

State of Palestine

Refugee quota factsheet

New Zealand Refugee Quota Palestinian Refugees

The New Zealand Government works with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to offer permanent resettlement solutions in New Zealand for 1000 refugees annually.¹ Refugees from the Occupied Palestinian Territories are included in the 2018/2019 refugee quota and will be resettled to New Zealand throughout the year.

Prior to their arrival to New Zealand the Palestinian refugees were living in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand recognised as refugees by the UNHCR.

Before settlement in the community all refugees accepted under the annual refugee quota programme complete a six week reception programme at Auckland's Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre.

In order to become successfully resettled, refugees will be accessing the assistance of mainstream services such as health, education, housing and Work & Income. The New Zealand Red Cross is the key agency responsible for assisting quota refugees in their initial community settlement.

This document aims to provide New Zealand's community-based professionals with general information about Palestine, the human rights situation in Palestine, the Palestinian culture as well as some general information on supporting successful refugee resettlement in your community.

Humanitarian situation and needs

The current context of vulnerability and protracted instability in the State of Palestine is rooted in the ongoing 70-year Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is still far from a politically-agreed and sustainable solution.

Following the Six-Day War in 1967, Israel gained control of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. In the following decades, Israeli control over land, people and resources was established through a series of measures, including the settlement of the Israeli population within the then so-called "Occupied Territory" – Gaza and East Jerusalem. Imposing military rule over the Palestinian Territory, Israel established a closure system of checkpoints and barriers, and as of 2015, at least 350,000 Israeli settlers lived in the West Bank. This has led to very strong internal as well as external resistance, resulting in a number of outbreaks of violent conflict, beginning with the First Intifada in 1987.

The Oslo Accords, brokered in 1994 between Israel and a newly created interim self-government body, the Palestinian Authority, brought temporary peace to the region. Despite intent the accords would be temporary, the deterioration of the security situation has meant the Agreement is still in place today. The protocol established that the Palestinian Authority has limited control over tax and budget management and no control over monetary and trade policies.

The paralysis following the Oslo Accords led to further insecurity and dissatisfaction, and the failures of subsequent attempts for peace agreements triggered new cycles of violence, including the outbreak of the Second Intifada in the year 2000. This period saw massive Israeli repression of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza and the polarization of the Palestinian political spectrum after the victory of Hamas in the 2006 elections. A political split between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank followed. Since 2007 Israel has placed economic sanctions and a blockade on Hamas-controlled Gaza, with the population unable to enter or leave the strip.

¹ The quota will increase to 1500 refugees from July 2020.

As a result, for nearly 48 years the civilian population in the State of Palestine has suffered continued violence, displacement, dispossession and deprivation. Despite efforts made by the international community to alleviate conditions and meet the most urgent needs, the humanitarian situation for specific population groups in Palestine has continued to deteriorate, especially in the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and the West Bank.²

Nearly one-third of the registered Palestine refugees, more than 1.5 million individuals, live in 58 recognized Palestine refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Socioeconomic conditions in the camps are generally poor, with high population density, cramped living conditions and inadequate basic infrastructure such as roads and sewers.³

Palestinian cultural communications:⁴

GREETINGS & ETIQUETTE

- › The right hand is typically used for any public interaction – shaking hands, receiving or giving gifts and eating, especially from shared plates.
- › Men should not initiate contact with Palestinian women – wait for them to offer a handshake, or alternatively, place your right hand over your heart and very slightly bow your head.
- › Equally, women should not offer a hand to a Palestinian man but wait for one to be proffered.
- › If you're meeting a family or group of people, greet the eldest person first and direct your initial speech to them.
- › The standard polite greeting to anyone is '*Salaam aleikum*', meaning 'Peace be upon you' and which is responded to with '*Wa-aleikum salaam*' (And peace also upon you). The simpler '*Salaam*' (Peace) or '*Marhaba*' (Hello) is also acceptable in most situations, but is more casual and not particularly respectful to older people or those in high positions.

2 Social Cohesion & Education Sector Analysis, May 2016, *State of Palestine*

3 United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA), [no date], *Palestine Refugees*

4 Sarah Irving, 2011, Palestine, *Bradt Travel Guides Ltd: UK*, p.61-62

- › Body language is also important – showing the soles of your feet is considered offensive so be aware of how your feet are pointing when sitting down. Public touching between men and women is not acceptable, although both men and women are often particularly affectionate with members of their own gender.

Supporting successful refugee resettlement:

- › Be aware of differences between yourself and your client / student in terms of customs, values and belief systems, as well as perceptions of service delivery and treatment. It may be advisable to obtain the assistance of a cultural adviser, or someone familiar with the culture of your client's home country to help you develop culturally appropriate forms of service delivery when working with a new refugee community in your area.
- › Many adult refugees will have only had limited formal education so communication styles may need to be adjusted accordingly.
- › Refugees may also have difficulty comprehending the importance New Zealand society places on official documentation. Some refugees may associate the recording of personal information with suspicion because of past experiences in their home country. As such, it is important to ensure refugee clients understand why you are recording information, where it will be stored and with whom it will be shared.
- › Explain your role carefully to the client and always use a professional interpreter if the client is not proficient in English. If your organisation does not have established procedures for using interpreters, interpreting services can be found through the following organisations: Interpreting New Zealand – www.interpret.org.nz and Language Line – www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/browse/language-line

Language

Arabic (spoken by many Palestinians),
English (widely understood)

■ BASIC ARABIC:

Hello (literally 'welcome') – *ahlan wa sahlan/ahlan*

Goodbye – *ma'a salaama/Allah ma'ak*

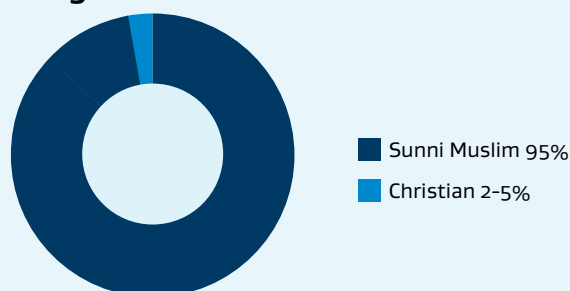
Thank you – *shukran*

Yes – *aywa/na'am*

No – *la*

Source: Michael Kohn et al, 2007, *Israel & the Palestinian Territories*, Lonely Planet, Hawthorn, Victoria, p.418

Religion



Source: Sarah Irving, 2011, Palestine, *Bradt Travel Guides Ltd: UK*, p.19

New Zealand is one of thirty seven countries that take part in the United Nations Refugee Agency's regular refugee resettlement programme. Our annual refugee quota of 1000 refugees is a reflection of the government's commitment to fulfilling its international humanitarian obligations and responsibilities to provide protection to refugees.

The New Zealand Government and a number of local organisations, such as New Zealand Red Cross, are helping these families to resettle, and to access the goods and services they need to restart their lives.



East Jerusalem is the designated capital of the State of Palestine

*European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Organisations (ECHO) estimates a total of 2.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in the Gaza Strip, West Bank and East Jerusalem.**

*2017 marks 50 years of Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories and 10 years of its blockade on the Gaza Strip. Palestinians still live in a protracted crisis causing a deteriorating humanitarian situation emanating from recurrent violations of International Law and the contextual lack of accountability for these violations.**

PALESTINE

*40,000 people remain internally displaced following the 2014 conflict in Gaza Strip. (ECHO, September 2018)**

*As of 2018, there are at least 5 million UNHCR registered Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip.***

*European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), September 2018, *Echo Factsheet – Palestine*

**UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), 2018, *Annual operational report 2017 – for the reporting period 01 January – 31 December 2017*

Additional Resources

- › New Zealand Immigration has factsheets and videos for refugees and family members settling in New Zealand which are available at www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/our-strategies-and-projects/supporting-refugees-and-asylum-seekers/information-for-refugees-settling-in-new-zealand
- › Detailed UNHCR guidelines for working refugees are available in a publication called *Refugee Resettlement: An International Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration*, see www.unhcr.org/4a2cfe336.html
- › BBC, 7 December 2018, *Palestinian territories profile*, www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14630174
- › Every Culture, [2018], *Palestinians*, <http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Germany-to-Jamaica/Palestinians.html>
- › Human Rights Watch, 18 January 2018, *World Report 2018 - Israel and Palestine*, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5a61ee62a.html>
- › UN General Assembly, 22 October 2018, *Report by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 (demonstrations and use of force; access and movement restrictions; other topics)*, A/ 73/ 447, https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1451250/1226_1542637672_n1833291.pdf
- › Vox, 14 May 2018, *Everything you need to know about Israel-Palestine*, <https://www.vox.com/cards/israel-palestine/intro>

Contact Information

For more information about New Zealand's Refugee Quota programme, or New Zealand's Refugee Policy, please contact:

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If you require further information or support on any health or education issue for the refugees recently resettled in your region, please contact the following specialist agencies located at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre:

Refugees as Survivors New Zealand (RASNZ)

(09) 270 0870
www.rasnz.co.nz

Refugee Health Screening Service

(09) 276 6719
www.refugeehealth.govt.nz

AUT - Centre for Refugee Education

(09) 921 9366
<https://www.aut.ac.nz/aut-centre-for-refugee-education>

Refugee Quota Branch

(09) 928 2648
www.immigration.govt.nz

New Zealand Red Cross

0800 RED CROSS
www.redcross.org.nz

Please note: No personal information will be released without written consent from the client.