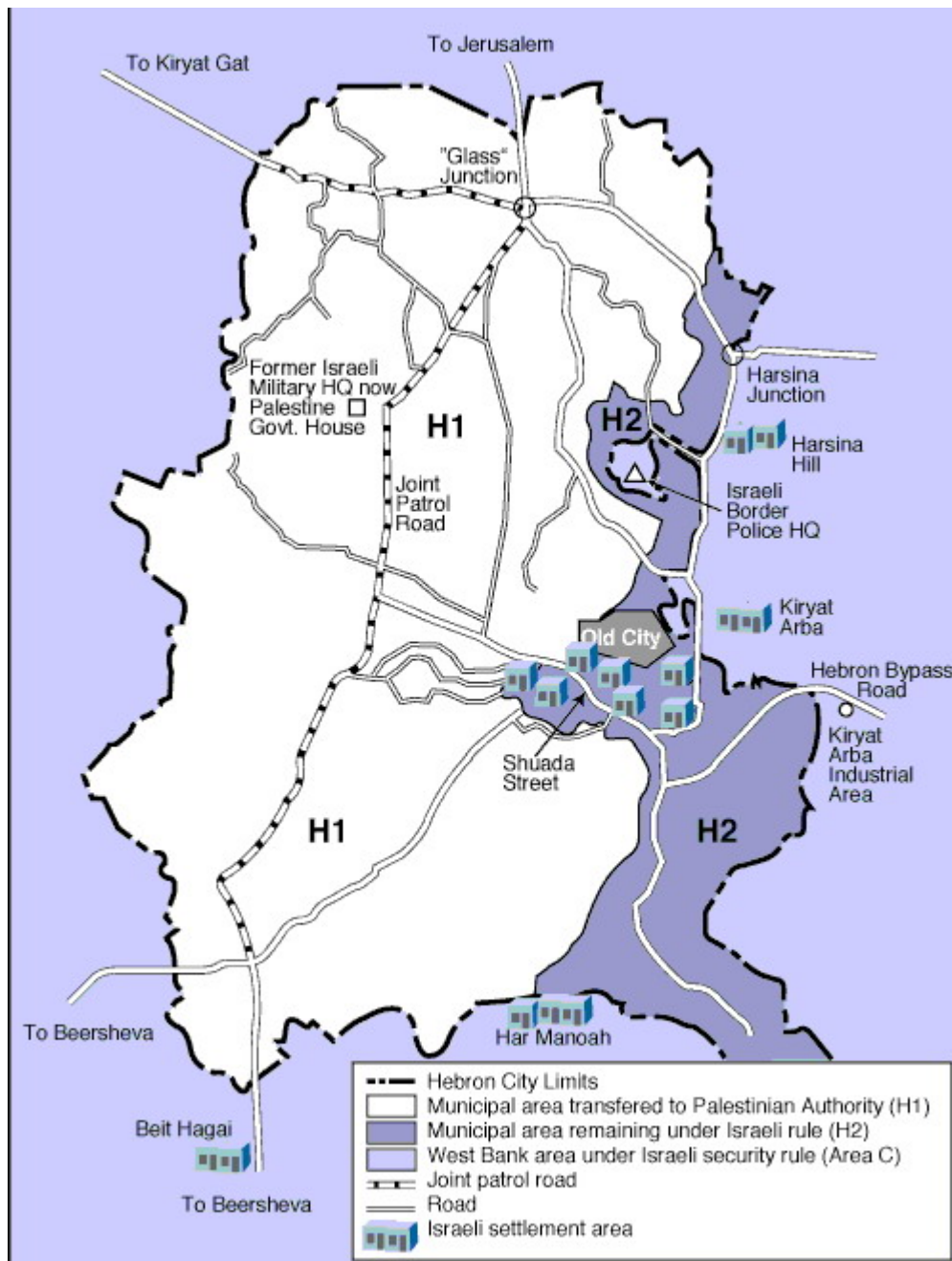


BASIC FACTSHEET ON HEBRON

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1) Hebron (Al-Khalil in Arabic language) is the only city in the Occupied Palestinian Territory apart from Jerusalem, where colonization takes place inside the city itself. Located 30 km south of Jerusalem, the city covers an area of 74.102 km² and is home to 89,000-195,000 residents, the majority of whom are Palestinian Arabs.¹

2) As the biggest city in the West Bank Hebron used to be a commercial and manufacturing center with a vibrant economy.² With the Ibrahimi Mosque / Cave of the Patriarchs believed to be the resting place of Abraham and his wife Sarah, their son Isaac and his wife Rebecca, and their grandson Jacob and his wife Leah, Hebron is of religious significance for Jews, Muslims and Christians.³

3) The Old City Center of Hebron includes the Casbah, four Israeli downtown settlements, Shuhada Street, and the Ibrahimi Mosque/Cave of the Patriarchs. This area was traditionally the heart of Hebron's commercial district. Under the 1997 Hebron Protocol, these sections of the Old City were designated as part of the H2 area of Hebron, which is under Israeli military control. H2 itself includes a population of 35,000 Palestinians,⁴ in addition to 800 Israeli settlers. In addition, there are several hundred Israeli soldiers based in H2, primarily to protect the Israeli settler population.⁵ The remaining city area other than the Old City is assigned to Palestinian Authority Administration, under the designation of "H1".

4) Israeli control over H2 results in unconditional protection and support for the settlements and settlers therein, even though occupation of Palestinian houses, attacks on civilians and property damage by settlers is illegal according to Israeli civil law. Impunity of settler activities severely infringes on Palestinian human rights in the Old City of Hebron and introduced severe hurdles to their daily lives. In addition, Israeli practices have wreaked significant damage to the economic health of the city as a whole.⁶

5) Apart from four settlements⁷ inside H2, aligned in connection to the Kyriat Arba settlement on the outskirts of the Old City, settlers regularly attempt to create 'outposts' in the Old City by occupying houses of Palestinians who left the city. Forged property documents often serve as the base of these kind of operations.⁸

¹ According to an estimation done by the Palestinian Central Bureau for 2012-2013.

² Hebron economy nowadays still accounts for one third of the West Bank gross domestic product (see: TIPH's website at: http://www.tiph.org/en/About_Hebron/Hebron_today/).

³ Adamczyk, S. (2013). *Driven Out. The Continuing Forced Displacement of Palestinian Residents from Hebron's Old City*. p. 3. Norwegian Refugee Council. Available at: http://www.nrc.no/arch_img/9208359.pdf [Accessed February 22, 2016].

⁴ UNOCHA, the Monthly Humanitarian Monitor, February 2012, p. 7.

⁵ Adamczyk, S. (2013). *Driven Out. The Continuing Forced Displacement of Palestinian Residents from Hebron's Old City*. p. 12. Norwegian Refugee Council. Available at: http://www.nrc.no/arch_img/9208359.pdf [Accessed February 22, 2016].

⁶ Adamczyk, S. (2013). *Driven Out. The Continuing Forced Displacement of Palestinian Residents from Hebron's Old City*. p. 3. Norwegian Refugee Council. Available at: http://www.nrc.no/arch_img/9208359.pdf [Accessed February 22, 2016].

⁷ Avraham Avinu, Beit Romano, Beit Hadassah and Tel Rumeida

⁸ Adamczyk, S. (2013). *Driven Out. The Continuing Forced Displacement of Palestinian Residents from Hebron's Old City*. p. 26. Norwegian Refugee Council. Available at: http://www.nrc.no/arch_img/9208359.pdf [Accessed February 22, 2016].

6) The population of the historic center of Hebron decimated since daily life and economic activity endure harsh restrictions. By 2007 more than 40 percent of Palestinian apartments in the Old City had been vacated and over 75 percent of Palestinian businesses had closed due to settler activities and Israeli military restrictions.⁹ By 2009 the livelihoods of Palestinian residents who remained in the Old City deteriorated badly, which, together with increasing unemployment, resulted in 77 percent of Palestinians in H2 living below the poverty line.¹⁰ Palestinian residents who did not leave the Old City of Hebron cite their financial inability and lack of economical means as the reason for not moving to a more livable environment.

7) Israel has systematically denied freedom of movement to Palestinians residing in H2 and has frequently prohibited Palestinians from entering or returning to their homes. Palestinian residents in the Old City of Hebron face daily Israeli checkpoints, searches and frequent detention. These infringements on the freedom of movement are not implied on Israeli settlers who live near the shuttered Palestinian commercial area. The Old City counts as many as 20 checkpoints, whole streets are closed for Palestinian pedestrian and vehicle movement (for example Shuhada Street since 2001), and neighborhoods undergo curfew or are designated closed military zones (Palestinian residents living near the Tel Rumeida settlement for example, have to orally provide an identification number to Israeli soldiers at the Tel Rumeida checkpoint before being allowed to enter their home).¹¹

8) Palestinian access to basic services is impeded by the restriction on movement in that for example ambulances are delayed in entering certain areas, which results in pregnant women giving birth before reaching the hospital, or ill people not being able to receive timely vital assistance. Emotional impact and psychological distress is enormous, especially for the 4200 children who have to pass armed checkpoints on a daily basis in order to reach school.¹² In addition, settler violence and harassment add to daily hardships: an example of this is the necessity for a net covering streets to protect pedestrians from rubbish thrown at them out of first floor windows of occupied houses.¹³

9) Recent unrest amounted to 16 Palestinian civilians in the Old City of Hebron being killed by Israeli soldiers between September 2015 and February 2016, a number that constitutes 27 percent of the total West Bank number of Palestinian dead during this period.¹⁴

⁹ According to studies conducted in the Old City by Israeli NGOs B'Tselem and the Association for Civil Rights in Israel in late 2006-early 2007.

¹⁰ A study by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 2009.

¹¹ Adamczyk, S. (2013). *Driven Out. The Continuing Forced Displacement of Palestinian Residents from Hebron's Old City*. p. 3. Norwegian Refugee Council. Available at: http://www.nrc.no/arch/_img/9208359.pdf [Accessed February 22, 2016].

¹² Reliefweb. *Hebron Violence Takes a Toll on Children*. Online. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/hebron-violence-takes-toll-children> [Accessed February 23, 2016].

¹³ Protection Cluster occupied Palestinian territory (2014). *Protection Concerns And Humanitarian Impacts of Settlement Activity in Hebron City (H2)*.

¹⁴ HRC monthly reports: September 2015 – January 2016; for the recent killed girl Kilzar al-Uweiji see: <https://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=770266>.