



Palestine

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

- 4.5 million people living in Palestine
- 1.8 million people in the Gaza Strip, of which 1.2 million are refugees.
- 137,600 Palestinian houses destroyed after the 2014 military assault on Gaza
- Around 300,000 Palestinians living in Area C, West Bank.

European Commission humanitarian funding in 2015:

€25 million

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Key messages

- The Israeli blockade of Gaza and the occupation in the West Bank have resulted in a **protracted crisis** with humanitarian consequences for the Palestinian population.
- The EU humanitarian assistance in Palestine is governed by **International Humanitarian Law (IHL)** and International Human Rights Law, with the aim of providing assistance and protection to vulnerable Palestinian populations.
- The European Commission's humanitarian aid funding in Palestine is **providing emergency support** to people affected by eviction and or demolitions, provision of basic services, legal assistance and advocacy for the upholding and respect for International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law in Palestine.
- Following the summer 2014 fighting in Gaza which led to more than 2 000 casualties, mostly civilians, massive population displacement and large-scale destruction, reconstruction has not yet started in Gaza. In Gaza, the Commission funds humanitarian projects that deal with **shelter assistance, health, water and sanitation, food security, disaster preparedness and protection activities**.
- In the West Bank, **demolition and confiscation of homes** and property as a consequence of Israeli settlement expansion, have increased socio-economic vulnerability and left many families homeless and without any source of income or livelihoods.

Humanitarian situation and needs

After more than 8 years and three phases of active conflict (the latest in summer 2014), the blockade of the Gaza Strip imposed by Israel continues to impact the lives and livelihoods of the Gaza population, driving many people deeper into poverty and unemployment. Around 80% of the 1.8 million people living in Gaza now rely on external assistance.

The latest hostilities in the **Gaza Strip** in July and August 2014 led to a high number of civilian casualties and the mass displacement of more than half a million people. Over 137 600 houses were damaged and crucial infrastructures such as reservoirs, water distribution, and sewage systems were severely damaged or destroyed. Over 7 000 explosive remnants of war are left in Gaza and continue to cause injuries and threats to the civilian population. During the war, the high civilian fatality rate, the shelling of hospitals and schools, and the killing of humanitarian aid workers raised concerns about lack of respect of international humanitarian law.

The very slow pace of recovery and reconstruction, is due to the existing blockade and a cumbersome temporary importation process for construction materials,

The **West Bank** is home to 2.65 million people. Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, the Seam Zones (located between the Barrier and the 1949 Armistice green line) and in Area C (area under full Israeli control which represents 60% of the West Bank) are facing ever-growing pressure from the Israeli occupation. Restrictions on movement and access, demolition of houses and livelihood assets, forced transfers and settler violence increase the socio-economic vulnerability of people in terms of access to basic services, livelihoods, legal assistance and protection. Palestinians are separated from their land, families, schools, hospitals, workplace and places of worship due to restrictions on the freedom of movement.

The European Union's Humanitarian Response

Humanitarian aid funding for Palestine in 2015 stands at €25 million.

So far, **€5.5 million** has been allocated to legal assistance to families living in Area C and East Jerusalem, emergency response to demolitions and evictions, and coordination with humanitarian partners. **€18.5 million** has been allocated to fund humanitarian projects in Gaza.

Following the 2014 fighting, the Commission's humanitarian assistance to Gaza is addressing the needs of the most war affected and vulnerable Palestinian population. The funding provides **shelter, health care, food security, water and sanitation and protection**. The Commission's overall humanitarian assistance in Gaza in 2015 will reach more than 200 000 people.

Since 2000, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO) has provided a total of **€700 million in humanitarian aid** to help meeting the basic needs of the Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.



DG ECHO's humanitarian assistance focuses on:



Food security through in-kind or cash support to households. In Gaza, vouchers are distributed to displaced Palestinian by the World Food Programme (WFP), Première Urgence - Aide Médicale Internationale, and Oxfam GB.



Water and sanitation through water trucking. In Gaza, the disastrous consequences of the 2014 Israeli offensive 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 living with host-families or in emergency shelters are provided through UNRWA and the Norwegian Refugee Council.



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 crucial during the last Gaza war when the health system was hugely compromised. Emergency medical services in the main hospitals, including ambulance services, presence of surgical teams and provision of drugs and disposables were also provided.



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.



Humanitarian Advocacy and Coordination 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.

