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Demographic Profile of Palestinian Migration

**By
Ismail Lubbad**

Paper Prepared for the

Migration and Refugee Movements in the Middle East and North Africa

**The Forced Migration & Refugee Studies Program
The American University in Cairo, Egypt**

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Discussion Paper

Demographic Profile of Palestinian Migration

Ismail Lubbad PhD

I. Introduction

This working paper was prepared for the Centre of Forced Migration and Refugee Studies (FMRS) at the American University in Cairo (AUC) within the overall framework of the creation of a Middle Eastern and African Center for migration and refugee studies.

The lack of available border registration data - Palestinian borders in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) are controlled by Israel - has restricted research on the demography of Palestinian migration. Furthermore, demographic statistics have been a political issue in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict since the beginning of the 20th century. A number of research studies, however, have been conducted on the demography of Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East “UNRWA” in its five fields of operation in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. (Khwaja, 2003)¹

This working paper, therefore, aims to bridge the gap and to present some demographic characteristics of Palestinian migration, including refugees both in and outside the oPt by examining the evolution of the Palestinian population since the late 19th century. In order to explore migration trends in Palestinian society, the paper also examines the differences in the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics between migration patterns and populations in host countries. Finally, the paper considers some of the desirable socioeconomic characteristics of future emigrants from the oPt.

II. Methods and Data

¹ See: Non-published PhD of Ismail Lubbad, Impact of UNRWA services on the demographic behavior of Palestinian refugees –1948-2000. Paris, March 2006.

In order to present comprehensive demographic figures on Palestinian migration, both emigration and immigration statistics are required. As noted earlier, however, border registrations are not available, since the Palestinian Authority (PA) does not register demographic data on the oPt borders. Efforts made by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) to obtain migration data from Israeli, Egyptian and Jordanian records have failed. In order to address this lack, the paper seeks to explore alternative sources of data.

Immigration Data

This working paper will concentrate, therefore, on immigration data available in the Population, Housing and Establishments Census which was conducted in the oPt in 1997. Another source of data is the national survey conducted by PCBS in 2006 which focused on the impact of the unilateral Israeli measures on Palestinian households in the oPt.² The raw data of the previous census and survey were analyzed by using statistical software (SPSS) with direct cooperation with PCBS. The previous survey and population census included questions relating to individuals' residences during specific periods, such as place of original residence at birth; current place of residence; previous place of residence (if any); reasons for changing place of residence (if appropriate); and length of time in current residence.

Emigration Data

Neither the Palestinian population census nor the Demographic and Health Survey included emigration data; it is hard to collect data on all the Palestinian emigrations since the 1990s, as the emigration data are available only in the host countries of these emigrations. Additionally, the paper will make use of the public poll concerning migration issues conducted by Beirzeit Development Program in the oPt in February 2007.

As for Gaza between 2003 and 2007, the paper will include data on the numbers of arrivals and departures collected by the Palestinian National Authority, Palestinian Ministry of Civil Affairs and Passports Department at Rafah Crossing.

² Source: Palestinian Central bureau of Statistics (PCBS), 2006. Survey of the Impact of the Israel Unilateral Measures on Social, Economic, and environmental Conditions of the Palestinian Households: Main findings, September 2006, Ramallah, Palestine

With regard to demographic refugee data registered at UNRWA, the researcher got a row data of a survey conducted by UNRWA in cooperation with the Institute University of Geneva and the Catholic University of Louvain IUED-UCL. The analyzed data will be used in comparison between demographic refugees and Palestinian migration as well as the rest of Palestinians in the oPt and host countries.

III. Migration Status: Evolution of Palestinian Population

Migration has marked the population dynamics in Palestine/Israel since the late 19th century. Migration caused an increase of Jewish population that created the state of Israel in 1948; meanwhile, migration and forced migration resulted in the creation of the Palestinian refugee question inside Palestine and in Diaspora. The migration status and population size has been debated since the beginning of the 20th Century. The Zionists claim that Palestine was a land without a people, which is challenged by pro-Palestinian historians who cite census figures that show a substantial Palestinian-Arab population by 1914. Zionists note that most of this increase seems to have occurred after 1880, when Jews began developing Palestine.³ In this profile, we will present the migration status through a presentation of population evolution in Palestine and different estimations of the current size of Palestinian population inside Palestine and in Diaspora.

Palestinian Population Trends by the end of British Mandate in 1947

In Ottoman and Mandate periods, migration was a minor factor in the Palestinian (Muslim and Christian) population trends. The analysis of Ottoman statistics showed a little permanent migration of Arabs into or out of Palestine from 1860 to 1914. (McCarthy, 1990) Before 1932, Mandate authorities did not register migration properly as immigration was recorded fairly, but not emigration. The analysis of migration by religion indicated that only 838 more Muslims entered Palestine than left from 1932 to 1946. While, the net migration of Christians (20,051) was positive (Arab immigrants emigrated primarily from Lebanon and Syria). In regards to Arab emigrants, a large majority from Mandatory Palestine went to the United Kingdom, other Arab countries and some to Latin America. Concerning the displaced and expelled persons,

³ See : <http://www.israelipalestinianprocon.org/populationpalestine.html>

more than 100,000 were displaced in and within the borders of Palestine between 1922 and 1947 when the UN recommended the Partition of Palestine into two states.⁴

Regarding the immigration of the non-Arab population into Palestine, the number of Jews increased from 15,000 inhabitants (3.2% of the total population in Palestine) in 1879 to 65,000 inhabitants (10.2% of the total population in Palestine) in 1917; an annual increase of 14%ⁱ. By 1947, it reached to 650,000 inhabitants (about 33.2% of the total population in Palestine); an annual increase of 30% between 1917 and 1947 (during the British Mandate) due to the mass migration encouraged and initiated by the Zionist Movement following the Balfour declaration.

Table 1: Evolution of Palestinian Population by Religion in Palestine 1917 -1945

Year	Source	Moslem	Christian	Jews	Others	Non-Jews %	Total
1879	Census	15 000	..	96.8%	462 465
1917	Estimation	515 000	62 550	65 300	n.a	89.8%	642 850
1922	Census	589,177	71,464	83 790	7,617	88.9%	752 048
1931	Census	759 700	88 907	174 606	10 101	83.1%	1 033 314
1946	Survey	1 076 780	145 060	608 230	15 490	67.1%	1 845 560
1947	Projection	1 135 269	153 621	650 000	16 370	66.8%	1 955 260

Source:

1879: Population census conducted by the Ottomans

1922 and 1931: Population census by the British Mandate in Palestine

1946: Survey of Palestine, prepared by the British for the United Nation Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) in 1946, which contains a wealth of statistical data about the almost all sectors of life during the British Mandate.

Palestinian Population Trends after 1947

The war of 1948 (Nekba) forced about 726,000 of the Arab population of Palestine to emigrate outside Palestine, the West Bank, Gaza and inside Israel (Israel was declared as a state on the 15th May 1948 on the 78% of historical Palestine land) consequently becoming refugees.⁵ As a

⁴ From among 9,000 applications of Palestinians abroad

⁵ The number of Palestinians varies from source to source. The UN commission for Palestine (UNPCC) gave a number of 710,000 in its report 23 October 1951, while one year after, the UNPCC used the number of 900,000 for its estimation for Palestinian refugees figure. The Israeli historian Benny Morris in his book *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem* (1987) estimated the number of Palestinian refugees to be 520,000 in 1948. While Khaldi, W, estimated the figure of refugees by 849,186 in his book *All That Remains, The Palestinian Villages Occupied and developed by Israel in 1948*, Washington DC, IPS, 1992.

response to the crisis, the UN established an international agency (UNRWA) to offer relief, work, education, health and social services to Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The movement of Palestinians in the Arab and foreign countries was affected by the political and economic situation. The war of 1967 caused another forced migration of about 325,000 Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip towards Arab countries especially Jordan (95% of the displaced persons went to Jordan in 1967).⁶ Besides the previous migration waves, the internal conflicts in Jordan in 1970, civil war in Lebanon in 1980s and the Gulf wars of 1991 and 2003 resulted into another movement and migration of Palestinians to Arab and foreign countries especially in Scandinavian countries and to the West Bank and the Gaza strip following the establishment of the PA on the base of Oslo peace understandings. For example, the number of Palestinians in Kuwait decreased from to 250,000 in 1990 to 40,000 in 2005.⁷

Palestinian Migrants in 2006-2007

Palestinian migration is complex and unique. Palestinian migrants can be divided into three categories: a) refugees and displaced persons in the West Bank and Gaza and inside Israel; b) refugees and displaced persons in Diaspora; c) migrants due to social and economic situations including refugees and non refugees. An estimation of Palestinian migration is quiet difficult as there is no official sources of enumerating Palestinians outside the WBGS and Israel, coupled with the problem of defining the Palestinians as a large segment of Palestinians outside Palestine were born elsewhere and received different citizenship. (McCarthy, 2001) However, in this part we will try to picture and discuss the migration status and different sources regarding Palestinian migration.

Firstly, is the current migration status negative or positive? Demographers cannot answer this question without statistical figures. Actually, Israeli authority indicates that migration is negative

⁶ Source: UN, the number of displaced is about 325,000 Palestinians, Palestine Refugees: 50 Years of Injustice: <http://www.palestine-un.org/info/ref.html>

⁷ Based on a demographic study, the Palestinians presented 14% of the total population of Kuwait (1.8 million in 1990), while the figure for 2005 was based on Badil survey of Palestinian refugees and internally displaced persons p. 54 (2004-2005). See also: Arab Generations for Philippe Fargues, 1989

while the PCBS estimates no migration flow from/into the oPt since 2000 (zero migration).⁸ Nevertheless, between July 2006 and June 2007, the number of arrivals and departures Palestinians to/out of the Gaza Strip indicates that the difference is approximately 10,000 departures.⁹ This matches the expectations of a public poll conducted by Beirzeit Development Program in February 2007, which revealed that about 31% of the respondents expressed their desire to migrate if they had the opportunity, which reflects an increased desire of emigration. In general, there is a tendency for emigration from the oPt.

Secondly, what is the estimated number of Palestinian migrants? In order to answer this question, we are going to explore different source of data regarding Palestinian figures. The number of registered Palestinian refugees is about 711,000 and 1,001,000 respectively in the West Bank and Gaza according to UNRWA 2006 figures.¹⁰

Thirdly, the differences of estimation from one source to another are quite high. In this paper, we will compare between sources and methods of estimation by country/region.

In Jordan: The number of Palestinians in Jordan is quite difficult to be estimated for many reasons including identity, politics and census definition. However, it is impossible to identify the number of Palestinians in Jordan through the population census as Palestinians in Jordan have the right to hold Jordanian citizenship.

High fertility coupled with huge quantities of returnees from Kuwait in 1991, the share of Palestinians located in Jordan increased from 592,000 (47%) in 1970 to 2.8 million (56% out of the total Palestinians abroad according to PCBS in 2006). Our estimation for Palestinians in Jordan is about 2.66 million in 2006, which estimated by considering an annual increase of 2.9 between 2000 and 2006. (See Table 2)

⁸ According to Israeli Borders Authority, about 35,000 Palestinians emigrated from the oPt between 2000 and 2003. See: CARIM Mediterranean Migration 2006-2007 report P.216-217

⁹ Source: Palestinian Authority , Ministry of Civil Affairs and Passports departments, Gaza, Palestine

¹⁰ There is a difference in UNRWA and PCBS figures regarding the number of Palestinian refugees; the Palestinian population census enumerated 651,000 in 1997 while UNRWA registration showed a bout 759,000 in the same year. The difference of figures because of UNRWA registration processes have been done in order to enable the Agency to provide services and not for demographic purposes. The number of deaths is rarely deleted from UNRWA registration and the refugees leaving the field of operation still registered.

Table 2: Palestinians in 1970, 2000, 2003 and 2006b by Country of Residence

	1970 1	2000 2	2000 3	2003 4	2006 5	2066 6	
		PCBS	Courbage	Lubbad	PCBS	Lubbad	%
Palestinians inside Historic Palestine	1,413,970	4,253,056	4,208,000	4,470,000	5,086,647	4,809,884	51.0%
Israel	367,000	1,113,000	1,113,000	1,080,000	1,134,293	1,134,293	12.0%
West Bank and Gaza	1,046,970	3,140,056	..	3,390,000	3,952,354	3,675,591	39.0%
Palestinians abroad	1,258,000	4,534,277	3,550,000	4,169,000	5,007,920	4,620,326	49.0%
Jordan	592,000	2,522,431	2,020,000	2,471,000	2,799,440	2,668,785	28.3%
Other Arab Countries	626,000	1,530,342	1,320,000	1,431,000	1,635,486	1,525,541	16.2%
Foreign countries	40,000	481,504	210,000	267,000	572,994	426,000	4.5%
Total	2,671,970	8,787,333	7,758,000	8,639,000	10,094,567	9,430,209	

Sources and notes:

1. Justin McCarthy calculation based on national census and PLO figures
2. PCBS, Statistical year book of 2000, Ramallah, Palestine, 2006
3. Youssef Courbage, le droit au retour, la démographie des palestiniens, dans le livre « le droits au retour », Paris, mars, 2002, p 177-206
4. Non published Phd of Ismail Lubbad, Impact of UNRWA services on the demographic behavior of Palestinian refugees –1948-2000. Paris, March 2006.
5. PCBS, Palestinians at the end of year 2006, Ramallah, Palestine, December, 2006.

Other Arab Countries: Based on UNRWA figures, other international surveys carried by international institutions, and PCBS figures regarding the number of Palestinians in the Arab countries (1.545 million inhabitants), they are estimated by assuming an annual growth of 2.5. The number of Palestinians by country is not shown in the figures, while our estimation for the Palestinians in the Arab countries was based on disaggregated figures by country. If this number of refugees in Lebanon adjusted to only 25,000 according to FAFO estimation, the number of Palestinians in the Arab countries would be 1.525 million inhabitants.

In Europe: our estimations of the number of Palestinians in Europe is based on an annual growth rate of 2% (191,000 in 2001) which was estimated by Shiblak. In the USA, the number of Palestinians was estimated by the survey of Palestinian refugees conducted by *Badil Center for Refugees* at 215,000 in 2005.

The total number of Palestinians in the world is between 9.4 and 10.1 million in 2006. About one half of them live abroad totalling between 4.6 and 5 millions according to LUBBAD and PCBS estimations in 2006. (See table 2)

IV. Demographic Characteristics of Palestinian Emigration

As stated before, the demographic data for Palestinians outside the oPt is not available at the PCBS figures, but some of them could be derived from country national censuses where Palestinians live. However, difficulties will face researchers to accomplish that mission because of identity issues from one hand and political considerations from another hand.

While last section discusses the figures of Palestinians inside Palestine and in Diaspora, this one will focus on certain demographic characteristics available in IUED survey in 2005, in FAFO surveys, and UNRWA statistics. We will present the refugee profile by age, sex, religion, fertility and mortality rate.

Palestinian Refugees by Age, Sex and Refugees' Fertility

By 2006, the total number of Palestinian refugees registered in the UNRWA's area of operation, according to the agency's registration statistics, was 4,448,429, of which 46% live in Jordan.

The demographic profile of the registered Palestinians refugees is that of a young population with children under 18 years of age constituting 38.8% of the total population. This proportion is as high as 47.6% in Gaza Strip. Children under 18 years of age and women of reproductive age, the main targets for UNRWA health services, constitute together about 64% of the total refugee population.¹¹

The total registered Palestinian refugee population in the Syrian Arab Republic is 442,363, of which about 75% live in Damascus and its surroundings. Children under 5 years of age constitute 12% of the refugee population and about one third of the population is older than 40 years.

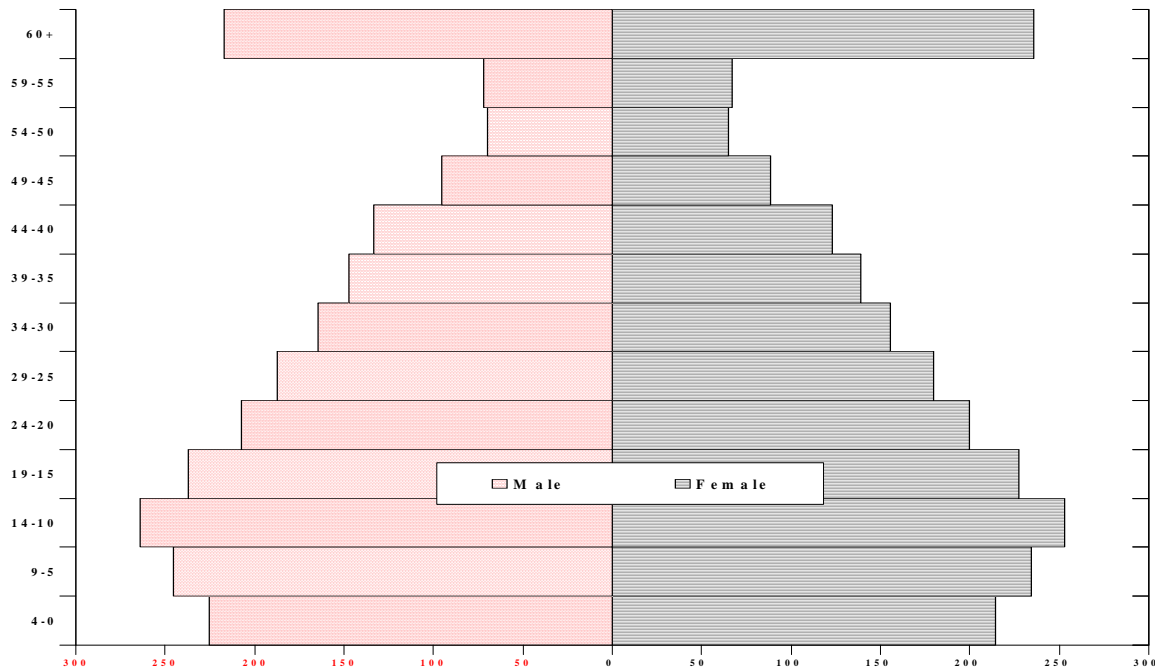
Based on UNRWA data in 2006, around one third of the population is under 18 years of age and another third is 40 years and older. Over one quarter are women of reproductive age (15–49 years). The data of the IUED study in 2005 shows that the number of women is higher than the number of men in the age groups (30-50). This may be due to more emigration of men than women in Lebanon.

The results of the IUED survey show that the age groups between (10-14 and 15-19) are the largest in all UNRWA fields of operation, while the age groups between (0-4 and 5-9) are smaller. The shape of the age pyramid shows that there was a decline in the total fertility rate for Palestinian refugees in the last ten years.

¹¹ UNRWA Health Department 2006 reports, Amman, Jordan, 2007

With regard to **total fertility rate (TFR)**, overall, UNRWA figures show that Palestinian refugees' TFR decreased and it is nearly similar to population in the host countries, while the age group (0-4) is smaller than the age group of (5-9) which indicates less birth rate in the last five years (See Table 3).

Table 3: Refugee Population Registered in UNRWA, 2006



By country, the latest figures issued by UNRWA in 2003 indicate that the Palestinian refugees in Gaza have the highest TFR (4.4 children per women) while in Lebanon and Syria TFR (2.5) is the lowest.¹² It was 4.1 and 3.6 in the West Bank and Jordan respectively. The decline of fertility might be due to UNRWA efforts in decreasing the illiteracy rate through providing free education for men and women, in addition to UNRWA health services such as family planning programs launched in the early 1990s. Furthermore, the region has faced economic crisis since the Gulf war in 1991.

The structure of age groups indicated that about 55% of refugees are in the working age population (15-60) demonstrating that there will be a coming increase in demand for work.

¹² PCBS DHS in 2003 indicated that TFR was about 5.8 children/woman in 2003.

Because of difficulties in the current political and economic circumstances, however, the local labor markets can not respond to continuous increases of population, especially in the labor force, which will lead to an increase of the refugees tendency for emigration especially in the oPt and Lebanon. For example, in the Gaza strip, 27 % of the registered refugees are aged between 10 and 18 years old, which means that the demand for jobs will be enormous in a few years. Therefore, if nothing is achieved towards economic development in the coming years, this would lead to more emigration among youths.¹³

By Religion

The statistics show that the emigration amongst Christian populations was bigger than in Muslim populations; the share of Christian's population decreased from 12% in 1946 to 3.3% of the total Arab population in Palestine and Israel in 2003.¹⁴ However, the emigration of Christian populations has increased since the beginning of the second Intifada in the oPt in September 2000. (UNSCO, 2003)

Infant Mortality Rate

Infant mortality rate (IMR) per 1,000 live births is a universally recognized key indicator in the field of child health. It is also one of the Millennium Development Goal indicators. Overall in Arab countries, IMR has declined in the last twenty years.¹⁵ Furthermore, agency-wide, there was a drop in IMR from 32 to 22 deaths per 1,000 live births, a drop of 31%.¹⁶

Despite the different methodologies used to measure infant mortality rates by UNRWA and the Host Countries, the figures demonstrate that the rates achieved by the UNRWA Health Program are more accurate than those prevailing in the host countries except for Lebanon. Similar results were obtained by the FAFO (Institute for applied Research, Oslo) surveys, which use the same methodology for refugees and non-refugees in measuring the infant mortality rate. (Khawaja,

¹³ Population projections for socioeconomic development in the Gaza Strip, Gaza 2010, Harvard University, May 2006.

¹⁴ Survey of Palestine, prepared by the British for the United Nation Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) in 1946, which contains a wealth of statistical data about the almost all sectors of life during the British Mandate. 2003: the number of Christian population out of the total Arab population in Israel and in the oPt based on PCBS and Israeli CBS statistics.

¹⁵ ESCWA, 2003

¹⁶ UNRWA, Infant and Early Child Mortality Among Palestine Refugees, Amman, Jordan, 2004

2003) and (Madi, 2000) Further reduction in the UNRWA rates would require specific targeted interventions by the Health Program. (See Table 4)

Table 4: Evolution of Infant Mortality Rate between Palestinian Refugees and Population in Host Countries 1990 - 2003

	Jordan		Lebanon		Syria		West Bank		Gaza Strip	
	Ref	Country	Ref	Country	Ref	Country	Ref	Country	Ref	Country
1990-1995	38,0	33	40,0	31,0	40,0	36,0	26,5	25,5	28	34
1997	32	27	35	20	29	27	33	..
2003	22,5	23	19,2	27	17	31	15,3	20	25,2	30

Source:

1. UNRWA Annual Health Reports 1990-1995.
2. Data for refugees in 2003 and 1997 are from a UNRWA study. The study included a total of 16,691 women with more than one child, who attended the Agency's primary health care facilities to register their newborn babies in Jordan (n = 4279), Gaza (n = 4225), Lebanon (n = 2162), Syria (n = 2744) and the West Bank (3,281).
3. PCBS, demographic and Health Survey in the West Bank and Gaza in 2004, Ramallah, Palestine 2005
4. For Jordan, Lebanon and Syria: UN Millennium Development Goals and World Fact Sheet.

V. Palestinian Immigration

The land of Palestine has always attracted migrants, and those who migrated there developed a deep attachment to the country. (Shiblak, 2005) The immigration of non-Jews increased steadily between the two World wars. About 100,000 (8% of the total population of Palestine in 1948) of immigration (entrepreneurs, professionals and laborers) came from neighbouring Arab countries. However, most of them left the country after the war of 1948. Since that date, the oPt did not witness immigration except for the early 1990s when thousands of Palestinians lost their jobs in the Gulf in 1991 and because of returnees to the oPt following the Oslo agreement.

This part will focus on analyzing return migration to the Palestinian territories and its trends during the last 2 decades by studying demographic and social characteristics of returnees along with other characteristics such as place of residence (West bank and Gaza strip), identifying provinces most attractive for returnees,¹⁷ and allocating them according to the country of destination.

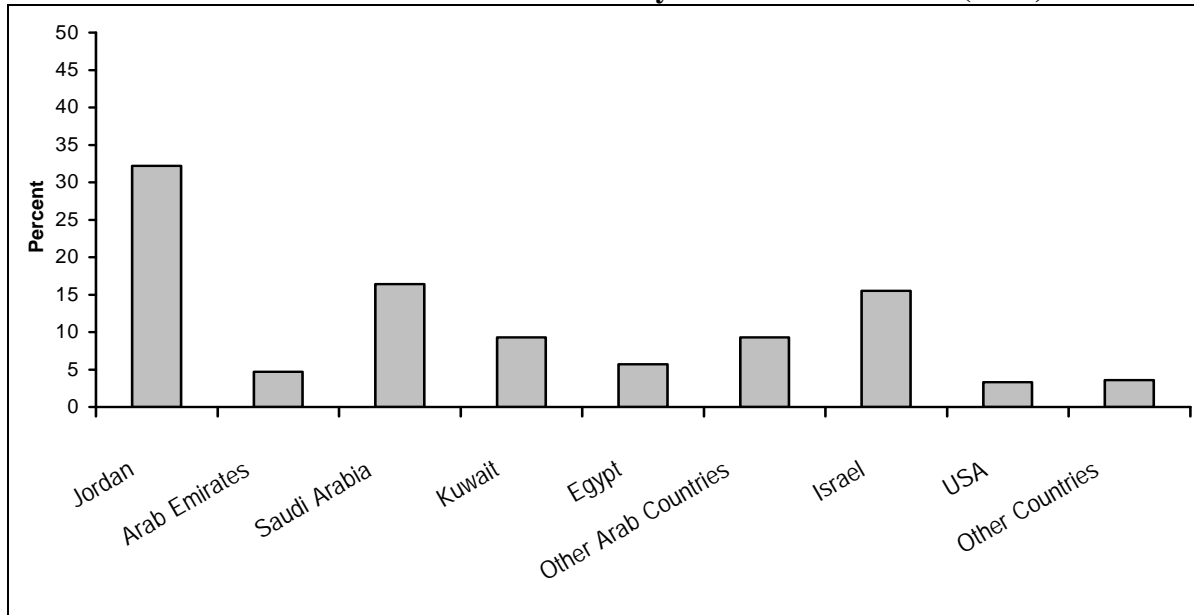
¹⁷ Returnees as defined by PCBS in its population census in 1997 are those who returned to Palestinian areas after having been normally resident outside these areas.

Based on the Survey of the Impact of the Israel Unilateral Measures on the Palestinian Households of 2006 and population census of 1997, returning migration was derived from the place of residence prior to the current place outside the territories, knowing that if the individual has moved on after his return from Diaspora to any another category; other than the one he has returned to within the Palestinian society, the person is classified as an internal migrant and not as a returnee from abroad.

Data of the Palestinian population census of 1997 pointed out that the percentage of individuals having previous usual place of residence outside the Palestinian territories was 10.5% (267,000 individuals) of the total population, while this percentage, according to the 2006 survey data, has decreased only to 7.7%. The main reason for this decrease refers to the situations that have prevailed in the oPt since the beginning of this decade, while the past decade has witnessed the return of thousands of Palestinians due to the peace agreements signed with the Israeli side, the data indicated that the percentage of returnees has not exceeded 10.5% out of the entire returnees from abroad during 2001-2006 (about 31,300 Palestinians) only. During the period of 1996-2000, this percentage reached about 31.3% (about 93,600 Palestinians). During the period of 1991-1995, it reached 24.2% (72,100 Palestinians), taking into consideration that if the coming individual from abroad has changed his place of residence to another one after his return, he is classified as an internal immigrant and not as a returnee from abroad.

By country of return, the results of the survey of 2006 show that one third of returnees are from Jordan followed by Saudi Arabia, Israel and Kuwait (See Table 5). The situation is slightly different at the level of the West Bank and Gaza strip. Most Palestinians returning to the Palestinian territories have originated from Jordan, with a percentage of more than 46% out of the entire returnees to the West Bank. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have come at the second and third ranks respectively with very close percentages between them. In the Gaza strip, Saudi Arabia has come at the first rank with a percentage of 23.2% because of a high proportion of Palestinians who lived and worked in Saudi Arabia then returned after termination of their labor contracts. Israel has come at the second rank

Table 5: Palestinian Returnees by Countries Returned (2006)



Source: Palestinian Central bureau of Statistics (PCBS), 2006. Survey of the Impact of the Israel Unilateral Measures on Social, Economic, and environmental Conditions of he Palestinian Households.

The northern West Bank governorates (Jenin, Nabuls and Tulkarm) are considered the most desired by the returnees (where to the percentage of returnees headed to the northern West Bank has reached about 33.0%), while provinces of southern West Bank (Bethlehem and Hebron) are the less attractive for the returnees from abroad.

As presupposed, motives for return migration to the Palestinian territories are different from those for internal migration; as return to the homeland is the essential motive for most returnees (about 50%). Types of returnees include those by the national authority or individuals who have returned from abroad and those who have terminated their work abroad and returned to reside in the Palestinian territories, having no alternative or any other motive for return. While about 19.1% out of returnees have returned to accompany their families, whereof the most are wives and sons. Displacement has come at the third rank with a percentage of 13.1% out of the entire returnees, due to the forced displacement of Palestinians whether by Israeli wars or other wars like the first or second Gulf war. Marriage was also one of the important motives for Palestinians returning to the Palestinian territories (11.8% out of the total returnees).

Generally, we could notice that the political factors and peace agreements were the essential motives for the return of the largest proportion of Palestinians during the 1990s, followed by social factors such as marriage, education and family reunification. It is also noticed that the

return is not related to clear economical factors, especially under the current situations, nor is there clear differences about reasons of return between the West Bank and Gaza strip, but it seems that marriage is a second essential motive for females in order to return to the Palestinian territories.

Demographic Characteristics of Returnees

The data of this section is derived from the PCBS Survey of the impact of the Israel unilateral measures on social, economic, and environmental conditions of the Palestinian Households in 2006 (See Annex 1). Concerning the demographic characteristics of individuals who returned to the Palestinian territories, the data shows an increase of males' percentage (53.3% of males versus 46.7% of females, i.e. 114 males per 100 females). This overestimates the sex ratio prevalent in Palestinian society. This difference might refer to the return of many male individuals, sometimes without their families, with establishing the Palestinian national authority, or to the return of male Palestinians who left Palestinian territories during the last period because of studying or working abroad.

Characteristics of Palestinian returnees are also influenced by age. The percentage of returnees under the age 15 years has reached 10.4% only out of the entire returnees (their ratio in the Palestinian society is about 46.0%.) The percentage of returnees among individuals between (25-39) years has reached 24.5%, whereas their ratio in the society does not exceed 19%. Individuals between (20-39) years often immigrate because of return to the homeland or marriage for females. There are notably high percentages of elderly returnees (17% out of the entire returnees); it is obvious that return home is the essential motive for their return.

Percentage of returning Palestinian refugees was almost equal to their percentage of presence inside the Palestinian territories, where the percentage of returnees has reached about 47%. The returnees were distributed according to whether they resided in urban or country areas as well as in camps. The percentage of those who returned to the urban communities was about 53.5%; to the countryside, 30.3%; and to the camps, 16.2%. (Distribution of Palestinian society is 56.5%, 28.2% and 15.3% for urban, countryside, and camps respectively.)

With regard to marital status of returnees aged 15 and above, it is demonstrated that married categories are the most acceptable for return; even married returnees' percentages are less than their internal migrant counterparts' percentage. The percentage of married returnees has reached 62.0% out of entire returnees, while returned singles' percentages have reached 28.0%. The percentage of male single returnees is obviously high versus females of the same category. It also shows that the percentage of returnees holding high scientific degrees is higher than the percentage of high scientific holders within the Palestinian society, since the percentage of returnees holding bachelors degrees and higher has reached 12.6%, while it has reached 6.6% in the Palestinian society.

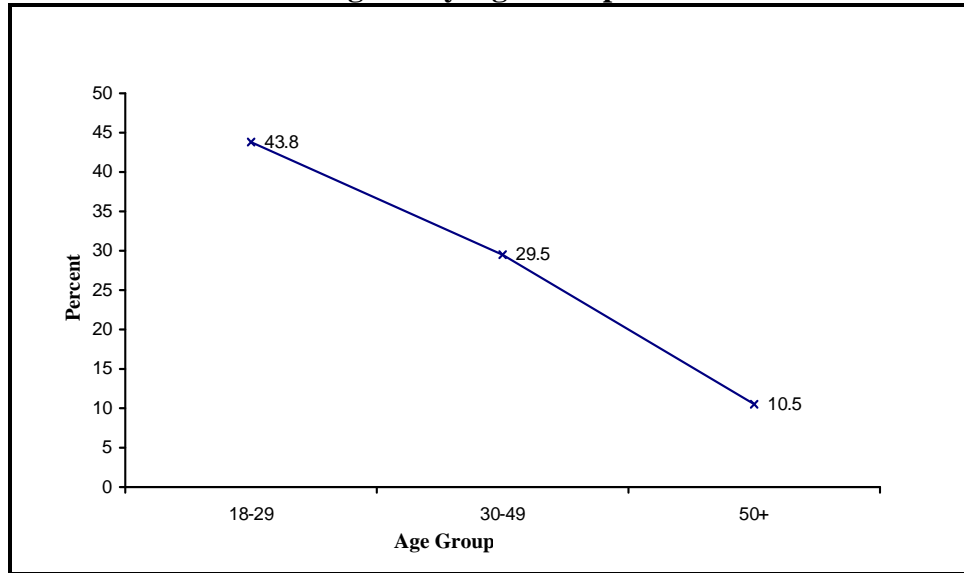
The paper shows also that 29.4% of the returnees are heads of households, since the percentage of returnees classified as a husband or wife head of the household has exceeded 26.4%, while the percentage within Palestinian society was 14.1%, and the percentage of sons of the head of the household was 64.0% out the entire Palestinian society.

VI. Trends of Palestinian Emigration

Characteristics of Palestinians Desire to Emigrate

Taking into account the current situations that Palestinians live in since the beginning of the current decade such as closure, poverty and unemployment, it is obvious that there is a trend of migration preference amongst the youth sector and unemployed persons particularly. Data from questionnaires carried out by the Institute of Development Studies in Birzeit university during February 2007, indicates that percentages of individuals aged 18 years and above, who prefer migration from the Palestinian territories, has reached 32.4%. The data also obviously indicates that males are more desirable for emigration than females, about 41.6% for males and 2.9% for females. By region (West Bank and Gaza strip), populations of the West Bank were more desirable for emigration than of the Gaza strip, despite the higher ratio of poverty and unemployment in the Gaza strip. In addition, data indicates that youth are the category most desirable for migration, since the percentage of individuals aged between 18-29 years who prefer migration has reached 43.8%, while it has reached 29.5% for the category aged between 30-49 years (See Table 6).

Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Palestinian (Aged 18 Years and over) Desiring to Emigrate by Age Group 2007



Source: Birzeit University, Development Studies Programme, 2007. Poll No.30.

By education level, data of the same opinion poll shows us that educated categories are more desirable for migration than others, 36% for persons with secondary school level, 35.2% for ordinary diploma and higher, and 26.4% for individuals holding preparatory certificate and below. Data also shows that singles were the category most desirable for emigration, about 54.1% of the total persons who desire to emigrate and 15% for divorcees and widows. Employed individuals, furthermore, were more desirable for emigration than unemployed ones, since the percentage of employed preferring migration was 41.0% versus 28.4% for unemployed. This may be due to the fact that the unemployed category includes a large proportion of female housewives, disabled, and elderly who are not classified within the labor force.

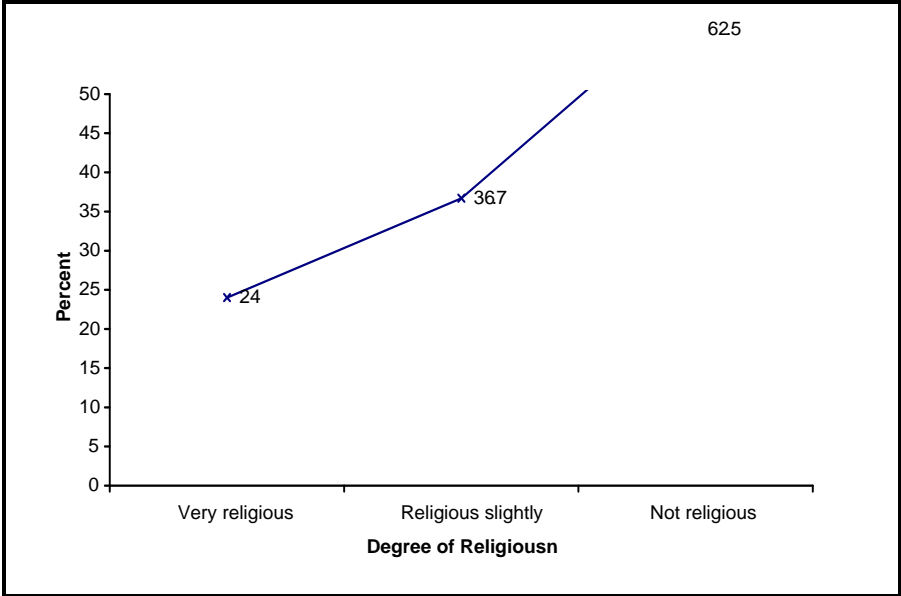
It is noticed that populations in rural areas are more desirable to emigrate than populations in urban and camp areas, as the percentages were 35.1% for villagers, 31.1% for urban, and 32.2% for camp residents. Conversely, we can notice the absence of big differences on the trends towards migration abroad according to refuge status, given that the percentage of refugees desire to migrate has reached 30.3% versus 33.8% for non-refugees.

Political Affiliation and Religious Engagement and Trends for Emigration

Based on political affiliation and religious engagement, the data indicates that individuals who are affiliated to political parties and organisations or religious individuals are less desirable towards

emigration than others. Data showed that the percentage of individuals aged 18 years and above, who stated they are affiliated to the Hamas movement and preferred to emigrate is 23.7% and 40.1% for people related to the Fatah movement, considering that these two organizations are the largest on the Palestinian political system. In this context, percentage of religious individuals (observed religious traditions and ceremonies) who desired to emigrate reached 24.0% and 36.7% for individuals who stated that they are religious to a certain extent. This percentage has reached 62.5% out of entire individuals classified as irreligious with a desire to emigrate (See Table 7).

Table 7: Percentage Distribution of Palestinians (aged 18 Years and over) Desiring to Emigrate by Degree of Religious Status of Individuals 2007



Source: Birzeit University, Development Studies programme, 2007. Poll No.30.

VII. Conclusion

The presentation of different sources for population and migration figures indicated that the number of Palestinians outside Palestine is difficult to estimate for a number of different reasons such as:

- The Palestinians do not have an effective system of registering departures and arrivals at their borders as Israel still controls these registrations,
- The definition of what constitutes a Palestinian and UNRWA registration policy.

Palestinians abroad represent one half of the total Palestinian population; six out of ten are located in Jordan and the majority of them have been refugees since 1948. The pyramid age for the Palestinian refugee population registered in UNRWA -4.4 million in the oPt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria in 2006- shows a decline in total fertility rate for refugees, while age distribution for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon indicated differences between men and women numbers in the age groups (20-40) due to the emigration of men in this age groups. The infant mortality rate for Palestinian refugees is similar to that in the population in the host countries.

As a result of political events in the Middles East, especially the Gulf War in 1991 and the Oslo peace accord between the PLO and Israel in 1993, more than 267,000 Palestinians from the Gulf countries, Jordan and other countries returned to the West Bank and Gaza. However, since the political and socioeconomic indicators have deteriorated significantly since the start of the second Intifada 2000, Palestinian immigration has declined steadily.

According to the population census of 1997, the demographic characteristics of returnees reveal an excess of males over (53.3% for males, as against 46.7% for females - 114 males for every 100 females). The percentage of returnees in the age group 25-39 years has reached 24.5%, whereas the percentage in the society as a whole for this age group does not exceed 19%. Returnees, moreover, are educated to a higher level than Palestinians in the oPt (12.6% of returnees hold bachelor degrees or higher, while in oPt the figure is 6.6%).

With regard to current and future migration, there is a trend for emigration among Palestinians in the oPt and Lebanon. A public poll conducted by Beir Zeit Development Programme in 2007, revealed that about 31% of the respondents expressed their desire to migrate if they had the opportunity, reflecting an increased desire of emigration. About 44% of young people between 18 and 29 years would prefer to emigrate if they could find an opportunity to travel. The majority of them are single males.

In order to obtain reliable figures on Palestinian migration, the following steps are recommended:

1. Establish a working group with membership drawn from Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Palestine to monitor people movements across common borders;
2. Improved statistical cooperation between UNRWA and host countries to obtain de facto numbers of Palestinian refugees through national population censuses;
3. Conduct more joint research with foreign countries which do not consider the Palestinian citizenship in their statistical systems;
4. Increase the capacity of PCBS to produce migration figures and indicators.

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¹⁸ CARIM Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration