

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

Press Release on Labour Force Survey Results (January– March, 2004) Round 287,000 Unemployed persons during the 1st quarter 2004

This report is based on the Labour Force quarterly Survey. Data was collected for the 32nd round from 3/1/2004 to 1/4/2004, representing the 1st quarter of 2004.

The survey sample of this round is based on the 1997 census, 7,563 households were selected to represent the Palestinian society of which 6,201 questionnaires were completed.

Economically Active:

- According to the ILO standards, the number of participants in labour force increased by one thousand between the 4th quarter 2003 and the 1st quarter 2004, where it increased from 815 thousand in the 4th quarter 2003 to 816 thousand in the 1st quarter 2004, compared with 735 thousand in the 3rd quarter 2000.

Unemployed Persons:

- Number of persons who don't work nevertheless seeking or not seeking job, increased from 274 thousand in the 4th quarter 2003 to 287 thousand in the 1st quarter 2004, compared with 170 thousand in the 3rd quarter 2000. This represents 32.3% of the total labour force, according to the relaxed definition of unemployment.
- While those who don't work, but seeking job, in the 1st quarter 2004 reached 215 thousand which represent 26.3% of the total labour force according to the ILO standards, compared with 24.3% in the 4th quarter 2003 and 10.0% in the 3rd quarter 2000 (before the beginning of Al-Aqsa Intifada). The results showed that unemployment rate in the West Bank reached 24.6% in the 1st quarter 2004 compared with 20.7% in the 4th quarter 2003, whereas it decreased in Gaza Strip from 32.1% in the 4th quarter 2003 to 29.8% in the 1st quarter 2004.
- Unemployment rate by educational attainment, data showed that the rate decreased between the 4th quarter 2003 and the 1st quarter 2004, from 21.8% to 20.7% among those completed intermediate college and above.

Employed Persons:

- The results showed a decrease in the percentage of employment¹ for those who are working in agriculture in the West Bank (16.4% in the 4th quarter 2003 to 15.6% in the 1st quarter 2004), while it was 11.3% in the 3rd quarter 2000. In Gaza Strip the percentage decreased from 15.9% in the 4th quarter 2003 to 14.8% in the 1st quarter 2004. Also the results showed that employment in construction decreased in the West Bank from 11.3% in the 4th quarter 2003 to 8.5% in the 1st quarter 2004. also it decreased in Gaza Strip from 9.5% in the 4th quarter 2003 to 9.3% in the 1st quarter 2004.
- The results showed a decrease in the percentage of unpaid family members in the Palestinian Territory (from 11.3% in the 4th quarter 2003 to 9.9% in the 1st quarter 2004).
- The results showed that the percentage for self employed increased in the West Bank from 28.1% in the 4th quarter 2003 to 29.3% in the 1st quarter 2004, while it decrease in Gaza Strip from 24.9% in the 4th quarter 2003 to 21.7% in the 1st quarter 2004. The results showed that wage employees increased in the Palestinian Territory reached 59.2% in the 1st quarter 2004 compared with 57.4% in the 4th quarter 2003, the percentage increased in Gaza Strip from 62.9% in the 4th quarter to 66.6% in the 1st quarter 2004.

¹Employed persons in Israel and Israeli settlements are excluded

also it increased slightly in the West Bank from 55.2% in the 4th quarter 2003 to 55.9% in the 1st quarter 2004.

- Employees from the West Bank working in Israel and Israeli settlements decreased during the 1st quarter 2004 compared with the 4th quarter 2003, they reached 50 thousand compared with 54 thousand in the 4th quarter 2003, while the number increased in Gaza strip from 4 thousand in the 4th quarter 2003 to 6 thousand in the 1st quarter 2004.

Wages:

- The average value of the nominal daily net wage of the employees in the West Bank remains the same as in 4th quarter 2003 (72.5 NIS), compared with 70.3 NIS in the 3rd quarter 2000. While the nominal daily net wage of the employees in Gaza Strip increased slightly from 55.3 NIS in the 4th quarter 2003 to 55.6 NIS in the 1st quarter 2004, compared with 50.4 NIS in the 3rd quarter 2000. Also the Average daily net wage for those working in Israel and settlements decreased from 131.8 NIS in the 4th quarter 2003 to 127.5 NIS in the 1st quarter 2004, compared with 110.8 NIS in the 3rd quarter 2000.

Dependency Ratio and Poverty:

- The economic dependency ratio² increased in the Palestinian Territory from 4.8 in the 3rd quarter 2000 to 6.3 in the 1st quarter 2004 (the change rate is 31.3%). Whereas, it increased in the West Bank from 4.3 to 5.7 (the change rate is 32.5%) and in Gaza Strip increased from 5.9 to 7.5 (the change rate is 27.1%). The ratio in the West Bank reached 5.4 compared with 7.7 in Gaza Strip in the 4th quarter 2003.
- The percentage of employees whose monthly wages below poverty line³ increased from 43.5% in the 4th quarter 2000 to 59.4% in the 1st quarter 2004 (the change rate is 36.6%).

² The economic dependency ratio: Number of population *divided by* Number of employed persons.

³ The poverty line equivalent for the year 2000 (1622 NIS, for reference household composed of two adults and 4 children) was used for the 3rd quarter 2000. The poverty line equivalent for the 1st quarter 2004 (1800 NIS, for reference household composed of two adults and 4 children) was used for the 1st quarter 2004 results.