The Situation of Women in Jerusalem

Introduction

This report is being prepared at a time when all Palestinian territories (Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, and the West Bank) are subjected to a systematic act of genocide, alongside regional and international transformations that have cast their shadows over the area and have had a particular impact on women, especially Jerusalemite women.

The unique situation of Jerusalemite women has received attention from Arab countries and the Palestinian government, which has adopted it as one of its main declared goals, due to the suffering these women endure as a result of the occupation's violence, ranging from various forms of killing, arrest, targeting, demolition, and displacement, as a means to drive Jerusalemites from their land. Palestinian women in Jerusalem have been among the most affected.

The preparation of this report coincides with the Arab Women Committee's adoption of Jerusalem as the Capital of Arab Women during its 44th session, in which it emphasized the protection of women and children in light of the crime of genocide being committed against the Palestinian people, a crime that violates all international norms, treaties, and the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.

The report primarily aims to shed light on the legal, living, social, health, and economic conditions of Jerusalemite women, in order to develop interventions that respond to their needs and strengthen their resilience. This comes in light of the ongoing violations the city of Jerusalem has faced daily since its occupation in 1967, including settlement policies, land confiscation, restrictions on civil rights, family fragmentation, home demolitions, and the banning of UNRWA services in the city. These measures have had a profound impact on living conditions in Jerusalem, with their consequences particularly affecting Jerusalemite women and girls.

Mona Al-Khalili
Minister of Women's Affairs

Executive Summary

Jerusalemite women face increasing living and political challenges due to Israeli occupation policies. They are constantly threatened with displacement and face restrictions in various aspects of life. The population of the Jerusalem Governorate is 507,781, with women comprising 49% of this number. Approximately 80,000 Jerusalemites live behind the separation wall. The occupation continues to carry out systematic violations, including home demolitions. Over 5,000 homes have been destroyed since 1967, in addition to the confiscation of 35% of East Jerusalem's land for settlement purposes. Furthermore, the revocation of Jerusalemite residency permits has stripped 14,500 Jerusalemites of their legal rights and scattered families through strict family reunification restrictions. Jerusalemite women prisoners also suffer harsh detention conditions, with 12 female prisoners, including a child sentenced to 12 years in prison.

In addition to these violations, the education sector in Jerusalem faces significant challenges, most notably the occupation's attempts to distort Palestinian curricula and impose Israeli ones, which negatively impacts academic achievement. As a result, 32% of Jerusalemite students do not complete their secondary education. Health services also suffer from financial constraints and systematic restrictions, which affect the quality of medical care provided, especially to women.

Economically, Jerusalemite women face significant challenges in entering the workforce, with their participation rate not exceeding 10.2%. Meanwhile, 72% of Jerusalemite families live below the poverty line, and 81% of children suffer from difficult living conditions due to the discriminatory policies imposed. In response to these challenges, the Palestinian government is making efforts to strengthen the resilience of Jerusalemites through financial and legal support, improving health and education services, and boosting the local economy, alongside political and diplomatic efforts to confront unjust Israeli policies. This report highlights the pivotal role of Jerusalemite women in resisting occupation and preserving Palestinian identity, emphasizing the need to intensify efforts to support and empower them in various fields to continue their role in protecting the social and national fabric of Jerusalem.

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Jerusalem Under Israeli Occupation

Jerusalem has long been central to Zionist thought and ambitions to seize the city. The Zionist movement has utilized the biblical vision, coloring its colonial activities with a religious hue, transforming illusion into reality and non-history into history. It has shaped the Jewish imagination to regard Palestine as the Promised Land, in line with the phrase "A land without a people for a people without a land," using this idea to mobilize Jews from all corners of the world. This led to the creation of a specific conception of Jerusalem in the Jewish mind, where the occupation of the city through "cleansing" it of non-Jews (the "gentiles") was seen as a form of liberation. The ultimate goal was to make it the capital of the Jewish people and establish what is known as Greater Jerusalem, the nucleus of the largest Jewish city in the world.

During the 1948 war, Zionism began implementing its colonial activities as a colonial movement, disregarding UN General Assembly Resolution 181 issued on November 29, 1947 (regardless of the legitimacy of this resolution), which called for Jerusalem to become an international city. Zionist forces carried out massacres against the inhabitants of the western part of the city, expelling and displacing around 60,000 Palestinians and seizing 84% of the land. Meanwhile, the eastern part and the Old City remained under Jordanian rule (11.48%), and 4.4% of the city was designated as United Nations areas.

The Zionist movement did not settle for the lines of the armistice (the Green Line), which at the time divided the city of Jerusalem into East and West, as this contradicted its ambitions for expansion and the complete occupation of the city. In 1967, it began its attempts to extend its control over East Jerusalem through a series of measures. On June 27, it issued an administrative order annexing East Jerusalem politically and administratively (about seven square kilometers) to the western part of the city, in violation of international law and Security Council resolutions on the matter. This annexation led to the cancellation of Jordanian laws, the closure of Sharia courts, the shutdown of Arab banks, and the imposition of Israeli curricula, effectively excluding any role for Arab authorities. This was not the end; Israel legitimized the further seizure of West Bank land, nearly doubling the amount it had before 1967, with the aim of expanding the borders of what it called the "Jerusalem Municipality." It also built a settler belt around the city by confiscating thousands of dunams under false pretenses and constructing Israeli settlements on them. In 1989, in an effort to impose a fait accompli on the Palestinians and the international community, the Israeli Knesset passed a law declaring a unified Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Successive Israeli governments have implemented various measures and policies to geographically, politically, and economically isolate the city from the rest of Palestinian land, a process that continues today with the goal of making geodemographic changes to reduce the Palestinian presence in the city.

The issue of West Jerusalem cannot be regarded as something to accept or submit to as a fait accompli, nor can the annexation of East Jerusalem after 1967 be considered the

sole dilemma. Jerusalem, with an area of 125 square kilometers, is a deeply rooted right for the Palestinians and their eternal capital.

The Legal Status of Jerusalem

International legitimacy, based on international treaties and law, affirms the illegality of Israeli actions aimed at changing the historical and demographic Arab character of Jerusalem. It does not recognize Israel's annexation of Jerusalem and considers the measures to Judaize the city, alter its character, or declare it as the capital of Israel to be invalid and illegitimate[1].

In the context of the legal illegitimacy committed by Israel, the annexation of East Jerusalem in 1967 led to the classification of its residents as "permanent residents." This status allows them to live, reside, and work in Israel without the need for permits. However, this classification excludes any Jerusalemite with a family history in the city who was born or lived outside of it when this classification was made, depriving them of the right to return and categorizing them as "absent."

The Demographic Picture of Jerusalem

The estimated population of Jerusalem Governorate reached 507,781 individuals by the end of 2024[2]. This number includes the residents of villages and towns surrounding Jerusalem, which were geographically isolated from the city due to the annexation and expansion wall. They constitute 9% of the total population of Palestine and 15.1% of the population of the West Bank. Women make up 49% of the total population, while men represent 51%[3].

Approximately 80,000 Jerusalemites live behind the separation wall in eight Palestinian neighborhoods, even though they are located within the boundaries of what Israel designated as the "Jerusalem Municipality" in 1967. In East Jerusalem, around 320,000 Palestinians reside[4].

Israel, through its systematic policies of annexation and colonization, has been implementing repressive measures against the Jerusalemites, particularly those annexed forcibly in 1967. Israel has not hesitated to enact laws aimed at reducing the Palestinian presence in the city, in line with the decision made by the Israeli Gafni Committee in 1973, which stated that the demographic balance should be maintained with 70% Israelis and 30% Palestinians in Jerusalem. Israel takes all repressive measures to prevent exceeding this ratio. In addition to the various violations, which

[1] Resolution (465) and Resolution (467) of 1980
[2] Palestinians at the End of 2024 - PCBS
[3] ibid.
[4] OCHA

have taken different forms and patterns, Israel seeks to impose the fait accompli to induce forced changes in the city's demographic picture, disturbing the demographic balance by increasing the number of settlers and consolidating the surrounding colonial infrastructure to make the city shrink both geographically and demographically.

Israeli Violations in Jerusalem

The Separation Wall – A Tool for Distorting the Geography of Jerusalem and the Demographic Picture of its Population

The separation wall is a vital tool that serves the heart of the Zionist colonial project, a living embodiment of all the concepts of oppression and control associated with it. It is an attempt to disrupt the lives of Palestinians, fragment their communities, deprive them of access to their lands, and sever the ties between Palestinian territories, all within the context of Israeli annexation and expansion. It constitutes a clear violation of the rights of nearly one million Palestinians living along its path, a violation that is stipulated in international human rights conventions[5].

The construction of the wall began in 2002, and it passes through 85% of the West Bank's lands, swallowing up about 160,000 dunams of land. When completed, its total length will reach 703 km, and it will confiscate approximately 10% of the West Bank's area, with the possibility of further expansion[6].

The length of the wall surrounding Jerusalem is approximately 168 km, completely encircling the city from all sides[7]. It has distorted the city both geographically and demographically, isolating Jerusalemites in residential areas located outside the wall, such as Semiramis, Kafr Aqab, and Al-Ram, from their lands, communities, homes, establishments, and all forms of life within the wall. These areas have been forcibly annexed into the boundaries of what is called the "Jerusalem Municipality" (East Jerusalem). The wall has obstructed their access to the city, its markets, and its medical and educational services. Additionally, it has isolated the eastern part of the city and its residents from the entire West Bank, imposing inhumane security measures and humiliating searches when entering or exiting the city through electronic gates. This has had a tangible impact on all aspects of life.

The consequences did not stop there, as the isolation of Jerusalem from the surrounding neighborhoods and towns has led to the fragmentation of Jerusalemites administratively and legally, with corresponding economic, social, and living conditions. Jerusalemites residing in areas outside the wall hold Palestinian green IDs and are under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, while those in the eastern

[5] On July 9, 2004, the International Court of Justice issued an advisory opinion deeming the wall illegal.
[6] Report by the Palestinian Research Center titled "The Impact of the Apartheid Wall on the Economic and Social Life of Jerusalemites."
[7] Report by the Palestinian News and Information Agency

part of the city, within the annexation wall, are administratively, politically, and legally under "Israel," the occupying power. This has led to the separation of Jerusalemite families, as around 21% of Jerusalemite families have been separated from relatives, 18% from fathers, and 12% from mothers due to the different ID cards held by members of the same family.

This created a reality with multiple facets for Jerusalemites, forming one of their greatest daily challenges, which feeds into the efforts of colonial policies in their attempt to take complete control of the city.

Following the construction of the separation wall and the forcible annexation of East Jerusalem in 1967, the city became divided into two areas: Jerusalem (Area J1), which includes Kufr Aqab, Beit Hanina, Shuafat Camp, Shuafat, Al-Issawiya, Sheikh Jarrah, Wadi al-Joz, Bab al-Sahira, Al-Sawana, At-Tur (Mount of Olives), Beit al-Maqdis, Al-Shayah, Ras al-Amud, Silwan, Al-Thawri, Jabal al-Mukabber, Al-Sawahira al-Gharbiya, Beit Safafa, Sharafat, Sur Baher, Umm Tuba, and Jerusalem (Area J2), which includes the communities of Rafat, Mukhmas, Qalandiya Camp, Qalandiya, the Bedouin community of Jaba', Beit Duqqo, Al-Judeira, Al-Ram and the Postal District, Beit Anan, Al-Jib, Bir Nabala, Beit Ijza, Al-Qubaybah, Khirbat Umm al-Lahm, Bedouin community of Bedou, Nabi Samwil, Hizma, Beit Hanina al-Balad (Al-Tahta), Qatana, Beit Suriq, Beit Iksa, Anata, Al-Ka'abneh (Al-Khan al-Ahmar Bedouin community), Al-Za'im, Al-Ayzariya, Abu Dis, Arab Al-Jahalin (the Bedouin communities of Al-Ayzariya and Abu Dis), Al-Sawahira al-Sharqiya, and Sheikh Saad.

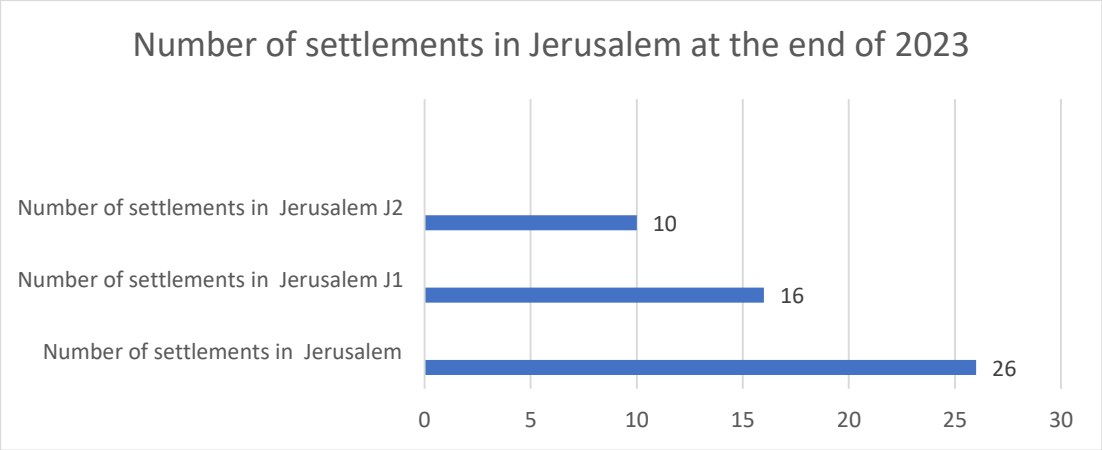


PASSIA - Jerusalem Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs

Political and Legal Violations

As part of the legal violations followed by the occupying authorities to displace, uproot, and expel Jerusalemites, they adopt various methods that include enacting laws and adopting racist policies.

Settlement Policies and Land Seizures



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics - Israeli settlements in the West Bank 2023

Land confiscation is one of the most significant tools used by Israel to expand its control over Palestinian territories. To achieve this, Israel implements policies, laws, and regulations that legalize the administration and use of land, enabling illegal expansion in blatant violation of international law, UN resolutions, and Security Council decisions. This constitutes a war crime against humanity. Since 1967, the occupation authorities have confiscated 35% of East Jerusalem's land for the purpose of building Israeli settlements. By the end of 2023, the number of settlements in East Jerusalem had reached 14[8].

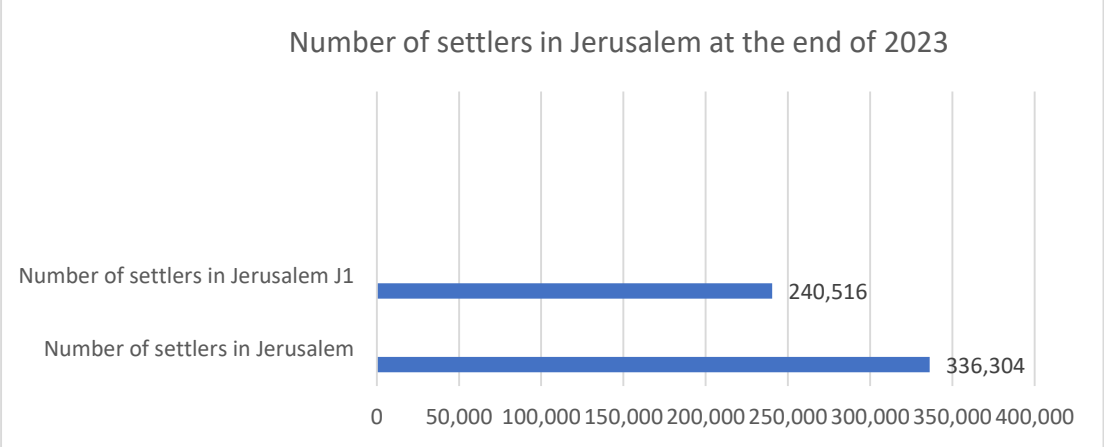
In addition to housing settlers in the heart of Palestinian neighborhoods in the city, Israel has seized Palestinian homes and expelled their inhabitants under weak pretexts, including the application of the "Absentee Property Law," which followed the military order issued by Israel in 1967 to halt any form of land registration, including in East Jerusalem. This led to the "Land Settlement Plan" for Jerusalem, which aims to deprive Palestinians, whether from inside or outside the city, of any rights to lands or properties they owned or inherited in Jerusalem for decades, even before its occupation in 1967. The justification is that these properties were not documented, making them vulnerable to eviction and confiscation, as seen in Sheikh Jarrah. As part of its efforts to assert its

[8] Quick Facts: East Jerusalem- The Institute for Middle East Understanding

control over occupied Jerusalem, Israel allocates substantial budgets, amounting to hundreds of millions, to develop and establish settlement outposts, while incentivizing new Jewish immigrants to settle in Jerusalem.

These settlement outposts' ambitions go beyond merely increasing the settler population; they also aim to ensure and develop the well-being of the settlers at the expense of displacing peaceful and rooted Palestinians from their usurped land. Israeli authorities confiscate hundreds of dunams annually for the establishment of Torah gardens, recreational spaces featuring water ponds, and innovative playgrounds, as seen in the town of Hizma, which is located within the confines of the separation wall.

In 2023, settlement expansion reached its highest levels since 2012, with the number of colonial plans surpassing those of 2022. This occurred in parallel with the genocidal actions in Gaza, where the pace of Israeli violations escalated across all fronts. The expansion of settlements and the construction of outposts in Jerusalem significantly increased. A total of 18,333 settler housing units were established in East Jerusalem during 2023[9], alongside the approval of plans aimed at dispersing neighborhoods in East Jerusalem and embedding settlers within them. Among the most prominent of these was the "Givat Shaked" plan, which had been stalled since the 1990s but was finally approved during this period.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics - Israeli settlements in the West Bank 2023

Restricting Civil Rights and Revoking Residency Permits

The policy of revoking residency status for Jerusalemites is one of the most direct and oppressive measures used as a tool of forced displacement. It violates the fundamental rights of Palestinians in Jerusalem, including their right to residency and citizenship in their own city. While residency should be an inherent right as the indigenous population, Israeli laws have turned it into a conditional privilege that can be revoked

[9] EU Neighbors South

at any time, leaving thousands of Palestinians vulnerable to expulsion from their homeland.

As a result of Israel's forced annexation of East Jerusalem in 1967, its Palestinian residents were classified as "permanent residents." This status allows them to live, work, and move within Israel without requiring special permits. However, it excludes any Jerusalemite with family ties to the city who was born or living outside its borders at the time of this classification. Those individuals were denied the right to return and were effectively categorized as "absentees," stripping them of their residency rights in their own city.

A "permanent resident" is deprived of citizenship and the associated political and social rights. They are required to continuously prove their place of residence within the so-called "Jerusalem Municipality" to maintain access to social rights such as health insurance, child allowances, unemployment benefits, and essential services like obtaining travel documents or birth certificates for their children. Moreover, their residency status is subject to stringent and expanding regulations established in 1967. In contrast, any Jewish immigrant is automatically granted citizenship upon arrival in "Israel" under the so-called "Law of Return."

Since 2006, the Israeli Minister of Interior has been authorized to revoke the residency status of Palestinians in Jerusalem on punitive grounds under the pretext of "breach of allegiance." This measure allows "Israel" to strip a Jerusalemite of their residency without a court conviction, serving as an unlawful punitive action against those engaged in resistance activities. As a result, more than 14,500 Palestinians from Jerusalem have had their residency revoked since 1967.

14,500 Jerusalemites have been stripped of their residency rights in Jerusalem since 1967.

The revocation of residency is not limited to the pretext of "breach of allegiance" but extends to broader criteria. Any Jerusalemite who fails to prove that their "center of life" is in the city risks losing their residency. This applies even if they have not obtained residency or citizenship elsewhere, including those who have lived in the suburbs of Jerusalem, the West Bank, or Gaza for seven years or more. Alarmingly, even Palestinians who have never left Jerusalem face the threat of residency revocation.

Approximately 140,000 Palestinians residing in neighborhoods beyond the Separation Wall are at risk of losing their residency and having their areas excluded from the so-called "Jerusalem Municipality" boundaries.

Adding to these violations, Israeli authorities continue to issue arbitrary expulsion orders. In 2023 alone, 1,105 expulsion orders were issued against Palestinians from Jerusalem, including 568 orders banning individuals from the Old City and 29 orders banning them from the city of Jerusalem entirely[10].

Dispersion of Jerusalemite Families and Deprivation of Family Reunification

In 2002, Israel imposed even harsher restrictions by freezing family reunification applications under the so-called "Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law." This law effectively prevents Palestinian Jerusalemites from living with their spouses from the West Bank or Gaza, forcing families into a state of legal limbo. Even before this freeze, the process was notoriously difficult, requiring extensive documentation and years of waiting, with no guarantee of approval. During this period, couples were often forced to live apart or risk legal consequences if the non-Jerusalemite spouse stayed in the city without a permit. The policy continues to systematically fragment Palestinian families, deepen demographic control, and reinforce the displacement of Palestinians from Jerusalem.

This 2003 law further institutionalized the fragmentation of Palestinian families, reinforcing Israel's demographic control over Jerusalem. By denying residency or family reunification rights, many couples are forced to live apart, relocate outside the city, or reside illegally under constant threat of deportation. Even in rare cases where temporary permits are granted, they do not provide stability. These permits must be frequently renewed and can be revoked at any time. Additionally, they do not grant access to healthcare, social security, or other basic rights available to Jerusalem residents. This policy has left thousands of families in a state of uncertainty, living in fear of separation or forced displacement.

This forced separation and the bureaucratic hurdles surrounding family reunification have a disproportionate impact on Palestinian women. Many face an impossible choice between maintaining their legal residency in Jerusalem and living with their spouses and children. The lack of a clear legal pathway for reunification further exacerbates economic and psychological distress, particularly for women raising children alone.

Kufr Aqab, despite its dire living conditions, has become a refuge for those seeking to remain within the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem while staying close to their spouses. However, the area suffers from overcrowding, neglected infrastructure, and limited access to essential services due to Israel's deliberate policies of

[10] Jerusalem Annual Status Brief 2023

marginalization. This reflects the broader strategy of pressuring Palestinian families to leave Jerusalem, further advancing Israeli demographic and territorial control over the city.

This policy not only violates the fundamental rights of Palestinian children but also imposes immense emotional and psychological burdens on families. By denying children legal status and essential social rights, Israel systematically undermines Palestinian presence in Jerusalem, forcing families into impossible decisions. The separation of children from their parents at the age of twelve is particularly cruel, tearing families apart and disrupting children's education, stability, and emotional well-being. These measures reflect Israel's broader strategy of demographic control, using legal and bureaucratic means to gradually displace Palestinians from their city[11].

25,000 family reunification applications are frozen
300,000 Palestinians have unrecognized applications, denying them their family and legal rights.
75% of those applying for family reunification are Jerusalemite men applying for their wives, while approximately 25% are Jerusalemite women applying for their husbands or children from the West Bank.

Home Demolitions

The policy of home demolitions is a systematic tool of oppression aimed at erasing Palestinian presence in Jerusalem. By creating nearly impossible legal and bureaucratic barriers to obtaining building permits, Israel forces Palestinians to either leave the city or build without permits, exposing them to the constant threat of demolition. The scale of destruction, 5,000 homes since 1967, illustrates the severity of this policy[12]. Beyond the physical loss, home demolitions inflict deep psychological and economic harm on Palestinian families, leaving many homeless and financially devastated. The correlation between escalations in Gaza and the West Bank and the rise in demolitions further underscores the punitive and retaliatory nature of Israel's actions.

The expansion of home demolitions has reached both areas within the separation wall as well as those beyond it, including towns like Hizma, Anata, and Al-Ram. Since the

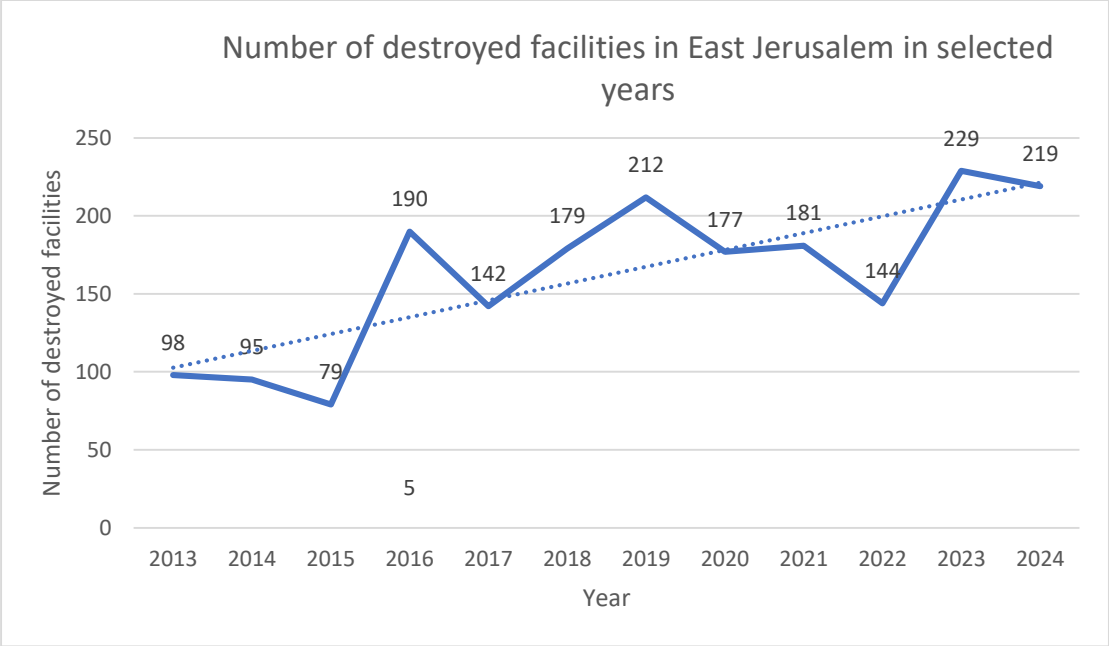
[11] Report titled Forbidden Families - Family Unification and Child Registration in East Jerusalem
[12] Quick Facts: East Jerusalem- The Institute for Middle East Understanding

escalation of the Gaza conflict in October 2023, until the end of 2024, Israeli authorities have carried out approximately 439 demolitions in Jerusalem under the pretext of unlicensed construction[13]. This widespread practice, which affects areas not only in direct proximity to the holy sites but also in more peripheral regions, reflects a broader effort to undermine Palestinian presence and enforce territorial control across the entire city and its surroundings. The justification of unlicensed construction, however, highlights the restrictions and discriminatory policies that prevent Palestinians from legally building or expanding their homes in their own land.

In East Jerusalem, during the same period, Israeli authorities demolished approximately 226 homes and structures in 24 towns and neighborhoods, with the majority concentrated in areas such as Jabal al-Mukabber, Silwan, Beit Hanina, and Al-Issawiya. These demolitions led to the displacement of 621 Palestinians, while 40,767 others were affected[14]. Among the demolished properties, 125 were inhabited homes, demolished without prior notice or waiting for a "court decision" regarding the demolition. This practice underscores the arbitrary nature of these actions, further intensifying the hardship faced by Palestinian families in these neighborhoods, many of whom are left homeless or displaced under coercive circumstances.

In most demolition cases, Israeli policies do not only cause material damage but also intentionally inflict psychological harm. Palestinians in Jerusalem are often forced to demolish their own homes, a process that adds immense emotional distress, as they are left feeling powerless, oppressed, and heartbroken. At the same time, this policy exerts financial pressure, as the Jerusalemite is burdened with the cost of demolition, which can amount to tens of thousands of dollars. This financial strain forces many to carry out the demolition themselves, unable to afford the fees imposed by the Israeli authorities, thus compounding the injustice and emotional toll on Palestinian families. In 2023, Jerusalem research centers documented 95 instances of self-demolition, citing the lack of building permits. In addition, Palestinians in Jerusalem were forced to pay more than 52 million shekels (about 15 million dollars)[15] under the pretext of "building violations." This strategy aims to break the will of the Jerusalemites, impoverish them financially, and undermine their resilience, adding to the psychological and material suffering caused by the ongoing occupation and discriminatory policies.

[13] Jerusalem Governorate Data
[14] OCHA
[15] Jerusalem Annual Status Brief 2023



Source: OCHA

The demolition of homes by the occupation severely impacts women and children, as the home represents a key source of security and stability. The repercussions of these demolitions ripple through the social, economic, and living conditions, with particularly devastating effects on mental health. The destruction of homes, where memories are made and familial bonds are formed, leaves families not only without shelter but also without the emotional and psychological safety that a home provides. This trauma is especially pronounced among women and children, who often bear the brunt of such violence, as they are left to grapple with the loss of their homes and the upheaval of their lives.

Violation of the Right to Political Participation and Restriction of Freedom of Opinion

The occupation authorities actively suppress political participation and freedom of expression for Palestinians in Jerusalem, severely restricting their ability to engage in peaceful activities, protests, cultural events, or any political mobilization. They impose harsh measures such as bans, arrests, and repression, especially targeting children. This situation has worsened with the 2014 law allowing the detention and prosecution of Palestinian children as adults once they reach the age of 14. The constant raids and surprise searches, often carried out late at night with intimidation and threats of violence, traumatize families. These actions frequently end in the arrest of a family member, often the husband or son of a Palestinian woman, who is taken for interrogation without any legitimate reason. The feeling of helplessness and fear is pervasive, as these families are unable to prevent such incursions or protect their loved ones from arbitrary detention.

In 2023, approximately 3,081 cases of detention were recorded across the Jerusalem Governorate, including 318 children and 135 women and girls[16]. The forms of repression vary, starting from arrests, house arrests, or internal expulsion to other neighborhoods where children are separated from their families and schools for months. These detentions occur under harsh and humiliating conditions, where individuals are blindfolded and taken to interrogation centers, held for nights without access to food, water, or the ability to use the restroom. In many cases, they are placed under "house arrest," where the child is confined to their home, prohibited from leaving or attending school. This often forces parents to constantly monitor their child, creating negative emotional consequences between the child and their parents. In 2023 alone, 316 house arrest orders were issued[17].

The Israeli authorities use the threat of revoking the residency of Jerusalemites as a means to intimidate them from engaging in any political or resistance activities, which extends to social media activists in a complete restriction of freedom of expression. This is done under the pretext of "breach of loyalty," which allows the Israeli Minister of Interior to revoke the residency of Jerusalemites without the need for a court conviction.

The Israeli authorities target institutions and journalistic teams in Jerusalem, obstructing their work by summoning dozens of journalists to interrogation and forcing them to sign pledges not to work with media outlets specializing in Jerusalem affairs. They do not recognize Palestinian or international press cards and demand Israeli press cards for journalists to work in Jerusalem.

Closure of Institutions in Jerusalem

Since 1967, Israeli authorities have been pursuing Jerusalem's Palestinian institutions in an effort to enforce Israeli sovereignty over the city. They have implemented various measures to force these institutions to move their offices and activities to areas in the West Bank, aiming to eliminate any Palestinian presence in the city. In 1994, they formed a committee to determine which Palestinian institutions could continue operating in Jerusalem, and nearly 50 institutions were closed while 94 others were placed on a list of those at risk of closure without justification, based on the "Law of Application of Sovereignty." This law restricts any Palestinian Authority activity in Jerusalem. Recently, Israeli authorities have extended the closure of more than 26 Palestinian institutions, including the Palestinian Prisoner's Society, the Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Orient House, which had served as the headquarters for the Palestinian Authority in Jerusalem since 2001.

The closure of bank accounts for these institutions, despite their compliance with payment obligations, has been one of the main methods used. As a result, over 100

[16] Jerusalem Statistical Yearbook 2024
[17] ibid.

Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem that provide economic, youth, social, and cultural services have been shut down since 1967, depriving Jerusalemites of essential services[18]. Despite these measures, the Palestinian Authority continues to strengthen its presence in the city through various means, including funding activities in Jerusalem to support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people there.

The Reality of Female Detainees in Jerusalem

The number of female detainees from Jerusalem in Israeli prisons is 12, in addition to the female detainees who were arrested after October 7, 2023, bringing their number to 11. Among them are wounded women, those with medical conditions, mothers, and the child, Nofouth Hammad, (16 years old), who was sentenced to 12 years in prison and fined 50,000 shekels[19].

The female detainees endure tragic and difficult conditions from the moment of their arrest, which is carried out in brutal ways that humiliate their dignity, particularly the dignity of women. They are subjected to all forms of humiliation, including beatings, insults, and threats of death. They also endure cold, hunger, and deprivation of basic human necessities such as food, clothing, blankets, and essential items for women, including sanitary pads. Additionally, they are denied medical treatment, especially for those suffering from chronic and serious illnesses, all amid a complete absence of the Red Cross and humanitarian and human rights organizations. Their privacy is also violated, and efforts are made to disrupt their daily lives through repeated raids on their rooms and sections under false security pretexts. Surveillance cameras are installed in rest areas and hallways, further infringing upon their personal space and adding to the harassment they face in the prisons.

Regarding communication with the outside world, the occupation implements a policy of isolation, where female detainees are prevented from contacting their families except through visits, which are subject to restrictions and are often canceled. There are significant limitations placed on lawyer visits, and they are prohibited from receiving books or bringing in embroidery and handicrafts. This further isolates them and restricts their ability to maintain any form of connection or engagement with their previous lives.

According to testimonies from released female detainees and reports issued by organizations that monitor their conditions in prisons, many of them have been subjected to threats of sexual assault, in addition to strip searches, verbal abuse, and offensive language. These practices violate human dignity and legally constitute sexual harassment. Such actions are part of a broader strategy to dehumanize and exert control

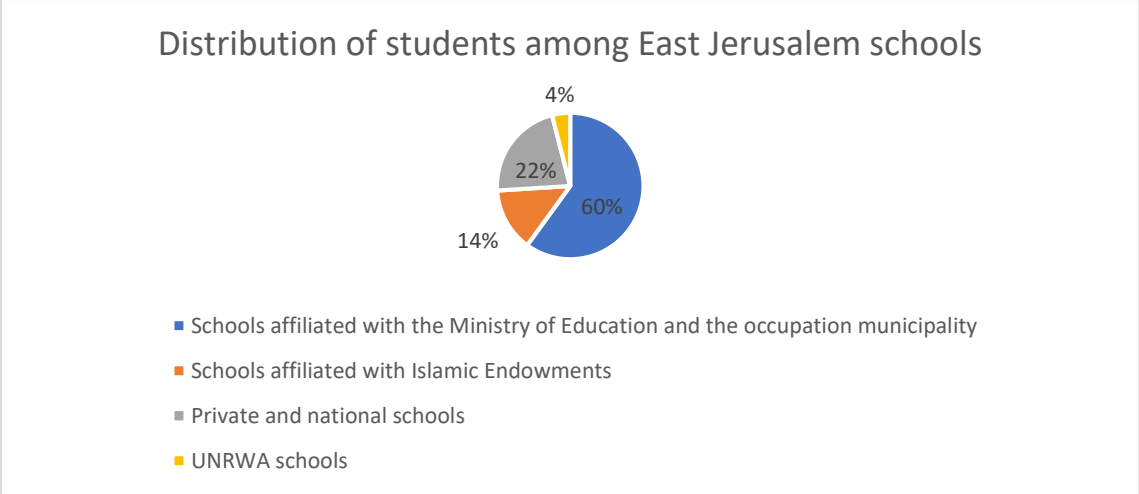
[18] Report entitled "The Occupation Extends the Closure of Palestinian Institutions in Jerusalem"
[19] Report entitled "Women and Children of Jerusalem Detainees Expected to be Released in the Exchange Deal"

over the prisoners, and they contribute to the physical and psychological trauma experienced by the women.

The Reality of Education in Jerusalem

The data for the 2023-2024 academic year indicates that the number of students in the Jerusalem Governorate has reached 98,428[20]. Palestinian students in Jerusalem receive their education in areas located behind the separation wall, attending 262 schools. These are divided into 127 public schools, 120 private schools, and 15 schools run by UNRWA[21]. The total number of Palestinian students in these areas is 29,025, with 8,665 male students and 9,616 female students attending public schools in the suburbs of Jerusalem[22].

In the areas within the Separation Wall (East Jerusalem), the education system is fragmented and ineffective due to the multiplicity of official bodies supervising, managing, and funding the schools. Official statistics indicate that about 60% of Palestinian students in East Jerusalem attend schools run by the Israeli Ministry of Education and the Jerusalem Municipality, including 19,371 males and 20,804 females. Around 14% attend schools administered by Islamic Waqf institutions and supervised by the Palestinian Ministry of Education, 4% attend schools run by UNRWA, and 22% are enrolled in private and community-based schools.



Education in East Jerusalem faces significant challenges due to systematic Israeli policies aimed at undermining the Palestinian narrative, erasing the national identity, and promoting the Israeli narrative. These policies seek to create a local Jerusalemite identity that is detached from its Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic roots.

[20] Jerusalem Statistical Yearbook 2024
[21] PCBS - Data for the year 2023
[22] Statistical Yearbook - Ministry of Education and Higher Education

The Impact of Israeli Policies on the Education of Jerusalemite Girls

The Israeli occupation's policies significantly restrict the educational sector's ability to exercise the right to education and the right to choose the content of education provided to students. These restrictions include incitement against Palestinian curricula, falsification of educational materials, and the imposition of Israeli curricula. Institutions distributing Palestinian textbooks are threatened with the revocation of recognition and licenses, forcing them to adopt distorted curricula. This is a clear violation of international conventions that affirm the right to choose the type of education, particularly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article (26), Article (13) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and Article (18/4) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which state that "parents, guardians, and caretakers have the right to choose the type of education given to their children." Additionally, students are hindered in their ability to reach schools, with frequent raids on schools, assaults on students and teachers, and intimidation tactics.

The intense and systematic assault on Palestinian curricula is not new; it began as soon as work started on the preparation of the first national curriculum in the late 1990s. This incitement has taken various forms, including submitting reports to international organizations and institutions accusing Palestinian curricula of incitement against "Israel." Meanwhile, the Israeli curricula promote incitement and hatred towards Arabs and Palestinians, urging students to kill "non-Jews." This double standard highlights the disparity in how education systems are held accountable for the messages they convey.

In addition to distorting the curricula by erasing everything related to the Palestinian cause, the history of Palestine, and events such as the Nakba of 1948 and the Naksa of 1967, there is also the removal of Palestinian geography, maps, and the names of cities, villages, and streets, replacing them with Hebrew names. Sections that discuss martyrs, wounded individuals, and prisoners are also erased. Furthermore, Quranic verses and Hadiths are removed, and references to UN resolutions on the Palestinian issue are also eliminated. This systematic erasure is part of the broader effort to undermine the Palestinian narrative and identity.

The schools funded and overseen by the so-called "Jerusalem Municipality" are subject to heavy surveillance and the distortion of Palestinian curricula, leading to 32% of students not completing 12 years of education. On the other hand, Palestinian schools that do not receive funding from Israel face significant challenges in ensuring a safe, healthy, and conducive environment for their students due to the constraints imposed by Israel, which pushes these schools toward collapse. These schools suffer from a

shortage of classrooms (there is a need for 2,200 classrooms)[23], leaving 8,000 to 9,000 students without seats. The Israeli authorities do not grant the necessary permits to build new schools, and when schools are built, they are demolished. The Israeli authorities justify this by pointing to the refusal of Palestinians to sell their land to the occupation government for school construction. Meanwhile, they find ample space to build housing for 200,000 illegal settlers, who do not face any issues in accessing education.

As a result of this shortage, 60% of schools in East Jerusalem are located in buildings originally designated for residential purposes, lacking essential infrastructures such as courtyards and playgrounds. This situation has negative consequences for students, including overcrowding, poor ventilation, and limited exposure to sunlight. Additionally, there is a severe shortage of necessary resources such as computers, laboratories, and teaching staff, especially in subjects like physics, mathematics, and English.

Among the Israeli plans to 'Israelize' education in Jerusalem is the five-year plan aimed at integrating Palestinians in Jerusalem into the Israeli system at various social, economic, and legal levels. The education and higher education sector received the largest share of the plan's budget, amounting to 445 million shekels (approximately 127 million US dollars). Of this amount, about 200 million shekels are allocated to encourage engagement with the Israeli education system by increasing the number of students studying the Israeli curriculum in East Jerusalem. In addition, the Israeli Knesset recently approved two laws in May 2023 aimed at restricting Palestinian schools and teachers in East Jerusalem through monitoring, inspection, and scrutiny of teachers' activities, with the possibility of dismissal if they are found to be involved in anti-occupation activities.

These practices and the restrictions imposed on schools and educational institutions under the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Islamic Waqf have led to a 10% dropout rate of students from schools under the Palestinian education system to schools run by the Israeli municipality that teach the Israeli curriculum. Furthermore, there is a shortage of teaching staff and difficulties in access faced by around 40% of teachers working in Palestinian public and private schools in Jerusalem, who come from the West Bank, due to closures. About 150 teachers have been forced to resign from these schools due to the salary crisis and move to Israeli-run schools, which threatens the closure of these schools and the increasing spread of the Israeli curriculum among the students.

Health Conditions of Jerusalemite Women

Before the occupation, Jerusalem was a vital hub for providing healthcare services in the West Bank, with many essential hospitals concentrated in the city, such as Al-

[23] ibid.

Makassed Hospital, the Eye Hospital, and others. Since the city's occupation in 1967, the reality of healthcare services, like other sectors, has changed drastically. These changes have had significant impacts on Jerusalemites and Palestinians throughout the rest of the West Bank.

The healthcare services in Jerusalem have become fragmented, subject to the geographic segregation policies imposed by Israel. This has impacted the access of Jerusalemites to healthcare services, with varying levels of mobility and access available to them. Residents of the eastern part of the city, within the boundaries of what is called the "Jerusalem Municipality," are subject to the mandatory Israeli health insurance system, which was enforced in 1995. Meanwhile, residents in the towns outside the annexation wall receive healthcare services managed by the Palestinian Authority. As of 2023, the government provides 27 primary healthcare centers in the Jerusalem Governorate, covering 31 population clusters outside the so-called "Jerusalem Municipality" boundaries, in addition to UNRWA-run centers and private healthcare facilities[24].

Jerusalemites in these areas face severe restrictions on movement to reach hospitals inside the separation wall. Although the distance is less than 5 kilometers, they are forced to obtain permits to cross the wall through military checkpoints and delays associated with these procedures. This not only reduces their willingness to visit hospitals in Jerusalem but also creates a psychological barrier due to the oppressive permit system. As a result, this situation could negatively affect the sustainability of hospitals operating in Jerusalem.

In East Jerusalem, there are seven hospitals with a total bed capacity of 716 beds: Al-Maqasid, Al-Mutalla, the Palestinian Red Crescent, the French Hospital, St. John Eye Hospital, Princess Basma Hospital, and Al-Jabah Hospital. These hospitals face financial pressures, especially after the decision by Israel in 2005 to impose the municipal property tax (Arnona), despite being classified as charitable institutions. This tax burden forces hospitals to reduce medical services to avoid bankruptcy. Additionally, the percentage of medical referrals to Jerusalem hospitals has declined due to the permit system and movement restrictions, with the referral rate dropping to 33% in 2023 from the total number of referrals, a 2% decrease compared to 2022[25]. The challenges associated with the sustainability of Jerusalem’s hospitals also affect the workers, especially women, who make up the largest percentage of employees in the healthcare sector. These challenges have resulted in a rising unemployment rate among healthcare workers, with women bearing the brunt of this economic strain.

[24] Annual Health Report 2023 - Ministry of Health
[25] ibid.

In East Jerusalem, Palestinian women face significant barriers to accessing healthcare services, particularly maternal health services. The available medical facilities are insufficient to meet the growing needs of the population. There are only six clinics managed by the "Jerusalem Municipality" in the Palestinian neighborhoods, compared to 25 clinics in the Jewish neighborhoods. Additionally, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society operates six clinics in the area. This disparity in healthcare provision exacerbates the challenges faced by Palestinian women in accessing adequate maternal and reproductive healthcare services.

The Repercussions of the UNRWA Ban in Jerusalem on the Health and Educational Conditions of Women and Girls

On October 28, 2024, the Israeli Knesset passed a law prohibiting the activities of UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) in East Jerusalem, which Israel considers to be "under Israeli sovereignty." This move contradicts international law, which regards Jerusalem as an occupied territory. The law reflects Israel's ongoing efforts to erase the Palestinian refugee issue. The presence of UNRWA in Jerusalem, which Israel claims as its capital, serves as a reminder that Israel is an occupying power and does not have sovereignty over the city.

The UNRWA headquarters is located in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem and serves as the central hub for the agency's work in the city and throughout the West Bank. The catastrophic consequences of Israel's decision to implement the ban on UNRWA's activities, which came into effect on January 29, 2025, will not only affect the refugees in Jerusalem but will extend to encompass all refugees in the West Bank. The headquarters oversees providing services to more than 850,000 refugees in the West Bank and over 100,000 refugees in Jerusalem, offering healthcare, education, social services, small loans, and other essential assistance.

The lives of 16,344 refugees in Qalandiya camp and 16,419 refugees in Shu'fat camp will be significantly impacted, as they will be deprived of essential services such as healthcare, education, and waste collection services provided by UNRWA[26]. At the same time, alternatives are not available for Jerusalem's residents, who are unable to access health insurance for various reasons, further exacerbating the situation. The withdrawal of these services will create a severe gap in the access to basic necessities for these vulnerable populations.

The thousands of Palestinian refugee women in Jerusalem will be deprived of essential medical services provided by UNRWA, including maternal care, family planning, child care for children up to 3 years old, mental health services, chronic disease treatment, as well as emergency and dental care. This will significantly increase the financial and physical burdens on these women as they are forced to seek alternative healthcare options, which are often less accessible and more costly. The lack of these vital services will have long-term negative impacts on their well-being and quality of life.

[26] UNRWA

Jerusalemite refugees receive their education in six schools run by UNRWA, which accommodate around 1,800 male and female students, in addition to 350 vocational education students at the Qalandiya Training College. With the decision to impose restrictions and the lack of alternative options, the education of these students is at risk, which will particularly affect girls. This situation will also have an impact on mothers, as they are the primary caregivers in the family, increasing the family responsibilities placed on their shoulders. Furthermore, the economic impact will be significant, as 1,200 male and female teachers will lose their jobs, leaving them forced into unemployment.

The cessation of waste collection services provided by UNRWA will result in catastrophic environmental and health consequences for the refugees. With streets in the refugee camps becoming clogged with untreated waste, this will create a breeding ground for diseases and epidemics. The accumulation of garbage will attract pests and rodents, further exacerbating the public health crisis and placing vulnerable populations, particularly children and the elderly, at great risk. These environmental hazards will compound the already challenging living conditions in the camps.

The Reality of Basic Services in Jerusalem

The housing density in the Jerusalem Governorate (the number of individuals per room) is 3 people. The number of occupied homes in areas behind the wall is 32,342, compared to 62,892 homes in areas inside the wall (East Jerusalem, J1)[27]. This reflects the difficult housing conditions for Palestinians in these areas under Israeli administration compared to those in Palestinian areas.

Despite the fact that residents of areas outside the separation wall continue to pay taxes to the so-called "Jerusalem Municipality," they suffer from high housing overcrowding, a lack of infrastructure, and deterioration in water and sewage networks, as well as all essential services that do not meet the growing population's needs in these areas.

The Palestinians in East Jerusalem suffer from a differential legal status and systematic marginalization compared to the settlers, especially regarding housing and access to healthcare and education services. Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem experience marginalization in terms of the services provided, urban planning, allocation of funding, and access to resources. Despite Palestinians constituting 37% of the city's population and paying municipal taxes and income taxes as "permanent residents" under Israeli law, they do not receive the necessary services that address their growing needs in infrastructure or medical services. The share of Palestinian neighborhoods in the budget spent by the Israeli municipality does not exceed 10%.

[27] ibid.

While Jerusalemites are deprived of infrastructure development services, the area that Israeli authorities allow Palestinians to build and live in constitutes only 13% of the area of occupied East Jerusalem, most of which is already densely populated. The possibility for expansion and construction is extremely limited due to Israeli restrictions and discriminatory policies in granting building permits. Even when permits are granted, they rarely exceed 2% of building permit requests due to lengthy procedures and costly fees associated with them, such as development fees, improvement fees, and others. The total cost for building permits, including applying for water and sewage services and taxes, is estimated at around $30,000.

Despite Jerusalemites' commitment to paying taxes to the so-called "Jerusalem Municipality" under Israeli control, only 7% of the city's budget is allocated to them, compared to 93% for Jewish settlers, despite the low wages of the Jerusalemites and the wage gap compared to Jewish settlers.

In addition to the "protocols" that impose restrictions on construction in Arab areas, building structures exceeding three floors are prohibited, while Jewish buildings are allowed to expand up to eight floors. This forces Jerusalemites to leave densely populated Arab neighborhoods and relocate to areas outside the Jerusalem Municipality or to the West Bank. This is one of the objectives pursued by Israeli authorities through strict urban planning and construction laws, which serve as coercive factors that drive the Israeli policies of residency revocation and demographic transformation, in line with their broader goals.

The average number of people per household for Palestinian families is approximately 6 individuals in a 110-square-meter apartment, which, by nature, does not meet the needs of people with disabilities. In contrast, Jewish households have an average of 3.2 individuals per home. This discrepancy does not accommodate the population growth rate, with a natural birth rate of 2.81 children per woman[28].

These restrictions create a housing crisis within households, and women and girls bear the brunt of this issue. They are forced to live in extended families within confined spaces, losing their privacy and freedom, which is a fundamental need for every woman.

The restriction on Palestinians' access to public services in Jerusalem is not limited to housing. Official institutions under the occupation, including the National Insurance Institute, fail to provide social allowances to Palestinians, considering them "permanent residents." These allowances help them manage their lives, impacting their living and economic conditions. As a result, there is a growing need for legal assistance

[28] Fact sheet-Demographic of east Jerusalem 2024/world council of churches

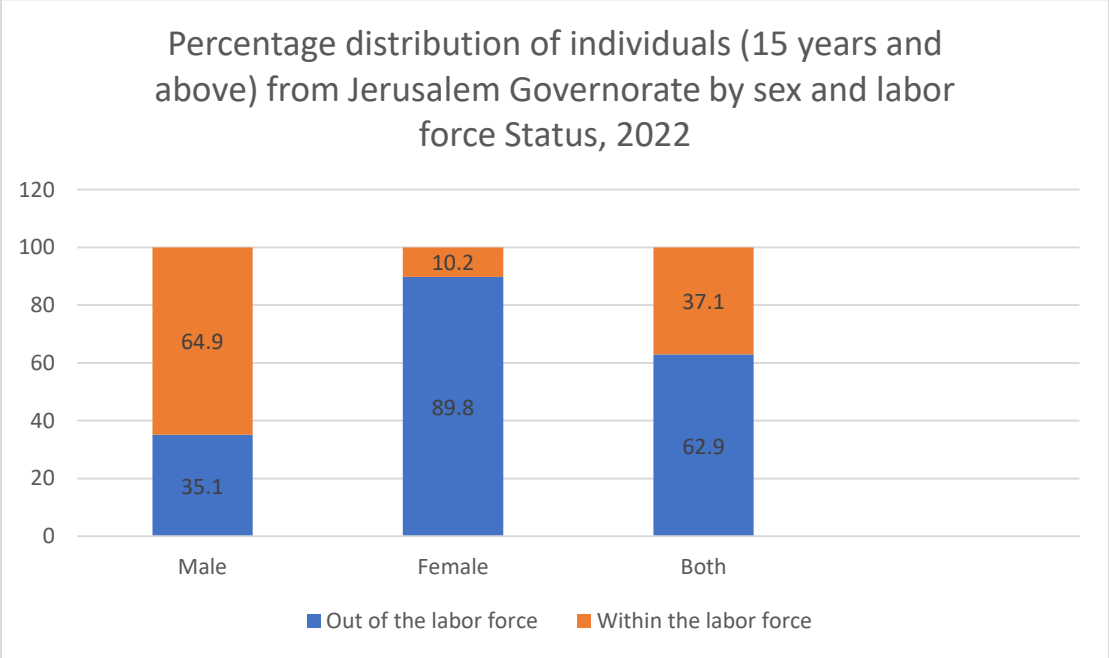
to secure their right to these allowances, which has become increasingly difficult due to the closure of dozens of Jerusalemite institutions that play a role in this legal domain.

The Economic Conditions of Jerusalem

Key Indicators of the Labor Market

The labor force participation rate in Jerusalem Governorate among individuals aged 15 and older was 37.1% in 2022. Female participation in the workforce in the same age group was only 10.2% of the total female population, compared to 64.9% for males. Meanwhile, the percentage of females outside the labor force was 89.8%, compared to 35.1% for males[29]. This highlights the significant gender disparity in labor market participation in the region, with women facing greater barriers to entering the workforce.

This low participation rate indicates that Jerusalem's economy is struggling to generate new job opportunities, particularly for women. The problem is less severe for men, who have access to employment opportunities in the Israeli labor market. However, this disparity highlights systemic challenges that prevent women from entering the workforce, which may include cultural norms, limited access to education and training, and restricted mobility or opportunities within Palestinian-controlled areas.



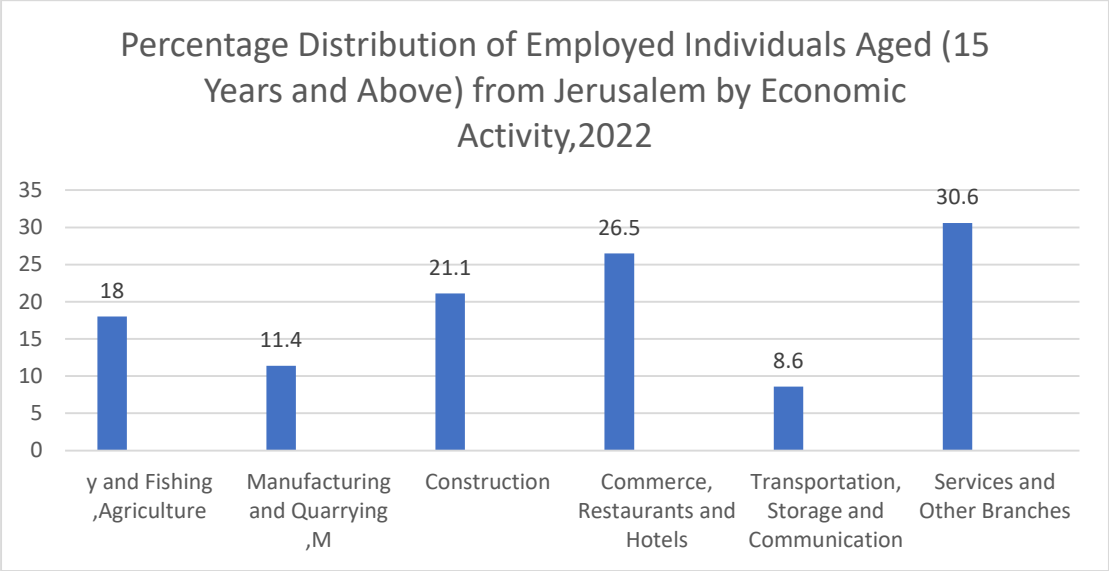
Source: PCBS

The employment rate in Jerusalem Governorate was 96.8% in 2022, with 94% for females and 97.2% for males. According to official data, 88.9% of workers are wage employees, while 4.7% are self-employed. On the other hand, the unemployment rate

[29] Jerusalem Statistical Yearbook 2024

in the Jerusalem Governorate among individuals aged 15 and above is 3.2%, with 5.9% for females and 2.8% for males.

The largest proportion of workers from the Jerusalem Governorate is distributed across the services sector and other branches, accounting for 30.6%, followed by the trade, restaurants, and hotels sector at 26.5%. This highlights Jerusalem's heavy reliance on the tourism sector and its related services. According to key indicators for the hotel industry in the Jerusalem Governorate at the end of 2022, there are 22 operational hotels, with an average of 213 female workers compared to 577 male workers.



Source: PCBS

The Economic Impact of Israeli Violations in Jerusalem

The construction of the separation barrier has paralyzed the economic life in the towns and neighborhoods located behind the wall, with its encroachment on surrounding lands, the closure of dozens of establishments and factories, and the confiscation of agricultural lands, depriving their owners of access and use. Women are directly affected, especially since they make up a significant portion of the workers in this sector. Jerusalem Governorate had the lowest percentage of cultivated land, accounting for only 0.9% during the 2020-2021 agricultural year[30]. The number of agricultural landholders in the Jerusalem Governorate was 2,542 in the 2021-2022 agricultural year[31].

In East Jerusalem, Israeli policies, including its forced annexation in 1967 and the construction of the separation wall in 2001, which isolated the city from its geographical extension and severed its natural connection with the West Bank, have led to a systematic and gradual separation of the economy of East Jerusalem from the rest of the Palestinian economy. This is despite its historical significance and its status as the cultural, tourist, and spiritual center for Palestinians across all Palestinian territories.

[30] Preliminary results of the agricultural census in Palestine - Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
[31] Jerusalem Statistical Yearbook 2024

The systematic exclusion of East Jerusalem from "Israel" through discriminatory policies that restrict Palestinians' access to healthcare, education, housing services, and infrastructure has directly impacted the quality of human capital in Jerusalem, which is essential for the economic development of East Jerusalem. Additionally, settlement policies hinder any developmental impact.

As a result of these Israeli policies over the decades, the economy of East Jerusalem has become completely detached from both the Palestinian and Israeli economies, remaining unintegrated with either. Structurally, it relies on the West Bank economy to sustain trade in goods and services while being forcibly aligned with Israeli market regulations. This leaves the economy of East Jerusalem to struggle independently, facing significant challenges that impede its growth[32].

The economy of East Jerusalem suffers from fluctuations and instability due to the political situation, especially as the city heavily relies on the tourism sector and related activities, which make up 40% of its economy, in addition to the commercial sector. These sectors are among the most affected during times of security unrest, with a significant decline in internal tourism from the West Bank, further worsened by the construction of the separation wall in 2002.

In addition to the political barrier, financial obstacles also hinder the development of the economy in East Jerusalem. Jerusalemites face difficulties in obtaining financing and credit, whether for consumption, investment, or housing purposes. While the Israeli occupation prevents the presence of Palestinian banks in East Jerusalem, Jerusalemites are forced to deal with limited Israeli banks that do not cover basic needs. Language barriers further complicate dealings with these banks, as banking transactions are conducted in Hebrew, which not all Jerusalemites are proficient in. Additionally, the fear of losing property, including land, homes, and businesses, to the Israeli entity in case of inability to repay a loan serves as a critical deterrent.

More than 30,000 properties in Jerusalem are threatened with demolition, which will cause economic losses to the lives of about 100,000 Jerusalemites.

[32] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Report

Living Conditions of Jerusalemites

The living conditions and social and economic circumstances of Jerusalemites have been affected by Israeli policies, which have naturally affected their standards of living, housing, health and education services they receive.

Sources of Income for Jerusalemite Families

In East Jerusalem, Israeli labor sectors represent the primary income source for approximately 54% of Jerusalemite families. This is followed by wages and salaries from the local private sector at 13.1%, family businesses as a source of income for 6% of Jerusalemite households, wages and salaries from international public organizations at 3.3%, and other sources at 1.8%.

These indicators highlight the significant dependency of the Jerusalemite economy on Israeli income sources. From this perspective, Israel pursues policies aimed at impoverishing Jerusalemites as part of its systematic planning to create a coercive environment that pushes them out of the city. This is manifested through home demolitions, commercial establishment closures, and the imposition of various taxes despite the neglect of essential infrastructure and services associated with them. Additionally, Israel imposes arbitrary fines for late tax payments and imposes living costs similar to those in West Jerusalem settlements, despite the wage gap between Palestinian residents and Israeli settlers. According to the data, the average income of an Israeli settler in West Jerusalem is $42,000 annually, which is nine times the income of a Palestinian in Jerusalem[33].

According to data published by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in May 2023, 78% of Jerusalemites are dissatisfied with their economic situation, while 74% of settlers in the city are satisfied with their situation.

The monthly income of an individual in Jerusalem ranges between $1,380 and $2,200. Forty percent of the Jerusalemite family's expenses are consumed by housing costs ($857 per month), while the average monthly consumption of a family is $2,142. As a result, 78% of Jerusalemites struggle to cover their monthly expenses, whereas only 23% of settlers face such difficulties[34].

Jerusalemite Women in the Israeli Labor Market

The participation of Jerusalemite women in the labor market in East Jerusalem does not exceed 13%. This is due to many reasons, the most prominent being the occupation's measures, settler violence, and discriminatory wage policies, all of which act as deterrents for Jerusalemite women to join the Israeli labor market. Additionally, the Hebrew language barrier is an obstacle to their involvement in the Israeli job market, as 60% of Jerusalemite women do not have verbal proficiency in Hebrew[35].

[33] ibid.
[34] Data published by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in May 2023.
[35] Report entitled "Why do Jerusalemite Women not Integrate into the Labor Market?"

With such low participation, households are left with only one breadwinner, which is insufficient given the high cost of living[36].

After the events of October 7, 2023, the number of job seekers in occupied Jerusalem increased by 500%, according to data from the Employment Authority in the Occupation Municipality. The rise in unemployment in Jerusalem is attributed to several reasons:

- Arbitrary dismissal of Jerusalemites working in Israeli institutions under the pretext of "incitement" on social media platforms.
- Israeli companies and institutions reducing the number of employees due to the war, prioritizing settlers for continued employment.
- Increased violence against Palestinians working in Israeli institutions by settlers and Israeli forces, pushing them to leave their jobs.
- Daily provocations by settlers that disrupt markets and businesses, particularly in the Old City, in addition to the closure of Jerusalem's markets and businesses during Jewish holidays under threat of force by the occupation authorities.
- The closure of checkpoints leading to Jerusalem and the installation of additional barriers, hindering Jerusalemites from reaching their workplaces.
- Negative implications for women's projects and the difficulty of sustaining them due to unstable conditions.
- High tax burdens and costly registration fees imposed on small and medium-sized businesses.
- Obstacles to the circulation of Palestinian products and restrictions on their access to markets, in addition to continuous threats to local trade.
- Institutional discrimination and racist practices by the Israeli Standards and Metrology Authority affecting the acceptance of Palestinian products.

These measures lead to the impoverishment of Jerusalemite families and an increase in poverty and extreme poverty rates among them. 72% of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem live below the poverty line, compared to 26% of settler families. As a result, 81% of Palestinian children live under the poverty line, compared to 36% of settler children[37].

Given these indicators, Jerusalemite families are faced with difficult living conditions that threaten their economic stability, with women bearing the largest burden. The repercussions are felt in their psychological and social well-being, especially for women who are heads of households and face challenges in providing for basic needs and covering expenses. Poverty rates are higher among these women. Reports show

[36] A study conducted by Al-Quds University
[37] East Jerusalem: Facts and Figures 2019

that households led by women are more vulnerable to poverty, with poverty rates in female-headed households in the West Bank reaching 11.9%, compared to 11.5% in male-headed households[38].

Religious Violations in Jerusalem

The city of Jerusalem has been witnessing for decades an Israeli religious war, filled with various forms of Judaization and attacks on the Islamic and Christian religious presence in the city, in violation of what the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates regarding the right to freedom of worship and the practice of religious rituals.

One of the most prominent of these violations is the attempt to alter the Islamic character of Al-Aqsa Mosque through excavations beneath it, repeated attacks on worshipers and those who defend the mosque, and the monthly incursions by extremist Jewish groups, such as the Temple Mount groups. These groups encourage thousands of settlers to storm Al-Aqsa, accompanied by provocative actions, such as raising Israeli flags in an attempt to impose sovereignty, performing Talmudic prayers, singing, and dancing. The Israeli Ministry of "Heritage" has allocated a budget of 550,000 US dollars for this purpose.

In addition to the military restrictions imposed by the occupation army on entering the mosque and limiting Muslims' access during the holy month of Ramadan and on Fridays, there are arbitrary deportation decisions issued against worshippers. In 2023 alone, 412 deportation decisions were made, which were not based on any accusation or justification. One of the most prominent cases was that of Jerusalemite Hanadi Al-Halawani, who was banned from entering the courtyards and gates of Al-Aqsa. Her deportation period reached 7 years.

Regarding Christian holy sites, churches are subjected to various forms of harassment, including assaults on clergy and worshippers, deliberate vandalism of monasteries and churches, as well as attempts to illegally seize these properties. This is compounded by difficulties in obtaining permits for restoration and expansion. These violations are accompanied by restrictions on religious holiday celebrations and tight restrictions on Christian pilgrims.

The Jerusalemite woman bears an additional burden in confronting these violations. She faces harassment when entering Al-Aqsa Mosque and is subjected to frequent arrests and summonses. Despite these challenges, she remains at the forefront in defending her holy sites.

The Directions of the Nineteenth Palestinian Government in Strengthening the Resilience of Jerusalem and its Inhabitants

Jerusalem has always been a top priority on the Palestinian government's agenda. The government spares no effort in supporting the city and its residents, working to preserve its historical and religious character, while strengthening its presence within the

[38] Household Expenditure and Poverty Survey in the West Bank 2023-Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

Palestinian national fabric. This is alongside addressing the challenges imposed by the occupation, whether economic or social, through strategic plans and action programs that contribute to empowering citizens and enhancing their stability.

In this context, efforts are being made to reconnect the city with its Palestinian surroundings, with intensified efforts to ensure the continuation of essential services and provide the necessary support to affected families. Projects are also being developed to strengthen the resilience of citizens in areas targeted by the occupation, by meeting their basic needs and improving their living conditions.

The most prominent efforts made by the ninth government to strengthen the steadfastness of the people of Jerusalem can be summarized as follows[39]:

- **Providing services to Jerusalemites and working to improve them:** such as health, education, and infrastructure services. In this context, meetings and discussions are being held with the network of hospitals in East Jerusalem and the Directorate of Education in Jerusalem and its suburbs to identify the needs of Jerusalemites. Additionally, partnerships are being established with civil society organizations and neighborhood committees in Jerusalem, along with conducting field visits for monitoring and assessment. In addition to providing legal services to Jerusalemite citizens in accordance with Cabinet Resolution No. (9) of 2018 on the financial system for supporting the steadfastness of Jerusalemites, efforts are being made to follow up on cases and files in Israeli courts and official enforcement and execution departments. Efforts are also being made to provide financial support to the residents by offering financial assistance in light of the difficult social and economic conditions. This assistance specifically targets impoverished Jerusalemite families and those affected by the policies of the occupation.
- **Protecting holy places:** The Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs conduct field visits to Jerusalemite neighborhoods as part of efforts to enhance development and Palestinian presence in the city, while preserving its religious and cultural identity.
- **Empowering the local economy:** The Ministry of National Economy has signed eight projects funded with a total value of 426 million dollars from the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). These projects are in partnership with non-governmental organizations in Jerusalem and focus on sectors such as tourism, e-commerce, and youth empowerment, aimed at supporting small businesses and local traders to confront the economic restrictions imposed.
- **Confronting Israeli policies**: efforts are made to resist displacement operations, home demolitions, and land confiscation. A variety of services are provided to Jerusalemites to strengthen their resilience in the city, including assistance related to building permits and financial aid for house demolitions. The financial support

[39] Performance Report: 'One Hundred Days of the Nineteenth Government's Work

is allocated based on the type and condition of the demolition. The Palestinian Ministry of Education is also working to confront the plans to 'Israelize' education in Jerusalem, both on the media and awareness levels, as well as through social engagement with parents regarding the dangers of their children enrolling in Israeli-run schools.

- **International Advocacy**: the efforts to gather political and diplomatic support aim to highlight the suffering of Jerusalemites and confront Israeli violations. In line with strengthening advocacy and exposing the occupation's violations, the Ministry of Women's Affairs works on raising awareness about the issues faced by Jerusalemite women in local, regional, and international forums. Additionally, the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs holds numerous meetings with ambassadors, consuls, and representatives of diplomatic missions to inform them about the current situation in the city. The ministry also leads the process of setting priorities for Jerusalem's residents in vital sectors such as health, education, and housing to implement the necessary developmental interventions.
- **Local Advocacy**: The ministry holds meetings with Jerusalem's civil institutions to discuss the developments in the city and ways to strengthen citizens, while also monitoring the level of basic services provided to them. Additionally, financial support is provided to institutions, associations, and clubs in Jerusalem through annual grants that assist with their operational expenses.

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