

COUNTRY STUDY

PALESTINE Social Rights Monitor

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The EU-Palestine Partnership should:

- Adopt a strong political stance against the Israeli occupation which is the primary driver of poverty in Palestine;
- Take into account civil society concerns regarding social protection and labour, particularly towards the development of the national social protection floor in Palestine and the national budget allocated for social development. The EU should promote a shift from a narrow approach to social protection to a universal one through creating jobs, insuring the protection of the unemployed, and the inclusion of the rights of children and the elderly or disabled;
- Reinforce the role of civil society and trade unions and engage in a structured dialogue to enhance an enabling environment and promote the application of international human rights standards;
- Promote fundamental rights and freedoms of public employees, like any other citizens to foster sound public administration and good governance.



Introduction

The European Union (EU) is a strong and important donor for the Palestinian people. As made clear in the evaluation report of the EU's cooperation with Palestine, it has been the Palestinian people's most reliable partner for many years and the largest contributor to Palestinian welfare¹. The Palestinian Authority's institutional capacity is supported by the EU and governance, private sector development, water and land development (including Area C) and the East Jerusalem Programme have been identified as cooperation priorities².

This report aims to assess the overall situation in terms of social protection, decent work and civil society space in Palestine. In particular, it aims to track the progress made since the implementation of the ENP and the partnership established with the EU. In order to evaluate the situation in Palestine, consultations have been conducted with civil society representatives and human rights activists within the seven countries covered by the project 'Decent Work, Social Protection and Freedom of Association in the Middle East and North Africa: Mobilizing for Social Justice by strengthening and promoting civil society organisations (CSOs), social movements and independent trade unions' role in reforms and democratic changes', including Palestine. Qualitative feedback was collected on the basis of a questionnaire, the Social Rights Monitoring Tool, (hereinafter SRM tool) that included options for defining the context as well as open questions, offering room to provide direct input.

This report summarizes the results/feedback received based on which a set of recommendations have been formulated in the conclusion section.

Report

Social Protection

Social protection can be defined as a set of public measures, policies and programmes that are designed to protect, prevent and "transform" poverty and vulnerability across the life cycle³. It seeks to guarantee 'access to essential goods and services, promote active so-economic security and advance individual and social potentials for poverty reduction and sustainable development'⁴. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has now established the notion of social protection floors, which aims to promote access to services and goods that meets the criteria of availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality, ensure income security for children, persons in active age and persons in old age while ensuring the progressive achievement of higher levels of protection (increasing social potential and opportunities while reducing poverty). The latter criteria were used to assess social protection in Palestine. The following issues were reported by the respondents to the social rights monitor.

In October 2016, the EU and Palestinian Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) launched a new €1.5 million programme for the improvement of social protection systems in Palestine. The programme supports the MoSD to improve and develop the strategic and management capacity of the institution to better serve vulnerable families and groups in Palestine. The programme was also designed to support Palestine's National Policy Agenda 2017-2022 that identifies achieving social justice as one of the key national priorities through strengthening social protection.

However, despite EU financial support and the strategies adopted at national level, respondents to the SRM highlight the lack of universal access to essential services in Palestine, as well as their bad quality. The Israeli occupation has been identified as one of the key challenges in this regard.

1. <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/neighbourhood/pdf/key-documents/palestine/evaluation-cooperation-eu-palestine-1327-summary-201405.pdf>

2. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/near_factograph_palestine.pdf ►►

3. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/download/lifecycl/lifecycle.pdf> (pp. 13-14); <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=54887>;

4. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/download/lifecycl/lifecycle.pdf> (p. 22)



With regard to the right to health and the access to health facilities, respondents highlighted the violations of the freedom of movement of patients. There have been several cases of denial or delay of permit when referral for treatment to East Jerusalem hospitals, Israel or abroad for specialized care is needed (particularly for cancer patients). 2017 has had the lowest rate for approvals; the WHO documented that 54% of patient applications to exit Gaza via Erez were successful. The World Health Organisation (WHO) notes that the limitations on movement were also applied to health workers in exit or entry to Gaza for humanitarian purposes, with an approval rate only 61%⁵. The number of permits granted decreased constantly, and between 2015 and 2016 alone there was a 28% decrease in permits issued to Palestinian health personnel⁶.

The Israeli occupation hampers other essential services severely, particularly in the Gaza Strip. Most of Gaza's population no longer has access to safe drinking water, and less than 5% of the water from the aquifer remains fit for human consumption. Most households have to buy drinking water from private vendors at high prices and without proper quality control. Sanitation infrastructure has been deteriorating and its rehabilitation is hampered by restrictions on imports of materials and equipment into Gaza. Almost a quarter of the population is not connected to sewage networks. Without adequate energy supply, sanitation plants stop functioning and raw sewage is pumped into the sea. Water and sanitation crises are closely connected to the electricity crisis, with supply being limited to a couple of hours a day⁷.

Health insurance coverage remains fragmented, with different categories of the population insured through different schemes. For instance, public health insurance is mandatory for public employees, municipal employees and public service pensioners. Palestinian workers employed in Israel through work permits are also insured with the public health insurance. On the other hand, 10.7% of waged employees in the private sector obtain partial or full private health insurance coverage through their employer (PCBS, Annual Labour Force Survey 2016).

Nevertheless, private health insurance coverage is not comprehensive, and often excludes or provides limited coverage for chronic diseases.

With regard to health services, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) remains an important actor; through 22 centres, UNRWA provides health-care services to the vast majority of the over 1.2 million Palestine refugees in Gaza⁸. Yet respondents noted that services remain limited due to lack of high-cost sickness coverage (i.e. cancer, heart operations...etc.)

Affordability and accessibility of healthcare is particularly difficult for persons with disabilities (PWD), who usually need specific medications, aid and health care services which can be very expensive. In this regard, despite the fact that all PWDs are entitled to receive - free of charge or with a maximum 25% contribution- health care services by the Ministry of Health, public health care services in Palestine are limited to occasionally providing assertive tools and aids (i.e. wheel chairs) and some medications based on an unclear selection criteria. In addition, the aids and tools provided are usually of poor quality which can negatively affect the health of PWDs (i.e. hearing aids) which leads the PWDs to purchase these very expensive tools by themselves.

With regard to income security, the majority of the respondents to the SRM note that income security exists but for certain groups namely those in the public sector only and that it is not sufficient for a decent retirement. Taking into consideration that the illegal Israeli occupation remains a constant challenge for the Palestinian people, this exacerbates challenges in light of the already high unemployment rate in Palestine. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip was 43.6% compared with 18.1% in the West Bank in 2017, and the unemployment rate for males in Palestine was 22.3% compared with 47.4% for females⁹.

5. WHO Monthly Report, December 2017 issue http://www.emro.who.int/images/stories/palestine/documents/WHO_monthly_Gaza_access_report_Dec_2017-final.pdf?ua=1

6. Right to Health: Crossing barriers to access health in the occupied Palestinian territory 2016. Cairo: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; 2017

7. UNICEF. (1/09/2017). Gaza children face acute water and sanitation crisis, available at https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/oPt_100684.html

8. <https://www.unrwa.org/activity/health-gaza-strip>

9. The Labour Force Survey Results During, 2017, available at <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=3051>





The cash transfer programme used as the main instrument of social protection has partially contributed to poverty reduction. Respondents to the SRM highlight the limitations of the cash transfer, given that beneficiaries consider the amounts too small to make a significant contribution to their and their children's physical and emotional well-being and too limited for it to act as a springboard for income-generating opportunities. In this regard, it does not protect children from being pushed to work at a young age at the cost of their education and longer term opportunities¹⁰. For the PWD, social assistance provided through cash and in-kind assistance, rehabilitation fund or empowerment and care from the PWD programme remain limited as well. For instance, under the cash assistance programme if the family includes any person with disability, an additional allowance is paid to the family but not to the PWD. Also, middle class families are not entitled to receive any social protection services despite having members with disabilities where the determinant for the assistance programmes is the poverty level not

the disability. Additionally, much of the in-kind assistance is of low quality and there are cases where beneficiaries have received expired items. Another problem is that each family is only entitled to receive one kind of assistance; in other words if a family received in-kind assistance they are not allowed to receive cash assistance.

In these conditions, the outlook for the future of social protection in Palestine is not positive. In addition, as the Palestinian economy faces severe challenges under the Israeli occupation and thus financial resources remains heavily dependent on foreign aid, the respondents remain negative about any progress in universal social protection in Palestine.

Decent Work

Decent work, as defined by ILO involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men. In other words, decent work is the converging focus of all four of its strategic objectives: the promotion of rights at work; employment; social protection; and social dialogue. Looking at these four strategic objectives, the following issues were highlighted.

The minimum wage was adopted in 2012 in Palestine and was set at 1,450 NIS. Yet as noted by all respondents to the SRM tool, this amount is found inadequate, in addition to the wage system being fragmented and discriminatory. As the statistics issued by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) 2017 demonstrate, in the West Bank 17.9% of waged employees in the private sector received less than the minimum monthly wage. In the Gaza Strip the percentage of waged employees in the private sector who received less than the minimum monthly wage was 80.6%, about 90,400 waged employees with an average monthly wage of 731 NIS (\pm 168 EUR)¹¹.

10. ODI and UNICEF. (April 2014). Effects of the Palestinian National Cash Transfer Programme on Children and adolescents.

11. The Labour Force Survey Results During, 2017, available at <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=3051>

Women suffer worse due to the failure to implement an adequate minimum wage policy, given that in the West Bank, 36.7% of women workers are paid less than the minimum wage compared to 12.7% of male workers. Government policies have not adequately addressed the issue, as there are large segments of specific sectors that depend on women employed at less than the minimum wage, such as kindergartens and day-care, garment factories, beauty salons. Respondent to the SRM tool note that there are no incentives or supportive schemes to modify this trend, while inspections and sanctions have not been effective in significantly reducing the percentage of women paid below the minimum wage.

The women in Palestine, like in many other Arab countries and globally, also face discrimination in the form of a gender pay gap; the average daily wage of women was 83.3 NIS in 2016 compared to 114.1 NIS for men, i.e. the women's wage was 27% lower than men's.

The high unemployment rate in Palestine remains an 'excuse' for further violations of basic labour rights, given that unemployed people seek an income at any expense without adequate social protection provided to them. In addition, working conditions, when employed, remain questionable; the environment can be unsafe as safety and health at work can be questionable. In fact violations of basic labour rights are widespread for workers in the Palestinian and Israeli labour markets. For instance, in the Palestinian labour market, only 22.6% of private sector wage workers obtained annual paid vacation in 2016, and 22.8% obtained paid sick leave. Only 37.5% of women workers obtained paid maternity leave. Only 14.7% were insured by employers against work injuries (PCBS, Annual labour force survey 2016). Other violations of rights include unpaid overtime hours, non-payment of the notice month, other leaves and vacations that were not paid, as well as long working hours, particularly in Gaza, for low pay. Moreover, many workplaces do not respect occupational safety and health regulations, including in high risk sectors like construction. It is important to note that due to the low percentage of workers insured against work injuries, many accidents remain undeclared or workers do not

obtain compensations for medical treatment, lost work days, temporary or permanent disability, and support for reinsertion in the labour market in cases of disabilities that prevent them from pursuing their former occupation.

63.8% of Palestinians working in Israel and the settlements are employed in the construction industry, which registers highest accident rates. In 2016, Palestinians represented 44% of casualties in the Israeli construction sector. The lack of effective monitoring at workplaces to ensure occupational safety has been raised by the respondents as an important challenge.

Informal labour in Palestine is another factor to be considered. As the Arab NGO Network for Development's (ANND) Arab Watch Report 2016¹² demonstrates informal labour (in the formal and informal sectors) encompassed 59.9% of the total number of workers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with 632,500 female and male workers, representing 65.8% of the total working population in the West Bank against 42.5% in the Gaza Strip. Working conditions in informal employment are more critical, as the minimum health and environmental safety and security factors are not available; there is no specific work schedule, with working time mostly dependent on the employer's wishes, without any allowance for additional working hours. For PWDs, working conditions are not suitable at all in most cases, a high proportion of the few working PWDs are exposed to many accidents while the local private insurance companies refrain from including PWDs in the offered "labour insurance" packages.

Given these working conditions and the employment situation, collective bargaining remains as an important tool but is limited to a few sectors/workplaces and only a marginal percentage of workers are covered by collective agreements (i.e. university professors and employees in non-public



12. <http://www.annd.org/cd/arabwatch2016/pdf/english/16.pdf>

universities, electricity company workers, municipal workers, health workers, banking sector workers)¹³. In this regard, respondents to the SRM tool highlight that although collective bargaining is in place, bargaining power is unbalanced.

The banning of the Union of Public Employees in 2014 has deprived ministry employees from undertaking collective bargaining, since they no longer have representatives (except in education, postal and health sectors, where other unions represent workers). The public sector teachers' strike in the West Bank in 2016 also demonstrated the consequences of the lack of legitimacy of representatives. The spontaneous mass strike by teachers started because the leadership of the Teachers' Union failed to defend their rights towards the government and lost all legitimacy, while the government had failed to implement a previous agreement.

As the fact-sheet by the Democracy and Workers' Rights Center (DWRC)¹⁴ demonstrates, in Palestine, modalities for exercising the right to strike were addressed by Palestinian Labour Law No. 7 of the year 2000 and applied to private sector workers. In 2008 a decree was issued to extend its coverage to the public sector. In 2017, a further amendment was made organizing the exercise of the right to strike in the public sector; prohibiting six categories of employees from exercising this right: public health sector employees except administrators, presidency employees, cabinet employees, diplomatic sector employees, judges and prosecutors, and television and radio employees.

As for tripartite dialogue, since 2011, representatives of the three trade union federations considered as the most representative by the Labour Ministry have been included in the various committees (on labour policies, wages, labour law reform, and others). However, the representation and bargaining power of trade unions is weakened by the fragmentation of the trade union movement, and political parties' control over the leadership in some federations. In addition, the weakness of internal structures and governance in trade unions, and the fact that only a small percentage of workers are organized in trade unions limit their effectiveness. (In some sectors such as construction, workers



are mostly unorganized; according to PCBS, only 18.8% of employed persons were affiliated to trade unions or professional associations in 2016, 13.1% in the West Bank).

On policy, respondents to the SRM tool note that labour market policy is in place, but it is unable to effectively address unemployment, particularly among the youth and women. The Israeli occupation and the continuous blockade of the Gaza Strip and its devastating economic consequences are noted as key challenges. In addition to the scarcity of jobs due to the political context that impedes economic development and deprives Palestinians from using their natural resources, accessing and regulating markets, respondents note as well the skills gap that renders young people's transition from school to work more difficult, and a lack of harmonization between education and job market requirements. A study¹⁵ analyzing the skills gap highlighted the lack of practical skills among graduates (indicated by 82% of employers and 67% of graduates), the lack of in-job training opportunities, lack of awareness of business development centres and other new services available.

13. See DWRC. (2012). Collective bargaining in Palestine, available at <http://rosaluxemburg.ps/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Collective-bargaining-study-DWRC-2012.pdf>

14. See https://www.esr-net.org/sites/default/files/dwrc_annual_trade_union_forum_-_detailed_report_2017.pdf

15. See AWRAD and CARE international. (January 2015). Skills Gaps and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

With regard to the available resources for effective labour policy implementation, respondents note the insufficiency of resources, particularly for the Fund for Employment and Social Protection, which has been unable to fulfil its role since its reactivation some years ago. Furthermore, the labour law does not provide adequate protection against discrimination in employment, which is particularly detrimental for women, and the legal framework needs to be developed. The right to equal opportunities is mentioned by the law, but there are no practical measures detailing the responsibilities of the employer, sanctions, and legal remedy. For example, there is no obligation for employers to phrase job announcements to indicate that the position is open to both sexes.

Under these conditions, it looks as though working conditions are unlikely to improve, and may even worsen as Israel continues to control the movement of people and goods, access to land and resources, and markets. The violation of the right to self-determination and the right to development of the Palestinian people, and the negative impact of the occupation continue to restrict any opportunity to generate jobs for Palestinians. The situation for Palestinians and particularly for Palestinian youth is very serious, as due to the continued high demographic growth, an increasing number of young people will enter the labour market every year, without any prospect of employment.

Enabling Environment

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)¹⁶ has identified five ingredients essential to creating and maintaining an enabling environment for civil society: a robust legal framework compliant with international standards and a strong national human rights protection system that safeguards public freedoms and effective access to justice; a political environment conducive to civil society work; access to information; avenues for participation by civil society in policy development and decision-making processes; and long-term support and resources for civil society.

ANND research on an enabling environment highlights the special status of civil society in Palestine,

mainly the fact that it is under occupation. It notes that “given the specificity of the Palestinian reality, the environment of civil society is not only determined by the relationship with the state, but also by a political field involving multiple parties, as well as by the requirements of the occupation resistance and its impacts surpassing the political dimension to reach the economic and living dimensions”¹⁷.

The respondents to the SRM tool shed light on this differentiating context as well; some noting that civil society space is clearly limited in light of the Israeli occupation; while others recognize that the state allows individuals and civil society organizations to exercise their rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression referring to the Palestinian Authority. In this respect violations of these rights by the latter are also noted. For instance, the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank has been shrinking the space of Palestinian civil society by increasing regulations, especially with relation to financial processing and registration. This includes restrictions on opening bank accounts, preventing local bank transfers on the pretext of preventing money laundering. The new 16% tax applied to NGOs is seen as a further restriction.

Furthermore, as there have been several cases of arbitrary arrests, observations by the respondents to the SRM tool are not positive when elaborating on the context. Several examples are put forward including the arrest of unionists and workers’ activists, and as well intimidation and threats to livelihood (for example, threatening public workers that they will lose their jobs if they pursue union activities). Imprisonment is also possible under the Cyber Crimes Law. The law clearly violates Palestinian human rights; it infringes freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, and privacy rights, and civil society organizations are calling for amendments. The Palestinian Non-Governmental Organisations Network (PNGO) calls upon the Attorney-General, Dr. Ahmed Barak, to suspend the law because it clearly violates the Palestinian Basic Law 2005, Art (19,27), which states; “Complying with the Palestinian Basic Law guarantees the respect of freedom of opinion



16. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G16/073/52/PDF/G1607352.pdf?OpenElement>

17. <http://www.annd.org/data/file/files/enabling%20environment-eng.pdf>

and expression and the rights and freedom of the media". The Basic Law also prohibits Censorship of the media as "No warning, suspension, confiscation, cancellation or restriction shall be imposed upon the media except by law, and pursuant to a judicial ruling."

Restrictions imposed on the media in relation to freedom of expression and access to information are highlighted as well. Many Palestinian journalists and Palestinian civil society employees were arrested by the Palestinian Preventive Security (PSS) including PNGO National Advocacy Coordinator for practicing freedom of expression. The arrest was allegedly due to his activity on Facebook and made without any legal warrant; the following day he was released.



Other media violations are committed by the Israeli occupation as well; the total number of violations monitored by the Palestinian Centre for Development and Media Freedoms (MADA)¹⁸ in December 2017 amounted to a total of 89 violations.

The ANND study¹⁹ looks at the legislative framework on the freedom of peaceful assembly in Palestine. It is recognized through Public Meetings Law No. 12 of 1998, Article 2 stating that "Citizens are entitled to the right to hold public meetings, symposiums and free protests without any restriction but within the boundaries of law." Article 5 of the Law reads as follows: "Competent parties, upon request of the party organizing the meeting, shall take the required protection measures with no prejudice to the right of the participants in or process of the meeting." In its Article 3, the Law did not bind individuals to obtain a permit to exercise their right to peaceful assembly. It stated that "[p]ublic meetings may be held, provided that a written notice to this effect is addressed to the Governor or Director of Police at least 48 hours in advance." Yet, respondents to the SRM tool demonstrate that despite the legislative framework several violations occur in practice. They note that peaceful protests in the West Bank directed at denouncing Israeli violations of Palestinian rights continue to be violently repressed by the Israeli occupying army.

There are also cases where permission to assemble is denied. As PNGO shows, these denials affect private meetings, such as seminars, parties or conferences held in close places, which do not fall under the umbrella of public meetings law No. 12 of 1998, as they do not require notifying the police or the governor, and the right to hold them without the intervention of the police is guaranteed through the Palestinian Basic law²⁰.

Apart from the media restrictions mentioned above, with regard to access to information it is important to note that a draft law has been prepared but pending approval. The lack of such legislation is considered to contribute to the lack of accountability and as well as depriving citizens of their right to access and obtain information related to the work of public sector institutions.²¹

In such a context, civic space in Palestine is expected to deteriorate further.

18. http://www.madacenter.org/report.php?lang=1&id=1768&category_id=13&year=2018

19. <http://www.annd.org/data/file/files/enabling%20environment-eng.pdf> (p. 84)

20. <http://pchgaza.org/en/?cat=47>

21. <http://www.annd.org/data/file/files/enabling%20environment-eng.pdf> (p. 85)



Recommendations

Respondents to the SRM tool acknowledge the role of EU, as the biggest donor; supporting Palestinian people. Yet their expectations go beyond financial assistance to a strong political will to support the Palestinian people's rights, particularly when discussed at UN bodies. They envisage a partnership that reflects this strong support at all levels.

Within this partnership they call for a genuine engagement with civil society, ensuring a transparent, participatory and inclusive approach when the priorities are discussed and agreed upon. For instance, the absence of consultations with and the engagement of PWDs in these discussions is noted to have resulted in a lack of attention to PWD priorities and concerns in several calls for proposals launched to support Palestine. This is despite the fact that several respondents gave a positive reply regarding engaging with EU Delegations in consultations on diverse topics. Therefore they recommend that the priorities and thematic areas for EU cooperation in Palestine be built upon the real needs and priorities of the stakeholders through a bottom-up approach. Furthermore, with regard to the priorities set within ENP implementation, respondents recall ensuring the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and giving an immediate end to occupation as the priority concern of the Palestinian citizens within any framework.

In this regard,

- Given that as long as the Israeli occupation continues, the Palestinian economy will be dependent on aid; and that poverty will remain a key challenge, a strong political stance against the Israeli occupation is needed within the implementation of the ENP. The 2017 Annual Action Plan (AAP) for Palestine²², recognizes that “the Israeli occupation is the primary driver of poverty in Palestine” and “makes complex the delivery of assistance in Palestine.” This recognition should be reflected with a firm stance against the Israeli occupation, including within the framework of Israel's commitments under article 2 of the Association Agreement.
- Whereas the AAP focuses on public finance management as a priority, and envisages tech-

nical advice, training and monitoring for budget execution and control at central and selected sector levels (e.g. medical referrals, wage bill), civil society concerns regarding social protection and labour rights should be taken into consideration, particularly towards the development of the national social protection floor in Palestine and the national budget allocated for social development. The inclusion of social protection measures for persons with disabilities should be ensured in related support, as a strategic right. Within the partnership, EU should promote a shift from a narrow approach to social protection to a universal one through creating jobs, insuring the protection of the unemployed, and the inclusion of the rights of children and the elderly or disabled. Social protection policy should be considered as part of the broader strategy of social development within the partnership and within the dialogue with the Palestinian Authorities.

- Support to strengthen civil society engagement for oversight activities is included in the Partnership. Despite limitations on civic space, the role of civil society within the partnership should be broader than just watchdogs, and the EU should engage in a structured dialogue to enhance an enabling environment and promote the application of international human rights standards. The complementary support foreseen for managerial and financial capacity, particularly of cultural organizations is welcome, but the EU's partnership with Palestine should consider that arbitrary arrests, detentions, collective punishments and travel bans are continued to be used as tools to obstruct the legitimate work of human rights defenders, thus to provide effective support to civil society an enabling environment must first be developed for them to ensure the full enjoyment of the fundamental freedoms of association, assembly and expression.
- Trade union rights in the public sector in Palestine should remain a key concern within the Partnership, and in EU support to civil society. The promotion of fundamental rights and freedoms of public employees, like any other citizens, is crucial for fostering sound public administration and good governance. ▶▶▶

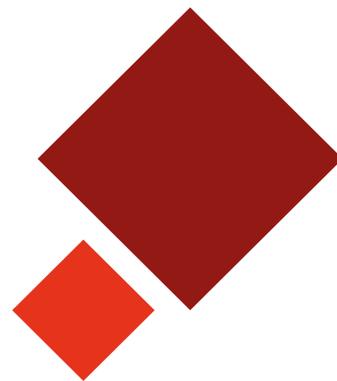
22. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/c_2017_8656_2017_palestine_aap_2017_merged.pdf



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The Social Rights Monitor is a tool developed by SOLIDAR members and partners to allow partner organizations and allies based in the country to assess the situations in terms of social protection, decent work and an enabling environment and track the progress made since the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the partnership priorities established with the EU. This report has been developed in the framework of a regional programme “Mobilizing for Social Justice: Decent Work, Social Protection and Freedom of Association in the Middle East and North Africa region” led by SOLIDAR.

SOLIDAR is a European network of membership based Civil Society Organizations who gather several millions of citizens throughout Europe and worldwide. SOLIDAR voices the values of its member organizations to the EU and international institutions across the three main policy sectors: social affairs, lifelong learning and international cooperation.

This country profile has benefited from contributions by Moroccan civil society organizations including Association BADES d’Animation Sociale et Economique, REMAJEC and Movimiento por la Paz.*

*If your organization has contributed to the report and is not listed here, contact the SOLIDAR offices to edit the report.



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