



Palestine

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

Population: 4.8M

- 1.8 M live in the Gaza Strip, 1.2 M of which are refugees
- 3 M live in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

Population in need of Humanitarian Assistance:

→ 1.6 M people in the Gaza Strip, Area C and East Jerusalem, of which:

- 60 000 people who remain internally displaced following the 2014 conflict in Gaza Strip
- 300 000 people in Area C (60% of the West Bank), including people in communities at risk of forcible transfer

European Commission humanitarian funding in 2016:

€25.8 million

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Key messages

- The situation in Palestine can be described as a **protracted crisis with a deteriorating humanitarian situation** where Palestinians are affected by prolonged occupation, the blockade of the Gaza strip, recurrent violations of International Law and the contextual lack of accountability for those violations. **2.3 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance** out of a total population of 4.8 million.
- The European Commission's humanitarian assistance in Palestine focuses on addressing protection and emergency concerns, namely **emergency preparedness and response, humanitarian advocacy** and support to **humanitarian coordination**. Such assistance is governed by **International Humanitarian Law (IHL)** and International Human Rights Law, with the aim of providing protection and assistance to the most vulnerable Palestinians.
- In the **Gaza Strip**, now entering its tenth year of blockade, vulnerable communities struggle to cope in what is a complex protracted environment. The deterioration of socio-economic conditions as well as access restrictions continue to undermine basic human rights and living conditions of 1.8 million people.
- In the **West Bank**, vulnerabilities stem from occupation policies and violations in the form of seizure of Palestinian land used for Israeli settlement construction and expansion, an action considered illegal under IHL, settler violence, a marked increase in demolition and confiscation of Palestinian-owned homes and property, and restrictions on movement and access. In 2016, there has been a 60% increase in demolitions and confiscations compared to the same period in 2015. These developments lead to the **forcible displacement** of vulnerable families.

Humanitarian situation and needs

The lives and livelihoods of the **Gaza** population continue to deteriorate, driving many people deeper into poverty and unemployment. Around 80% of the population living in Gaza still relies on external assistance.

The slow pace of recovery and reconstruction of homes in the **Gaza Strip**, mainly due to the existing blockade, a cumbersome importation process for construction materials and the shortage of donors' funding, takes its toll on the population in Gaza, more than two years after the last conflict. 60 000 Internally Displaced People (IDPs) have moved multiple times and live in overcrowded rented accommodation, damaged homes, prefabs, tents or host families, often at risk of eviction. Providing appropriate shelter and housing repair and reconstruction for IDPs and vulnerable households in need of upgrading is one of the top priorities in the Gaza Strip.

In the **West Bank**, the Palestinian population in Area C and East Jerusalem (approximately 600 000 people) are subject to economic deprivation with limited access to basic services (water, food, health, education) due to a multi-layered system of restrictions and obstacles. The population is increasingly subjected to displacement and dispossession of land and housing through multiple factors like forced evictions and demolitions of houses triggered by building restrictions, the lack of Israeli-issued building permits, military training exercises near residential areas, settler violence, revocation of residency, restrictions on access to services and livelihoods and relocation plans. As a result, Palestinians are separated from their land, families, schools, hospitals, workplace and places of worship.

The European Union's Humanitarian Response

Humanitarian aid funding for Palestine in 2016 stands at €25.8 million.

In the West Bank, humanitarian assistance is provided through an **integrated protection approach** which incorporates preventative measures, emergency response and protective advocacy. So far, **€4.9 million** has been allocated to legal assistance to families living **in Area C and East Jerusalem, emergency response to demolitions and evictions, material assistance** for essential services and **coordination** with humanitarian partners.

In the Gaza Strip, €20.1 million has been allocated to humanitarian programmes designed to address vulnerabilities and worsening living conditions of the populations affected by the blockade, and to build resilience. This is done mostly through **shelter** assistance, **health, water and sanitation, food security, disaster preparedness** and **protection activities**.

In 2016, €0.8 million has also been allocated to support children's education and protection, with a focus on highly vulnerable communities in the West Bank.

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 meet the basic needs of the Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.



DG ECHO's humanitarian assistance in Palestine focuses on:



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. Protection is mainstreamed in all ECHO-funded operations in both West Bank and Gaza Strip.



Food assistance is provided mainly through unconditional cash support to households. Interventions aiming to increase economic access to sufficient and qualitative food and to restore productive capacity of small and medium producers are also encouraged.



Water and sanitation: In Gaza, the disastrous consequences of the 2014 war 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. Designated collective shelters (schools) are being upgraded by UNICEF, ACH, Oxfam GB and Première Urgence.



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



Humanitarian Advocacy and Coordination remains a key priority 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.

