

Press Release
Jerusalem
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The EU provides around €16 million to support families in need in Palestine

The European Union and Austria made a contribution of €16.4 million to the Palestinian Authority (PA) payment of social allowances to poor families in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The European Union and Austria (€15 million EU and €1.4 million Austria) will contribute to payments to around 64,500 families. 80% of them live in the Gaza Strip.

The EU's commitment to the PA budget support allows the ministries to sustain the delivery of their services to the Palestinian public. The EU's support of the Ministry of social development guarantees that basic needs of vulnerable families are covered. The Palestinian Authority cash transfer programme supports some 108,000 vulnerable families through an inclusive and equitable social protection system.

"Poverty is the first obstacle against social development, security, and growth. Our joint efforts with the Ministry of Social development work to eradicate poverty and protect Palestinian citizens," said the ***EU Representative Ralph Tarraf****. "The Cash Transfer programme largely supports Palestinians in Gaza. Amid the deteriorating political and humanitarian situation in Gaza, the EU and Member States remain committed to supporting families in need," he added.*

Background:
Most of the European Union's assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA) is channelled through PEGASE[1] Direct Financial Support since 2008 to support the PA Reform and Development Plan (2008-2010) and the subsequent Palestinian National Development Plans. PEGASE supports the PA recurrent expenditures, mainly the salaries and pensions of civil servants, the social allowances paid through the cash transfer programme and part of the costs of referrals to the East Jerusalem Hospitals. This has contributed to the PA major reforms and development programmes implemented by key ministries in preparation for statehood. Since February 2008, over €2.3 billion have been disbursed through PEGASE. In addition, the EU provides assistance to the Palestinian people through UNRWA as well as through a wide range of other cooperation projects.

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[1] *Mécanisme **P**alestino-**E**uropéen de **G**estion de l'**A**ide **S**ocio-**E**conomique (PEGASE)*