



12. SOCIETY & LIVING CONDITIONS

► GENERAL SOCIAL FEATURES 2000

Muslims WBGS 97%
Christians (concentrated in Jerusalem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahur, Bethlehem and Ramallah; main WBGS denominations: Greek Orthodox - ca. 52.2%, Latin - 30%, Catholic - 6%) 3%
incl. Diaspora: 10%

	West Bank	Gaza	WBGS (Average)
Type of household (%)			
Nuclear family:	74.0	71.8	73.2
Extended family:	21.7	25.3	23.0
Composite family:	0.6	0.3	0.5
One person:	3.7	2.6	3.3
Average household size (persons):	6.6	7.8	7
Average housing density (persons/room):	--	--	1.88
Female -headed households - 1997 (%)	8.3	6.4	7.7
Fertility rate			5.75
Marriages registered (Courts & Churches)	16,285	8,115	24,874
First cousin marriages 1997 (%)	27.2	31.6	
Marriages within extended family - 1997 (%)	47.4	51.8	
Polygamous marriages 1997 (%)	3	4.4	
Persons aged 14 years and above: (%)			
married:	55.3	56.5	55.7
never married:	39.9	39.0	39.6
widowed:	3.9	3.6	3.8
divorced:	0.6	0.8	0.7
Legal age of marriage (years):		15	17
Median age at first marriage (years):			
male:	24.4	23.5	24.1
female:	18.9	18.7	18.8
Divorces ():	2,388	1,283	3,761

(Sources: PCBS, Statistics on *Demography*, and *Household Goods and Public Services*, 1997 and 1999)

► HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES AND LEVEL OF LIVING

In 1999, 92% of WBGS households owned a fridge and 83.6% a washing machine. Some 99% of the households were connected to electricity, 85.4% to a public water network, and 37.9% to public sewerage. For lighting, the majority (97.2%) used electricity, for cooking gas burners (95%), and liquid petroleum gas for heating water (50.7%; 21% use solar and 14.9% electricity). For space heating, 35.3% used gas, 30.1% wood and 21% kerosene.

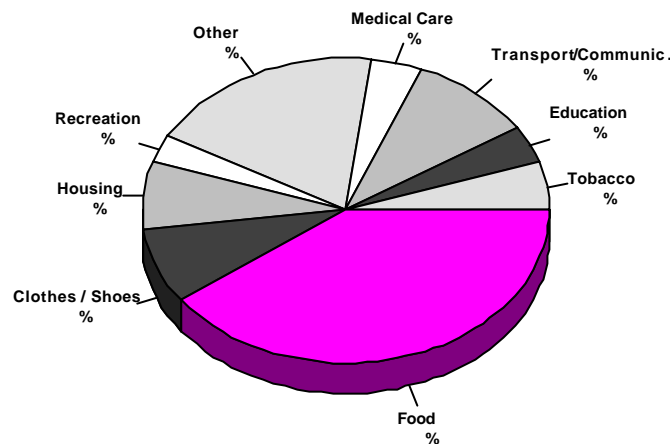
With regard to the expenditure priorities evinced by the average 7-person Palestinian household there has been little change in recent years. Food represents the predominant basic expense,



followed by transportation/ communication and clothing/footwear. Among secondary expenses, tobacco and furniture/utensils topped the list of monthly expenditures/

Total household expenditures amounted to NIS 2,634 in 1997, and to NIS 2,579 in 1998. In 1998, the average wage could cover 70.5% of the basic needs (1997: 63.7%) and 52.2% of the secondary needs (1997: 46.4%).

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD MONTHLY EXPENDITURES, WBGS, 1999



(Source: PCBS, *Monthly Household Expenditure and Consumption Statistics*, 1998.)

► WOMEN

- Women account for only some 11-12% of the formal labor force, where they are concentrated in the services sector. Women comprise only a small ratio in most professions, excluding teaching; in 1999 women comprised only 2.9% of judges, 7.7% of the trade professionals, 7.4% of lawyers, and 20% of journalists (Source: PCBS *Gender Statistics*, 1999.)
- In 1999, only 22 of 3,439 local council members were women, and only 7.5% of Palestinian National Council (PNC) members.