

General Statistics Law No. (4) for Year 2000

Chairman of Palestinian Liberation Organization Executive Committee
President of the Palestinian National Authority

After reviewing the Statistics Law No. (31) for 1947, effective in Gaza Governorates,

And the Statistics Law No. (24) for 1950 and any other amendments effective in the
West Bank Governorates,

And after the approval of the Legislative Council to the Law on 08/06/2000,

I hereby decree the following Law:

Chapter One

Definitions

Article (1)

These terms, wherever they occur in this law, shall refer to the following, unless otherwise specified:

Authority	Palestinian National Authority
Bureau	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
President	President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
Employee	Employee at the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
Council	Advisory Council on Statistics
Designated Employee	Any persons designated by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics to carry out any work in accordance with the provisions of this law.
Respondent	All natural or judicial persons required to complete statistical questionnaires in accordance with the provisions of applicable law.
Statistics	Numerical data concerning a group or a phenomenon which become apparent through comparing and processing information about the individual units in the group or a selection of these units, or through systematic observation of the phenomenon.
Official Statistics	Statistics which are made available to the public by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

Article (2)

1. A Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics shall be established in accordance with the provisions of this law. This Bureau shall enjoy a judicial character and be directly accountable to the council of ministers.
2. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics aims to develop and enhance the Palestinian official statistical system based on legal grounds that organize the process of data collection and utilization for statistical purposes.
3. The main office of the Bureau shall be located in Jerusalem. The Bureau may establish other branches in any other place in Palestine.

Chapter Two

Functions of the Bureau

Article (3)

1. To establish a comprehensive and unified statistical system to serve Palestinian authorities as an instrument of guidance for diagnosing problems and evaluating progress made.
2. To provide truthful and impartial official statistics on demographic, social, economic and environmental states and trends to serve the Palestinian citizenry.
3. To enlighten the public with information provided through the mass media, and cooperate with university and other research organizations.
4. To serve the instrumental needs of businesses and their organizations for statistical information on states and trends.
5. To conduct a population and housing census and agriculture census every ten years or less in accordance with the rules of a special census act issued by the President of the Palestinian National Authority, and to conduct an Establishment census every five years or less.
6. To participate in the international cooperation and exchange of official statistics in accordance with international standards which guarantee Palestinian membership in international organizations.
7. To compile essential statistics published on Palestine and the Palestinians by any country or international organization and analyze such statistics.
8. To establish statistical training centers in order to prepare qualified personnel to carry out the statistical activities conducted by governmental or non-governmental departments or agencies.
9. To create and maintain a library of Palestinian and international statistics and an archive of Palestinian censuses and surveys covering the areas listed.
10. To participate effectively in building the different administrative records and central registers to meet the administrative and statistical needs of the Palestinian society.
11. To publish statistical yearbook annually.
12. To update Voting Register based on the Population Register regularly and every three months, and to provide voter listings when needed.

Article (4)

All individuals have the right to obtain official statistics collected, processed, and disseminated by the Bureau in accordance with the adopted rules and instructions, taking into consideration the honoring of data confidentiality and individuals' privacy.

Article (5)

In accordance with the rules of this Law, the Bureau shall in coordination with ministries in relation collect, store, analyze and disseminate statistical data in the following fields:

First: A. Population size and structure and its changes by:

1. Births
2. Deaths
3. Migration
4. Household and family formation and dissolution

B. Social affairs, including:

1. Labor force and working conditions
2. Household income, expenditure and consumption
3. Education and access to schools and universities
4. Health and access to medical care
5. Family and conditions of vulnerable groups
6. Housing and amenities
7. Culture and recreation
8. Victimization by accidents and crimes
9. Elections
10. Gender issues
11. Other issues within social affairs

C. The national economy within the framework of national accounts, including:

1. National accounts
2. Balance of payments and foreign trade
3. Government financial affairs
4. Prices
5. Production of goods
6. Service sector production

D. Area and other statistics:

1. Land and land use
2. Agriculture, forestry and fishing
3. Buildings by use
4. Transport
5. Energy
6. Environment
7. Tourism

Second: The Bureau may collect statistical data on any other area as decided by the Council of Ministers at the recommendation of the President.

Third: Implementation of Internationally agreed recommendations on concepts, definitions, standards, nomenclature and classifications adapted to Palestinian conditions and needs in Palestine official statistics.

Article (6)

After the nomination of the Council of Ministers, the President of the Palestinian National Authority shall appoint the President of the Bureau from among persons with the required qualifications and experience to perform:

1. Enforcement of this Law and the relevant rules, organize and direct the activities of the Bureau.
2. Issue the necessary instructions or directives to employees and designated employees for the different data collection activities.
3. Development of programs and provide recommendations to achieve the Bureau's goals.
4. Prepare the Bureau's budget.
5. Seek international and other financing support for censuses and surveys as stated in this law in coordination with the Council of Ministers

Chapter Three

Financial and Administrative Affairs

Article (7)

The financing of the Bureau shall be:

1. Funds allocated to the Bureau from the general budget.
2. Loans, grants, donations and aids provided to the Bureau with the consent of the Council of Ministers.

Article (8)

1. The funds of the Bureau are public funds.
2. The Bureau enjoys the exemptions and facilities offered to the ministries and other governmental departments.

Article (9)

1. In organizing its accounts and records, the Bureau adopts accounting principles applicable in Palestine.
2. The accounts of the Bureau are subject to monitoring and auditing from the concerned auditing and control parties in Palestine.

Article (10)

1. The Bureau shall carry out its functions by means of its own employees and the other government employees designated for this purpose, in addition to other staff assigned on a temporary basis to conduct the census or any other statistical activity.
2. Each employee or other person required to collect data for official statistics shall be provided with an identity card bearing his photograph and signed by the President as a proof of his identity, and shall have the right to request data in accordance with the rules of this Law.

Chapter Four

Advisory Council on Statistics

Article (11)

An advisory council for statistics shall be established by a decree issued by the President of the Palestinian National Authority from among persons nominated by the council of ministers according to a special system.

Article (12)

Duties of the Council are:

1. Review the annual plans of the Bureau and defines areas of priority in the strategic planning of the Palestinian statistics.
2. Assess the performance of the official statistical system and promote awareness in utilizing statistics for decision making.
3. Advise the President of the Palestinian National Authority and the Council of Ministries on matters related to developing and improving the system of official statistics.
4. Other tasks identified by the Council of Ministers.

Chapter Five

Statistical Activities of Ministries

Article (13)

1. A statistical unit shall be established in each ministry or government department, where it is necessary, with qualified persons to assist these ministries and institutions in their decision making.
2. Statistical units shall coordinate its work with the Bureau and must abide with the Bureau's technical definitions and concepts.
3. In cooperation with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the ministries or governmental institutions may collect statistical information from the filed, provided that such data are specific, directly related to the mandate of the ministries or governmental institutions, and not available in the Bureau.

Article (14)

1. The Bureau is the authority empowered by Law to request data for official statistics from government departments, non-governmental agencies, public organizations and private economic actors taking into consideration what's stated in article 13 of this law.
2. The Bureau has the right to obtain administrative records data from government departments to be used for statistical purposes.
3. The various governmental and non - governmental institutions shall coordinate with the Bureau prior to implementing any amendments or additions to the adopted administrative records' forms or procedures, which is crucial to ensuring that these administrative records and procedures meet the requirements of statistical work.

Chapter Six

Censuses

Article (15)

1. A date for conducting the population and housing census and a date for conducting the agriculture census shall be specified by a decision of the President of the Palestinian National Authority in accordance with the rules of the special census act.
2. The census act shall include the census date, the issues to be studied, the target population, and the obligation for all in the target population to participate.
3. All individuals requested by the Bureau to be respondents in a survey for official statistics should participate as part of their civic duties.
4. All judicial persons or their representatives in the country are requested to complete and respond to censuses questionnaires and provide all required data in the date and in the form decided by the Bureau, in accordance with the provisions of this law or any pertinent regulations issued from time to time.

Article (16)

1. In accordance with the provisions of this law the Bureau and its employees shall respect the right to privacy of individuals and households, including their right to refuse participation in a statistical survey.
2. The Bureau and its employees shall endeavor to minimize the burden on respondents.

Article (17)

1. All individual information and data submitted to the Bureau for statistical purposes shall be treated as confidential and shall not be divulged, in whole or in part, to any individual or to a public or private body, or used for any purpose other than for preparing statistical tables.
2. The Bureau shall endeavor to issue official statistical publications in aggregate tables, which do not disclose individual data, in conformity with the confidentiality of statistical data.
3. Each employee or designated employee shall sign an affidavit according to which he shall not divulge, disseminate, or transmit any information or data that is protected as confidential.

Article (18)

The provisions of Article 17 of this Law do not apply in the following cases:

1. If the information and data pertain to a government department, or have been published by any legal organ.
2. If the information and data pertain to an individual, or a group of individuals, who have agreed in writing to publish such information or data.
3. If the information or data pertain to a company, society, or organization, and the persons in charge have agreed in writing to publish such information or data.

Chapter Seven

Penalties

Article (19)

Without prejudice to any severer penalty stipulated in any other law:

1. Any employee, representative, or any other enumeration or census employee, who divulges any confidential statistical information or data – in the sense conveyed in Article (17) of this law – which become known to him in the course of his / her work, shall be punished by imprisonment for a period that does not exceed three months or a fine not more than 200 JDs (or its equivalent in the local currency) or by both penalties.
2. Any person who acquires confidential information or data in any unlawful way (i.e. without being empowered to acquire them) shall be punished by imprisonment for a period that does not exceed three months or a fine not more than 200 JDs (or its equivalent in the local currency) or by both penalties.
3. Any person who impersonates or assumes the character of an employee or representative of the Bureau shall be punished by imprisonment for a period that does not exceed three months or a fine not more than 200 JDs (or its equivalent in the local currency) or by both penalties.
4. Any judicial person who refrains from providing required data or intentionally provides incorrect data - in accordance with the provisions of this law - shall be punished by a fine not more than 300 JDs or its equivalent in the local currency.
5. Any natural person who refrains – without sufficient excuses - from providing data required by the Bureau for purposes of the general census, in accordance with the provisions of this law, shall be fined a maximum of 100 JDs or its equivalent in the local currency.

Chapter Eight

Conclusive Provisions

Article (20)

The Bureau should adopt all data protection measures to ensure the safety of collected data and store such data in places that meet the general safety and security conditions.

Article (21)

No information, data, records or documents acquired under this Law may be presented or used as evidence in civil or criminal proceedings except as proof of violations committed against the rules of this Law as stated in article 19.

Article (22)

This law is applicable on the citizens and foreigners in Palestine.

Article (23)

The Council of Ministers shall issue the regulations necessary for enforcing the rules of this Law.

Article (24)

This law supercedes the Statistics Law No. (31) for 1947, effective in Gaza Governorates; the Statistics Law No. (24) for 1950 and any other amendments effective in the West Bank Governorates; and any regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this law.

Article (25)

All concerned parties, each in his respective field, shall enforce the provisions of this law after thirty days of the date of issue and publication in the official gazette.

Issued in Gaza City on: 08 / 07 / 2000

Corresponding to: _____ / ____ / 1421 H

Yasser Arafat
Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine
Liberation Organization
President of the Palestinian National Authority