



## 10. Health

### ■ Health Indicators in Palestine

	WBGS	WB	GS
<b>Hospitals</b> (2008)	77	53	24
of which: Government	24		
Non-Government	53		
<b>Hospital beds</b> (2008)			
Total no.	5,067	2,939	2,128
Beds per 1,000 population	1.3	1.3	1.5
<b>Physicians</b> per 1,000 population (2006)	1.60		
<b>Dentists</b> per 1,000 population (2006)	0.55		
Crude birth rate per 1,000 population (2007)	36.7	33.7	41.7
Crude death rate per 1,000 population (2007)	3.9	4	3.8
Total fertility rate (2006)	4.6	4.2	5.4
Infant mortality rate (death under the age of one year) per 1,000 live births	25.3		
Child mortality rate (under 5 years) per 1,000 live births	28.2		
Life expectancy at birth (male/female) (2007)	71.7 / 73.2	71.9 / 73.6	71.4 / 72.5
Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births (women aged 15-49 years) (2005)	12.7	6.7	21.3

(Source: *Palestinian Family Health Survey, 2006*, PCBS, *Census 2007*, PCBS, *Health Statistics, 2008*)

For a **detailed listing of health facilities** see the WHO's Interactive Database at <http://www.emro.who.int/palestine/>.

### ■ Facts & Figures

- **Key chronic problems** of the health sector are maintenance of equipment, staff shortages and problems of access to health facilities for staff and patients, especially in area C. In Gaza, an additional problem has been the shortage of fuel and power that needed to operate the emergency generators and ambulances.
- Over the last two decades **infant and under-five mortality rates** steadily declined (and is well below the regional average), while **life expectancy** has increased significantly (on average 4 years longer than the typical person in the region). Total health **spending** stands at about 13% of GDP - among the highest rate in the region. (World Bank. *West Bank and Gaza Public Expenditure Review. Vol. 1: From Crisis to Greater Fiscal Independence*, Feb. 2007).



- Main causes for **infant mortality** are premature delivery, low birth weight, respiratory system diseases, and congenital anomalies, and for **child mortality** (death under the age of five years) respiratory system diseases and congenital anomalies.
- According to the Israeli Ministry of Health, some 66 671 patients from the West Bank have been **treated in Israel hospitals** between May 2007 and May 2008, incl. 10 290 children. Approx. 40% of them were hospitalized and 60% received ambulatory services of various sorts.
- In 2004, 76.1% of the Palestinians (65.8% in the WB, 93.8 in Gaza) had **health insurance**, 23.9% not. Of those insured, 51.8% had govt. insurance, 4.1% military insurance, 32.9% were insured through UNRWA, 2.3% through social security, 6.1% with Israeli insurance companies and 1.7% had private insurance. (PCBS, *Demographic & Health Survey*, 2004).
- The Ministry of Health's salary **budget** increased by nearly 73%, and the number of medical personnel nearly doubled from 1,631 in 2000 to 2,999 in 2005. (World Bank. *West Bank and Gaza Public Expenditure Review. Vol. 1: From Crisis to Greater Fiscal Independence*, Feb. 2007).
- Comparing the 1997 and the 2007 censuses reveals a **decrease in the fertility rate** from 5.6 to 4.6 births (PCBS, Census 2007).
- Between June 2007 and April 2008, the Health Ministry approved 1,241 **referrals** documents to Egyptian hospitals for patients in need for specialized treatment. Of these, only 417 were allowed to leave through the Rafah or Erez crossings to obtain treatment in Egypt. (WHO, *Health Sector Surveillance Indicators*, No. 24, April-May 2008).
- Most **Gaza hospitals** are only providing emergency services, with only about 40% of health workers reporting to work. (The World Bank. *Palestinian Economic Prospects: Aid, Access and Reform*. Sept. 2008.)

### Recommended Research Sources:

<http://www.palestinercs.org> (Palestinian Red Crescent Society)  
<http://www.hdip.org> (Health, Development, Information and Policy Institute)  
<http://www.gcmhp.net> (Gaza Community Mental Health Program)  
<http://www.upmrc.org> (Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees)

<http://www.emro.who.int/palestine/> (WHO)  
<http://www.moh.gov.ps> (Ministry of Health)  
<http://www.pCBS.gov.ps> (Health Statistics)  
<http://www.healthinforum.net>

**Barghouthi, Mustafa & Jean Lennox**, *Health in Palestine*. Ramallah: MAS, 1997.

**Diwan, Ishac, and Radwan A. Shaban** (eds.). *Development Under Adversity: The Palestinian Economy in Transition*. Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS) and The World Bank, 1999 (see chapter on Health).  
*Health Research in Palestine: An Annotated Bibliography*. Ramallah: HDIP, 1999.

**Lennox, J. & A. Shbayta**, *Health Insurance and Health Service Utilization in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*. Ramallah: HDIP, 1998.

**Ministry of Health**, *Joint Report of Health Sector Review*, March 2007.

*The National Health Plan for the Palestinian People*. Jerusalem: Planning and Research Center (PRC), 1994.

*The Palestinian Health Services in the West Bank and Gaza Strip - Facts and Figures*. Jerusalem: PRC, 1994.