

Demography

The West Bank population is primarily that part of the Palestinian Arabs who have continued to dwell in their homeland following the establishment of the State of Israel. Ethnically, they are fairly homogeneous, originating from Semitic Arab tribes, mostly from northern Arabia. In this section we will try to assess changes in population growth, ascertain basic demographic characteristics, and evaluate their impact on economic development and technological change.

Population growth

The West Bank population has undergone dramatic changes since it was first disrupted in 1948. Table (II-13) presents a summary of those changes as assessed from several sources.

Table (II - 13)

Major shifts in the size of West Bank population

1948	Prior to War	475,400 <sup>1</sup>
1948	Post War	750,000 <sup>1</sup>
1952	Two years after annexation to Jordan	742,000 <sup>2</sup>
1961	First population census	805,450 <sup>3</sup>
1967	Prior to the June War	843,000 <sup>1</sup>
1967	Post occupation (IDF Census)	664,494 <sup>4</sup>
1980	End of year	820,600 <sup>5*</sup>

Sources:

1. Jamil Hilal, *op cit*, p 18, 81.
2. Housing Census of 1952, (Amman: Department of Statistics, (1953) Table No 1.
3. First Population Census of Jordan, 1961, (Amman: Department of Statistics, 1962).
4. Census of Population 1967, (op cit, Vol 1, p X. This figure includes the population of East Jerusalem estimated at 65,857.
5. Administered Territories Statistics Quarterly, Vol XI, No 1, 1981, op cit, p 1. Includes 117,000 for East Jerusalem.

\* The real size of the West Bank population might be well higher than the figures quoted by the Central Bureau of Statistics. A recent article in Davar (March 20, 1980) quotes a secret report by the Ministry of Interior which estimates the population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip at 300,000 higher than CBS estimates.

The original size of the West Bank indigenous population before the 1948 war is estimated at 475,400, which amounted to 36 percent of total Arab population in Palestine (1.33 million). But considerable changes took place during the course of the war which broke out following the termination of the British Mandate on June 15, 1948. A major objective of the invading Israeli forces was the seizure of the maximum land area while trying every possible means to evacuate their local Arab residents. By the end of the military hostilities in 1949, around 625,000 Palestinians were refugees<sup>1</sup>, amounting to 47% of all Arabs in Palestine. Only 156,000 (around 12% of Palestine's Arabs) continued to stay in the newly established State of Israel.

The exodus of Palestinian refugees caused major shifts in the size of population in the remaining West Bank and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. In less than two years the West Bank population increased by 65% and that of Jordan by 29%.

Population shifts continued at a marked pace during the fifties and the sixties and they were primarily motivated by depressed economic activity and a low standard of living. This resulted in a vigorous wave of emigration of the emerging Gulf states which were in great need of the skilled Palestinian labour force. Furthermore, many West Bankers opted to migrate to the East Bank in response to what was considered to be the biased economic policy of Jordan.

As a result of several push and pull factors, emigration proceeded at a pronounced pace all through the Jordanian rule and it included residents from all strata, refugees and non-refugees, urban and