



West Bank & Gaza Strip

population census of 2007

1,136,259
refugees

1997



1,551,145
refugees

2007

Briefing Paper
January 2010

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Any remaining shortcomings in the paper are attributable to UNRWA alone.

This briefing paper was prepared by **Salem Ajluni**
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Executive Summary

1. Population and Population Growth, 1997-2007

In gross terms, the total population of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) grew to an estimated 3,767,126 persons at end-2007, up 871,443 persons or 30 percent relative to end-1997. This implies an average annual growth rate of 3.0 percent during the decade between the two censuses.

The Palestinian population of the West Bank—including East Jerusalem—grew by 25.4 percent to 2,350,583, while the Gaza Strip increased by 38.5 percent to 1,416,543, during the decade prior to the 2007 census. Average annual population growth in the West Bank was accordingly about 2.5 percent while that in Gaza was 3.8 percent. (The growth rate of the Palestinian population inside the checkpoints of East Jerusalem—already included in the total West Bank figure—was only 7.2 percent or 0.7 percent per year between end-1997 and end-2007.)

The OPT average population growth rate between the two censuses was similar to that estimated for Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic but significantly above that for the larger Arab world for a comparable period. OPT average annual population growth during 1997-2007 was more than one full percentage point above that estimated for Northern Africa during 1995-2005 and more than one-half point greater than that for Western Asia and Israel

2. Registered Refugee Population and Population Growth

Registered refugees—those in the census who indicated they possessed UNRWA registration cards—accounted for 97.2 percent of all refugees counted in the census in 2007 (94.4 percent in the West Bank and 98.9 percent in the Gaza Strip).

The number of registered refugees in the OPT grew to an estimated 1,551,145 in 2007, growing from 1,136,259 in 1997, an increase of some 414,886 persons or by 36.5 percent.

The 3.6 percent average annual growth of the registered refugee population compares to 2.6 percent for the non-refugee population in the OPT.

The West Bank registered refugee population—including East Jerusalem—was estimated at 599,436 at end-2007, about 25.5 percent of the West Bank population, an increase of 116,237 persons relative to 1997. The total number of registered refugees in the West Bank grew by 24 percent in the decade prior to 2007, an average annual increase of 2.4 percent. The estimated registered refugee population inside the checkpoints of East Jerusalem declined about 31.9 percent to 50,963 in the decade prior to the 2007 census. This implies an average annual decline of 3.1 percent per year.

The estimated registered refugee population in the Gaza Strip grew by some 298,649 persons to a total of 951,709 at end-2007. This represented a 45.7 percent increase over 1997 or 4.5 percent per year on average. Refugees constituted 67.1 percent of the population in the territory in 2007. The non-registered refugee population grew by about 95,687 persons or 25.9 percent during the decade after 1997—about 2.6 percent per year.

3. Geographic Distribution of Population Growth

While the West Bank was 64.6 percent of the total OPT population in 1997, it accounted for only 54.7 percent of total population growth in the OPT in the decade after 1997. The Gaza Strip, on the other hand, was 35.4 percent of the 1997 population but was responsible for 45.3 percent of the growth in the intervening period.

In the West Bank the population expanded by some 25.4 percent in the decade after 1997. The Tubas and Hebron governorates significantly exceeded this average (more than 36 percent) while the Tulkarem and Jerusalem grew well below average, only 17.8 percent and 10.6 percent respectively.

In the Gaza Strip, total recorded population grew 38.5 percent. Population growth was more rapid in the far north and far south, with the Gaza North and Rafah governorates experiencing above average growth (47.3 percent and 41.1 percent, respectively). At the same time, the Gaza and Khan Yunis governorates grew slower than average (each about 35 percent).

4. Geographic Distribution of Registered Refugee Population Growth

In the West Bank, the registered refugee population grew by an estimated 24 percent between the two censuses. The registered refugee population in the Jenin, Qalqiliya, Hebron, Salfit and Tubas governorates grew significantly faster than average, accounting collectively for more than 62 percent of the growth of that segment of the population. On the other hand, the Jerusalem governorate is estimated to have lost almost one-fifth of its registered refugee population in the decade between the two censuses.

The registered refugee population in the Gaza Strip grew an estimated 45.7 percent between 1997 and 2007. The number of registered refugees in the Gaza North, Khan Yunis and Rafah governorates grew faster than average while growth in the Gaza and Deir al Balah governorates was below average. The result of this growth pattern was to disperse registered refugees more evenly among Gaza governorates.

5. Geographic Distribution of Population Density and Refugee Density

A. Area Population Density and Area Registered Refugee Density in the OPT

With a total surface area of 6,020 square kilometres, area population density—*population divided by surface area*—in 1997 was about 481 persons per square kilometre

in the OPT rising to 625.8 in 2007, an increase of 30 percent. Area density in the OPT was substantially higher than in neighbouring countries. Overall area population density in 2007 was more than 50 percent greater than in Lebanon; twice as great relative to Israel; six times greater than that for Syria; more than eight times greater than in Egypt; and 10 times greater than population density in Jordan. While area density in Gaza is far higher still, even population density in the West Bank exceeded that of all neighbouring countries and regions.

The West Bank (including East Jerusalem) accounts for 5,655 square kilometres, (almost 94 percent of total OPT surface area) and witnessed a 25.4 percent increase in population density, rising from 331.3 to 415.7 persons per square kilometre in the decade between the censuses. Population density in Tubas, Hebron, Ramallah and Jericho grew significantly faster than average while that in Jerusalem and Tulkarem grew well below average. Despite the slowest rate of growth in population in the decade between the censuses, the Jerusalem governorate remained the most dense in the West Bank, with some 1,054.1 persons per square kilometre in 2007. At the other extreme, Tubas experienced the most rapid rate of population growth of all West Bank governorates but maintained the lowest population density—125 persons per kilometre in 2007.

While the Gaza Strip is only 365 square kilometres (only 6.1 percent of the total surface area of the OPT), population density rose about 38.5 percent between 1997 and 2007 to an average of 3,880.9 persons per square kilometre. This was 9.3 times the average density of the West Bank. The Gaza governorate remained, by far, the most dense with 6,708.3 persons per square kilometre in 2007.

The area density of the registered refugee population in the OPT rose an estimated 36.5 percent to 257.7 persons per square kilometre in 2007. Such density in the West Bank rose 24 percent to 106 per square kilometre in 2007, despite the estimated 19.7

percent decline in the number of registered refugees in the J1 segment of the Jerusalem governorate. Jerusalem remained not only the most population dense but also the most registered refugee dense in the West Bank at 275.9 refugees per square kilometre in 2007. Tubas was both the most population sparse and the most refugee registered sparse governorate with 19.1 refugees per square kilometre in 2007. Registered refugee density in Gaza is estimated to have risen 45.7 percent in the decade after 1997 to 2,607.4 registered refugees per square kilometre—more than 24 times the average density of the West Bank. The Gaza governorate remained the most population and registered refugee dense at 2,531.3 per square kilometre. The Deir al Balah governorate lost its second position to the North Gaza governorate as between 1997 and 2007.

B. Registered Refugee Population Density

i. The Governorates

Total registered refugee density in the West Bank—total registered refugees divided by total population—was 25.5 percent at end-2007, down about 0.3 percentage points relative to 1997. Registered refugee density in the Jericho governorate, at 47.2 percent, remained the highest in the West Bank followed by Qalqiliya at 43.7 percent, followed by Tulkarem and Jenin at about 31-32 percent. The most registered refugee sparse governorates were Salfit, Tubas and Hebron with 7.9 percent, 15.2 percent and 16.4 percent respectively. Density growth was greatest in the Qalqiliya governorate where, paradoxically, there are no refugee camps. Jerusalem lost more than a quarter of its registered refugee density.

In Gaza, overall registered refugee density is estimated at 67.1 percent at end-2007. At the low end, 54.1 percent of residents in the Gaza governorate were registered refugees, followed by Khan Yunis with 61.3 percent. At the upper end, Rafah and Deir al Balah had registered refugee densities of 87.3 percent and 86.5 percent respectively. Overall refugee density was up nearly 3.2 percentage points

in the Gaza Strip relative to 1997. Density in the Rafah, Gaza and Khan Yunis governorates increased by more than average, Deir al Balah refugee density grew less than average and density in the North Gaza governorate declined by about 0.2 percentage points.

ii. The Camps

The total West Bank refugee camp population increased 18.5 percent between 1997 and 2007 to 126,835 persons. The number of registered refugees living in refugee camps increased 17.39.9 percent to 117,533 persons. Overall, only 5.82 percent of the West Bank population and only 21.3.3 percent of the registered refugee population resided in refugee camps in 2007. The growth of the camp population was slower than general population growth in the West Bank—an average of 1.8 percent versus 2.5 percent per year, respectively. Refugee camps that experienced particularly low growth rates include Tulkarem, 'Ein Beit el Ma (Camp No. 1), Qaddura, Nur Shams, 'Ayda and Jenin. Those experiencing particularly high rates of population growth include 'Ein as Sultan, 'Aqbat Jaber, El Far'a, Al Fawwar and Al 'Arrub.

Analysing changes in camp population in the Gaza Strip between 1997 and 2007 is made difficult for three reasons. First, PCBS has adopted a modified definition of camp borders consistent with the redefinition by the Ministry of Local Government. Under the new definition, there is a sharp decline in the number of camp residents. Second, there were only 8 designated refugee camps in Gaza in 2007, down from 9 in 1997 (Tel as Sultan camp was merged with the city of Rafah). Finally, due to the still pending completion of census data processing in Gaza, PCBS has not released data on camp populations by refugee status; there is no way to distinguish registered refugees from others in the Gaza camp populations.

Given the robust growth in the overall Gaza population (38.5 percent),presumably the large declines in the number of recorded refugee camp residents are not likely. More likely is the tendency toward slower than average growth as seen in the West Bank refugee camps and the Khan Yunis camp in

Gaza. Indirect evidence suggests this is the case. Of the four new Gaza Strip localities designated in the 2007 census, three of these were An Nuseirat, Al Bureij and Al Maghazi, each differentiated and separate from the middle area refugee camps of the same names. If the populations of the “new” localities are combined with their respective camp populations in the 2007 census and are compared to the localities of the same names in 1997, the growth rates of the three “re-combined” localities would be as follows: 41.3 percent for a combined An Nuseirat; 31.2 percent for Al Bureij; and 30.9 percent growth for a combined Al Maghazi, each relative to 1997. This suggests significant population growth in at least some “camp” populations in Gaza.

6. Demographic Dynamics

The changing weight of key demographic groups in the OPT provide insights for present and future policy and planning in the public and private sectors. For example, the number of children aged 0-14 increased by 23.1 percent between the two censuses, well below the overall average growth rate and indicative of a declining total fertility rate, especially in the West Bank. Meanwhile, the school-age population (5-19 years) grew by 32.8 percent, about equal to overall average population growth. This was true for both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Slower growth in the child population in the OPT suggests reduced momentum in the growth of the school-age population in the near future. This has important implications for education policy and planning.

The youth segment of the population (15-24 years) grew by 37 percent in the ten years between the censuses, nearly 7 percentage points faster than the population as a whole. In Gaza, the youth segment grew by more than 7 percentage points faster. This had, and will have, important ramifications for OPT social and political development. For example, youth have consistently suffered significantly greater than average unemployment rates. This suggests, at a minimum, that policy-

makers focus more attention on social, educational and labour market policies for this crucial and potentially volatile segment of the population.

Rapid growth of the youth segment was partly responsible for even more rapid growth of the working-age population (15-64 years), 39 percent in total growth during 1997-2007 or 9 percentage points faster than the population as a whole. Combined with more or less stable rates of labour force participation and constrained employment growth due to prolonged economic crisis, the growth of the youth segment produced unprecedented levels of unemployment and poverty, especially in Gaza. Data from the 2007 census suggest the working-age population will continue to outpace average population growth, highlighting the importance of policies that can accelerate job creation.

Finally, while the 65+ years population segment grew well below average during 1997-2007 in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip, its replacement segment (those who will be 65+ in 2017) grew by about 5 percentage points faster than average. Thus, the 65+ years population in the OPT grew by only 17.4 percent between the censuses while the 55+ population grew 22.7 percent. For the West Bank the growth rates were 12.9 percent and 17.9 percent, respectively, while for Gaza they were 26.9 percent and 32.3 percent. A greater portion of elderly in the OPT can be expected in the coming decade, other things being equal, with policy and planning implications for government and society.

7. Accounting for East Jerusalem

Due to obstacles imposed by the Israeli authorities, PCBS has never been able to fully enumerate or survey the population of East Jerusalem. This has made estimating the population in the Jerusalem governorate as a whole more difficult. Thus data pertaining to J1 (inside the checkpoints) are based mainly on estimates while data for J2 (outside the checkpoints) are based mainly on enumeration activity.

The total population of the Jerusalem governorate is estimated to have grown to 363,649 in 2007, about 10.6 percent more than the 1997 census, an average annual growth rate of about 1 percent. The J1 component is estimated to have grown to about 225,416, only 7.2 percent more people relative to 1997, a 0.7 percent annual average growth rate.

In 1997, refugees were an estimated 39.6 percent of the Jerusalem governorate's population (39.1 percent of the J1 population; 40.6 percent of the J2 population). By 2007, refugee density in the governorate is estimated to have declined to 31.5 percent (29.9 percent of the J1 population; 34.2 percent of the J2 population).

The refugee population in the governorate is estimated to have declined by more than 16,000 to 114,257, a 12.3 percent drop-off between the two censuses. The bulk of this shrinkage was due to the 18.6 percent decline in the refugee population in J1, augmented by a 1.4 percent decline in the J2 refugee population. The *registered* refugee population is estimated to have fallen from 118,734 in 1997 to 95,276 in 2007, a decline of 19.7 percent. The data suggest that the decline was due to developments in J1, as the number of registered refugees in J2 increased by about 1 percent during the decade between the censuses.

I. Introduction

This briefing paper is a review of the main results of the 2007 population census conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). It presents for the first time detailed results for refugees in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT). The paper focuses on the growth of the population—and the refugee population in particular—by territory, governorate, refugee camp, age cohort and demographic group in relation to the results of the 1997 census.

The paper relies in part on a special data base provided by the PCBS at the request of UNRWA. Due to the extraordinary circumstances in Gaza, and the obstacles to PCBS work there, complete and detailed census results for Gaza are not yet available. Therefore, much of the data in this report pertaining to Gaza is preliminary.

Data on the population, including refugees, in East Jerusalem—that portion of the Jerusalem governorate which was illegally annexed by Israel after 1967 (referred to by the PCBS and in this briefing as J1)—are also provided. That data, mainly estimates, complements information about the rest of the West Bank and refines what is known about population and refugee population in the West Bank as a whole.

The main objective of this briefing is to provide the various UNRWA departments with a basic quantitative framework for planning, implementing and monitoring their work in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In particular, the paper provides the best available data on the number and location of registered refugees in the OPT. Second, it provides data on the age structure of the population in the two fields, how it has changed in the decade between 1997 and 2007, and how it is likely to change in the years ahead.

The 2007 census provides much useful data beyond that presented here, not least of which pertain to the educational, health and housing characteristics of the refugee population in the OPT. UNRWA is in the process of acquiring additional census data that will provide a basis for better, more detailed research and analysis to inform its work..

II. Caveats and Methodological Notes

The process of conducting a national census involves a complex series of operations over an extended period. After extensive preparation and pilot exercises that began in early 2005, PCBS enumerators fanned out over all parts of the country on 1 December 2007 and, in the case of the West Bank, finished the door-to-door count on 16 December 2007.

The enumeration exercise in the Gaza Strip was interrupted by the authorities there. After interventions by multilateral agencies and Palestinian civil society, the census was allowed to resume and was completed in January 2008. However, data processing for Gaza remains incomplete due to policies of the authorities there. Thus far, PCBS has been able to process the census results for the entire population only; there are no “final results” for the number of refugees and registered refugees in Gaza.

To estimate these, PCBS has used the taken refugee share of the population in previous field surveys—especially the *Palestinian Family Health Survey, 2006* (December 2007)—and has applied these to the aggregate 2007 Gaza census results. (These estimates are found in PCBS *Census Semi-Final Results in the Gaza Strip; Summary (Population and Housing)*, December 2008.) The resulting refugee population growth rate estimate is *significantly* higher than that for the Gaza population as a whole, as calculated from the completed census results. The lower growth rate for the population as a whole implied by the census total census results strongly suggests that the implied PCBS “semi-final” refugee population growth rate is overestimated. *Estimates of the size of the Gaza refugee and registered refugee population for 2007 should, therefore, be used with caution.*

Even the best-planned census inevitably misses some portion of the population. To compensate, the PCBS conducted a large, statistically representative field survey after the completion of the census count to estimate the number of *uncounted*. The post-enumeration survey determined that

about 97.3 percent of the OPT population was counted while 2.7 percent were uncounted during the census. Under-coverage in the West Bank, excluding J1, was estimated at 2.9 percent while in Gaza it was 2.1 percent. Uncounted refugees in 2007, excluding J1, were estimated at less than 2.5 percent of all refugees in the OPT. As much as possible, this briefing “smoothes” and employs a total population definition—the counted plus estimates of the uncounted.

Likewise, the census data makes a distinction between *refugees* and *registered refugees*. Refugee status in the census was determined by asking the head of household whether he/she is a refugee and possesses an UNRWA registration card. (PCBS enumerators did not ask to see UNRWA family registration cards.) If the household head responded in the affirmative to both questions, the PCBS counted him/her as a registered refugee. If he/she responded in the affirmative to the first question and in the negative to the second, he/she was counted as a non-registered refugee. The household head was also asked these questions about other members of the household. Whenever possible, this briefing provides data and information on the registered refugee population specifically.

While PCBS conducted an abbreviated count in small parts of annexed East Jerusalem or J1,

Palestinians there remain largely uncounted. Therefore, data on East Jerusalem population and refugee population are mainly estimates based on secondary sources. As such, certain data and information on J1 is not available; this is indicated in the relevant parts of the briefing.

The number of localities designated in the 2007 census is 181 fewer than in the 1997 census. On the other hand, there are 17 localities in the 2007 census not mentioned in the 1997 census. Preliminary analysis suggests that the vast majority of 1997 localities not mentioned in 2007 (all but 10 of them in the West Bank) consist either of small agricultural extensions in rural areas or villages or areas that were incorporated into other villages or nearby towns in the past decade.

In the case of the Gaza Strip, there are four new localities, three of which are in the middle area: An Nuseirat, Al Bureij and Al Maghazi. Each of these has been separated from the refugee camps of the same names under a redefinition of camp borders that PCBS attributes to the Ministry of Local Government. The result is a dramatic decline—more than 25 percent—in the camp population of the Gaza Strip as between the two censuses. As the briefing suggests, however, a more likely scenario is that camp populations in Gaza grew but, on average, more slowly than the population as a whole.

III. The 2007 Population Census

According to the 2007 census, conducted in December 2007 and January 2008, the total population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) was 3,767,126, of which 2,350,583 (62.4 percent) were in the West Bank and 1,416,543 (37.6 percent) were in Gaza. The J1 portion of the Jerusalem governorate had an estimated population of 225,416.¹ These results are given in the third column of Table 1.

In Gaza the 1997 population was 1,022,207 persons, indicating total growth of 38.5 percent during the period between the two censuses, or 3.85 percent per year on average.

While the West Bank accounted for 64.6 percent of the OPT population in 1997, it accounted for only 54.7 percent of population growth during 1997-2007. The Gaza Strip, with 35.3 percent of the population in 1997, was responsible for 45.2 percent of total growth in that decade.

Table 1: Census Results for the OPT, 1997 and 2007²

OPT Populations	Average				
	Census 1997	Census 2007	Absolute Change	Percentage Change	Annual Change
West Bank	1,873,476	2,350,583	477,107	25.47%	2.55%
of which: Jerusalem (J1)	210,209	225,416	15,207	7.23%	0.72%
Gaza Strip	1,022,207	1,416,543	394,336	38.58%	3.86%
Totals	2,895,683	3,767,126	871,443	30.09%	3.01%

A. Population Growth between the Censuses

Population growth measures the difference between births and deaths as well as net migration (the difference between out-migration and in-migration) in the country as between the two censuses. While the census gives a fairly accurate read of changes in the population count, it can also provide insights into changes in birth rates, death rates and migration. The 1997 census found an OPT population of 2,895,683 as given in column two of Table 1. Thus, total population growth in the decade between the 1997 and 2007 censuses was about 30 percent, or an average of 3 percent per year.

The West Bank population (including J1) was 1,873,476 in 1997 indicating total growth of 25.4 percent, an average of 2.54 percent per year. Growth of the J1 population was far slower; total growth is estimated at 10,895 persons during the decade to 221,104 persons in 2007. This implies a total growth rate of just 5.1 percent, or just 0.5 percent per year.

(Appendix II places population growth in the OPT in regional context.)

B. Refugees and Refugee Population Growth

Both the 1997 and 2007 censuses distinguish between refugees and registered refugees in the OPT population. In 2007, the number of refugees (registered and unregistered) in the population was estimated at 1,605,402, as indicated in Table 2, accounting for 42.6 percent of the total OPT population. The West Bank refugee population was estimated at 643,305 persons, accounting for 27.3 percent of the West Bank population and for 40 percent of all refugees in the OPT. East Jerusalem accounted for an estimated 114,815 refugees in 2007, about 17.7 percent of the West Bank refugee population and 7.1 percent of all refugees in the OPT. There were 962,166 refugees in the Gaza Strip where they constituted 67.9 percent of the population in the territory and 60 percent of all OPT refugees.

Table 2: Census Results for Refugees in the OPT, 1997 and 2007³

OPT Refugee Populations	Average				
	Census 1997	Census 2007	Absolute Change	Percentage Change	Annual Change
West Bank	523,310	643,305	119,994	22.93%	2.29%
of which: Jerusalem (J1)	82,195	114,815	32,620	39.69%	3.97%
Gaza Strip	664,722	962,098	297,376	44.74%	4.47%
Totals	1,188,032	1,605,402	417,370	35.13%	3.51%

The refugee population grew at a rate of about 3.5 percent per year during the decade, as compared to a 2.6 percent growth rate among non-refugees. **In the West Bank the non-refugee population grew faster (2.6 percent) than the refugee population (2.2 percent) while in Gaza, the estimated refugee population growth rate (4.4 percent) was greater than that for non-refugees (2.7 percent).**⁴ West Bank refugees were 44 percent of all OPT refugees in 1997 but accounted for only 28.6 percent of refugee population growth between 1997 and 2007. Gaza refugees were 56 percent of OPT refugees in 1997 and were responsible for 71.4 percent of refugee population growth during the decade.

According to the 2007 census results, about 96.6 percent of OPT refugees were registered with UNRWA, up from 95.9 in the 1997 census. In the West Bank (excluding J1), refugees reporting they were registered rose from 92.9 percent in 1997 to 93.2 percent in 2007, while in Gaza the share rose from 98.2 to 98.9 percent.

As indicated in Table 3, there were an estimated 1,551,145 registered refugees in the OPT in 2007 with 599,436 in the West Bank (including J1) and 951,709 in Gaza. Thus, registered refugees accounted for 41.1 percent of the OPT population, 25.5 percent of the West Bank population (22.6 percent of the J1 population) and 67.1 percent of the Gaza Strip population.

The number of registered refugees grew by an estimated 36.5 percent in the decade between the censuses or an average of 3.6 percent per year. In the West Bank, registered refugee growth is estimated at 2.4 percent for the same period (with an estimated decline of 3.1 percent per year in J1), while in Gaza the average annual growth rate is estimated at 4.5 percent.⁶

Table 3: Census Results for Registered Refugees in the OPT, 1997 and 2007⁵

OPT Registered Refugee Populations	Average				
	Census 1997	Census 2007	Absolute Change	Percentage Change	Annual Change
West Bank	483,199	599,436	116,237	24.06%	2.41%
of which: Jerusalem (J1)	74,890	50,963	-23,927	-31.95%	-3.19%
Gaza Strip	653,060	951,709	298,649	45.73%	4.57%
Totals	1,136,259	1,551,145	414,886	36.51%	3.65%

IV. Geographic Distribution of Population and Population Growth

The population of the West Bank expanded by some 25.4 percent, as indicated in Table 4A. Several West Bank governorates significantly exceeded this average—Tubas, Ramallah, Jericho and Hebron—while Tulkarem and Jerusalem witnessed significantly lower than average growth. Tulkarem grew only 17.8 percent while Jerusalem grew only 10.6 percent.

Hebron, where 21.6 percent of the West Bank population resided in 1997, accounted for 30.7 percent of total population growth in the ensuing decade. At the other extreme, Jerusalem was the home of 17.5 percent of the West Bank population in 1997, but was responsible for only 7.3 percent of West Bank population growth.

Table 4A: Population Growth by West Bank Governorate, 1997-2007⁷

Governorate	Total Population 1997	Share of Population 1997	Total Population 2007	Absolute Population Growth 1997-2007	Percentage Population Growth 1997-2007	Share of West Bank Growth 1997-2007
Jenin	203,026	10.84%	256,619	53,593	26.40%	11.23%
Tubas	36,609	1.95%	50,261	13,652	37.29%	2.86%
Tulkarem	134,110	7.16%	157,988	23,878	17.80%	5.00%
Nablus	261,340	13.95%	320,830	59,490	22.76%	12.47%
Qalqiliya	72,007	3.84%	91,217	19,210	26.68%	4.03%
Salfit	48,538	2.59%	59,570	11,032	22.73%	2.31%
Ramallah	213,582	11.40%	279,730	66,148	30.97%	13.86%
Jericho	32,713	1.75%	42,320	9,607	29.37%	2.01%
Jerusalem	328,601	17.54%	363,649	35,048	10.67%	7.35%
Bethlehem	137,286	7.33%	176,235	38,949	28.37%	8.16%
Hebron	405,664	21.65%	552,164	146,500	36.11%	30.71%
Total	1,873,476	100.00%	2,350,583	477,107	25.47%	100.00%

In the Gaza Strip, total population grew 38.5 percent—13 percentage points above West Bank growth—as illustrated in Table 4B. The Gaza North and Rafah governorates grew even more rapidly, at 47.3 percent and 41.1 percent, respectively. Both the Gaza and Khan Yunis governorates grew slower than average at 35.1 percent and 35 percent, respectively.

The Gaza North governorate, that includes the cities of Beit Lahiya, Beit Hanun and Jabaliya, as well as the Jabaliya refugee camp, contained 17.9 percent of the Gaza population in 1997 but absorbed 22 percent of total recorded growth in the ensuing decade. The Gaza governorate, on the other hand, was the home to about 35.9 percent of the Gaza Strip population in 1997 but accounted for 32.7 percent of the growth between the two censuses. Khan Yunis grew somewhat less—while Rafah grew a bit more—than proportional.

A. Geographic Distribution of Registered Refugee Population and Population Growth

The number of registered refugees in the West Bank grew by an estimated 24 percent (see Table 5A) between 1997 and 2007. The number of registered refugees in Jenin, Qalqiliya, Hebron, Salfit and Tubas experienced much more rapid growth—between 36.4 percent and 52.5 percent (see penultimate column in Table 5A). These five governorates were home to only about 31.5 percent of registered refugees in 1997 but accounted for more than 62 percent of the growth for that segment of the population in the decade after 1997. On the other hand, the Jerusalem governorate lost about 19.7 percent of its registered refugee population between the two censuses.

The registered refugee population in the Gaza Strip grew 42.7 percent between 1997 and 2007, as indicated in Table 5B.¹⁰ Registered refugees in the Gaza North, Khan Yunis and Rafah governorates grew faster than average while growth in the Gaza and Deir al Balah governorates was below average (see penultimate column in Table 5B).

Table 4B: Population Growth by Gaza Strip Governorate, 1997-2007⁸

Governorate	Total Population 1997	Share of Population 1997	Total Population 2007	Absolute Population Growth 1997-2007	Percentage Population Growth 1997-2007	Share of Gaza Strip Growth 1997-2007
Gaza North	183,373	17.94%	270,246	86,873	47.38%	22.03%
Gaza	367,388	35.94%	496,411	129,023	35.12%	32.72%
Deir Al-Balah	147,877	14.47%	205,535	57,658	38.99%	14.62%
Khan Yunis	200,704	19.63%	270,979	70,275	35.01%	17.82%
Rafah	122,865	12.02%	173,372	50,507	41.11%	12.81%
Total	1,022,207	100.00%	1,416,543	394,336	38.58%	100.00%

Table 5A: Registered Refugee Population Growth by West Bank Governorate, 1997-2007⁹

Governorate	Registered Refugee Population 1997	Share of Registered Refugee Population 1997	Registered Refugee Population 2007	Absolute Growth of Registered Refugee Population 1997-2007	Percentage Growth of Registered Refugee Population 1997-2007	Share of West Bank Registered Refugee Growth 1997-2007
Jenin	53,619	11.10%	81,788	28,169	52.54%	24.23%
Tubas	5,621	1.16%	7,671	2,050	36.47%	1.76%
Tulkarem	39,965	8.27%	51,333	11,369	28.45%	9.78%
Nablus	62,672	12.97%	82,400	19,727	31.48%	16.97%
Qalqiliya	27,172	5.62%	39,860	12,689	46.70%	10.92%
Salfit	3,406	0.70%	4,721	1,315	38.59%	1.13%
Ramallah	57,554	11.91%	77,580	20,026	34.80%	17.23%
Jericho	15,134	3.13%	19,998	4,864	32.14%	4.18%
Jerusalem	118,671	24.56%	95,197	-23,474	-19.78%	-20.19%
Bethlehem	36,822	7.62%	48,214	11,393	30.94%	9.80%
Hebron	62,563	12.95%	90,673	28,110	44.93%	24.18%
Total	483,199	100.00%	599,436	116,237	24.06%	100.00%

Table 5B: Registered Refugee Population Growth by Gaza Strip Governorate, 1997-2007

Governorate	Registered Refugee Population 1997	Share of Registered Refugee Population 1997	Registered Refugee Population 2007	Absolute Growth of Registered Refugee Population 1997-2007	Percentage Growth of Registered Refugee Population 1997-2007	Share of Gaza Strip Registered Refugee Growth 1997-2007
Gaza North	127,811	19.57%	187,758	59,947	46.90%	20.07%
Gaza	187,314	28.68%	268,558	81,244	43.37%	27.20%
Deir Al-Balah	124,775	19.11%	177,779	53,004	42.48%	17.75%
Khan Yunis	111,824	17.12%	166,232	54,408	48.66%	18.22%
Rafah	101,337	15.52%	151,382	50,046	49.39%	16.76%
Total	653,060	100.00%	951,709	298,649	45.73%	100.00%

V. Geographic Distribution of Population Density and Registered Refugee Density

A. Population Density in the OPT

The total surface area of the OPT as a whole is about 6,020 square kilometres, as indicated in Table 6A. The West Bank (including East Jerusalem) accounts for 5,655 square kilometres, almost 94 percent of the total while the Gaza Strip is only 365 square kilometres, about 6.1 percent of the total surface area of the OPT. Population density in 1997 was about 481 persons per square kilometre in the OPT rising to 625.8 in 2007, an increase of 30 percent.

In the West Bank, density rose from 331.3 to 415.7 persons per square kilometre, an average increase of 25.4 percent. Population density in Tubas, Hebron, Ramallah and Jericho grew significantly faster than average while that in Jerusalem and Tulkarem grew well below average. Despite the slowest rate of growth in population in the decade between the censuses, the Jerusalem governorate remained the most dense in the West Bank, with some 1,054.1 persons per square kilometre in 2007. At the other extreme, Tubas experience the

most rapid rate of population growth of all West Bank governorates but maintained the lowest population density—125 persons per kilometre in 2007.

The Hebron governorate jumped two places in density ranking, from the fifth most dense to the third most dense, while Qalqiliya fell from third to fourth position in the ranking and Nablus fell from fourth to fifth. Other than these, the population density rankings remained stable in the West Bank with fairly wide variations as between governorates.

Population density in the Gaza Strip—renowned as among the highest in the world—rose about 38.5 percent between 1997 and 2007 to an average of 3,880.9 persons per square kilometre—about 9.3 times the average density of the West Bank. The North Gaza and Rafah governorates grew faster than average while density in the Gaza and Khan Yunis governorates grew less than average. The Gaza governorate remained, by far, the most dense and there was no change in the rankings with Khan Yunis remaining the least dense governorate.

Table 6A: Surface Area, Population and Population Density in the OPT and in the Governorates of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1997-2007¹¹

	Area (km ²)	Total Population Density 1997 (persons/ km ²)	Total Population Density 2007 (persons/ km ²)	Relative Changes
OPT	6,020	481.0	625.8	30.09%
West Bank	5,655	331.3	415.7	25.47%
of which, governorates:				
Jenin	583	348.2	440.2	26.40%
Tubas	402	91.1	125.0	37.29%
Tulkarem	246	545.2	642.2	17.80%
Nablus	605	432.0	530.3	22.76%
Qalqiliya	166	433.8	549.5	26.68%
Salfit	204	237.9	292.0	22.73%
Ramallah	855	249.8	327.2	30.97%
Jericho	593	55.2	71.4	29.37%
Jerusalem	345	952.5	1,054.1	10.67%
Bethlehem	659	208.3	267.4	28.37%
Hebron	997	406.9	553.8	36.11%
Gaza Strip	365	2,800.6	3,880.9	38.58%
of which, governorates:				
North Gaza	61	3,006.1	4,430.3	47.38%
Gaza	74	4,964.7	6,708.3	35.12%
Deir Al- Balah	58	2,549.6	3,543.7	38.99%
Khan Yunis	108	1,858.4	2,509.1	35.01%
Rafah	64	1,919.8	2,708.9	41.11%

B. Registered Refugee Area Density

The density of the registered refugee population is measured here in two ways: first, the number of registered refugees in a given geographic area; second, the ratio of registered refugees in a given population. This section provides both measures of density for registered refugees in the OPT. Registered refugee area density in 1997 was about 188.7 per square kilometre in the OPT rising to 257.7 per square kilometre in 2007, an increase of 36.5 percent, as indicated in Table 6B.

Such density in the West Bank rose from 85.4 per square kilometre to 106 per square kilometre, an average increase of 24 percent. Jerusalem, despite a 19.7 percent decline in the number of registered refugees, remained the most registered refugee dense

governorate in the West Bank governorate with 275.9 refugees per square kilometre. At the other end of spectrum, the Tubas governorate remained the least refugee dense—in area terms—with 19.1 refugees per square kilometre. Except for the Jerusalem governorate, refugee density rose faster than average, especially in the Jenin, Qalqiliya, Hebron, Salfit, and Tubas governorates. The Jenin and Hebron governorates rose in density ranking (Jenin from fifth to fourth; Hebron from seventh to sixth) while the Nablus and Ramallah fell in density ranking (Nablus from fourth to fifth; Ramallah from sixth to seventh). Other than these, the area density rankings remained stable in the West Bank with very wide variations from governorate to governorate.

Table 6B: Surface Area, Registered Refugees and Registered Refugee Density in the OPT and in the Governorates of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1997-2007¹²

	Area (km ²)	Registered Refugee Population Density 1997 (refugees/km ²)	Registered Refugee Population Density 2007 (refugees/km ²)	Relative Changes
OPT	6,020	188.7	257.7	36.51%
West Bank	5,655	85.4	106.0	24.06%
of which, governorates:				
Jenin	583	92.0	140.3	52.54%
Tubas	402	14.0	19.1	36.47%
Tulkarem	246	162.5	208.7	28.45%
Nablus	605	103.6	136.2	31.48%
Qalqiliya	166	163.7	240.1	46.70%
Salfit	204	16.7	23.1	38.59%
Ramallah	855	67.3	90.7	34.80%
Jericho	593	25.5	33.7	32.14%
Jerusalem	345	344.0	275.9	-19.78%
Bethlehem	659	55.9	73.2	30.94%
Hebron	997	62.8	90.9	44.93%
Gaza Strip	365	1,789.2	2,607.4	45.73%
of which, governorates:				
North Gaza	61	2,095.3	3,078.0	46.90%
Gaza	74	2,531.3	3,629.2	43.37%
Deir Al- Balah	58	2,151.3	3,065.1	42.48%
Khan Yunis	108	1,035.4	1,539.2	48.66%
Rafah	64	1,583.4	2,365.4	49.39%

Density in the Gaza Strip rose 45.7 percent to an average of 2,607.4 registered refugees per square kilometre—more than 24 times the average density of the West Bank. The North Gaza, Khan Yunis and Rafah governorates grew faster than average while density in the Gaza and Deir al Balah governorates grew less than average. The Gaza governorate remained the most dense as between the two censuses. The Deir al Balah governorate lost its second position to the North Gaza governorate as between 1997 and 2007, with Rafah and Khan Yunis maintaining fourth and fifth rankings in both censuses.

C. Registered Refugee Population Density

1. The Governorates

Registered refugee population density in the West Bank, defined as the proportion of registered refugees in the total population, was 25.5 percent at end-2007, as indicated in Table 7A. Jericho remained the most registered refugee dense governorate in the West Bank at 47.2 percent of its population. Qalqiliya was the second most dense governorate at 43.7 percent. (Paradoxically, there are no refugee camps in the Qalqiliya governorate.) This was followed

by the Tulkarem and Jenin governorates at 32.4 percent and 31.8 percent, respectively. The most refugee sparse governorates were Salfit, Tubas and Hebron with 7.9 percent, 15.2 percent and 16.4 percent respectively.

Overall registered refugee population density in the West Bank declined by a fraction of a percentage point or by about 1.1 percent in relative terms between 1997 and 2007. **The Jenin governorate experienced the most rapid growth in such density in the West Bank, rising 20.6 percent in relative terms.** The density of the Qalqiliya governorate grew by 15.8 percent in relative terms. In

addition, the Salfit, Tulkarem, Nablus and Hebron governorates experienced growth significantly above average. **On the other hand, Jerusalem saw a 27.5 percent relative decline in registered refugee population density, falling from 36.1 percent to 26.1 percent of the population.**¹⁴

In Gaza, overall registered refugee density is estimated at 67.1 percent at end-2007 (see Table 7B). At the low end, 54.1 percent of residents in the Gaza governorate were registered refugees, followed by Khan Yunis with 61.3 percent. At the upper end, Rafah and Deir al Balah had refugee density of 87.3 percent and 86.5 percent respectively.

Table 7A: Registered Refugee Population Density in West Bank Governorates, 1997 and 2007¹³

Governorate	Registered Refugee Population Density 1997	Registered Refugee Population Density 2007	Relative Changes
Jenin	26.41%	31.87%	20.68%
Tubas	15.35%	15.26%	-0.60%
Tulkarem	29.80%	32.49%	9.03%
Nablus	23.98%	25.68%	7.10%
Qalqiliya	37.73%	43.70%	15.80%
Salfit	7.02%	7.92%	12.93%
Ramallah	26.95%	27.73%	2.92%
Jericho	46.26%	47.25%	2.15%
Jerusalem	36.11%	26.18%	-27.51%
Bethlehem	26.82%	27.36%	2.00%
Hebron	15.42%	16.42%	6.48%
Total	25.79%	25.50%	-1.12%

Table 7B: Registered Refugee Population Density in Gaza Strip Governorates, 1997 and 2007

Governorate	Registered Refugee Population Density 1997	Registered Refugee Population Density 2007	Relative Changes
Gaza North	69.70%	69.48%	-0.32%
Gaza	50.99%	54.10%	6.11%
Deir Al-Balah	84.38%	86.50%	2.51%
Khan Yunis	55.72%	61.34%	10.10%
Rafah	82.48%	87.32%	5.87%
Total	63.89%	67.19%	5.16%

Overall registered refugee density was up about 5.1 percent in relative terms as between 1997 and 2007. Density in the Khan Yunis and Gaza governorates increased by more than average in relative terms while in Deir al Balah registered refugee density grew less than average and density in the North Gaza governorate declined by a fraction of a percentage point.

2. The Camps

a. West Bank

Both censuses identified 21 refugee camps in the West Bank¹⁵ the populations for which are given in Table 8 below. **Between 1997 and 2007, the total population living in West Bank refugee camps increased 18.5 percent to an estimated 126,835 persons.** On the other hand, the number of registered refugees living in camps increased 17.3 percent to 117,533 persons. Registered refugees accounted for about 92.6 percent of the total camp population at end-2007. Overall, only 5.8 percent of the West Bank population resided in refugee camps at end-

2007 as compared to about 6 percent in 1997. Of all registered refugees in the West Bank, only 21.3 percent resided in refugee camps in 2007, down from 22.5 percent in 1997.

In general, the growth of the camp population was slower than general population growth in the West Bank. On an average annual basis, the total camp population grew by 1.8 percent while the total West Bank population grew 2.5 percent. **Refugee camps that experienced particularly low growth rates include Tulkarem, 'Ein Beit el Ma (Camp No. 1), Qaddura, Nur Shams, 'Ayda and Jenin. Those experiencing particularly high rates of population growth include 'Ein as Sultan, 'Aqbat Jaber, El Far'a, Al Fawwar, Al 'Arrub and Qalandiya.**

The two Jericho area refugee camps expanded most rapidly with 'Ein as Sultan more than doubling in population. Presumably, this was due to internal migration mainly, not natural population growth. At the other end of the spectrum, the Tulkarem camp's total population increased only 1.7 percent over the decade between the censuses.

Table 8: Population Growth in West Bank Refugee Camps, 1997 and 2007¹⁶

Refugee Camp	Total Population 1997	Registered Refugee Population 1997	Total Population 2007	Registered Refugee Population 2007	Total Population Growth 1997-2007	Total Registered Refugee Population 1997-2007
Jenin Camp	9,457	8,636	10,371	9,517	9.67%	10.21%
El Far'a Camp	4,367	4,176	5,712	5,472	30.80%	31.02%
Nur Shams Camp	6,114	5,786	6,479	6,059	5.97%	4.72%
Tulkarm Camp	10,462	9,771	10,641	10,040	1.71%	2.75%
Ein Beit el Ma (Camp No. 1)	3,907	3,743	3,979	3,849	1.84%	2.82%
'Askar Camp	9,857	9,212	11,607	11,130	17.75%	20.83%
Balata Camp	13,689	13,286	15,247	14,710	11.38%	10.72%
Silwad Camp	311	310	382	369	22.66%	18.85%
Deir 'Ammar Camp	1,637	1,476	1,834	1,658	12.03%	12.31%
Al Jalazun Camp	6,378	6,185	7,813	7,521	22.50%	21.60%
Al Am'ari Camp	4,200	3,943	5,014	4,458	19.38%	13.08%
Qaddura Camp	1,144	855	1,208	813	5.60%	-4.95%
'Ein as Sultan Camp	1,524	1,128	3,160	2,398	107.29%	112.55%
Aqbat Jaber Camp	4,751	4,082	7,176	6,134	51.05%	50.28%
Qalandiya Camp	6,972	6,433	8,831	7,343	26.66%	14.14%
Shu'fat Camp	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
'Ayda Camp	2,481	2,379	2,631	2,524	6.02%	6.09%
Al 'Aza (Beit Jibrin) Camp	1,327	1,245	1,529	1,417	15.19%	13.80%
Ad Duheisha Camp	7,154	6,799	8,736	8,212	22.12%	20.79%
Al 'Arrub Camp	6,240	5,955	7,941	7,536	27.26%	26.55%
Al Fawwar Camp	5,031	4,771	6,544	6,372	30.08%	33.55%
Totals	107,005	100,172	126,835	117,533	18.53%	17.33%

b. Gaza Strip

Presenting a useful analysis of the refugee camp population in Gaza is hampered by three factors. **First, the PCBS has adopted a modified definition of the borders of the Gaza refugee camps in the 2007 census consistent with the re-definition by the Ministry of Local Government. Under the new, restricted definition, there is a sharp decline in the number of camp residents as between the two censuses.** Second, there were only 8 designated refugee camps in Gaza in 2007, down from 9 in 1997. The Tel as Sultan camp was merged with the city of Rafah in the 2007 census. Finally, due to the still pending completion of census data processing in Gaza, PCBS has not released data on camp populations by refugee status; there is no way to distinguish registered refugees from others in the Gaza camp populations.

Using the 2007 census results, and excluding Tel as Sultan, the total population of Gaza refugee camps declined by 25.6 percent relative to the 1997 results. Given the robust growth in both

overall population (38.5 percent between the two censuses) and in the estimated registered refugee population (45.7 percent between the two censuses), such a large decline in camp populations—however the camp borders are defined—is highly unlikely. More likely is a tendency toward slower than average growth as seen in the West Bank refugee camps.

Support for such a view is provided by indirect evidence. Of the four new Gaza Strip localities designated in the 2007 census, three of these were An Nuseirat, Al Bureij and Al Maghazi, each differentiated and separate from the middle area refugee camps of the same names. If the populations of the “new” localities are combined with their respective camp populations in the 2007 census and are compared to the localities of the same names in 1997, the growth rates of the three “re-combined” localities would be as follows: 41.3 percent for a combined An Nuseirat; 31.2 percent for Al Bureij; and 30.9 percent growth for a combined Al Maghazi, each relative to 1997. This suggests significant population growth in at least some “camp” populations in Gaza.

VI. Age Distribution of the Population

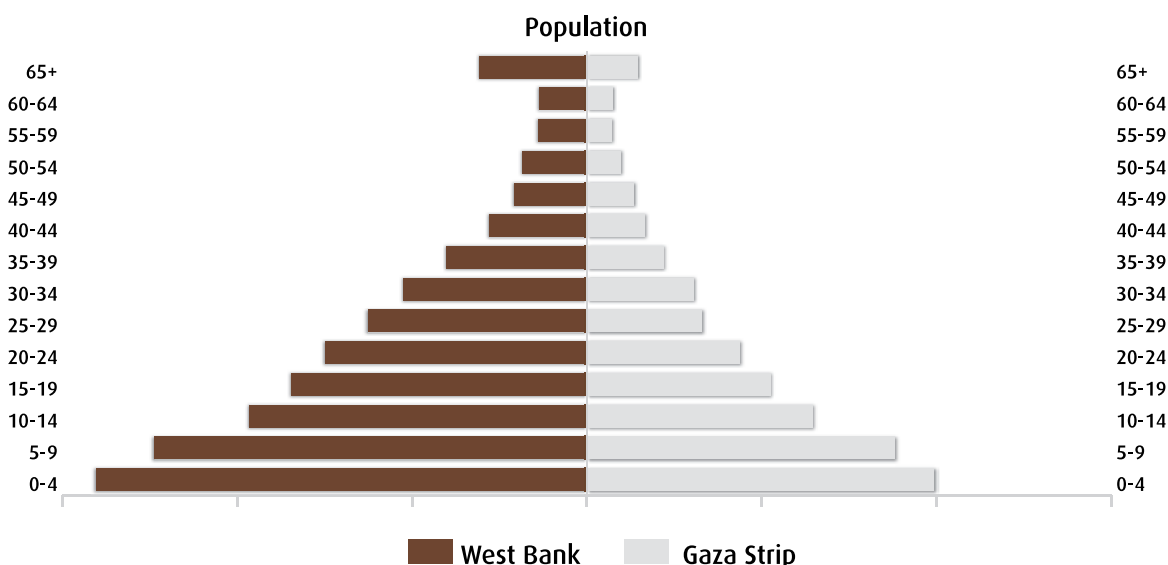
The population pyramid for the OPT in 1997 was of a very young population with about 47 percent of the population below 15 years of age and less than 9 percent above the age of 50 (see Table 9A). The population of the West Bank was somewhat older on average with 45 percent below age 15 and 9.5 percent above age 50. In Gaza, those below age 15 were 50.2 percent of the population with those above age 50 only 7.7 percent of the population.

The 1997 population pyramid, composed of five-year age intervals for the population, was neatly symmetrical. The youngest age cohort (0-4 years) was the largest in each Palestinian territory with older cohorts accounting for progressively smaller absolute numbers and shares of the total population. This is illustrated in Figure 1 below, constructed using data in Table 9A.

Table 9A: Age Distribution of the OPT, End-1997¹⁷

Age Group	West Bank	West Bank Shares	Gaza Strip	Gaza Strip Shares	OPT	OPT Shares
0-4	280,454	17.53%	198,318	19.80%	478,772	18.40%
5-9	247,158	15.45%	175,693	17.54%	422,851	16.25%
10-14	192,680	12.04%	128,893	12.87%	321,573	12.36%
15-19	168,708	10.54%	104,643	10.45%	273,351	10.51%
20-24	149,513	9.34%	87,143	8.70%	236,656	9.10%
25-29	125,164	7.82%	65,739	6.56%	190,903	7.34%
30-34	104,636	6.54%	60,727	6.06%	165,363	6.36%
35-39	80,194	5.01%	43,576	4.35%	123,770	4.76%
40-44	55,807	3.49%	32,861	3.28%	88,668	3.41%
45-49	41,601	2.60%	26,750	2.67%	68,351	2.63%
50-54	36,619	2.29%	19,379	1.93%	55,998	2.15%
55-59	27,831	1.74%	14,153	1.41%	41,984	1.61%
60-64	27,363	1.71%	14,540	1.45%	41,903	1.61%
65+	61,237	3.83%	28,982	2.89%	90,219	3.47%
Total	1,600,100	100.00%	1,001,569	100.00%	2,601,669	100.00%

Figure 1: Population Pyramid for the OPT, 1997



Ten years later, the age distribution of the OPT as a whole had changed somewhat. Comparing Tables 9A and 9B (below) indicates the relative shares of the two youngest age groups (0-4 years and 5-9 years) and the two oldest (60-64 years and 65+) declined significantly. The weight of the population below age 15 declined from 47 percent in 1997 to 43.7 percent in 2007 (40.6 percent in the West Bank and 48.3 percent in Gaza). At the same time, the 60+ cohort declined from 5 percent to 4.4 percent of the total population. There were also more modest declines in the

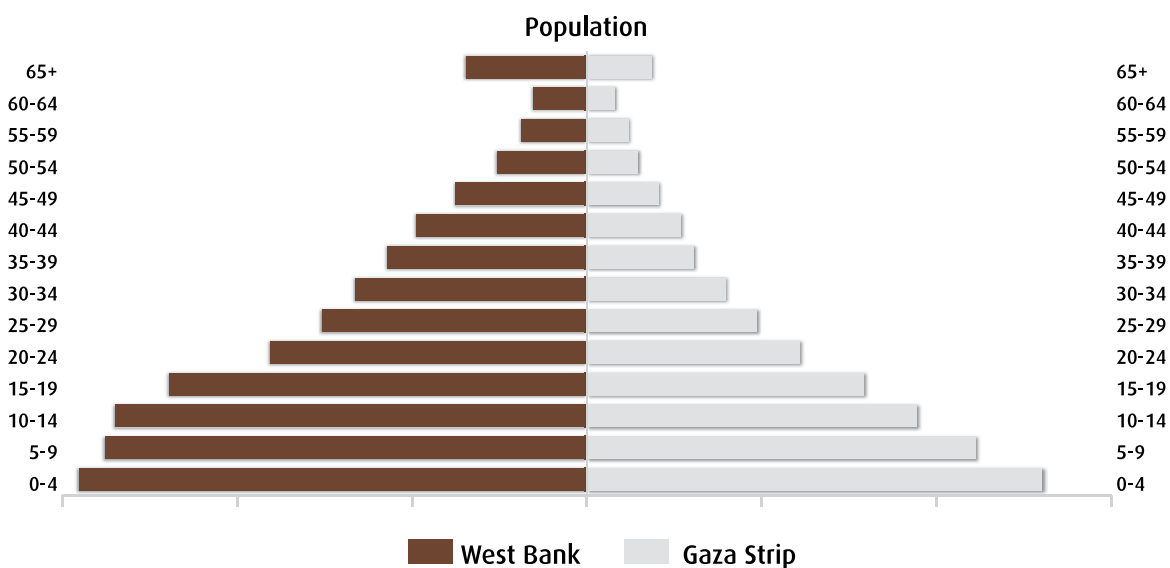
shares of 20-24, 25-29 and the 30-34 years cohorts (though not in Gaza where the first two of these expanded).

In relative terms, the fastest growing age segments in the OPT were 40-44 and 45-49 years. These two segments accounted for 6 percent of the total population in 1997 but 7.7 percent in 2007. In addition, there was relatively rapid growth in the shares of the 50-54 and 55-59 age groups. The resulting population pyramid for the 2007 census—based on the data in Table 9B—is given in Figure 2 below.

Table 9B: Age Distribution of the OPT, End-2007¹⁸

Age Group	West Bank	West Bank Share	Gaza Strip	Gaza Strip Share	OPT	OPT Share
0-4	290,327	14.12%	260,105	18.75%	550,432	15.98%
5-9	275,248	13.39%	221,964	16.00%	497,212	14.44%
10-14	269,714	13.12%	188,670	13.60%	458,384	13.31%
15-19	238,628	11.60%	158,150	11.40%	396,778	11.52%
20-24	180,973	8.80%	121,378	8.75%	302,351	8.78%
25-29	151,417	7.36%	97,110	7.00%	248,527	7.22%
30-34	132,447	6.44%	79,074	5.70%	211,521	6.14%
35-39	113,863	5.54%	61,040	4.40%	174,903	5.08%
40-44	97,423	4.74%	53,400	3.85%	150,823	4.38%
45-49	74,919	3.64%	40,915	2.95%	115,834	3.36%
50-54	51,453	2.50%	29,133	2.10%	80,586	2.34%
55-59	37,474	1.82%	23,584	1.70%	61,058	1.77%
60-64	30,671	1.49%	15,965	1.15%	46,636	1.35%
65+	69,163	3.36%	36,793	2.65%	105,956	3.08%
Total	2,056,298	100.00%	1,387,281	100.00%	3,443,579	100.00%

Figure 2: Population Pyramid for the OPT, 2007



(For more detailed and separate data on changes in the age distribution in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, see Appendix III.)

VII. Demographic Dynamics

A useful way to present the changing age distribution is to focus on key demographic groups in Palestinian society. In particular, the rates of growth of children, the school-aged population, youth, the working-age population and of the elderly are important indicators of demographic change. At the same time, the levels of—and changes in—these demographic segments are vital for social and economic planning in both the public and private sectors.

The number of children aged 0-14 increased by 23.1 percent between the two censuses, as indicated in Table 10, a rate of growth well below the overall average and indicative of a declining total fertility rate. The child growth rate in the West Bank was particularly low—only 15.9 percent for the decade as a whole, or about 1.5 percent on an annual basis.

Gaza's child population grew at twice that rate over the same period.²⁰

The youth segment of the population (15-24 years) grew significantly faster than the population as a whole in the OPT—37 percent versus 32.3 percent in the ten years between the censuses. In Gaza, the difference was far more pronounced, with youth increasing at more than 7 percentage points faster than the population at large. This has had, and will continue to have, important ramifications for social and political development. For example, youth in the OPT have consistently suffered significantly greater than average unemployment rates.²¹ This suggests, at a minimum, that policymakers focus more attention on social, educational and labour market policies for this crucial and potentially volatile segment of the population.²²

Table 10: Growth of Key Demographic Groups in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, End-1997-End-2007¹⁹

OPT	End-1997	End-2007	Growth
Children (0-14)	1,223,196	1,506,028	23.12%
Pupils (5-19)	1,017,775	1,352,374	32.88%
Youth (15-24)	510,007	699,129	37.08%
Working-Age (15-64)	1,286,947	1,789,017	39.01%
Retired (65+)	90,219	105,956	17.44%
Total Population	2,601,669	3,443,579	32.36%
West Bank	End-1997	End-2007	Growth
Children (0-14)	720,292	835,289	15.97%
Pupils (5-19)	608,546	783,590	28.76%
Youth (15-24)	318,221	419,601	31.86%
Working-Age (15-64)	817,436	1,109,268	35.70%
Retired (65+)	61,237	69,163	12.94%
Total Population	1,600,100	2,056,298	28.51%
Gaza Strip	End-1997	End-2007	Growth
Children (0-14)	502,904	670,739	33.37%
Pupils (5-19)	409,229	568,784	38.99%
Youth (15-24)	191,786	279,528	45.75%
Working-Age (15-64)	469,511	679,749	44.78%
Retired (65+)	28,982	36,793	26.95%
Total Population	1,001,569	1,387,281	38.51%

Rapid growth of the youth segment was partly responsible for even more rapid growth of the working-age population. On average, the latter grew by more than 6.5 percentage points faster than overall population in the OPT. For 8 of 10 years between the censuses, the OPT has also suffered a prolonged economic crisis characterized by decreased access to jobs in Israel and severe impediments to internal economic growth and job creation. Not least of these were Israeli military assaults on urban areas of the West Bank and especially Gaza, destroying public infrastructure and private business assets. Explosive growth in the working-age population—39 percent in total growth during 1997-2007—combined with more or less stable rates of labour force participation and severely constrained job growth, produced unprecedented levels of unemployment and poverty in the past 9 years.²³

The social impact has been severe and remains dire, especially in Gaza where population growth has been above average. The growth rate of the 5-54 years demographic in the OPT—the one that will replace the working-age population in 2017—was 35.1 percent during 1997-2007. Thus, it grew slower than the working-age population segment (39 percent) but faster than overall population growth (32.3 percent). This presages a continuation of relatively rapid growth in the working-age

population and a need for more attention to job creation on the part of policymakers.

Based on labour force data for 2008, it can be estimated that an average of 133,000 new jobs will need to be created in the OPT each year between 2010 and 2015 to reduce the unemployment rate to the average rate in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), a region which has had the highest unemployment rate of any region in the world for most of the past decade.²⁴ The Gaza job market will need to create and sustain an average of more than 76,000 jobs each year through 2015 to reduce core unemployment to the MENA average, with 57,000 required each year in the West Bank.

Finally, while the 65+ years population segment grew well below average during 1997-2007 in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip, its replacement segment (those who will be 65+ in 2017) grew by about 5 percentage points faster than average. Thus, the 65+ years population in the OPT grew 17.4 percent between the censuses while the 55+ population grew 22.7 percent. For the West Bank the growth rates were 12.9 percent and 17.9 percent, respectively, while for Gaza they were 26.9 percent and 32.3 percent. Based on the age distribution, a greater portion of elderly in the OPT can be expected in the coming decade, other things being equal, with policy and planning implications for government and society.

Appendix I: Accounting for Jerusalem

The PCBS has historically faced significant obstacles in enumerating or surveying the population of occupied East Jerusalem. This has made estimating the population in the Jerusalem governorate difficult. While PCBS has been active in the J2 component—that part of the governorate outside of the checkpoints that ring East Jerusalem—its activities in the J1 component—inside the checkpoints—has been limited. Thus, data presented here pertaining to J1 are based mainly on estimates while data for J2 are based mainly on enumeration activity.

As indicated in Table A1, the total population of the Jerusalem governorate grew to 363,649 in 2007, about 10.6 percent more than at end-1997 or an average of about 1 percent on an annual basis. The J1 component is estimated to have grown by only 7.2 percent over the decade, or about 0.7 percent per year on an average annual basis. In 1997, refugees were an estimated 39.6 percent of the Jerusalem governorate's population (39.1 percent of

the J1 population; 40.6 percent of the J2 population). By 2007, refugee density in the governorate had declined to 31.4 percent (29.6 percent of the J1 population; 34.2 percent of the J2 population).

The refugee population in the governorate is estimated to have declined by more than 16,000 or 12.3 percent between the two censuses. The vast bulk of the shrinkage was accounted for by an 18.6 percent decline in the estimated refugee population in J1. This was augmented by a 1.4 percent decline in the total refugee population in J2.

More than 91.1 percent of refugees in the Jerusalem governorate were registered as such at end-1997, totalling 118,734 persons.²⁶ The total number of *registered* refugees declined to 95,276 by end-2007, a decrease of 19.7 percent. The decline in J1 was particularly sharp, some 31.9 percent. The 2007 data indicates that, while 93.4 percent of J2 refugees were registered, only 76.2 percent of J1 refugees were registered.²⁷

Table A1: Estimates of Population and Refugee Population for the Jerusalem Governorate, End-1997 and End-2007²⁵

	End-1997	End-2007	Absolute Growth	Relative Growth
Total Population	328,601	363,649	35,048	10.67%
of which: J1	210,209	225,416	15,207	7.23%
of which: J2	118,392	138,233	19,841	16.76%
Refugee Population	130,315	114,257	-16,058	-12.32%
of which: J1	82,195	66,852	-15,343	-18.67%
of which: J2	48,120	47,405	-715	-1.49%
Registered Refugee Population	118,734	95,276	-23,459	-19.76%
of which: J1	74,890	50,963	-23,927	-31.95%
of which: J2	43,844	44,312	468	1.07%

Appendix II: OPT Population Growth and Population Density in Regional Perspective

The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat produces population and population growth estimates for all member states. Data in Table A2 are from their *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision* (<http://esa.un.org/unpp>) and is used here to indicate how population growth in the OPT during 1997-2007 compares with that in neighbouring countries and with Western Asia and Northern Africa (which roughly captures population growth in the larger Arab world).

The data indicates that OPT average annual population growth rate as measured by the two censuses—3 percent—was similar to that estimated for Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic but significantly above that for the larger Arab world over a comparable period.

OPT average annual population growth during 1997-2007 was more than one full percentage point above that estimated for Northern Africa during 1995-2005 and more than one-half point greater than that for Western Asia and Israel.

The same source indicates that area population density in the OPT is substantially higher than in neighbouring countries. The overall area population density of 625.8 persons per square kilometre in 2007, as indicated in Table A3, was more than 50 percent greater than Lebanon; twice that of Israel; six times greater than Syria; more than eight times greater than Egypt; and 10 times greater than population density in Jordan. While area density in Gaza is far greater still, even population density in the West Bank is greater than all neighbouring countries and regions.

Table A2: Population Growth Estimates by Country and Region, 1995-2005²⁸

Country/Region	Estimated Average Annual Population Growth Rate 1995-2005
OPT	3.01%
Israel	2.45%
Lebanon	1.69%
Syrian Arab Republic	3.09%
Jordan	2.93%
Egypt	2.08%
Western Asia	2.37%
Northern Africa	1.92%

Table A3: Area Population Density Estimates by Country and Region, 2005²⁹

Country/Region	Estimated Average Population Density 2005
OPT (2007)	625.8
West Bank	415.7
Gaza Strip	3,880.9
Israel	302.0
Lebanon	392.0
Syrian Arab Republic	103.0
Jordan	62.0
Egypt	77.0
Western Asia	44.0
Northern Africa	23.0

Appendix III: Details on Demographic Dynamics in the OPT

Below in Tables A4 and A5 and Figures A1 and A2, the changes in the age distribution of the West Bank and Gaza Strip populations are presented. All data in the tables and figures in this appendix are for the counted population and exclude East Jerusalem.

Table A4: West Bank Age Group Distribution, 1997-2007

Age Group	1997	Share	2007	Share	Absolute Change	Relative Change
0-4	280,454	17.53%	290,327	14.12%	9,873	-19.45%
5-9	247,158	15.45%	275,248	13.39%	28,090	-13.34%
10-14	192,680	12.04%	269,714	13.12%	77,034	8.93%
15-19	168,708	10.54%	238,628	11.60%	69,920	10.06%
20-24	149,513	9.34%	180,973	8.80%	31,460	-5.81%
25-29	125,164	7.82%	151,417	7.36%	26,253	-5.86%
30-34	104,636	6.54%	132,447	6.44%	27,811	-1.50%
35-39	80,194	5.01%	113,863	5.54%	33,669	10.48%
40-44	55,807	3.49%	97,423	4.74%	41,616	35.84%
45-49	41,601	2.60%	74,919	3.64%	33,318	40.14%
50-54	36,619	2.29%	51,453	2.50%	14,834	9.34%
55-59	27,831	1.74%	37,474	1.82%	9,643	4.78%
60-64	27,363	1.71%	30,671	1.49%	3,308	-12.78%
65+	61,237	3.83%	69,163	3.36%	7,926	-12.11%
Not Stated	1,135	0.07%	42,578	2.07%	41,443	--
Total	1,600,100	100.00%	2,056,298	100.00%	456,198	100.00%

26

Figure A1: Changes in Age Group Distribution in the West Bank, 1997 - 2007

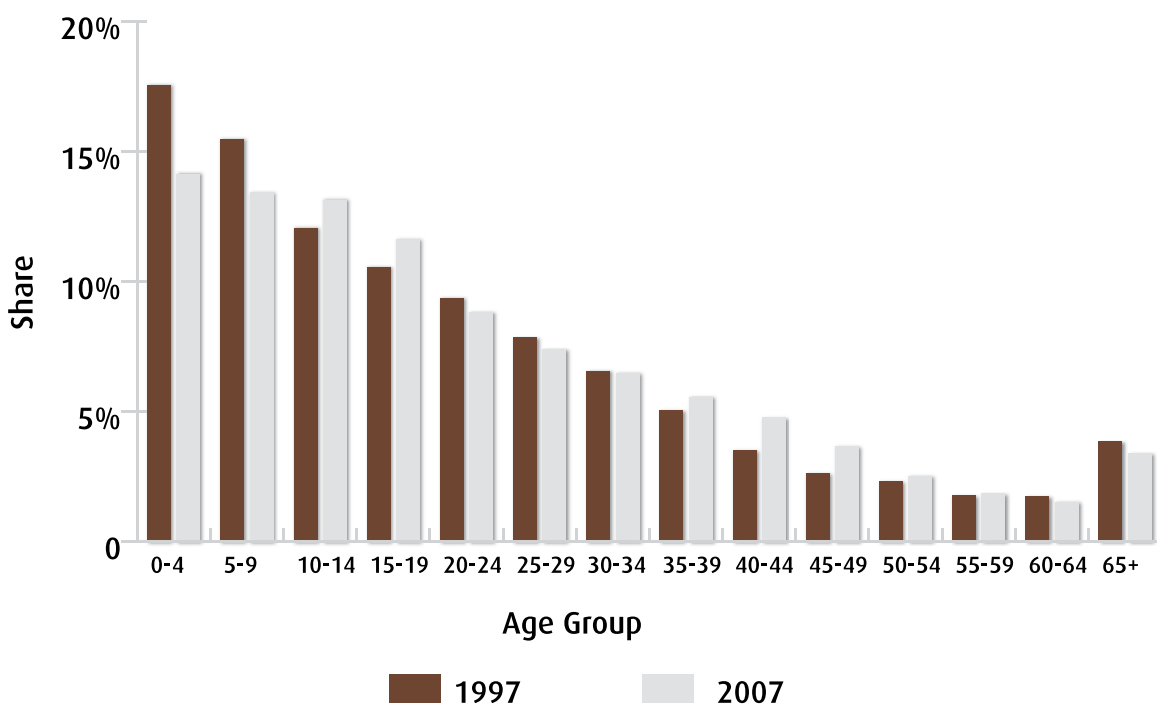
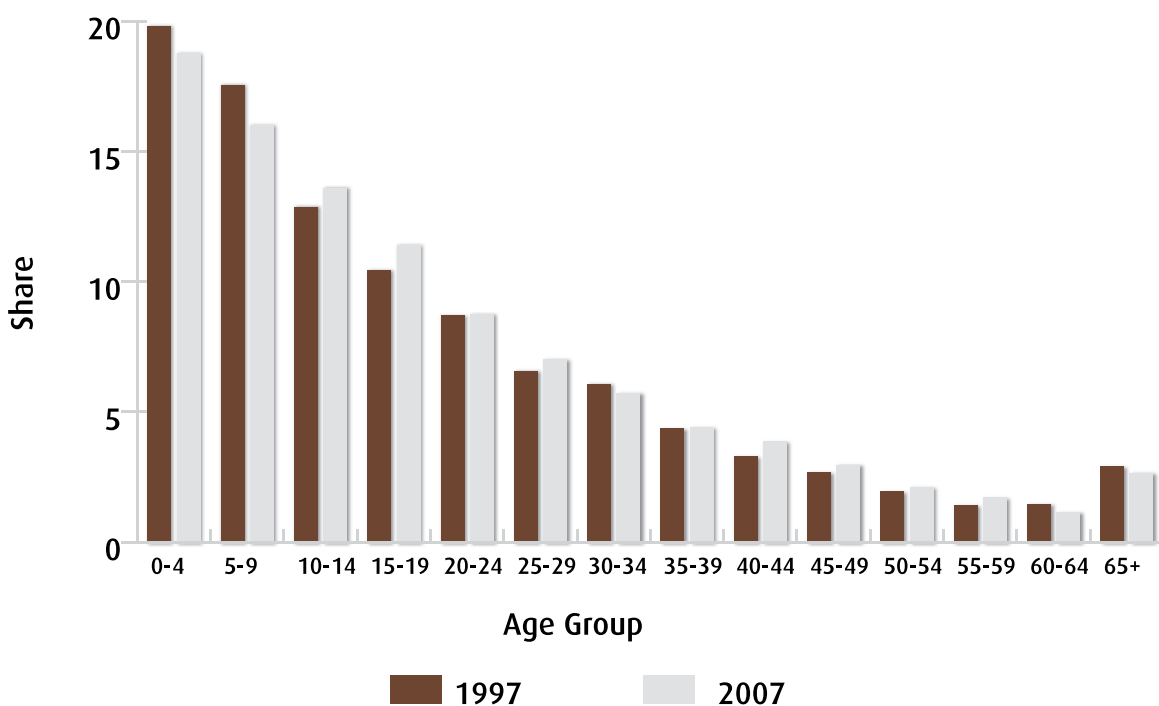


Table A5: Gaza Strip Age Group Distribution, 1997-2007²⁹

Age Group	1997	Share	2007	Share	Absolute Change	Relative Change
0-4	198,318	19.80%	260,105	18.75%	61,787	-5.31%
5-9	175,693	17.54%	221,964	16.00%	46,271	-8.79%
10-14	128,893	12.87%	188,670	13.60%	59,777	5.68%
15-19	104,643	10.45%	158,150	11.40%	53,507	9.11%
20-24	87,143	8.70%	121,378	8.75%	34,235	0.56%
25-29	65,739	6.56%	97,110	7.00%	31,371	6.65%
30-34	60,727	6.06%	79,074	5.70%	18,347	-5.99%
35-39	43,576	4.35%	61,040	4.40%	17,464	1.13%
40-44	32,861	3.28%	53,400	3.85%	20,539	17.32%
45-49	26,750	2.67%	40,915	2.95%	14,165	10.43%
50-54	19,379	1.93%	29,133	2.10%	9,754	8.54%
55-59	14,153	1.41%	23,584	1.70%	9,431	20.31%
60-64	14,540	1.45%	15,965	1.15%	1,425	-20.73%
65+	28,982	2.89%	36,793	2.65%	7,811	-8.35%
Not Stated	172	0.02%	0	0.00%	-172	--
Total	1,001,569	100.00%	1,387,281	100.00%	385,712	100.00%

Figure A2: Changes in Age Group Distribution



Endnotes

1 The J1 portion of the Jerusalem governorate is defined as that area illegally annexed by Israel in 1967. PCBS was prevented by the Israeli authorities from conducting enumeration activities in J1 in 1997 and was able to undertake only an abbreviated house-to-house survey in some parts of J1 in 2007. Thus, data for J1 are mainly estimates based on secondary sources. Information provided by PCBS staff, July 2009. See Appendix I for estimates of population and population growth for both the J1 and J2 segments of the Jerusalem governorate.

2 Results for the 1997 census are from the PCBS website. Results of 2007 census for the West Bank are from PCBS *Census Final Results in the West Bank; Summary (Population and Housing)*, August 2008. Results for the Gaza Strip 2007 census are taken from PCBS *Census Semi-Final Results in the Gaza Strip; Summary (Population and Housing)*, December 2008. Data in this table includes both the counted population in each census and the uncounted population, i.e. those missed in the enumeration but whose numbers were estimated in the post-enumeration surveys. The estimated undercount in the 1997 OPT population—excluding J1—was about 3.1 percent. The estimated undercount in 2007 was about 2.7 percent.

3 Results for the 1997 census are from the PCBS website. Data in this table include both the counted and uncounted population. The undercount rate among refugees is assumed to be equal to the overall undercount rate. Results of the 2007 census for the West Bank are from PCBS *Census Final Results in the West Bank; Summary (Population and Housing)*, August 2008. Due to limited access to J1, PCBS estimates for J1 should be used with caution.

Results for 2007 for Gaza are taken from PCBS *Census Semi-Final Results in the Gaza Strip; Summary (Population and Housing)*, December 2008. Thus far, PCBS has been able to process the census results for the entire population only. *Data processing for the 2007 census for Gaza refugees remains incomplete.* To estimate the size of the refugee and registered refugee population, the PCBS has used estimates of their respective shares of the population from previous field surveys—especially the *Palestinian Family Health Survey, 2006* (December 2007)—and has applied these to the aggregate 2007 Gaza census results. The resulting refugee population growth rate estimate is *significantly* higher than those for the Gaza population as a whole, as calculated from census results.

The refugee population growth rate presented here is almost certainly an overestimate, given the more moderate rate of growth for the total Gaza population indicated by the census data (see footnote 6 for evidence that supports this view). *Estimates of the size of the Gaza refugee and registered refugee population for 2007 should, therefore, be used with caution.*

4 The reasons for the differences in growth rates as between refugees and non-refugees—and between refugees in the West Bank and those in Gaza—are due, in part, to the overestimation of refugee growth rates as noted in the previous footnote.

5 In the context of the censuses, “registered refugee” indicates respondents reported they had an UNRWA family registration card. The numbers of registered refugees in 1997 and 2007 are calculated as those counted plus estimates of the uncounted registered refugee population. The assumption here is that the census under-coverage rate for refugees and registered refugees is equal to the rate for the population in Palestinian each territory or, in the case of J1, is equal to that of J2. Due to limited access to J1, PCBS estimates for J1 should be used with caution.

6 As a cross-check of these results, UNRWA records indicate the number of registered refugees grew 37.1 percent as between Q4 1997 and Q4 2007, an average annual rate of 3.7 percent, generally consistent with the census growth rate for registered refugees in Table 3. On the other hand, UNRWA records show a 3.59 percent growth rate for refugee registrations in the West Bank (versus the 2.4 percent growth rate in the census) and a 3.8 percent growth rate in the Gaza Strip (versus 4.57 percent growth in the census). The differences in census and UNRWA growth rates at the territory level seem to be due, on the one hand, to measurement errors with respect to refugees in J1 and to incomplete census data processing in Gaza, as already noted.

7 Data in this table include the counted population and estimates of the uncounted population. The estimate for the Jerusalem governorate includes J1.

8 Data in this table include the counted population and estimates of the uncounted population

9 The number of total registered refugees in this table is estimated by inflating the number of counted registered refugees for each governorate by the estimated rate of overall census undercoverage for each governorate. Data for the Jerusalem governorate includes J1. The reader is cautioned that results for J1, and therefore for the Jerusalem governorate as a whole, is subject to estimation error.

10 The reader is cautioned that the data in Table 5B are not based entirely on census results. Due to incomplete census data processing in Gaza, the PCBS has used estimates of the refugee and registered refugee share of the population from other field surveys and has applied these to the aggregate 2007 census results for Gaza. The results are significantly higher refugee and registered refugee population growth rates. As already noted above, such growth rates are almost certainly overestimated and should, therefore, be used with caution.

11 Geographical area data are from PCBS *Statistical Abstract of Palestine*, No. 9, December 2008, p. 239.

12 Geographical area data are from PCBS *Statistical Abstract of Palestine*, No. 9, December 2008, p. 239. Due to the likely overestimation of registered refugee population growth in Gaza, the 2007 area density figures should be used with caution.

13 The total registered refugee population is estimated by inflating the number of counted registered refugees for each governorate by the estimated rate of overall census undercoverage for each governorate. Data for the Jerusalem governorate includes J1. Registered refugee data for Gaza in 2007 are not based on census data. Such data should be used with caution.

14 The number of total registered refugees in this table is estimated by inflating the number of counted registered refugees for each governorate by the estimated rate of overall census undercoverage for each governorate. Data for the Jerusalem governorate includes J1. The reader is cautioned that results for J1, and therefore for the Jerusalem governorate as a whole, are subject to measurement error.

15 The PCBS defines a refugee camp as “any locality referred to as a refugee camp and administered by UNRWA.” See *PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census 2007; Main Indicators by Locality Type*, January 2009. Because PCBS was not able to enumerate the population of the Shu’fat refugee camp, the following analysis excludes that camp. UNRWA registration data indicates a population of 10,936 for Shu’fat at end-2007.

16 Data in this table are for the total registered refugee populations, i.e. the counted and estimates of the uncounted based on the post-enumeration surveys. In estimating the latter, it is assumed that the rate of undercoverage in the camps is equal to the rate of undercoverage for the governorate in which the camp is located. In both the 1997 and 2007 data, the J1 portion of the Jerusalem governorate is excluded. This means that the population of the Shu’fat refugee camp is not included in this table.

17 Data is for the counted population only and excludes the J1 portion of Jerusalem. Data also excludes those who did not state their age during the enumeration process. Demographers indicate the latter are mainly in the older age categories. Data processing for the 2007 census for Gaza refugees remains incomplete. To estimate the age distribution of the Gaza population, the PCBS has used estimates previous field surveys—especially the *Palestinian Family Health Survey, 2006* (December 2007)—and has applied these to aggregate census data. Estimates of Gaza age distribution for 2007 should, therefore, be used with caution.

18 Data is for counted population and excludes East Jerusalem. All data exclude those who did not state their age during the enumeration process. Due to incomplete census data processing in Gaza, age distribution for that territory is based on other PCBS field surveys, in particular the *Palestinian Family Health Survey, 2006* (December 2007). Results for Gaza should therefore be treated with caution.

19 Data in this table is for the counted population only and excludes East Jerusalem. Due to incomplete census data processing in Gaza, age distribution for that territory is based on other PCBS field surveys, in particular the *Palestinian Family Health Survey, 2006* (December 2007). Results for Gaza should therefore be treated with caution.

20 Incomplete 2007 census data processing for Gaza led the PCBS to use age distribution estimates from other recent field surveys and to combine these with the total 2007 census population results for Gaza (for which processing was completed). The population and age group growth rates are overestimated in all likelihood. At the same time, experts note that there is a tendency for interviewed heads of households to round off the ages of children such that the 0-4 age group is underreported, while the 5-9 age group is over reported. This would tend to reduced the children’s population growth rate.

21 See the UNRWA series *Prolonged Crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* available at www.unrwa.org.

22 If demographic trends in the decade between the censuses persist, growth in the youth segment will slow in the coming decade. Total growth of the 5-14 years segment in the OPT—those who will be the 15-24 segment in the year 2017—was 28.3 percent between 1997-2007, while total growth in the OPT was 32.3 percent.

23 See UNRWA *Prolonged Crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Recent Socio-Economic Impacts* (Gaza, November 2006) for a review of the causes and main impacts of the crisis.

24 See UNRWA, *Socio-economic developments in the oPt in 2008, The West Bank Labour Market in 2008 and the Gaza Strip Labour Market in 2008..*

25 All data in this table include the *counted* and the estimated *uncounted* populations for the J1 and J2 components of the Jerusalem governorate. In the case of the J1 component, data are mainly estimates as PCBS has had only limited access to occupied East Jerusalem inside the checkpoints. The reader is cautioned that results for J1, and therefore for the Jerusalem governorate as a whole, are subject to measurement error.

Data in this table are taken from the following sources: 1) Census data base for 1997 and 2007 provided to UNRWA by PCBS; 2) PCBS *Census Final Results, Population Report: Jerusalem Governorate*, June 2009, Table 1, p. 41; 3) PCBS *Census Final Results in the West Bank; Summary (Population and Housing)*, August 2008, Table 6, p. 68; 4) PCBS *Palestinian Population: A Proposed Count for Mid-Year 2000* (November 2000), Table 1, p. 29.

26 As PCBS was not able to conduct any enumeration activities in J1 in 1997, the simplifying assumption used here is that the proportion of registered refugees in J1 is equal to that in J2. "Registered refugees" are defined as those who reported that they possessed UNRWA family registration cards during the census enumeration.

27 The sharper decline in registered refugees in J1 may be due to the lack of data on registered refugees there in 1997 and the possible overestimation of their numbers. The 2007 estimate of J1 registered refugees is the difference between the PCBS estimate for total registered refugees for the Jerusalem governorate and those for J2.

28 Data in this table are for the medium variant of population growth projections.

29 Data in this table are for the medium variant of population growth projections. Area density in all cases is measured as persons per square kilometre.

30 The data in Table A3 and Figure A2 are not based on census results alone. Due to incomplete 2007 census data processing in Gaza, the PCBS has used estimates of the age distribution drawn from other field surveys and has applied these to the aggregate 2007 census results for Gaza. The 2007 data for Gaza should therefore be used with caution.



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