

WEST BANK

THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES

KEY FACTS

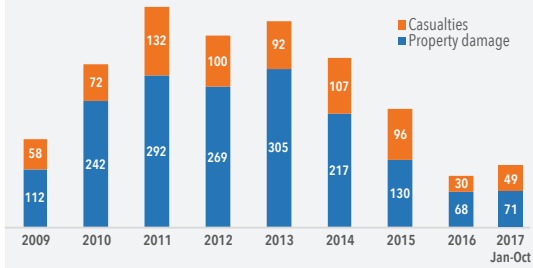
- About 250 Israeli settlements have been established across the occupied West Bank since 1967, some of them without the formal approval of the Israeli authorities (“outposts”), but with their support.
- Some 611,000 Israelis currently live in settlements, two-thirds of them in Area C and one third in East Jerusalem.
- The official municipal boundaries of Israeli settlements, which cover more than 10% of the West Bank, are declared ‘closed military areas’ and are off-limits for Palestinians.
- Over 400 kilometres of West Bank roads serving Israeli settlers (excluding internal settlement roads) are prohibited or highly restricted for Palestinian-plated vehicles, citing security concerns.
- Over 800 Palestinians in East Jerusalem are currently at risk of eviction due to legal cases initiated under the Israeli court system, mainly by settler organizations claiming ownership over the properties.
- A third of the housing units in the neighborhoods adjacent to the settlement compounds of Hebron city (1,105 out of 3,358) were abandoned by their Palestinian residents as a result of access restrictions and systematic violence and harassment.
- 18 Palestinian Bedouin communities in the Jerusalem governorate, located in an area planned for the expansion of Ma’ale Adummim settlement, are at risk of forcible transfer.
- After declining for three consecutive years, settler incidents resulting in Palestinians casualties or damage to their property increased by 88% in the first half of 2017 as compared to 2016 (on a monthly average).
- Between 2005 and 2016, over 90% of the investigation files on settler attacks against Palestinians and their property filed with the Israeli Police were closed without the indictment of a suspect.¹

- 1. Settlements are illegal under international humanitarian law as they violate Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention**, which prohibits the transfer of the occupying power’s civilian population into occupied territory.² The establishment and constant expansion of settlements has also involved the infringement on the human rights of Palestinians, including the right to property, to freedom of movement and to equality before the law.
- 2. The official seizure of land for the establishment and expansion of settlements, alongside the takeover of land by settler groups, have deprived Palestinians of their property and reduced the space available for them to sustain their livelihoods.** In some areas, this has also affected the access of Palestinians to water sources used for irrigation, livestock and domestic consumption. The loss of land and water resources has increased the vulnerability of rural communities, generating the need for humanitarian interventions, including food and cash assistance.
- 3. The Israeli authorities’ failure to adequately enforce the rule of law on Israeli settlers has increased the level of threat to Palestinians and their property in many West Bank areas.** This has included not only the failure to hold perpetrators of attacks accountable, but also the retroactive “legalization” of settlements built on Palestinian land taken over by force. Despite this, in recent years the Israeli authorities have adopted some preventive measures which have contributed to a decline in the frequency of settler attacks.
- 4. Many of the restrictions on Palestinian movement, which undermine access to basic services and livelihoods, are imposed to protect Israeli settlements and facilitate their daily life, at the expense of Palestinians.** The Israeli authorities have justified most of the Barrier’s deviations from the from the Green Line, which resulted in the isolation of Palestinian land and communities, by the need to protect the settlements blocs from Palestinian attack. Many checkpoints and roadblocks divert Palestinian traffic from certain roads serving the settler population, onto secondary and longer routes. Farmers are allowed to reach their land within or around the outer limits of settlements twice a year at most, subject to prior approval by the Israeli authorities.
- 5. The loss of land, exposure to violence and/or access restrictions, along with the application of a restrictive planning regime, have generated a coercive environment placing many of these Palestinian communities at risk of forcible transfer.** This risk is particularly high among Palestinian Bedouin and herding communities in areas planned for settlement expansion; those living in and around properties in East Jerusalem purchased or claimed by settler organizations; and those living in the vicinity of the settlement compounds in Hebron city.

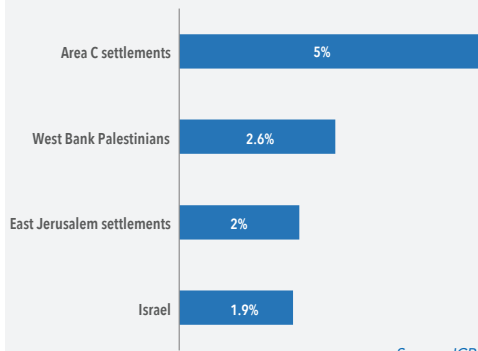
1. Out of a sample of 1,174 cases monitored by the Israeli organization Yesh Din.

2. This has been confirmed by the International Court of Justice, the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention and the United Nations Security Council.

SETTLER-RELATED INCIDENTS RESULTING IN PALESTINIAN CASUALTIES OR PROPERTY/LAND DAMAGE

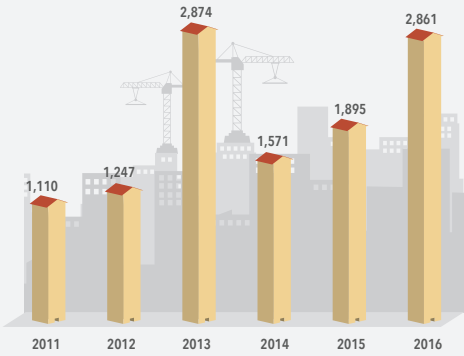


AVERAGE YEARLY POPULATION GROWTH 2000-2015



Source: ICBS, PCBS

BUILDING STARTS IN AREA C SETTLEMENTS



Source: ICBS

