



# المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

## State of the Gaza Strip Border Crossings

01 – 30 June 2023

The Israeli occupation authorities continue to impose an illegal and inhuman closure on the Gaza Strip for 16 consecutive years, inflicting negative repercussions on the humanitarian conditions of the Gaza Strip population. The Israeli occupation authorities also isolate more than 2.3 million Palestinians from the outside world through its control over the Gaza Strip's crossing<sup>1</sup>, by restricting the movement of goods and individuals from and into the Gaza Strip.

The ongoing Israeli-closure has deteriorated the economic and social rights of the Gaza population and worsened their living and humanitarian conditions. The unemployment rate reached 46%: 68% among youth, and 66.3% among women<sup>2</sup>, while more than half of the population lives in poverty as the poverty rate recorded 60%<sup>3</sup>, and more than 68.5% of the Gaza population suffers from food insecurity<sup>4</sup>. Additionally, 80% of the Gaza population relies on international aid<sup>5</sup>.

Despite its claims of easing the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip, Israel still imposes restrictions on the movement of individuals at the Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing, banning most of Gaza population travel via the crossing. The Israeli occupation authorities also continue to impose tightened restrictions on the entry of so-called "dual-use items" \* which are about 61 essential items<sup>6</sup>, including hundreds of goods and commodities necessary for the population's lives.

<sup>1</sup> Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing in the northern Gaza Strip is designated for the movement of individuals and is the Israeli control. It operates during the day from Sunday to Thursday, and on Fridays only for urgent cases and internationals.

Meanwhile, Kerem Shalom crossing in the southern Gaza Strip is designated for the movement of goods.

<sup>2</sup> The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) presents the Main Findings of Labour Force Survey, First Quarter 2023, 10 May 2023: <https://pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4505>

<sup>3</sup> The World Bank's Palestinian Economic Monitoring Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, 10 May 2022: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/westbankandgaza/publication/economic-monitoring-report-to-the-ad-hoc-liaison-committee-may-2022>

<sup>4</sup> Fact Sheet on Food and Nutrition in Palestine, Published in November 2022: [https://palestine.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/UNCT%20-%20Fact%20sheet%20Food%20%284%29\\_0.pdf](https://palestine.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/UNCT%20-%20Fact%20sheet%20Food%20%284%29_0.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people: Developments in the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 08 August 2022, Paragraph 46: [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tdbex72d2\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tdbex72d2_en.pdf)

\*Israeli occupation authorities claim that although these materials are used for civilian purposes, they can be used to advance combat capabilities of Palestinian armed groups.

<sup>6</sup> A list of prohibited items: [https://gisha.org/UserFiles/File/LegalDocuments/procedures/merchandise/170ar\\_full\\_list.pdf](https://gisha.org/UserFiles/File/LegalDocuments/procedures/merchandise/170ar_full_list.pdf)



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## Restrictions on Individuals' Movement

The Israeli occupation authorities continue to impose tight restrictions at Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing, denying most of the Gaza Strip population from travelling and allowing only limited categories after going through security checks. These restrictions include all categories allowed to travel at a very narrow range: patients referred for treatment abroad, Palestinian citizens holding Israeli citizenship, foreign journalists, international humanitarian organizations' staff, merchants, businessmen and workers, families of detainees in Israeli prisons and travelers via King Hussein Bridge. Such restrictions deprive the Gaza Strip population of their right to movement guaranteed by Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Similarly, the Israeli restrictions on items that can be carried by travelers via Erez remained in place; primarily no electronic and electric devices, food, and cosmetics are allowed, as well as wheeled luggage.

According to the General Authority for Civil Affairs' (GACA) June data, Israeli authorities allowed 42,006 Palestinians to exit the Gaza Strip via "Erez" Crossing, while 55,689 were allowed reentry. It should be noted that these statistics do not represent the number of persons allowed to travel via the crossing as the permit holders are far less than the passing times, but the permits holders can travel several times via the crossing in one month. It should be noted that citizens who obtain travel permits via Beit Hanoun "Erez" crossing only constitute 1% of the total Gaza's population, while merchants and the holders of economic needs permits constitute 90.9% of the total number of travelers via the crossing in June, and most of them are daily workers. Additionally, the percentage of patients and their companions traveled via the crossing reached (i.e., 5.8%) of the total number of travelers.

Group	Exit	Entry
Merchants	35764	48971
Businesspersons	506	399
Personal needs	1266	1297
Patients	1624	1773
International organizations	570	505
Arab 1948	178	234
King Hussain Bridge Travel	513	617
Prisoners' visits	37	37
Security interviews	51	54



# المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

## PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

### Restrictions on patients' travel:

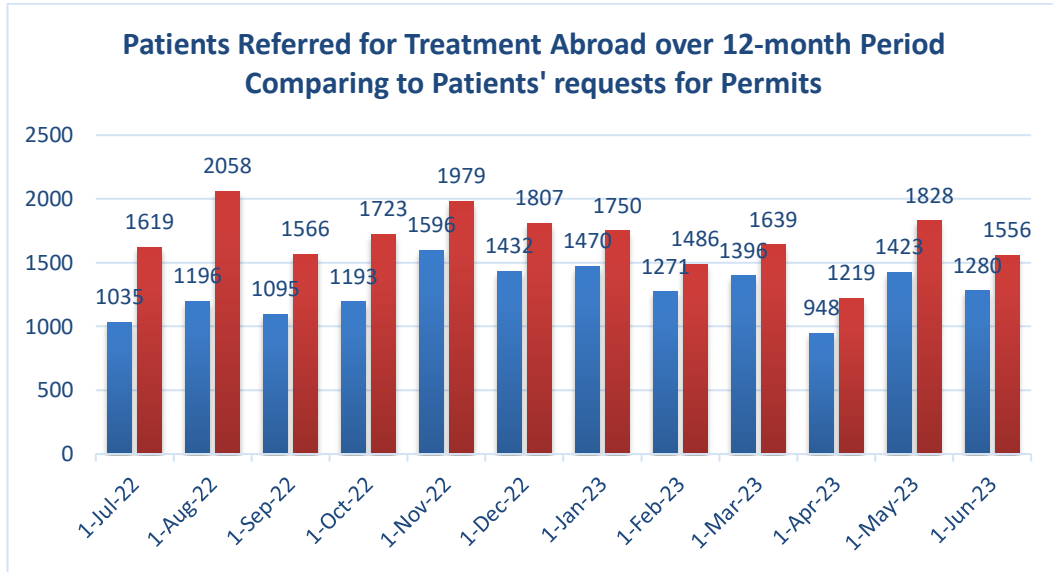
In June, the Israeli authorities obstructed the travel of 276 out of 1,556 patients who were referred for treatment in hospitals in Israel or the West Bank, including occupied Jerusalem, (i.e., 17.73% of the total permit applications), and allowed the travel of 1,280 patients.

Although the Israeli authorities claim that they would allow patients' travel, they refused to respond to dozens of requests filed by the Coordination and Liaison Department at the Ministry of Health for patients with serious diseases and who were referred for treatment in hospitals in Israel or the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem. In June, the Israeli authorities rejected 20 permit requests for security reasons; did not reply to 148 requests; delayed replies (under study) to 77 permits, asked 17 patients to wait for a security interview. Additionally, the Israeli authorities obstructed the travel of 9 patients under various pretexts.

These resections deprive patients of enjoying their right to the highest attainable standard of health that is guaranteed under Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights.

**Table (2):** Statistics of the results of travel requests for treatment in June 2023, the General Authority for Civil Affairs

Result	Number	Percentage
No reply	111	%7.13
Under study	86	%5.53
Approved	1280	%82.26
Rejected	18	%1.16
Waiting for an interview	6	%0.39
New appointment	1	%0.06
Hospital cancellation	16	%1.03
New medical report	2	%0.13
Illegally residing in Israel	1	%0.06
Total	1556	% 100



### Detainees' Visits

Out of 4,600 Palestinians detained in the Israeli prisons, about 199 are from the Gaza Strip; 25 of them are sentenced to life imprisonment. The Israeli authorities prevent the families of detainees from the Gaza Strip from visiting their sons in the Israeli prisons. Also, the visitation program was suspended without giving reasons and for long periods. In June, the Israeli authorities allowed 37 family members of Palestinian detainees to visit 22 of them. This violates the right of detainees to be in contact with their families through family visits that is guaranteed under international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, particularly Article 116 which provides that every internee shall be allowed to receive visitors, especially near relatives, at regular intervals and as frequently as possible, particularly in cases of death or serious illness of relatives.

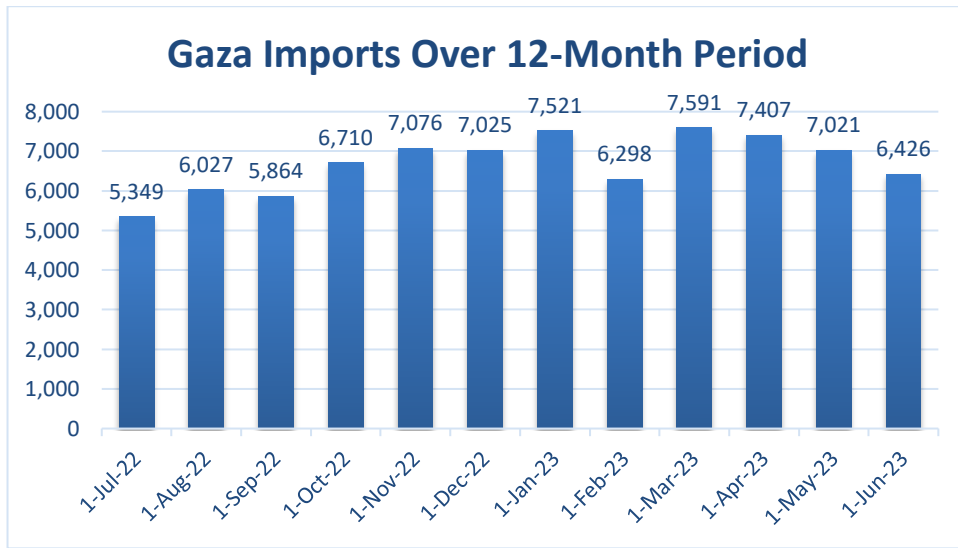
### Restrictions on Movement of Goods

The Israeli authorities continue to impose tightened restrictions on the movement of goods and commodities entering and exiting the Gaza Strip, causing a deterioration in the Gaza population's economic rights, exacerbating poverty, increasing the rates of unemployment and food insecurity, and undermining opportunities for investment and development of the Gaza Strip economy. This constitutes as a violation of international law, which obliges the occupying power under Article 55 of the Fourth Geneva Convention to ensure, to the fullest extent of the means available to it, the food and medical supplies of the population; it should, in particular, bring in the necessary foodstuffs, medical stores and other articles if the resources of the occupied territory are inadequate.

### Gaza Strip Imports

The Israeli authorities continued to impose tightened restrictions on the list of items classified as "dual-use." The dual-use items include 61 types and hundreds of goods and commodities that are essential to the life of the population. Imposing these restrictions caused infrastructure, economy, healthcare, and education to deteriorate severely. These items include communications equipment, pumps, big generators, iron bars, iron pipes in all diameters, welding equipment and welding rods, various types of wood, UPS devices that protect the electric devices from breaking down when the electricity suddenly cuts off, X-ray machines, cranes and heavy vehicles, elevators, types of batteries and several types of fertilizers.

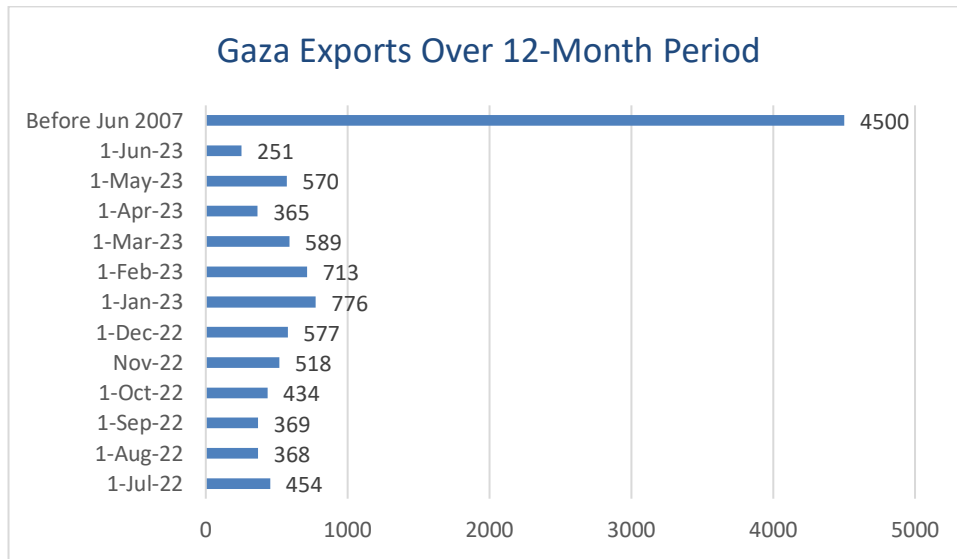
In June, the Israeli authorities allowed the entry of 6,426 truckloads via Kerem Shalom crossing, while 4,105 entered via Rafah crossing; these trucks include food and non-food items, construction and commercial materials, and fuel, according to the Ministry of National Economy in Gaza.





## Gaza Strip exports

IOF impose tightened restrictions on the exports of the Gaza Strip to the West Bank, including Jerusalem, or Israel and the outside world. In June, in a limited exception, the Israeli authorities allowed the export of 251 truckloads via Kerem Shalom crossing and 146 truckloads via Salah al-Deen Gate and Rafah Crossing. Those truckloads included agricultural products, damaged batteries, aluminum scrap, clothes, and chips. The exports during the reporting period constitute only 5.5% of Gaza's total monthly exports before closure was imposed in June 2007 (4500 truckloads/month).



## Movement at Rafah Border Crossing

According to the Crossing and Borders Authority in Gaza, in June, 12,995 persons traveled from the Gaza Strip via Rafah Crossing while 17,405 persons returned to the Strip. Moreover, the Egyptian authorities denied travel of 214 persons. Travelers returning to the Gaza Strip via Rafah Crossing suffer from prolonged, recurrent, and unjustified searches.