



PRESS RELEASE

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International Women's Day

- At the end of 2006 there were 3,536,000 women in Israel.
- The sex ratio in Israel is 102 females to 100 males.
- The average age of Israeli women at first marriage is 24.3 years
- About 900 thousand women have children up to age 17, and 10% of those women head single-parent families.
- The average number of children that a woman is expected to bear in her lifetime is 2.9 – almost double the fertility rate among women in Europe (1.5 children).
- Among Jewish women aged 35-39 years, and among Arab women aged 30-34 years, the percentage of singles (never-married, divorced, and widowed) is higher than among their male counterparts. From those ages, the gap between single men and women continues to increase.
- In 2004, 13.7% of all women aged 18 and over had a first degree, compared with 11.5% of all men aged 18 and over. 7.4% of all women had a second degree, compared with 7.1% of all men, and 0.7% of all women had a third degree compared with 1.4% of all men.
- In 2005, more single than married mothers were in the civilian labour force (80.6% versus 64.2%). However, the percentage of unemployed single mothers was higher than that of married mothers (12.4% versus 7.9%).
- The average hourly wage for women with 16+ years of schooling amounts to only 77% of the wages earned by their male counterparts (NIS 65.6 for men, versus NIS 50.3 for women)
- The social survey of persons aged 20 and over revealed that 44% of the women defined work as their main activity, compared with 59% of the men; 22% of the women defined housework as their main activity, compared with only 1% of the men.

The press release is also published on the CBS Website: www.cbs.gov.il/hodaot2005/01_05_49.htm

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On the occasion of International Women's day, which falls on March 8, 2006, the Central Bureau of Statistics presents statistics on women in Israel.

Percentages of Single Men and Women in the Jewish and Arab Populations, by Age Groups – End of 2003

	Jewish Population		Arab Population	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
30-34	30.3	24.7	17.0	20.7
39-35	20.2	22.3	8.8	18.1
40-49	17.2	23.6	5.3	18.4
50-59	14.8	26.6	4.1	24.3
60-69	14.9	36.6	5.6	40.9
70-84	22.4	62.3	15.1	68.7
85+	50.0	96.5	36.7	96.6

Marriage and Fertility

Marriage

In Israel, the average age at first marriage has been rising steadily since the 1970s, as has the age of mothers at the time of their first birth.

In 1970, the average age at first marriage among Israeli women was 21.7, compared with 24.3 in 2003. This is younger than the average age of European women at the time of their first marriage (age 28). Differences were also found among women from different religious groups in the Israeli population: at the time of their first marriage, Jewish women are about three years older than Moslem and Druze women, and about one year older than Christian women. Since 1970, the highest increase in the average age at first marriage was among Jewish women (3.4 years), and the lowest increase was among Moslem women (1.7 years).

Table 1: Average Age of Women at the Time of First Marriage, by Religion and Year

Woman's Religion	Average Age at Time of (First) Marriage		
	1970	2003	Change (in years)
Total	21.7	24.3	+2.6
Jewish	21.8	25.2	+3.4
Moslem	20.1	21.8	+1.7
Christian	22.3	24.2	+1.9
Druze	19.4	21.8	+2.4

Fertility

In 2004, 140,900 women gave birth. Of those women, 69% were Jewish, 25% were Moslem, 2% were Christian, and 2% were Druze. In 2004, there was a 2% decline in the average number of children that a woman is expected to bear in her lifetime – from 2.95 in 2003, to 2.90 in 2004. Nonetheless, the total fertility rate has remained stable since the beginning of the 1990s, at around 2.9 children per woman. Moslem women have a higher fertility rate (4.4 births per woman) than Jewish women (2.7 births per woman), Druze, women (2.7 births per woman), and Christian women (2.1 births per woman). Among married women who gave birth in 2004, the birth of the first child took place about two years after the marriage, on the average.

Table 2: Woman's Average Age at Birth of the First Child, by Religion and Year

Woman's Religion	Woman's Average Age at Birth of the First Child		
	1980	2004	Change (in years)
Total	23.8	26.4	+2.6
Jewish	24.1	27.3	+3.2
Moslem	21.8	23.1	+1.3
Christian	23.4	26.2	+2.8
Druze	21.9 ²	23.8	+1.9

(2) The figure for this year refers to Druze and Others.

Requests to Committees for Termination of Pregnancy

In 2003, about 20,000 women submitted requests to committees for termination of pregnancy – at a rate of 12 requests per 1,000 women of child bearing age (15-49 years). Fifteen percent of the requests were submitted by girls up to age 19, and 42% were submitted by never-married women. The average age of women who submitted requests to committees for termination of pregnancy was 28.8 years.

Immigrants to Israel

In 2005, 53% of the immigrants to Israel were women. As expected, the older the immigrants, the higher the percentage of women. In the 75+ age group, the proportion of women was 58% (the sex ratio in that age group was 136 women to 100 men). By comparison, among the population of Jews and Others in Israel, the proportion of women is 51%, and in the 75+ age group, the proportion of women was 60%.

Education Level

In 2004, 13.7% of all women aged 18 and over had a first degree, compared with 11.5% of all men aged 18 and over. 7.4% of all women had a second degree, compared with 7.1% of all men, and 0.7% of all women had a third degree compared with 1.4% of all men. 23.6% of the women indicated that a matriculation certificate was the highest diploma they received, compared with 20.7% of the men. 15.6% of the women aged 18 and over graduated high school without a matriculation certificate, compared with 21.3% of the men. 4.4% of the women aged 18 and over had no schooling, compared with 1.7% of the men.

Higher Education

In 2005, 90,500 men and 113,600 thousand women were studying for an academic degree at one of Israel's major universities or at an academic college. The percentage of women out of all first degree students at colleges and universities was 55% (compared with 54% in 1990); out of all second degree students, 57% were women (compared with 50% in 1990); and out of all third degree students, 52% were women (compared with 41% in 1990).

Women comprise over half of all first degree students at colleges and universities in the following fields: education (81%), medicine and paramedical studies (74%), humanities and social sciences (64%), biological sciences (61%), and agriculture (55%). Women comprised less than half of the students enrolled in law (47%), business and administration sciences (49%), physical sciences

(39%), mathematics, statistics and computer sciences (32%), and engineering and architecture (25%).

Labour

The percentage of women aged 15 and over in the civilian labour force in Israel continues to rise steadily. In 2005, the proportion of women in the civilian labour force reached 50.0% (compared with 45.7% in 1995). Concomitantly, the proportion of men in the civilian labour force declined to 60.7% in 2004, compared with 62.9% in 1995.

The percentage of unemployed women in the labour force declined from 11.4% in 2004 to 9.5% in 2005. The gender gap has narrowed, but it is still wide – the percentage of unemployed men in 2005 declined to 8.5% in 2005 (compared to 9.5% in 2004). In 2005, 61.7% of all employed women in 2004 had full-time jobs, and 38.3% had part-time jobs. By comparison, 86.9% of the men usually worked full time, and 13.1% usually worked part time. Of the women with part-time jobs (usually less than 35 hours per week), 26.9% worked part time because they had no other choice, i.e., they sought but did not find additional or full-time work. Of the men with part-time jobs, 24.8% did so because they had no other choice.

The following is a breakdown of the percentages of women, by occupation: managers – 26%; academic professionals – 49%; clerical workers – 75%; agents, sales workers, and service workers – 55%.

In 2005, 74,400 women were employed in high-tech industries, and comprised 34.1% of all persons employed in high-tech.

92% of all employed women are **employees**, and 6% are **self-employed, employers, or cooperative members**. By comparison, 83% of all employed men are employees, and 16% are **self-employed, employers, or cooperative members**.

In 2005, more single than married mothers were in the civilian labour force (80.6% versus 64.2%). However, the percentage of employed single mothers was lower than that of married mothers (87.6% versus 92.1%, respectively). Thus, the percentage of unemployed single mothers was higher than that of married mothers (12.4% versus 7.9%).

Wages of Employees

In 2004, **the average gross monthly wage of employees** was NIS 8,459 for men and NIS 5,357 for women. Thus, women's wages were 63% of men's wages.

Part of the discrepancy between the monthly wages of men and women can be explained by the fact that women worked fewer hours per month than men. On the average, male employees worked 45.7 hours per week, whereas women worked 34.9 hours per week.

Comparison of men's and women's income in terms of hourly wages, i.e., disregarding the influence of the difference in total work hours, reveals smaller discrepancies in wages – although the discrepancy still exists.

The average hourly wage for male employees was NIS 44.2, compared with NIS 37.2 for women. Thus, women's income was 84% of men's income.

In 1985, women's income was 73% of men's income. Since then, the gender gap has diminished. By 1995, women's income was 81% of men's income. The trend toward diminishing the gap continued in subsequent years, albeit at a lower rate. In 2004, as mentioned, women's income was 84% of men's income.

Men's income, like women's income, increases with age. Concomitantly, the discrepancy between men's and women's income increases with age. From ages 15 to 24, women's hourly wages are 92% of men's wages. Between the ages of 55 and 64, women's wages are 82% of men's wages. Comparison of wages by occupations reveals that the highest hourly wages earned by men were among academic professionals (NIS 71.9), followed by managers (NIS 69.8). By contrast, the highest hourly wages earned by women were among managers (NIS 62.1) followed by academic professionals (NIS 56.4). Thus, the hourly wage earned by women managers is 89% of that earned by their male counterparts (compared with 74% in 2003 and 75% in 1995); and the hourly wage earned by women academic professionals is 78% of that earned by their male counterparts (compared with 82% in 2003 and 79% in 1995). The lowest hourly wage earned by men and women was among unskilled workers – NIS 24.4 for men, and NIS 21.8 for women. That, among unskilled workers women's income is 89% of men's income.

Comparison of wages by years of schooling reveals that the highest hourly wages are earned by employees with 16+ years of schooling. 52% of the employees with this level of schooling were women. However, the hourly wages of a woman with 16+ years of schooling were only 77% of the wages earned by a man with the same level of education (about NIS 65.6 for men, versus NIS 50.3 for women).

Data from the Social Survey

The social survey of persons aged 20 and over revealed that 44% of the women defined work as their main activity, compared with 59% of the men; 22% of the women defined housework as their

main activity, compared with only 1% of the men, and 6% of the women defined **studies** as their main activity, compared with 9% of the men.

Eighty percent of the women indicated that they are satisfied with their lives, compared with 83% of the men; 46% indicated that they are satisfied with their economic situation, compared with 49% of the men; and 45% indicated that they are satisfied with their income from work, compared with 49% of the men.

Eight percent of the women in Israel do not know Hebrew, compared with 3% of the men; 33% do not know English, compared with 30% of the men; and 70% of the women do not know Arabic, compared with 63% of the men.

Health

A national health survey was conducted in Israel in 2003/2004, and included questions about the incidence of mental disorders among persons aged 21 and over. The findings revealed that the incidence of affective and anxiety disorders was higher among women than among men. About 6.9% of the women reported symptoms of affective disorders, compared with 4.1% of the men; and 4.7% of the women reported symptoms of anxiety disorders compared with 3.1% of the men.

A slightly higher percentage of women than men reported that they had received help and treatment for mental problems during the 12 months preceding the interview (22% versus 18%, respectively). Additionally, the percentage of women who reported that they take prescription medications for affective problems, attention problems, lethargy, sleep disorders, or coping with stress was higher than the percentage of men – 10% of women versus 6% of men.

Driving

In 2005, 1.25 million women and 1.9 million **had a driver's license**. The percentage of women among all drivers in Israel increased from 34% in 1990 to 40% in 2005. There were 46,000 women who had a license to drive a **motorcycle** (4.5% of all women drivers), and about 1,700 women had a license to drive a **taxi**.