



# Palestine

## ECHO FACTSHEET

### Facts & Figures

Population: 4.8M  
→ 1.8 M live in the Gaza Strip, 1.2 M of which are refugees  
→ 3 M live in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

Population in need of Humanitarian Assistance:

→ 2 M people in the Gaza Strip, Area C and East Jerusalem, of which:

- 40,000 people who remain internally displaced following the 2014 conflict in Gaza Strip

- 269,000 people in Area C and

213,000 people in East Jerusalem who are at risk of forcible transfer

European Commission humanitarian funding in 2017:

€20 million

Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid

B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: (+32 2) 295 44 00

Fax: (+32 2) 295 45 72

email:

[echo-info@ec.europa.eu](mailto:echo-info@ec.europa.eu)

Website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo>



Palestinian children study at an EU-supported school in Khibet Tana, a rural community located in Area C of the occupied West Bank. Photo: Peter Biro/EU/ECHO.

### Key messages

- **2017 marks 50 years of Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories** and 10 years of its blockade on the Gaza Strip. Palestinians still live in a protracted crisis causing a deteriorating humanitarian situation emanating from recurrent violations of International Law and the contextual lack of accountability for these violations. **Two million people are in need of humanitarian assistance** out of a total population of 4.8 million.
- **The Gaza Strip** suffered three wars in eight years, the last war taking place in 2014, in addition to the blockade that has been imposed since 2007. As a result, vulnerable communities struggle to cope in what is a complex protracted environment.
- **In the West Bank**, vulnerabilities are caused by multiple factors including coercive policies and practices related to the occupation, such as the seizure of Palestinian land for the purpose of Israeli settlement construction and expansion, settler violence, discriminative legislative initiatives, restrictions on movement and access and demolitions and confiscation of Palestinian owned homes and property.
- **The European Commission's humanitarian assistance in Palestine focuses on addressing protection and emergency concerns**, namely emergency preparedness and response, humanitarian advocacy and support to humanitarian coordination. Such assistance is governed by International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law, with the aim of providing protection and assistance to the most vulnerable Palestinians.



## Humanitarian situation and needs

The lives and livelihoods of the **Gaza** population continue to deteriorate, driving many people deeper into poverty and unemployment. Around 80% of the population living in Gaza remain dependent on external assistance. The blockade translates into a situation of continuous economic de-development with consequent increase of vulnerabilities. Unless normal movement of the 1.8 million people living in Gaza is allowed to resume, there will be no fundamental change in the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

The slow pace of recovery and reconstruction of homes in the **Gaza Strip**, mainly due to the existing blockade, a cumbersome importation process for construction materials and the shortage of donors' funding, have prolonged the hardship of 40,000 IDPs who have either moved multiple times - mainly living in rental situations, residing in their own war damaged and not yet repaired housing unit, with host families and in caravans, facing overcrowding, lack of privacy, extreme weather conditions and other protection concerns. Restrictions imposed by the Government of Israel on access of humanitarian staff to and from Gaza have intensified over the past year. These access restrictions including lengthy interrogations, permit cancellations are hampering humanitarian staff's ability to carry out their functions properly, and affecting the efficiency of aid delivery as well as increasing the cost of humanitarian aid.

In the **West Bank**, the Palestinian population in need in Area C and East Jerusalem (approximately 500,000 people) are subject to economic deprivation with limited access to basic services (water, food, health, education) due to a multi-layered system of restrictions and obstacles. The population is increasingly subjected to displacement and dispossession of land and housing through multiple factors like forced evictions and demolitions of houses triggered by building restrictions, the lack of Israeli-issued building permits, military training exercises near residential areas, settler violence, revocation of residency, restrictions on access to services and livelihoods and the enforcement of relocation plans. As a result, Palestinians are separated from their land, families, schools, hospitals, workplace and places of worship.

The total number of Palestinian structures demolished/seized in 2016 reached 1,094 structures, displacing over 1,600 Palestinians, half of which were children. The number of affected structures in 2016 nearly surpassed the number of structures demolished/seized over the course of 2014 and 2015 combined. Such practices lead to the forcible displacement of a protected population living under occupation.

## The European Union's Humanitarian Response

### **EU humanitarian aid funding for Palestine in 2017 stands at €20 million.**

In the West Bank, humanitarian assistance is provided through an **integrated protection approach** which incorporates preventative measures, emergency response and protective advocacy. So far, **€4.9 million** has been allocated to families living **in Area C and East Jerusalem for legal assistance, emergency response to demolitions and evictions**, and **material assistance** for essential services.

**In the Gaza Strip, €13.5 million** has been allocated to humanitarian programmes designed to address vulnerabilities and worsening living conditions of the populations affected by the blockade, and to build resilience. This is done mostly through **shelter assistance, health, water and sanitation, food security, disaster preparedness and protection activities**.

In 2017, **€0.8 million** has also been allocated to support **children's education and protection**, with a focus on highly vulnerable communities in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Another **€0.8 million** has been allocated for **humanitarian coordination** activities.

Since 2000, the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations directorate-general (ECHO) has provided more than **€700 million in humanitarian aid** to help meet the basic needs of the Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

## DG ECHO's humanitarian assistance in Palestine focuses on:



**Protection** is provided through legal assistance, counselling and access to information for Palestinians who have been displaced or are at risk of displacement. Protection is ensured through an international monitoring presence in areas at risk of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) violations. Protection is mainstreamed in all DG ECHO-funded operations in both West Bank and Gaza Strip.



**Food assistance** is provided mainly through unconditional cash support to households. Interventions aiming to increase economic access to sufficient and qualitative food and to restore productive capacity of small and medium producers are also encouraged.



**Water and sanitation:** In Gaza, the disastrous consequences of the 2014 war are being addressed through the provision of drinking water and basic sanitation, through International Committee of the Red Cross and Oxfam GB.



**Emergency shelter** and basic household items are provided as an immediate response to families in the West Bank who are victims of demolitions, evictions or confiscations of assets. In Gaza, shelter solutions for those still living with host-families or in emergency shelters are provided through UNRWA and the Norwegian Refugee Council. Designated collective shelters (schools) are being upgraded by UNICEF, ACH, Oxfam GB and Première Urgence.



**Health in emergencies** such as evacuation and treatment of the wounded, emergency services in hospitals, and medical supplies, are provided through the work of International Committee of the Red Cross. This emergency response proved to be crucial during the last Gaza war when the health system was severely affected. Emergency medical services in the main hospitals, including ambulance services, presence of surgical teams and provision of drugs and disposables were also provided.



**Humanitarian Advocacy and Coordination** remains a key priority to ensure the systematic and collective documentation of all incidents related to IHL violations that have a direct humanitarian impact on the population of Area C, East Jerusalem and Gaza. This includes monitoring and reporting on incidents of demolition of homes and livelihood structures and assets, settler violence, and movement restrictions.