

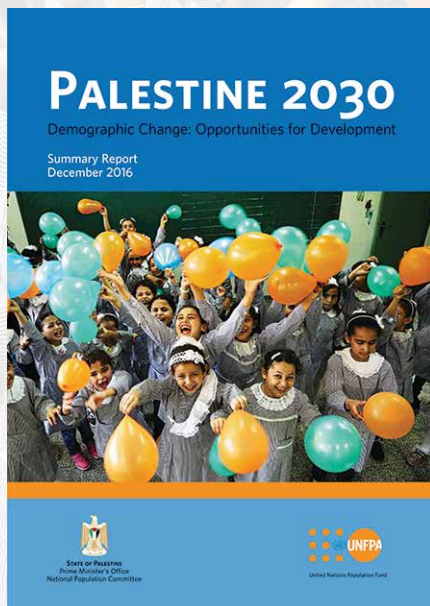
## Palestine 2030

Demographic Change: Opportunities for Development

By United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and  
Prime Minister's Office - National Population Committee  
December 2016

Available at <https://palestine.unfpa.org/>.

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Looking at projections of future population dynamics and scenarios provides a good guidepost for actions that need to be taken today: action to ensure sustainable economic development, full employment, and social protection for all Palestinians.

The title of the study, *Demographic Change: Opportunities for Development*, signals that a growing population with a growing workforce of a young, vibrant, empowered, and productive populace can provide a much needed boost to the development of a nation, a country, or a community. But only if we are prepared!

By the year 2030, the State of Palestine's population will have increased to 6.9 million, compared to 4.7 million in 2015. That is an increase of a bit more than 2 million people. Are we ready for that? Gaza's population will grow more than that of the West Bank and will need to accommodate 1.3 million more persons, whereas the West Bank will need to accommodate an additional 860,000 people. The number of registered Palestinian refugees will increase from 2 million to 3 million in 2030. What does this mean for the future of Palestinian refugees and their needs?

A more optimistic picture emerges from future demographic trends. Palestine will witness a high increase in the working-age population (15–64 years old) with a decrease in the dependent population. The number of young people will increase and the labor force will grow from the current 1.3 million to 2.3 million in 2030. Fifty-eight thousand jobs will need to be created every year; this number will increase annually by 72,000 during the years 2030–2035, just to keep the unemployment rate constant. Can we create 1 million new jobs in the coming 14 years?

Regarding statistics for education, 2 million students will be enrolled in schools and 400,000 students will be enrolled in tertiary education, which will require 1,650 new schools to be built and an additional 32,000 teachers hired to meet the demand by 2030.

In the area of health care, changes in population structure imply changes in health-care services that will be needed in the years ahead, especially among those most at risk: children, women of reproductive age, and the elderly. To cope with the population increase, the need for services will require an additional 36 hospitals, 347 primary health care centers, 4,200 physicians, and 7,600 nurses.

The change in the population age structure in Palestine can create a virtuous circle of economic growth, named demographic dividend, if invested well in human capital, youth, and women's empowerment. Realizing a demographic dividend requires multiple intersecting investments to empower, educate, and employ young people.

The key challenges to achieving this demographic gain are the ongoing Israeli occupation and the severe restrictions on the movement of both people and goods in Palestine. With continued occupation, the capacity of the local economy to create jobs and activate more people as effective producers is likely to remain low, thus limiting the realization of a demographic dividend. Without a peace agreement, political instability and the occupation will remain the primary obstacles to making gains in social and economic development.

To access the full report, please visit <https://palestine.unfpa.org/>.