

## Situation of Palestinian Woman Rights

**Forum:** Economic and Social Council

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### Introduction

Based on the research by the Economic Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) about Palestinian women and girls, they highlighted some complex situation for Palestinian females showing setbacks in the context of Israel's military occupation of the West bank. Evidently, many of the high-ranking positions such as the presidency, in Arab countries are held by men. Furthermore, women struggle to get full custody of their children when they lack financial independence. Also, even though Palestinian women are some of the region's best educated, as 13 percent of Palestinian women have a university degree compared to 9 percent of men, only 19 percent of women are in or seeking work, which compares to 25 percent in the Middle East and North Africa and 51 percent in the world as a whole. Despite economic discrimination toward Palestinian women, there is also social discrimination such as honor killing, Early marriage that are threatening the rights of women in Palestine.

### Background

Palestinian women have played a central role in the resistance against the Occupation and held a key position with Palestinian men. Notwithstanding, they are still considered inferior to men, and the main factor and reason for this is that the Palestinian society is a patriarchal society, which is a male-dominated social system where males are supreme authority figures and hold primary and maximum power, and this puts women in unequal and unjust positions in the aspect of human rights, economy, and society. Yet, it is considered a significant achievement that women have secured seats in Parliamentary elections due to the Palestinian Electoral Law. And in addition to access to maternity leave and other rights under the Law of Civil Service and Labor Law.

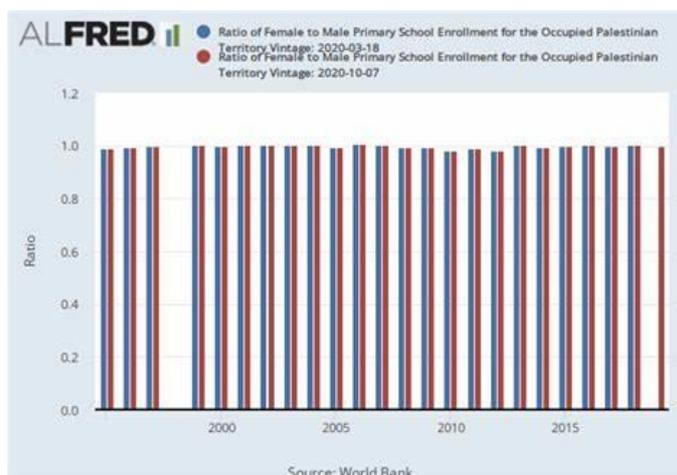
Also, in recent decades, due to political division between the Gaza strip and West Bank, Palestinian women are currently suffering from serious violations affecting their social rights. The presence of two governments led to the dissolution of decisions and laws. The presidential decisions on the West Bank to ensure women's rights in some fields are not implemented in the Gaza Strip. Also, several laws and resolutions were created in Gaza Strip independent of the government in the West Bank, which included violations of women's personal rights under religious claims. For example, the imposition of the veil on the parameters and schoolgirls. Moreover, they are facing a number of challenges in their communities. And three common types of violation experienced by Palestinian women are honor killing, early marriage, and economic discrimination.



## International Action

There has been financial support from the United Nations (UN), and funding to a plethora of Palestinian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dedicated to women's issues such as gender-based discrimination and violence, education, healthcare, political, civic, social rights, economic rights, and human rights.

Additionally, ostensible government support for gender equality issues buys the PA valuable international political capital while effectively preserving the gender status quo. And this is exemplified by the accession of the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by the PA. Despite garnering widespread praise for adopting an important international treaty meant to foster gender equality, the PA has not made significant progress in actually implementing the treaty. According to a report that was made by the independent Commissions for Human Rights (ICHR), all international human rights treaties signed by the PA, including CEDAW, are presented as non-obligatory due to the non-existence of a legal framework that would regulate the merger of these treaties in the national legal system.



## Key Organization

*SAWA (non-profit organization)*

SAWA (non-profit organization) is a Palestinian, non-profit civil society organization that was established in 1998 by a group of female volunteers active in women's issues and rights. This organization works to liquidate all types of violence against women and children, and to promote gender equality in Palestinian society.

*General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW)*

GUPW (General Union of Palestinian Women) is an umbrella organization for Palestinian women's groups that was established in 1965 as part of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Its general goal is to raise the status of women in Palestinian society by increasing their participation in social, economic and political life.

*PWWSD (The Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development)*

The Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development (PWWSD) is one of the biggest women's Non-Government Organization's (NGO) working in occupied Palestine that was established in 1981. It aims to build a democratic Palestinian society based on gender equality, social justice, and respect for human rights.

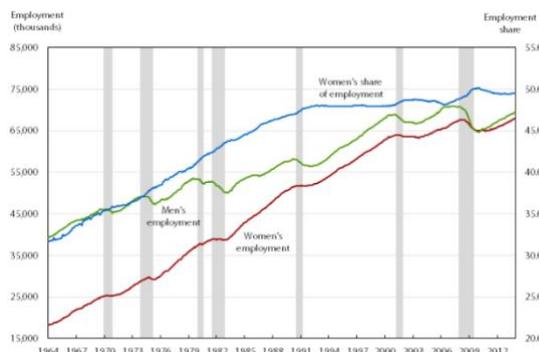
## The Stances of the P5 Nations

### *United States of America*

United States of America have supported women’s rights by asserting the equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex. Also, Seneca Falls Woman’s Rights Convention (SFWR) was established in 1848, marking embark of the women’s rights movement in the United States.

### *United Kingdom*

The low share of women in top positions certainly contributes to the overall gender pay gap in the United Kingdom, which stood at 15.4 percent for all workers in 2021. The pay gap is even more pronounced among older age groups, and was in double figures for every age group that was above the age of 39. But, as UK has been promoting gender equality like most of other nations, gender equality in UK has been conclusively shown to stimulate economic growth, which is important, especially in countries with higher unemployment rates and less economic opportunity.

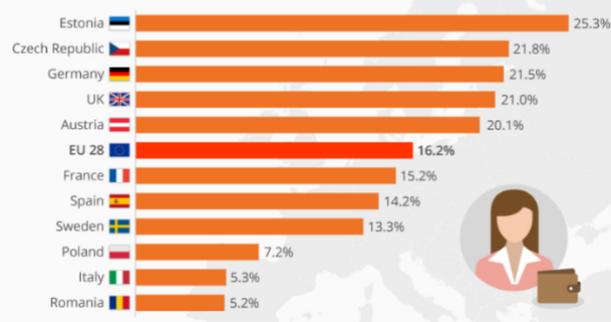


### *France*

Women’s Right in France in February 1848. The provisional government recognized three rights essential to the new democratic and social republic, which can be referred to things such as education, employment, and universal suffrage. Also, France has a tradition of gender equality legislation in employment and professional life. Beginning with the Law of 22 December on equal pay in 1972, at least 12 laws were adopted on the topic prior to 2014, including the 1983 Law on professional equality.

### The Gender Pay Gap In Europe

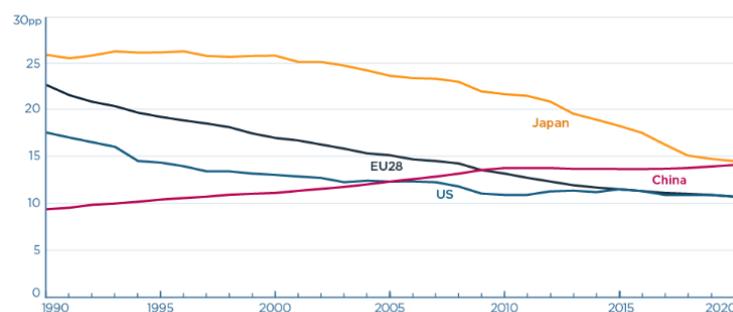
Unadjusted gender pay gap in selected EU member states



### *China*

China’s government was set to overhaul its law governing women’s rights for the first time in decades, to refine the definition of sexual harassment, affirm prohibitions on workplace discrimination and ban forms of emotional abuse. And the government has also recently emphasized its dedication to women’s employment rights,

Gender gap in labor force participation rate (age 15-64), 1990-2020



especially as it urges women to have more children amid a looming demographic crisis.

### *Russian Federation*

Russian women are equal in theory, but not in practice. The constitution of Russia, adopted in 1993, guarantees equal rights for women and men. Even before that, the Bolshevik Revolution granted women's rights in Russia including suffrage in 1917. However, women are still fighting inequality in many sectors, including the professional realm. People in Russia expect women to prioritize motherhood over professional development because of Russia's low fertility rate. Citing a belief that strenuous jobs pose a threat to women's safety and reproductive health, the government has barred women from occupations like aircraft repair, construction and firefighting. Even though there were lot of efforts to reduce the gender gap and inequality in Russia, there are unequal situation based on genders such as more women are in more poverty than men, Russian women face threats to their physical safety, and the policy stand by, learned attitude reinforce gender inequality, and the feminist movement in the Russia that is growing every year.

### **Possible Solutions**

As there are various aspects to this problem, various solutions can be proposed. Among the various problem that exists within the issue, three of the gravest are the following:

1. Despite the fact that even though Palestinian women are some of the region's best educated, and 13 percent have a university degree compared to 9 percent of men, only 19 percent of women are in or seeking work, which compares to the 25 percent in the Middle East and North Africa, and 51 percent in the world as a whole.
2. Women struggle to get full custody of their children when they lack financial independence.
3. The fact that there is a denial of women's right to inheritance. As 36 percent of women are deprived of their inheritance, while a large quantity of them do not have fair access to their rightful inheritance.

Hence, it is crucial to highlight the importance to confer certain occupations or jobs to the ones who are qualified, and not judging them based on their genders. Also, receiving support from NGOs, The Association for Women's Right in Development (AWID), UN Women, and other organization are necessary, in order to practice and stimulate the following solutions. Such as raising awareness of the situation that Palestinian women's current situation that they are placed in by utilizing platforms such as Social Network Services (SNS). And intrigue other organizations to help and support Palestinian women to protect their economic, and social rights

### **Glossary**

*Zionism:* A worldwide Jewish movement that resulted in the establishment and development of the state of Israel and that now supports the states of Israel as a Jewish homeland.

*Patriarchal:* of or relating to a patriarch, the male head of a family, tribe, community, church,

order, etc.:

*Honor killing*: the killing of a relative, especially a female relative, as retribution for the perceived dishonoring of the family, as dictated, or sanctioned by some cultures and religions.

*Parliament*: It is known as the highest legislature, consisting of the sovereign, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons in the UK; a formal conference for the discussion of public affairs specifically : a council of state in early medieval England.

*CEDAW (Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women)*: CEDAW is what the Palestinian president has specifically acknowledge the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

*Confiscation*: to seize as forfeited to the public domain; appropriate, by way of penalty; to seize by or as if by authority; appropriate summarily;

## **Timeline**

1988 – Palestinian women’s rights are part of the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, and are declared by the Palestinian Liberation Organization

1993 – The General Union of Palestinian Women created ‘The Women’s Right Document’ setting out principles for gender equality and women’s social and economic rights. This was taken forward in 2022, and consolidated into a final document in the same year reflecting a consultation process with women’s organizations in Palestine

2002 – The Palestinian Basic Law (PBL), which while stressing that Palestine is an Islamic state and Islamic is the main source of legislation, confirms a set of principles and concepts that emphasizes freedom, equality, and non-discrimination.

2005 – The Palestinian Election Law (TPE) asserted the principle of quota and offered women the chance to participate in elections.

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