

GAZA STRIP

THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF THE BLOCKADE

KEY FACTS

- In June 2007, following the military takeover of Gaza by Hamas, Israel imposed a land, sea and air blockade on the Gaza Strip, which intensified earlier access restrictions.
- On a daily average, less than 240 Palestinians were allowed out of Gaza via Israel in the first half of 2017, as compared to 420 in the first half of 2007, before the blockade. In September 2000, prior to the second Intifada, the daily average was approximately 26,000.
- 38% of the applications to Israel for exit permits for medical treatment outside Gaza submitted in 2016 were rejected or delayed (meaning that patients missed their appointments). This marked a seven-year low in the approval rate.
- The Egyptian-controlled Rafah crossing has been effectively closed since October 2014, including for humanitarian assistance; in the first half of 2017 it has opened exceptionally on 16 days only.
- A monthly average of 272 truckloads of commercial goods exited Gaza between January-June 2017, up from 178 in 2016. This represents less than a third of the equivalent figure in the first half of 2007 (961).
- The volume of truckloads entering Gaza in the first half of 2017 has almost returned to the 2007 levels. Since the 2014 conflict, a significant proportion of truckloads carried materials for the reconstruction of Gaza.¹
- Access to areas within 300 metres of the Gaza side of the perimeter fence with Israel is largely prohibited and areas several hundred meters beyond are not safe, preventing or discouraging agricultural activities.
- Fishermen are only allowed to access 40% of the fishing areas allocated for this purpose under the Oslo Accords.
- The unemployment rate at the third quarter of 2017 was 46.6%, while among youth it stood at 64.9% and 71% among women.
- Around 47% of households in Gaza suffer from moderate or severe food insecurity.
- 97% of piped water is unfit for human consumption.
- More than 70% of Gaza's population receives some form of international aid, the bulk of which is food assistance.

- About two million Palestinians in Gaza are 'locked in', unable to access the remainder of the occupied Palestinian territory and the outside world.** Movement restrictions imposed by Israel since the early 1990s and which were intensified after the events of June 2007, citing security justifications, have had a profound impact on living conditions in Gaza and fragmented the territorial unity and the economic and social fabric of the oPt. Those eligible for exit permits constitute a small minority, primarily patients, business people and staff of international organizations. The isolation of Gaza has been exacerbated by Egypt's closure of the Rafah crossing also.
- Longstanding access restrictions imposed by Israel have undermined Gaza's economy, resulting in high levels of unemployment, food insecurity and aid dependency.** These include restrictions on the marketing of goods in the West Bank and Israel; on the import of certain goods to Gaza; and on the access of people to agricultural land and fishing waters in Gaza. The easing of some of these restrictions since the 2014 ceasefire has not enabled a significant reactivation of the economy. The impact of access restrictions is compounded by recurrent rounds of hostilities, which have resulted in the loss of assets and people being left with long-term disabilities; a chronic energy crisis; and the ongoing internal Palestinian divide.
- Restrictions on the import of goods considered by Israel as "dual use" items continue to undermine the quality of basic services and impede efforts to address housing needs.** Limited access to construction materials and critical equipment since 2007 has delayed the construction, repair and upgrade of homes and infrastructure, needed to address rapid population growth and the devastation caused by recurrent hostilities. This has undermined the quality of health, education, and water and sanitation services available in Gaza, and prolonged the displacement of those who have lost their homes. Although since 2014 the entry of restricted construction materials has been facilitated by a temporary mechanism (the GRM), the import of other restricted items, particularly those required for water and sanitation projects, remains a major challenge.
- The blockade has raised concern about collective punishment and other provisions under international humanitarian and human rights law.** While the relaxation of certain restrictions since 2014 is welcomed, this is no substitute for a full lifting of the blockade on Gaza in line with Security Council resolution 1860.

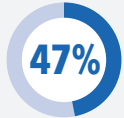
1. The Israeli authorities have raised concern about the diversion of cement allowed into Gaza and temporarily suspended private sector imports in 2016 for this reason. The three signatories to the GRM are working to address these concerns.

GAZA STRIP KEY FACTS

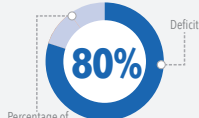


1.88 M Population
PCBS 2016

1.3 M
Need humanitarian assistance

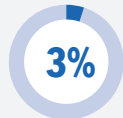


Moderate/severe food insecure households



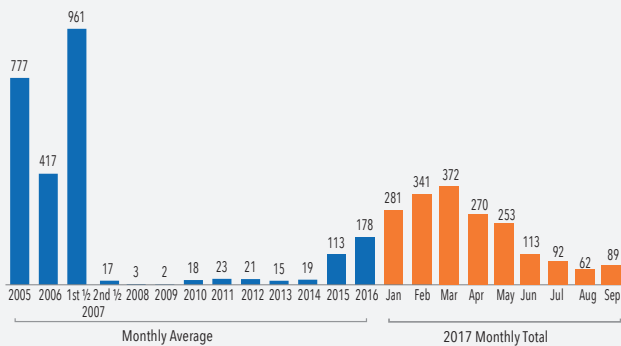
Percentage of demand met

Uncovered energy needs

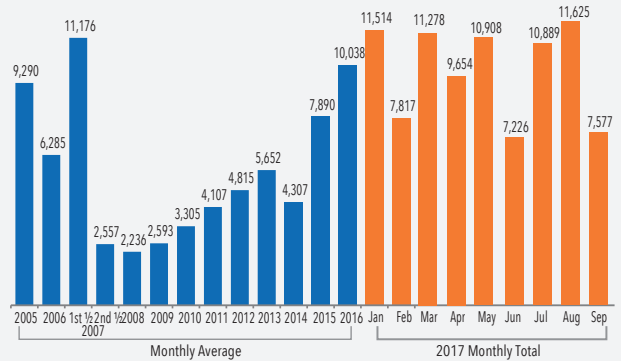


Potable piped water

TRUCKLOADS EXITING GAZA

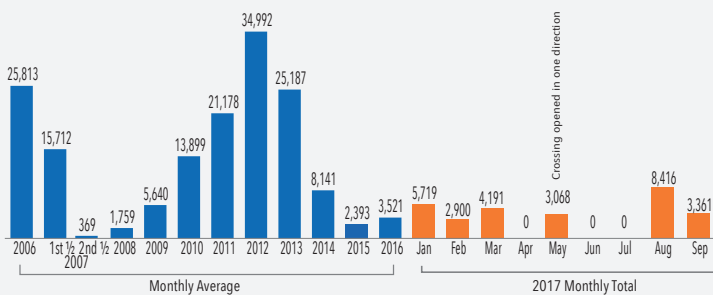


TRUCKLOADS ENTERING GAZA**

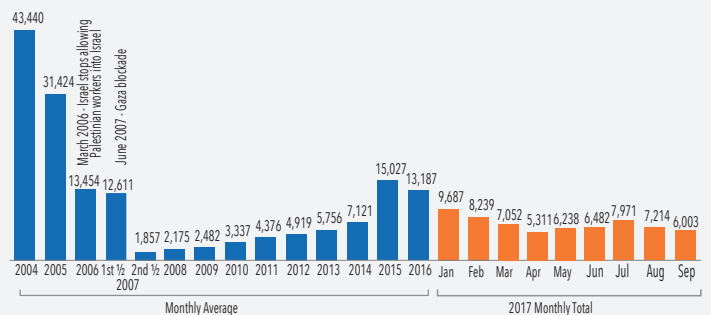


** Figures exclude truckloads carrying fuel.

RAFAH: CROSSINGS IN BOTH DIRECTIONS



EREZ: CROSSINGS INTO ISRAEL



* The figures reflect number of times people crossed, but not the actual number of people crossing.

