

# The Forward Eagle

News, Reviews & Elisions  
Of Mutual Interest  
Compiled Weekly by Tim Forward  
for  
The Riverdale Senior Services Center  
Bronx, NY

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## Current events

### CALLED THE GAZA STRIP

The debate surrounding the number of deaths in Gaza has been dominated by a single question. Are the surveys compiled by the Hamas-controlled Ministry of Health in Gaza credible? According to many experts, the ministry's lists are plausible and realistic, while Israel has consistently referred to them as "terrorist propaganda."

Previous studies have faced the same problem, as they have always relied, at least partially, on the only comprehensive database available to date, that of the Hamas-controlled Ministry of Health and its hospitals.

Now, for the first time, researchers have created an independent database. And the result is clear: The Ministry of Health's death toll is likely too low. Between October 7, 2023, and January 5, 2025, the number of direct war deaths in Gaza is estimated at approximately 75,200.

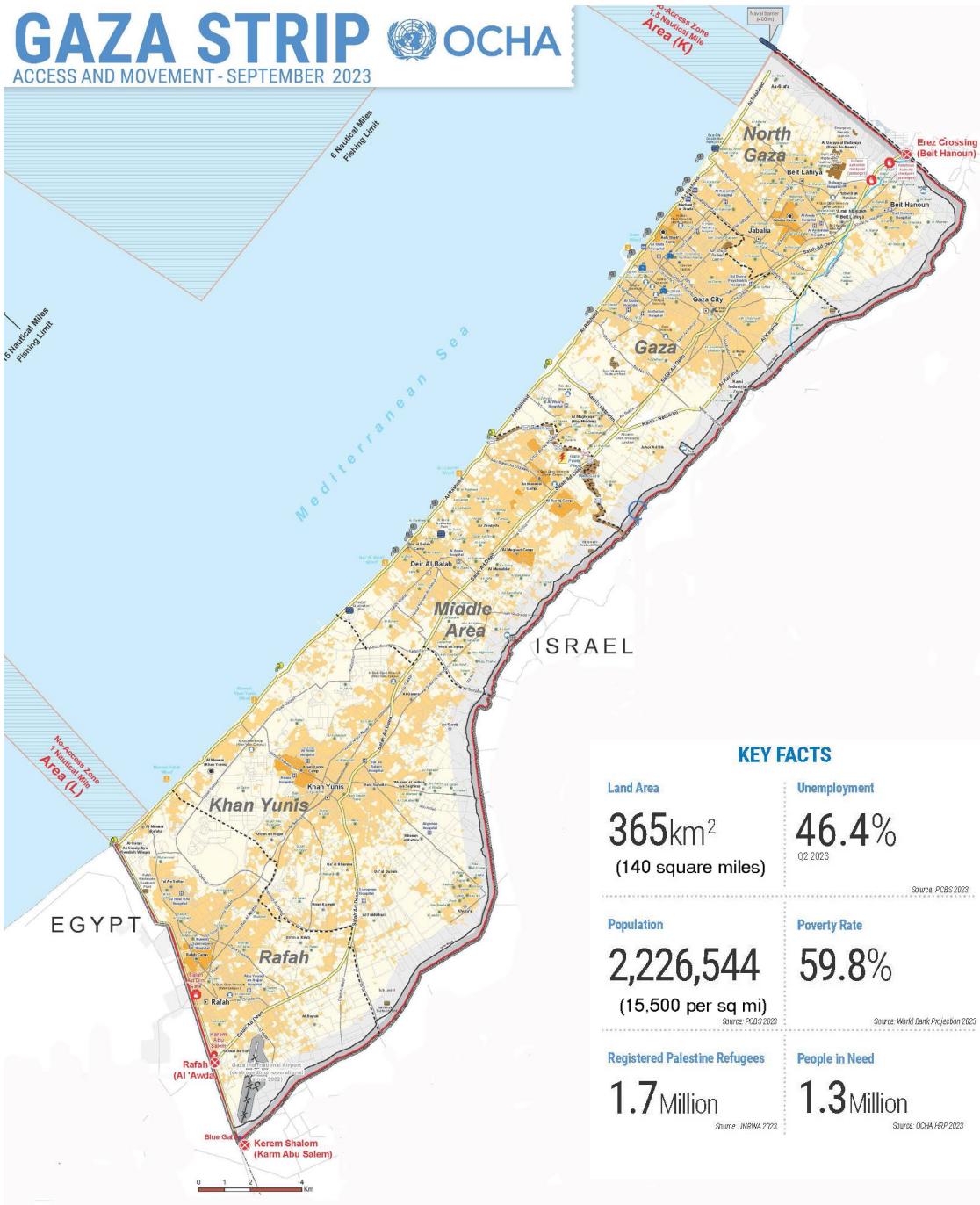
The Ministry of Health's figures for the same period, retrospectively, show exactly 45,805 deaths. According to new research, the actual number is likely about 60 percent higher than determined by the Ministry of Health.

The researchers used an obvious method, household surveys. British, American, Norwegian, and Belgian researchers collaborated with Palestinian colleagues from the PCPSR (Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research), an independent research organization based in the West Bank, largely funded by private foundations and the European Union.

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The PCPSR has staff in the Gaza Strip who traveled to 200 randomly selected locations to conduct interviews in ten randomly selected households each. "We had two major problems: first, the refugee movements; and second, the evacuation orders for parts of the Gaza Strip," said Michael Spagat, one of the study's authors and a professor at Royal Holloway College in London. The interviews were not conducted in the so-called "no-go zones" that were subject to evacuation orders by Israel.

At the end of last year, for example, the southern city of Rafah was in a "no-go zone." However, an explicit attempt was made to interview displaced persons from Rafah and other targeted areas. All surveyed households reported their original place of residence. The results were then weighted according to other criteria to ensure the most representative picture possible.



Map from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

The researchers' publication is currently a so-called preprint. It has not been published in a public journal and has yet to have a peer review. The new figures show that most of the fatalities in Gaza have been civilians.

The results of the new study are consistent with others previously published. One such study published in the journal *Lancet* used social media content to calculate the number of unreported deaths. The *Lancet* study focused on the period up to June 2024, and found figures that were 40 percent higher than the Hamas-controlled Ministry of Health had reported.

The international team of researchers and the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research have demonstrated that Israeli claims of doing everything possible to protect civilians in Gaza are not supported by the numbers.

More than 30 percent of the deaths are children under 18. Another 22 percent are women, and about four percent are the elderly over 65. Within Gaza, 44 percent of deaths are men between 18 and 64. The researchers' count of Hamas combatants killed in three years of Israeli assaults still remains speculative.

## Word of the week

### misnomer

noun  
/ˌmɪsˈnoʊ.mər/

A name that does not suit what it refers to, or the use of such a name

*It was the scruffiest place I've ever stayed in, so "Grand Hotel" was a complete misnomer.*

## The Forward Eagle

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Tim Forward Editor

This paper is offered as a review of recent topics taken up by the current events discussion group at Riverdale Senior Services Center.

Please join us at the Center for Ageless Living, 2600 Netherland Avenue, Bronx, NY each Monday at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon for Current Events with Tim.

This week's article was excerpted and edited from *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

For reference:

Detroit, Michigan has a land area of 138 square miles (360 square km) and a population density of approximately 4,600 people per square mile.