 and the 1st quarter of 2023**

The number of employed persons in the local market decreased from 1.001 million employed persons in the 4th quarter of 2022 to about 993 thousand employed persons in the 1st quarter of 2023. It decreased by 3.1% in Gaza Strip, while it increased by 0.2% in the West Bank during the same period.

Results showed that the decrease in the number of employed persons in the local market during the 1st quarter of 2023 is due to the decrease in the number of employed persons in agriculture activity, followed by constructions activity, then by mining and manufacturing activity. Whereas, it stayed at the same level in transportation and storage activity and communication activities. However, it increased in other services[[1]](#footnote-1).

The average weekly working hours for wage employees in the West Bank was 43.7 hours per week compared to 36.2 hours in Gaza Strip. The average monthly working days was 22.9 working days in the West Bank compared to 21.6 working days in Gaza Strip.

**7 out of 10 employed persons are wage employees**

74% of employed persons are wage employees, 16% of employed persons are self-employed, 6% of employed persons are employers, and 4% are unpaid family members.

**More than half of the wage employees in the private sector were hired without any employment contract.**

58% of wage employees in the private sector were hired without any employment contract, and 30% of wage employees receive a contribution to their pension fund/end of service compensation. Moreover, 39% of wage female employees receive a paid maternity leave.

**37% of wage employees in the private sector receive a monthly wage of less than the minimum wages (1,880 NIS) in Palestine**

The percentage of wage employees in the private sector who receive a monthly wage less than the minimum wages in the West Bank was 16% in the 1st quarter of 2023 (about 52 thousand employees). While it reached about 119 thousands in Gaza Strip with a percentage of about 88% of wage employees in the private during the same period.

It is worth mentioning that the Council of Ministers issued a decree stating that the minimum wage is to be (1,880 NIS) as of the beginning of 2022.

The monthly minimum wage in Gaza Strip was (722 NIS) compared with (1,395 NIS) in the West Bank.

**One fourth of the labour force participants were unemployed in the 1st quarter of 2023**

The unemployment rate among labour force participants (15 years and above) in the 1st quarter of 2023 was about 25%, while the total underutilization of labour was about 30%, according to the International Labour Organization Standards (ICLS-19th).

There is still a large disparity in the unemployment rate between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as this rate reached 46% in Gaza Strip compared to 14% in the West Bank. The unemployment rate by sex reached 21% among males compared to 40% among females.

Unemployment Rate (ICLS 19th) by Region, Q2- 2020 – Q1-2023

The number of unemployed persons reached about 387 thousand in the 1st quarter of 2023; of which 247 thousand persons in Gaza Strip and 140 thousand persons in the West Bank.

The number of persons who are participated in the labour force in the 1st quarter, 2023 reached 1.530 million persons; 997 thousand persons in the West Bank and 538 thousand persons in Gaza Strip. In addition, the participation rate in the labour force remained at the same level of about 45% between the 4th quarter of 2022 and the 1st quarter of 2023. It also remained at the same level of about 41% in Gaza Strip, while it increased from 47% to 48% in the West Bank during the same period.

The participation rate in the labour force among males remained at the same level of about 71%, while it was19% among females in the 1st quarter of 2023 compared to 18% in the 4th quarter of 2022.

Within the same context, the total of labour underutilisation reached 485 thousand persons, as this number includes 36 thousand discouraged job seekers and 21 thousands in time-related underemployment.

**Unemployment rate was the highest among youth graduates**

About 46% is the unemployment rate among youth graduates (aged 19-29 years) who hold Associate Diploma Certificate and higher (29% in the West Bank compared to 68% in Gaza Strip).

1. Includes: Public administration and defense; compulsory social security, education, human health activities, social work activities, creative, arts and entertainment activities, libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities, sports activities and amusement and recreation activities, activities of membership organizations, other personal service activities, activities of households as employers of domestic personnel and activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies [↑](#footnote-ref-1)