

Study: Compared to pre-war levels, life expectancy in the Gaza Strip has almost halved

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Life expectancy in the Gaza Strip has been nearly cut in half (-46.3%) since the current war began in October 2023, according to new estimates

[published](#) in *The Lancet*.

The study led by Michel Guillot, professor of sociology in the School of Arts & Sciences, and a team of international collaborators found that life expectancy dropped from a pre-war average of 75.5 years to 40.5 years for the period of time between October 2023 and September 2024. The decrease in life expectancy was higher for men (-51.6%; 73.6 years pre-war to 35.6 years) than for women (-38.6%; 77.4 years pre-war to 47.5 years).

The authors calculated three life expectancy scenarios:

- The central scenario—based on the official count of fatalities from the Gaza Ministry of Health, excluding the estimated count of individuals reported missing or under the rubble, estimates life expectancy between Oct. 2023 and Sep. 2024 to be 40.5 years
- The low scenario—based on deaths for which complete identifying information was available—estimates life expectancy between Oct. 2023 and Sep. 2024 to be 44.4 years
- The high scenario—based on the official count of fatalities from the Gaza Ministry of Health, including the lower bound of the estimated count of individuals reported missing or under the rubble—estimates life expectancy between Oct. 2023 and Sep. 2024 to be 36.1 years

The authors caution that the central scenario estimate of 40.5 years [life expectancy](#) includes deaths for people whose identification information was not complete and whose existence could not be cross-checked against the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) register.

As the estimate doesn't include individuals reported missing or under the rubble, it may still be an underestimation. Additionally, the authors

highlight that none of the scenarios include the indirect effects of the war—such as lack of access to [health care](#) and malnutrition—on mortality.

More information: Michel Guillot et al, Life expectancy losses in the Gaza Strip during the period October, 2023, to September, 2024, *The Lancet* (2025). DOI: [10.1016/S0140-6736\(24\)02810-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(24)02810-1)

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