

SYRIA

Most of the Palestine refugees who fled to Syria in 1948 were from the northern cities of Palestine, such as Safad and Haifa, and the Galilee, while most 1967 refugees fled from the Golan Heights. Some 70% of the refugees – about 2.7% of Syria's total population – live outside the 10 UNRWA camps. The legal status of Palestinian refugees is regulated by the Syrian Arab Republic Law No. 260 of 1957, which gives them the same duties and responsibilities as Syrian citizens with the exception of the right to vote, hold office, and possess Syrian passports (the latter in order to preserve their Palestinian identity/nationality). Instead, they hold travel documents, which, however, are not recognized by many governments and thus limit their freedom of movement, but otherwise Palestinians are integrated, allowed to own certain kinds of property (such as businesses or one house per person but not arable land), have equal access to educational facilities as well as to government services, and men must undertake military service (in the Palestine Liberation Army under Syrian Command). They do not require work permits and may even work in the government; this economic stability is reflected in the high number of refugees who were able to move out of the camps and take up residence elsewhere. Syria, like Lebanon, has refused to participate in the multilateral talks.



OTHER COUNTRIES

There are almost a million Palestinians in **Israel**, including the 'internal refugees', who remained in the country after fleeing their homes in 1948, and the tiny number of refugees who have been allowed to return to places in Israel other than their original homes, on condition that it is made clear that the decision to grant these permits does not constitute a recognition of a 'right of return'. Palestinians in Israel are treated as second-class citizens.

Over the past decades almost half a million Palestinian refugees have, individually, been granted asylum in the **US, Canada and Europe**, where they are generally treated in the same way as any other refugees.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

| Inside (mid-2003) | | Outside | I ² | II ³ | III ⁴ |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| West Bank & Gaza Strip ^{1a} | 3,364,495 | Jordan | 2,797,674 | 2,472,501 | 2,626,000 |
| | | Lebanon | 415,066 | 456,824 | 463,000 |
| | | Syria | 436,157 | 494,501 | 411,000 |
| | | Egypt | 61,917 | 51,805 | 48,000 |
| | | Saudi Arabia | 309,582 | 291,778 | 299,000 |
| | | Other Arab countries | 6,523 | 5,887 | - |
| Areas Occupied in 1948 ^{1b} | 1,259,890 | Kuwait & other Gulf | 163,632 | 149,786 | 135,000 |
| | | Libya and Iraq | 115,542 | 78,884 | 79,000 |
| | | The Americas | 236,357 (only USA) | 216,196 | - |
| | | Other Countries | 300,977 | 275,303 | 606,000 |
| | | Total Inside | 4,642,385 | Total Outside | 4,843,427 |

^{1a} PCBS, *Demographic Statistics*.

^{1b} Israeli CBS.

² PCBS, end of 2003.

³ Salman Abu Sitta. *Palestine 1948 - Commemoration of Al-Naqba*. London: Palestinian Return Center, May 2000.

⁴ Justin McCarthy. "Population", entry in *Encyclopedia of the Palestinians*, ed. By Philip Mattar. New York, 2000.



Cartoon by Baha Bukhari, www.baha-cartoon.net