

INTRODUCTION

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A. GENERAL

This publication presents data on kindergartens in Israel, public and private, during the 2003/04 school year. The data on Ministry of Education kindergartens and day-care centres are based on administrative files (of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour), whereas the data on private kindergartens are based on annual surveys conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics, commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.

The publication details the types of public and private kindergartens by sector and supervision, and presents information on the population of children aged 0-6 in these kindergartens. In addition, the influence of the reductions in tuition on the enrollment rates of children attending Ministry of Education kindergartens will also be examined.

B. MAIN FINDINGS

In the 2003/04 school year there were 429,396 children aged 0-6 in kindergartens. Of these, 339,624 children aged 3-6 attended Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport kindergartens; 70,785 children aged 0-6 attended Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour day-care centres; and 18,987 children aged 1-5 attended private kindergartens.

In the 2003/04 school year the enrollment rate of children aged 0-6 attending all types of kindergartens was 450 per 1,000 children. The enrollment rate of children aged 3-6 was 664 per 1,000 children; and in Ministry of Education kindergartens, in this age group, the enrollment rate was 636 per 1,000 children.

The basis for calculating the enrollment rates of children aged 0-6 in all kindergartens (including East Jerusalem), is population estimates for the end of 2003.

The overwhelming majority of children aged 6 studied in primary schools; therefore, the kindergarten enrollment rate at this age drops significantly.

**Table A. Children Aged 0–6, in all Types of Kindergartens, 2003/04
(Including East Jerusalem)**

Age	Total in Population	Total in Kindergartens	Kindergarten Enrollment Rates (per One Thousand)
Total	954,906	429,369	450
0	143,805	11,303	79
1	139,816	28,595	205
2	137,199	34,977	255
3	137,597	101,438	737
4	134,323	112,433	837
5	133,217	124,364	934
6	128,949	16,286	126

In the 2003/04 school year, 343,971 children attended kindergarten in the Hebrew Education system; of those, 258,524 attended kindergartens of the Ministry of Education, Culture and

Sport, 67,540 attended day-care centres of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour, and 17,907 in private Kindergartens.

In the Arab Education system 85,425 children attended kindergartens; of those, 81,100 attended Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport kindergartens, 3,245 attended Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour day-care centres, and 1,080 were in private kindergartens.

Table B. Average Number of Children in Kindergartens by Type of Kindergarten and District, 2003/04

District	In All Kindergartens	Thereof: in Public Kindergartens			In Private Kindergartens
		Average No. of Children in Kindergarten	In Ministry of Education Kindergartens(1)	In Day-Care Centres	
General Average	32	33	31	44	25
Jerusalem	35	36	34	53	21
Northern	30	30	31	28	30
Haifa	31	31	30	40	27
Central	32	33	30	55	27
Tel Aviv	34	35	31	70	24
Southern	32	33	31	40	23
Judea and Samaria	34	34	33	40	18
Gaza Area	29	29	25	36	-

(1) In Ministry of Education kindergartens: in the Hebrew Education system there was an average of approximately 30 children in kindergartens, and in the Arab Education system there was an average of approximately 33.

Ministry of Education Kindergartens

Ministry of Education kindergartens are intended for children aged 3-6.

In the Hebrew Education system 129,558 children attended 4,710 kindergartens under State-General Supervision; 51,266 children attended 1,871 kindergartens under State-Religious Supervision; and 77,558 children attended 1,940 kindergartens under Ultra-Orthodox Supervision. In the Arab Education system 81,100 children attended 2,425 kindergartens.

Kindergarten Enrollment Rates and Tuition in Ministry of Education Kindergartens

In the years 1997/98 to 2003/04 a rise occurred in the enrollment rates of 3-year-olds, in the Hebrew and Arab Education systems. In Arab Education a rise of 2.6 was observed in the enrollment rates for these years (Table C). The rise in enrollment rates can be related, in part, to the 1999 Compulsory Education Law, under which the Ministry of Education awards a full or partial exemption from tuition fees for children aged 3 and 4 in kindergartens (pre-compulsory and compulsory, respectively), in the following cases:

The Urban Renewal Project, border localities, localities classified as having National Preference A status, localities in Clusters 1 and 2¹ (whose population is defined as having the lowest socio-economic level, on a scale of 1 to 10), the seven localities (Bet Shemesh, Afula, Akko, Migdal Ha'Emeq, Nazerat Illit, Qiryat Gat and Karmi'el) and children from Special Education placed in Special Education kindergartens.

Table C. Children Aged 3 in the General Population, and in Ministry of Education Kindergartens, by School Year and Sector

School Year	Hebrew Education			Arab Education		
	Total Number of Children in the General Population	Total Number of Children in Ministry of Education Kindergartens	Enrollment Rates (per 1,000) in Ministry of Education Kindergartens	Total Number of Children in the General Population	Total Number of Children in Ministry of Education Kindergartens	Enrollment Rates (per 1,000) in Ministry of Education Kindergartens
1997/98	84,726	55,456	655	32,950	7,056	214
1998/99	85,782	58,728	685	35,652	7,288	204
1999/2000	89,163	(1)54,830	615	35,349	11,343	321
2000/01	91,703	65,211	711	36,196	16,094	445
2001/02	94,218	59,098	627	38,662	16,223	420
2002/03	94,703	63,659	672	38,658	19,971	517
2003/04	97,109	66,632	686	40,488	22,688	560

In order to examine whether the fourth condition for receiving an exemption from tuition payment (localities in Clusters 1 and 2) has a part in the rise of kindergarten enrollment rates in the Arab Education system, the enrollment rates were examined at five points in time: 1997/98, 1998/99, 1999/2000, 2001/02 and 2003/04, with the exclusion of mixed cities² (Table D).

The localities were divided into two groups: localities in Clusters 1-2, and localities in Clusters 3-6. It should be noted that the highest cluster among Arab localities, after exclusion of the mixed cities, is 6 (out of 10), and with the inclusion of the mixed cities is 8³.

¹ According to the 2001 index of characterization of local councils and their ranking by the socio-economic levels of their population.

² Jerusalem, Tel Aviv-Yafo, Haifa, Lod, Akko, Nazerat Illit, Ramla and Ma'alot-Tarshiha.

³ Ranking of mixed cities in descending order, from high to low: Tel Aviv-Yafo – 8, Haifa – 7, Nazerat Illit – 5, Jerusalem – 4, Ma'alot-Tarshiha – 4, Lod – 4, Ramla – 4 and Akko – 4.

Table D. Comparison of Enrollment Rates in Ministry of Education Kindergartens, at Age 3, in the Arab Education System, Among Localities in Clusters 1-2 and Clusters 3-6, by School Year

School Year	Clusters 1-2		Clusters 3-6	
	Enrollment Rate	Percentage Change Compared to Previous Year	Enrollment Rate	Percentage Change Compared to Previous
1997/98	333	-	367	-
1998/99	274	-17.7	360	-1.9
1999/00	562	105.1	486	35.0
2001/02	667	18.7	529	8.8
2003/04	823	23.4	576	8.9

The greatest increase in the enrollment rate occurred between the 1998/99 and 1999/00 school years, with the greatest percentage of change being among localities in Clusters 1-2 - 105.1%, compared with 35% in localities in Clusters 3-6.

Table E. Children in Ministry of Education Kindergartens, in the 3-6 Age Group, in the Mixed Cities¹, by Sector, 2003/04

	Sector	Total Number of Children in the Locality	Number of Children in Ministry of Education Kindergartens	Number of Ministry of Education Kindergartens	Average Number of Children in a Kindergarten
Country-wide	Total	534,086	339,624	10,962	31
	Hebrew	379,141	258,524	8,537	30
	Arab	154,945	81,100	2,425	33
Thereof: Jerusalem	Total	66,549	30,064	866	35
	Hebrew	38,752	26,078	747	35
	Arab	27,797	3,986	119	34
Tel Aviv-Yafo	Total	17,808	11,085	374	30
	Hebrew	16,199	10,338	352	29
	Arab	1,609	747	22	34
Haifa	Total	12,953	7,874	245	32
	Hebrew	11,007	6,566	223	29
	Arab	1,946	1,308	22	59
Lod	Total	5,937	4,307	134	32
	Hebrew	3,776	3,105	100	31
	Arab	2,161	1,202	34	35
Ramla	Total	4,971	3,565	102	35
	Hebrew	3,322	2,682	83	32
	Arab	1,649	883	19	46
Akko	Total	3,053	2,141	69	31
	Hebrew	1,875	1,391	46	30
	Arab	1,178	750	23	33
Nazerat Illit	Total	2,396	1,549	57	27
	Hebrew	1,911	1,452	54	27
	Arab	485	97	3	32
Ma'alot-Tarshiha	Total	1,443	1,018	35	29
	Hebrew	1,034	752	27	28
	Arab	409	266	8	33

¹ In mixed cities children may transfer from kindergartens of the Arab Education system to those of the Hebrew Education system.

C. DATA SOURCES, EXPLANATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

The data of the Children in Kindergartens and Day-Care Centres Survey are based on three sources, as detailed below. Due to differences in definitions of variables in the various sources, these will be listed separately as they appear in each file.

Definitions regarding all kindergartens

Public kindergartens – include Ministry of Education kindergartens and day-care centres of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour.

Enrollment rates – relate to children attending kindergartens, in the 0-6 age group, based on population estimates for the end of 2003. In Table A in the Introduction – the data include children from East Jerusalem; and in Table 1 – the data do not include children from East Jerusalem.

Ministry of Education kindergartens

Official education – educational institutions owned by the State or by a Local Authority, which were listed in the Ministry of Education registers as official schools. Official educational institutions provide State-General and State-Religious education. Official education refers mainly to primary education and intermediate schools.

Recognized, unofficial education – every educational institution not included in the definition of an official educational institution, and listed in the Ministry of Education registers as an unofficial institution.

Sector – determined by the teaching language in Ministry of Education compulsory and pre-compulsory kindergartens.

Day-Care Centres

Sector – determined by the child's nationality as reported in the day-care centers file of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment.

Private Kindergartens

Sector – determined by the religion of the locality in which the kindergarten is located.

Data Assessment

Public Kindergartens:

Ministry of Education Administrative File - Regarding Ministry of Education Kindergartens

In processing data of 2003/04, in contrast to data from previous years, a change occurred in the data-gathering method. In the past, a Ministry of Education kindergartens aggregate file (a kindergarten registry, with the number of children in each kindergarten) served as the source of the survey data. The 2003/04 file supplied detailed data for the kindergarten children, with each individual entry containing – among others – the name and code of the kindergarten.

Using the file with individual data it was possible to compare the files of Ministry of Education kindergartens with those of Ministry of Industry, commerce and Employment day-care centers, and to list those children appearing in both files only once, in the Ministry of Education file.

It should be noted that the difference in the types of files of the Ministry of Education may influence the level of coverage of the kindergartens, and as a result, changes may appear in the average number of children in the kindergartens. This is one of the reasons for the rise in the average number of children in kindergartens, compared with previous years.

The comparison between files and deduction of double listings led to a decline in the enrollment rates among children in public kindergartens.

Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment Administrative File – Regarding Day-Care Centres

The file includes detailed data on children aged 0-6. Analysis of the data is performed by aggregation of the children in kindergarten, by the kindergarten symbol.

It should be noted that some of the changes that occurred in the enrollment rates among children in day-care centers are the result of an adjustment in the calculation of the children's age in the file. In the past, age was calculated by deducting the birth year from the secular year in which the school year ended. As of 2003/04, the birth year has been deducted from the secular year in which the school year started. As a result of this change, a rise occurred in the 0-2 age group, and a drop in the number of those aged 3 and over.

Private Kindergartens File

The file is based on the "Survey of Pupils in Pre-Primary Education, 2003/04", which includes children aged 0-6. The survey was conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics, during the months December 2001 to April, 2002 among private kindergarten teachers (see Table 8.6 in the Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2005, No. 56). The survey reflects the situation in private kindergartens in the months December, 2003 – April, 2004.

It should be noted that the information on private kindergartens is incomplete, as detailed below:

Problems in locating the kindergartens: The survey parameters are composed of Ministry of Education kindergartens for ages 3-6, which are privately owned; kindergartens for pre-primary age groups, who receive pedagogical supervision from the Department for Pre-Primary Education of the Ministry of Education; and from kindergartens belonging to the Organization of Private Kindergartens in Israel. In 2003/04 the supervision was stopped, and therefore the survey is based on a framework from previous years.

Due to the abundance of data sources, duplications in the kindergartens were detected in recent years (Table F). This problem was dealt with in the surveys conducted in 2002/03 and 2003/04, and the duplications were deducted from the data. Kindergartens which reported closing down were deducted from the file; but many kindergartens which closed did not report it, and no data were received from them. However, new kindergartens which opened in these years were added to the survey framework.

There are additional kindergartens which were not included in the file for two main reasons:

1. They do not belong to the above-mentioned bodies.
2. Kindergartens often open and close during and between school years.

Enrollment of children in the kindergartens is also very dynamic, with children entering and leaving the kindergarten throughout the entire school year.

Response of kindergartens located: in 2003/04 there were questionnaires sent out to approximately 1,859 kindergarten teachers, of which approximately 750 responded.

Therefore, the data appearing in this publication in the section regarding private kindergartens refer only to kindergarten teachers who responded to the survey.

Table F. Results of Survey in Private Kindergartens

Survey Year	Survey Framework	Framework After Deduction of Kindergarten Duplications	Thereof:		
			Active Kindergartens	Closed Kindergartens	Returned Mail
2001/02	3,092	2,645	675	160	350
2002/03	1,920	1,856	690	118	168
2003/04	1,859	1,807	746	128	128