

جمعية الجليل الجمعية العربية القطرية للبحوث والخدمات الصحية
The Galilee Society The Arab National Society For Health Research & Services



مركز بنك المعلومات حول المجتمع الفلسطيني في إسرائيل
Rikaz The Databank on the Arab Community in Israel



مدى الكرمل المركز العربي للدراسات الاجتماعية التطبيقية
Mada al-Carmel Arab Center for Applied Social Research



إعلام مركز إعلامي للمجتمع العربي الفلسطيني في إسرائيل
I'lam Media Center for Arab Palestinians in Israel



Reality of Arab woman in Israel

january 2012



This project is funded by the European Union
The content of this publication is the sole responsibility of the Galilee Society
and can in no way be taken as views of the European Union

Reality of Arab woman in Israel

Author: Ahmad Sheikh Muhammad, Leena Abu-mukh Zoabi, Mtanes Shehadeh, Sami Miaari, Foad Moadi, Liana Fahoum

English translation: Zvi Shulman
Design and production: Wael Wakeem

This Publication is funded by the European Union

Shefa-Amer - 2012

© All Rights Reserved to The Galilee Society – The Arab National Society for Health Research & Services.

P.O. Box 330, Shefa-Amr 20200, Israel
Phone: (972) 4 986 1171, Fax: (972) 4 986 1173 ,E-mail: admin@gal-soc.org

Opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Galilee Society – RIKAZ Databank.

Contents

Preface	7
Summary	8
1. Preface	11
2. Educational attainment of Arab woman	15
2.1 Changing of Educational attainment	16
2.2 Academic Arab women	24
2.3 Education by Age	26
3. Arab Women in the Labor Force	32
3.1 Participation in the Labor Force by level of Education	33
3.2 Participation in the Labor Force by Age	36
3.3 Employment of Arab women- Economic Sectors and Occupations	40
3.3.1 Participation by Economic sector	41
3.3.2 Participation by Occupation	47
3.4 Unemployment among Arab Woman	49
4. Health Status of Arab Women	53
4.1 infant mortality rates	53
4.2 Life Expectancy at Birth	54
4.3 Causes of Death	55
4.4 Chronic Diseases	57
4.4.1 Prevalence of Diabetes	61
4.4.2 High Blood Pressure and Cardiovascular Disease	63
4.5 Breast Cancer	65
4.6 Health Behavior	68
4.6.1 Overweight	68
4.6.2 Physical Exercise	71
5. Poverty Among Arabs in Israel	74
The General Situation	75
5.1 Changes in the Incidence of Poverty over the Years	77
5.2 Development of the Poverty Rate of Families, Persons, and Children	82
5.3 Changes in Income over the Years	84
6. Poverty and Law	88

Tables	Page
Table 1: Level of education of Arab women, 1998-2010 (by percentage)	16
Table 2: Persons having 13-15 years of education, by nationality and gender, 1998-2010 (by percentage)	19
Table 3: Persons having more than 16 years of education, by nationality and gender, 1998-2010 (by percentage)	21
Table 4: Composition of workforce of Arab women, by years of education	33
Table 5: Percent participation of Arab women in the workforce,	34
Table 6: Participation rate in the workforce, by level of education	35
Table 7: Participation rate of Arab women, by age	39
Table 8: Employment of Arab women, by economic sector	41
Table 9: Employment of Arab women, by occupation	48
Table 10: Unemployment rate in selected years, by nationality and gender	50
Table 11: Poverty line, by family size, 2009	75
Table 12: Poverty rate of Arab and Jewish families in selected years from 1990 to 2010	75
Table 13: Poverty among Arab women and Jewish women	77
Table 14: Poverty rate of Arab and Jewish families, in which the woman works, does not work, 2001-2009	79
Table 15: Poverty rate of Arab and Jewish persons, in families in which the woman works, does not work, 2001-2009	80
Table 16: Poverty rate of Arab and Jewish children, in families in which the woman works, does not work, 2001-2009	81
Table 17: Monthly average gross and available economic income per family, for Jewish and Arab households, in which the woman works, does not work, 2001-2009	85

Graphs	Page
Graph 1 and 2 depict the increase in level of education among Arab women and Jewish women.	17
Graph 1: Level of education of Arab women, 1998-2010	17
Graph 2: Level of education of Jewish women, 1998-2010	17
Graph 3: Persons having 13-15 years of education, by nationality and gender	18
Graph 4: Comparative relation between persons having 13-15 years of education, men and women	19
Graph 5: Persons having 13-15 years of education, comparative relation between Jewish and Arab women, Jewish and Arab men	20
Graph 6: Persons having more than 16 years of education, by nationality and gender, 1998-2010 (by percentage)	21
Graph 7: Persons having 13-15 years of education, Arab men and women, Jewish men and women	22
Graph 8: Persons having more than 16 Years of education, comparative relation between Jewish and Arab women, Jewish and Arab men	22
Graph 9: Persons in labor force having 13-15 and more than 16 years of education in 2000 compared with 2005, and 2005 compared with 2010	23
Graph 10: Distribution of Arab women, by level of education and degree or certificate acquired, 2005-2010	24
Graph 11: Distribution of Arab men, by level of education and degree or	25
Graph 12: Distribution of Jewish women, by level of education and degree or certificate acquired, 2005-2010	26
Graph 13: Holders of a bachelor's degree, 25-34 age group,	27
Graph 14: Bachelor's degree among Arabs by age and gender	28
Graph 15: Bachelor's degree, Arab men and women, by age group	28
Graph 16: Holders of bachelor's degree, Arab women and Jewish women	29
Graph 17: Holders of master's degree, Arab women and men, by age group	30
Graph 18: Holders of master degree, Jewish women and men, by age group	31
Graph 19: Percent participation in the workforce,	32
Graph 20: Number of participants in the workforce, men and women,	36
Graph 21: Participation rate in the labor market,	37
Graph 22: Participation rate in the labor market,	38
Graph 23: Participation rate in the labor market,	38
Graph 24: Participation rate of Arab women in the labor market, 2000-2010	39
Graph 25: Employment of Arab women, by economic sector	42
Graph 26: Employment of Jewish women, by economic sector	44
Graph 27: Percentage of employed persons having an academic degree, by nationality and gender, 2000-2010	45
Graph 28: Percentage of academics employed in education,	46

Graph 29: Employees, by occupation, nationality, and gender, 2010	48
Graph 30: Unemployment rate, by nationality and gender	50
Graph 31: Unemployment rate, by nationality, gender, and age group (2005)	51
Graph 32: Unemployment rate, by nationality, gender, and age group (2010)	52
Graph 33: Infant mortality rates	54
Graph 34: Life expectancy at birth	55
Graph 35: Cause of death, by nationality (by percentage)	55
Graph 36: Various causes of death among women, by nationality	56
Graph 37: Various causes of death among men, by nationality	57
Graph 38: Chronic diseases among Arabs, by age group and gender	58
Graph 39: Chronic diseases among Arabs, by age group, selected years	59
Graph 40: Incidence of selected chronic diseases among Arabs aged 21 and above, by sex	60
Graph 41: Incidence of selected chronic diseases among Arabs aged 60 and above, by sex	60
Graph 42: Incidence of diabetes among women, by nationality and age	61
Graph 43: Incidence of diabetes among men, by nationality and age	62
Graph 44: Comparative relation of incidence of diabetes,	62
Graph 45: Comparative relation of incidence of diabetes among Arab women in selected years, by age group	63
Graph 46: Prevalence of high blood pressure among Arabs, by age group and gender	64
Graph 47: Prevalence of cardiovascular disease among women, by nationality and age group	65
Graph 48: Prevalence of breast cancer among women in Israel, selected years (per 100,000 persons)	66
Graph 49: Distribution of women with breast cancer in Israel, by nationality and stage at which the disease was first diagnosed	67
Graph 50: Arab women taking mammogram test, 2007 and 2010	68
Graph 51: Weight category of 21-34 year old women in Israel	69
Graph 52: Weight category of 35-49 year old women in Israel	69
Graph 53: Weight category of 50-64 year old women in Israel	70
Graph 54: Weight category of women 65 years old and older in Israel	70
Graph 55: Physical exercise among the Arab population, by gender and purpose of the exercise (by percentage)	71
Graph 56: Physical exercise among the Arab population, by type of exercise (by percentage)	72
Graph 57: Physical exercise among women, by nationality and age group	73
Graph 58: Poverty rate of families, persons, and children in the Jewish population, 2001-2009 (2001 = 100 percent)	83
Graph 59: Poverty rate of families, persons, and children in the Arab population, 2001-2009 (2001 = 100 percent)	83

Preface

In recent decades, the role of the budget has come to increasingly affect economic and political disparities between different population groups and determine the limits of economic activity and the status of various population groups. Thus, the analysis of the budget and its economic particulars, political and social implications, and effects on distributive justice, has become one of the most important means in the struggle for equality and social justice, specifically the improvement of rates of women's participation in the public sphere and in the development of society at large.

This report aims to review the reality of Arab women in Israel in the last decade in the areas of employment, education, health as well as view the changes that have occurred in the basic rates of poverty compared to their Jewish counterparts.

This report is part of a broader project "Mainstreaming Gender and Minority in the National Budget", which seeks to raise awareness of the budget, increase transparency in the budgeting process, and achieve maximum public involvement in ensuring this process' equitability. The project at large focuses on understanding the political and economic system's effects on poverty among Arab women in Israel, so done through a thorough study of the state budget in three main Ministries: those of Health, Industry, and Education, respectively.

The project's primary goal is to convince decision-makers to adopt a more gender sensitive budget by encouraging them to take into account the aspects of gender and ethnicity while preparing the distribution of public resources through the budget. Such an achievement, we believe, will advance social justice and equality between men and women in general, and between Arab men and women in particular. The budgets of three government Ministries have been identified as having the most decisive impact on poverty levels among Arab women.

With great appreciation, we would like to thank the European Union for their contribution towards this project.

This research project was shared by three Arab organizations: The Galilee Society – The Arab National Society for Health Research & Services, Rikaz – The Databank of the Arab Community in Israel; Mada Al-Carmel – Arab Center for Applied Social Research; and I'Lam – Media Center for Arab Palestinians in Israel.

Project team

Summary

This report presents the general status of Palestinian women in Israel over the past decade. It studies the mechanisms for reducing their poverty and assimilating them in the economic growth and development by enhancing their human capital (level of education), increasing their participation in the labor force, and improving their health. These three spheres of activity directly affect their economic status and the opportunities for change.

The report describes the principal transformations in the incidence of poverty among Arab women compared with Jewish women, with emphasis on the difference in poverty indicators between families in which the woman works and families in which the woman does not work. In this context, the report examines the effect that women's participation in the labor force has had on the poverty indicators over the years, in both populations.

Current poverty figures on Arab society in general, and women in particular, are not encouraging. The incidence of poverty is much higher among the country's Arab population than among the Jews; indeed, over the years, Arabs have accounted for a large percentage of the poor. Almost 50 percent of Arab families are classified as poor, compared with 14 percent of Jewish families; half of Arab women live under the poverty line, compared with 12 percent of Jewish women. Average income of Arab families is continuously lower than that of Jewish families, regardless of whether the woman works. This gap testifies to the low compensation paid to Arab women in the labor force. In families in which the woman does not work, average Arab family income is 69 percent of the average Jewish family income. The gap is slightly less where the woman participates in the labor force: average Arab family income is 73 percent of average Jewish family income.

With respect to the contribution of employment of women in reducing poverty, women's participation in the labor force significantly diminishes the incidence of poverty in both populations and reduces the poverty gap between Arabs and Jews. In Jewish families in which the woman works, the incidence of poverty is one-fifth that of Jewish families in which the woman is not employed. The relevant figure for Arab families is one-fourth.

The poverty rate among Arab families and Arab women is directly linked to the level of participation in the labor force, the nature of the employment, and the economic sectors and occupations in which Arab women generally work. Change in Arab women's economic status and reduction of poverty requires improvement in their human capital (upgrading their education and areas of specialization) and better access to the central, modern labor market.

In the part describing the level of education, we find steady improvement over the past decade. In 2010, 11 percent of Arab women had 16 or more years of education, 11 percent had 13-15 years of schooling, and 30 percent had up to eight years of education, whereas in 1998 the figures were 3.5 percent, 8.6 percent, and 45 percent respectively. The continuous increase in the level of education of Arab women has closed the gap between them and Arab men, and reduced the gap between them and Jewish women.

The steady increase in level of education of Arab women has led, among other things, to a rise in the percentage of Arab women in the labor force: from 17.9 percent in 1998 to 19.1 percent in 2000 to 20.9 percent in 2005 and to 26.4 percent in 2010, representing an increase of almost eight percent over a ten-year period. Of course, the higher participation in the labor force has not been uniform among Arab women and has occurred primarily among young women and educated women; the participation rate of older women and uneducated women has dropped. Along with continuing the increase in participation in the labor force, it is necessary to alter the nature of the employment of Arab women, almost half of whom are employed in education, personal services, and health services.

In health matters, Palestinian women in Israel suffer more than all the other groups (Arab men and Jewish men and women). The difference is clearly seen in many health indicators, such as life expectancy, incidence of chronic illness, breast cancer, obesity, and being overweight. The life expectancy of Arab women is 81 years (the figures are for 2010), compared with 83.7 for Jewish women. Among Arab women, 47.8 (these figures are per 100,000 women) die of heart disease, a figure twice as high as that for Jewish women; diabetes is the cause of death of 39.6 of Arab women, compared with 10.1 among Jewish women; and the mortality rate from strokes is 23.8 for Arab women, compared with 8.8 for Jewish women.

1. Preface

According to Sadan (2006), the Palestinian population in Israel accounts for about 8 percent of gross domestic product.¹ Based on Sddan's data, one can conclude that the share of Arab women in GDP does not exceed 3 percent and is about one-quarter of GDP of the Arab population. Among the reasons for this low figure are the poor participation of Arab women in the labor market and their concentration in traditional, female economic sectors, where the pay is the lowest. In addition, structural obstacles and governmental policy hold women back from improving their socioeconomic status. This situation creates a cycle of poverty from which Arab women have great difficulty in freeing themselves without assistance.

The poor participation of Arab women in the labor market is partially connected to the level and nature of the education Arab students receive in post-elementary school and to the areas of specialization during their academic studies. These obstructions make it difficult to improve the economic status of Palestinian women and enable them to benefit from the country's economic growth. The health status of the population, primarily that of women, affects economic growth and the Arab population in particular.

In light of the above, this report will discuss the employment, education, and health of women in Israel, with emphasis on Arab women because of the crucial importance these three matters have on improving their economic opportunities. Additionally, there is a need to change the policy and the State's approach toward its Arab citizens. Inasmuch as we consider the state's budget to be an important, if not the most important tool, for effecting change

1 Sadan, E.. In 2006. Part - the Arab sector's contribution to the economy: some parameters of the Arab society in Israel's economy. The Abraham Fund.

in the socioeconomic status of the diverse groups in society, we believe that a careful examination of the socioeconomic status of Arab women will aid in reaching the right and proper solutions to improve their status.

Poverty is more than just a matter of shortage. Poverty infringes human rights. It creates fear, employment insecurity, mental, physical, nutritional, and developmental difficulties, and severe social exclusion. Furthermore, poverty reduces accessibility to the public sphere by silencing the voices of the poor; it prevents them from sharing in decision-making on matters affecting their lives, reduces the effectiveness of the struggle for their rights, and consequently leads to greater inequality in society. These reasons clearly demonstrate the need to eradicate poverty.

The UN Human Development Report for 2005 deals, in part, with inequality and human development. The report's main argument is that inequality not only results in critical harm to social justice, it also harms economic growth, democracy, and social unity.²

Due to the unique reality of Arab women and the factors affecting their life experience, the doctrine of substantive equality should be adopted whenever the question of equality of Arab women arises, especially in connection with poverty. Such a doctrine necessitates a definition of poverty that does not have a single, defined meaning.³ Rather, it should be defined and evaluated on the basis of a number of parameters that emphasize diverse aspects of personal and social situations. Indeed, the term poverty has been given many definitions.

First and foremost, poverty relates to needs; it expresses shortage in basic commodities (with commodities referring also to assets and items). Persons are deemed poor if they have a severe shortage of food, clothing, housing,

2 See http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2005/pdf/HDR05_chapter_2.pdf, p. 24 (visited on 16 March 2012).

3 The following comments are based on the article of Netta Ziv, "Poverty, Reducing Gaps and Equality: The Case of the Right to Water," *Mishpat u'Memshal* 7 (2) (5765 – 2005), 945, 949, and footnotes 6-10 there.

means to protect themselves from cold, natural disasters, and disease.⁴ Others define poverty as the lack of resources, or according to a particular standard of living, which continues for an appreciable period of time.⁵ Or as an accumulation of problems involving shortage of resources, including the lack of personal, physical, and health security, lack of social and political power, which continue for an appreciable period of time.⁶ Another approach is by giving poverty a subjective definition, whereby a person is deemed poor if he perceives himself as such.

Poverty has also been defined as a situation of dependence, in which persons, due to their lack of resources, rely on others.⁷

A similar approach was taken by Magdalena Sepulveda, the UN special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, who states that poverty is “a multifaceted situation from which it may be difficult – if not impossible, to escape without assistance.”

Often, the concept poverty is linked to inequality, with poverty being defined in relation to the standard of living in the relevant society. This approach is accepted around the world and by Israel’s National Insurance Institute in its annual poverty report. Leah Ahdut and Refaela Cohen, of the NII, take a relative approach in defining poverty.

According to the relative approach, poverty is a phenomenon of relative distress, which should be evaluated according to the society’s standard of living: a family is deemed poor not when it is unable to purchase a basket of basic products needed to exist, but when its living conditions are appreciably poorer than the living conditions of the whole society.

4 David Gordon and Paul Spicker, *The International Glossary on Poverty* (Zed Books, 1999).

5 Paul Spicker, “The Rights of the Poor: Conceptual Issues,” in *Poverty and the Law*, Paul. Robson and Asbjorn Kjonstad, eds. (Hart Publishing, 2001), 3.

6 Morton S. Baratz and William G. Grigsby, “Thoughts on Poverty and its Elimination,” 1 *Journal of Social Policy* (1971), 119.

7 George Simmel, “The Poor,” 13 *Social Problems* (1965), 118.

Amnesty International defines poverty as a combination of four elements: shortage, insecurity, exclusion, and silencing of voices.

It was important to bring the different definitions of poverty because selection of a particular concept reflects the problem with which the society chooses to deal, as well as the assumptions on which the problem is based, whether socialist (which views poverty as a situation of inequality) or neoliberal (which considers poverty a situation of lack of existential needs).

This report is divided into chapters that deal with a specific aspects critical to improving the status of Arab women in Israel: Chapter 2 deals with education; Chapter 3 deals with employment; Chapter 4 deals with health; and Chapter 5 deals with poverty. A final chapter deals specifically with the perspective of poverty and law in Israel and worldwide. It describes documents enshrining state obligation for improving the wellbeing and social rights of the individual – for reasons both of equality and justice – in a manner that ensures the right to substantive equality of all citizens, regardless of race, gender, ethnic group, economic status, and the like.

2. Educational attainment of Arab woman

Despite the increase in the level of education of Arab women in the past decade, and the greater proportion of educated women among women in the workforce, low participation in the labor market and higher than average unemployment continue to exist among Arab women. This situation arises, in part, due to the large number of Arab women working in the local market, the occupations they engage in, the difficulty they have in integrating in the central-Israeli economy, and the lack of employment opportunities in Arab towns and villages (Semyonov *et.al* 1999).⁸ Other factors affecting their level of employment include the family structure (a relatively large number of children at home) and the lack of convenient public transportation that would enable them to seek work outside their home communities, especially in the case of Bedouin women in the Negev (Abu Baker and Gottlieb 2008).⁹

Other researchers view the low participation of Palestinian women in the labor market as an indicator of employment inequality and discrimination between Jews and Arabs in hiring, in employment opportunities, and in the occupations in which they are employed (Gra and Cohen 2001, Yashiv and Keysar 2009).¹⁰ Gra and Cohen found that Arabs, especially educated Arabs, are much less likely than Jews to find work in the occupations they studied, particularly outside their home communities. For these educated Arabs, teaching is the main substitute employment.

8 Semyonov, Moshe, Noah Lewin-Epstein, and Iris Brahm. 1999. "Changing labor force participation and occupational status: Arab women in the Israeli force," *Work, Employment, and Society*, 13(1):117-131.

9 Abu-Bader, S. And. D. Gottlieb. In 2008. "Poverty, education and employment in Arab society - Bedouins: A Comparative Perspective", a series of policy studies. *Research and Policy* 6, Jerusalem: Van Leer Institute

10 Gra, R.. And c. Raffaele. 2001. "Poverty among Arabs in Israel and the Sources of Inequality - equality between Arabs and Jews," *Economic Quarterly*. 48 (4), Tel Aviv.
Eran, Y. And N. Kassir. In 2009. *Participation patterns of Israeli Arabs in the labor market*. Discussion Paper Series, Bank of Israel.

2.1 Changing of Educational attainment

It is undisputed that the higher the level of education, the greater the participation of Arab women in the labor market and the lower the incidence of poverty. But, as this report shows, more years of education and increased participation in the labor market, although necessary, do not alone improve the economic status of the women; the level of education is not the main obstacle to Arab women joining the labor market, and a rise in the level of education is not a sufficient guaranty of change in the nature of employment of Arab women. Below we describe the development in the level of education of Arab women compared with other groups, Arab men and Jewish women in particular.

The level of education of Arab women has steadily increased since the mid-1980s, with a sharp spike in the past decade or so. Whereas in 1998, 12 percent of Arab women had more than 13 years of schooling, in 2010, the figure was 22 percent. Looking at from the other end, there has been a steady decline in the percentage of Arab women having 0-4 years of schooling, from 20.2 percent in 1998 to 13.3 percent in 2010. Most Arab women still have a moderate level of education, 11-12 years of schooling: in 1998, the figure was 27 percent, and in 2010, 34 percent. This level of education also had the highest percentage among Jewish women.

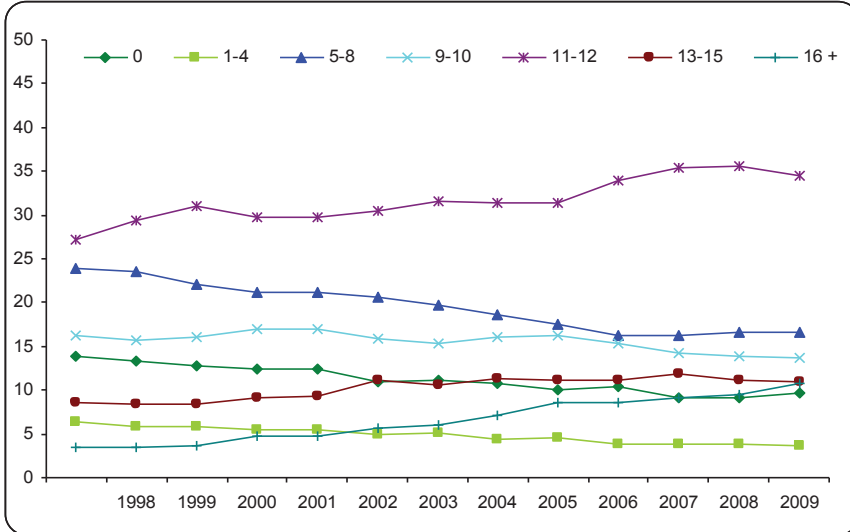
Table 1 depicts the increasing of level of education of Arab women since 1998.

Table 1: Level of education of Arab women, 1998-2010 (by percentage)

Year	0	1-4	5-8	9-10	11-12	13-15	16 +
1998	13.9	6.3	23.9	16.3	27.1	8.6	3.5
1999	12.3	5.8	23.6	15.7	29.3	8.4	3.4
2000	12.8	5.9	22.0	16.0	31.0	8.4	3.7
2001	12.4	5.5	21.1	17.0	29.8	9.2	4.7
2002	12.4	5.5	21.1	16.9	29.8	9.3	4.7
2003	11.0	4.9	20.6	15.8	30.4	11.2	5.7
2004	11.2	5.2	19.7	15.4	31.6	10.6	6.1
2005	10.7	4.3	18.7	16.0	31.3	11.4	7.1
2006	10.1	4.5	17.6	16.2	31.3	11.2	8.5
2007	10.4	3.8	16.3	15.3	33.9	11.2	8.6
2008	9.1	3.8	16.3	14.3	35.4	11.9	9.1
2009	9.2	3.9	16.6	13.8	35.6	11.2	9.5
2010	9.6	3.7	16.6	13.7	34.4	10.9	10.7

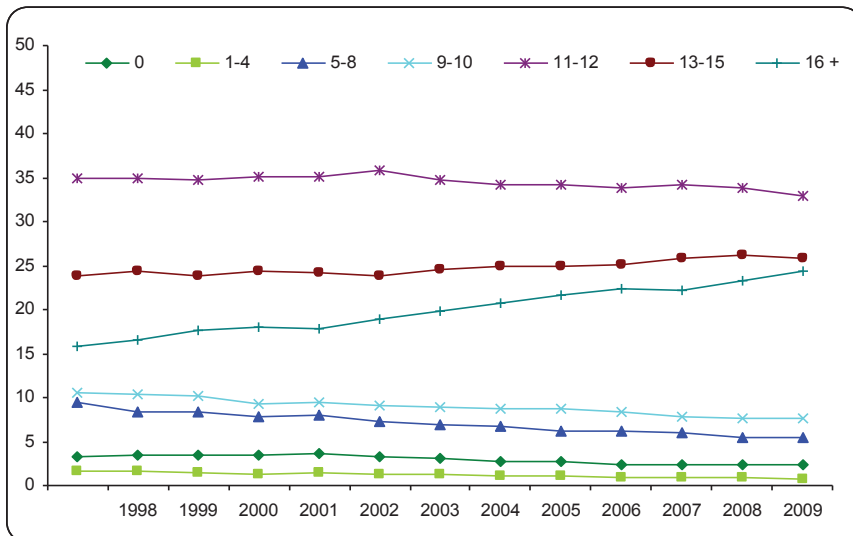
Graphs 1 and 2 depict the increase in level of education among Arab women and Jewish women.

Graph 1: Level of education of Arab women, 1998-2010



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 2: Level of education of Jewish women, 1998-2010

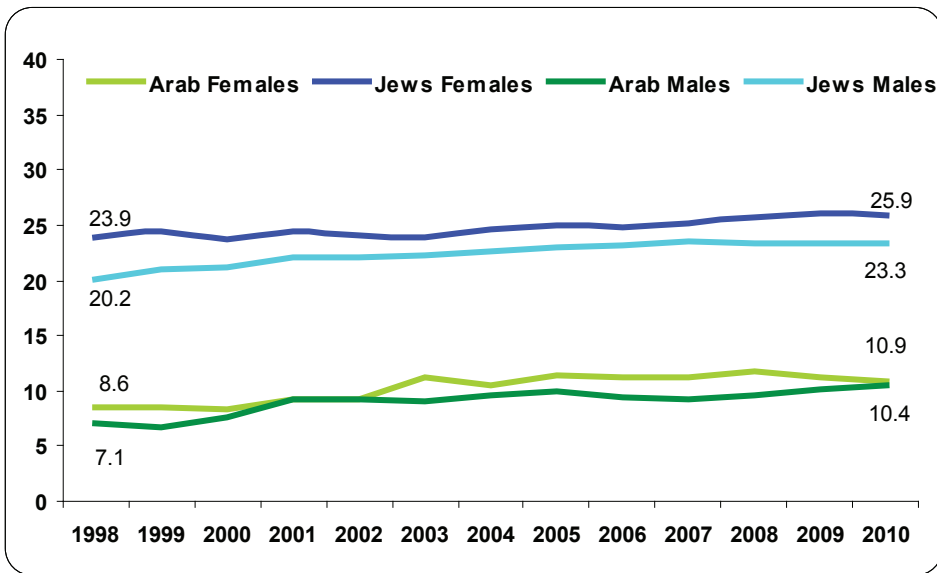


Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

The steadily increasing level of education of Arab women has reduced the gaps between them and Arab men and between them and Jewish women, though to a lesser extent.

In the 13-15 years-of-schooling group, which accounts for the largest segment of Arab women participating in the labor market, the percentage of Arab women exceeds that of Arab men but continues to be less than that of Jewish women. Graph 3 shows that, in 1998, 8.6 percent of Arab women had 13-15 years of schooling, compared with 10.9 percent in 2010. The figure for Jewish women is almost twice as high and barely changed during the period (from three times higher in 1998 to 2.5 times higher in 2010).

Graph 3: Persons having 13-15 years of education, by nationality and gender



The percentage of Arab women is higher than that of Arab men in the 13-15 years-of-schooling group, although the advantage diminished from 1.17 in 1998 to 1.04 in 2010. Among the Jewish population, there was a minor change, of 0.03, in favor of the women during this period.

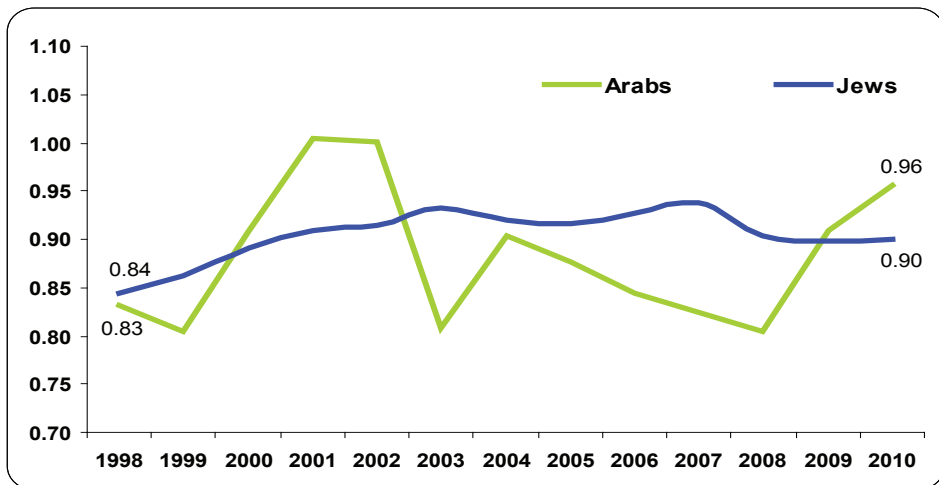
Table 2: Persons having 13-15 years of education, by nationality and gender, 1998-2010 (by percentage)

Year	Arab Women	Arab Men	Jewish Women	Jewish Men
1998	8.6	7.1	23.9	20.2
1999	8.4	6.8	24.4	21.0
2000	8.4	7.6	23.8	21.2
2001	9.2	9.3	24.4	22.2
2002	9.3	9.3	24.1	22.0
2003	11.2	9.0	23.9	22.3
2004	10.6	9.5	24.6	22.6
2005	11.4	10.0	25.0	22.9
2006	11.2	9.4	24.9	23.1
2007	11.2	9.3	25.1	23.6
2008	11.9	9.5	25.8	23.3
2009	11.2	10.2	26.1	23.4
2010	10.9	10.4	25.9	23.3

Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 4 illustrates the transformation in level of academic studies that took place between Arab men and women. A relation of greater than 1 indicates an advantage to men, and less than 1 to women. Generally, women, both Arab and Jewish, exceed men in this category.

Graph 4: Comparative relation between persons having 13-15 years of education, men and women

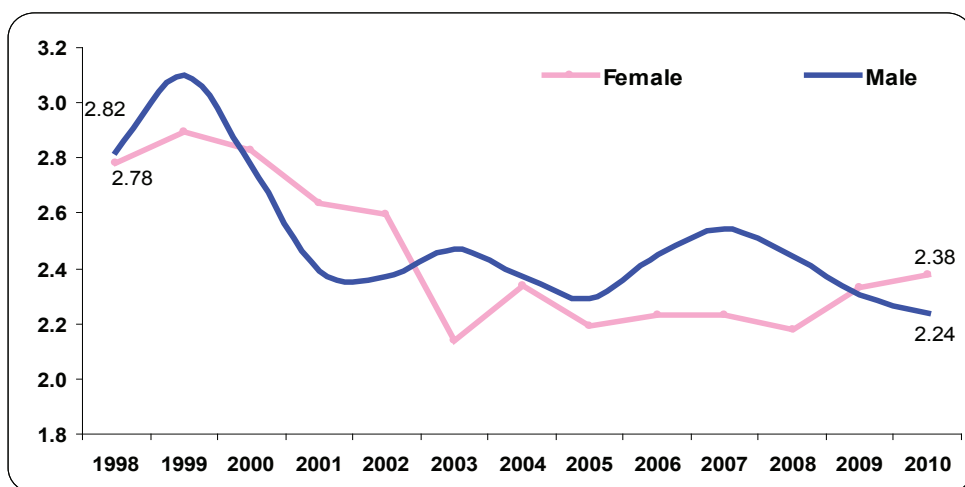


Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

The comparison in level of education between that of Arab men and women and Jewish men and women reveals that the educational gaps between Arabs and Jews has decreased over the years, with the gap among men being greater than among women.

In a comparison of Arab and Jewish women, in 1998, the relation was 278 Jewish women for every 100 Arab women having 13-15 years of schooling; in 2010, the figure fell to 238 to 100. Graph 5 depicts the relation, for persons having 13-15 years of schooling, between Jewish women and Arab women and between Jewish men and Arab men. A relation of greater than 1 indicates an advantage to Jews.

Graph 5: Persons having 13-15 years of education, comparative relation between Jewish and Arab women, Jewish and Arab men



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

With respect to education of more than 16 years, the picture is different. During the period 1998 to 2010, the gap between Arab men and women began to narrow in 2005, while an appreciable gap between Arab women and Jewish women continued to exist (Graph 8). In the past decade, the percentage of Arab women who acquired more than 16 years of education tripled, and

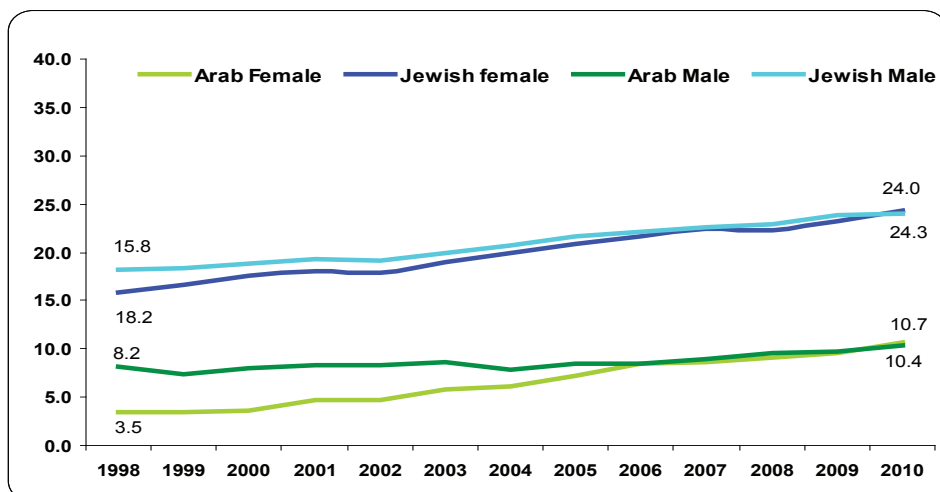
equaled that of Arab men, though the figure was almost half as high as among Jewish women. Among the Jewish population, the percentage of men and women with 16 years of education remained about the same (Graph 6). In the Arab population, the differences closed only in recent years (Graph 7).

Table 3: Persons having more than 16 years of education, by nationality and gender, 1998-2010 (by percentage)

Year	Arab Women	Arab Men	Jewish Women	Jewish Men
1998	3.5	8.2	15.8	18.2
1999	3.4	7.4	16.6	18.4
2000	3.7	8.1	17.6	18.8
2001	4.7	8.4	18.0	19.3
2002	4.7	8.4	17.9	19.1
2003	5.7	8.6	18.9	19.9
2004	6.1	7.8	19.9	20.7
2005	7.1	8.4	20.8	21.7
2006	8.5	8.5	21.7	22.1
2007	8.6	8.9	22.4	22.5
2008	9.1	9.5	22.2	22.9
2009	9.5	9.7	23.3	23.8
2010	10.7	10.4	24.3	24.0

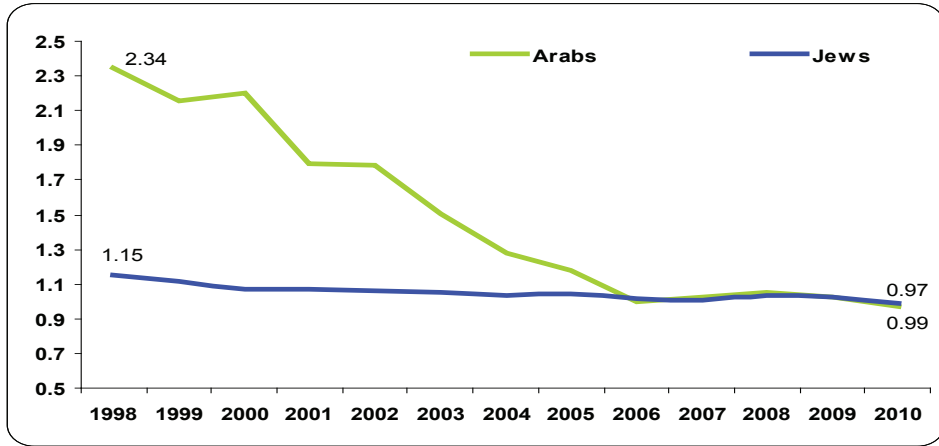
Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 6: Persons having more than 16 years of education, by nationality and gender, 1998-2010 (by percentage)



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

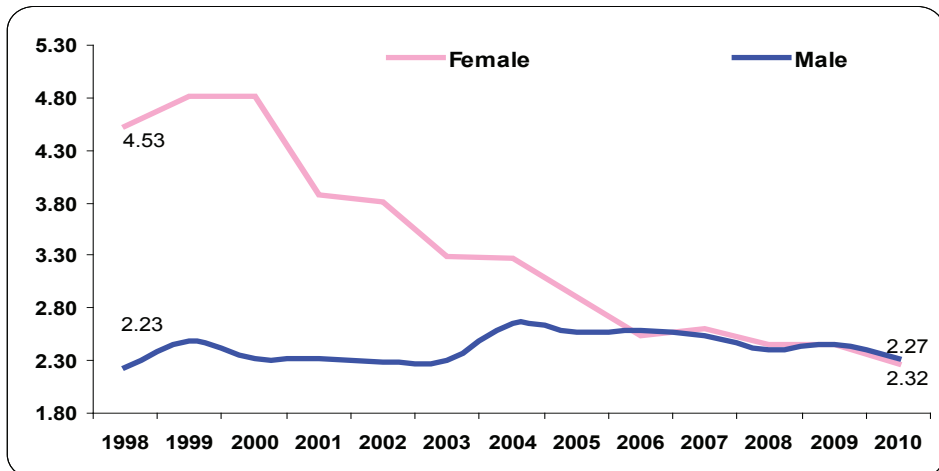
Graph 7: Persons having 13-15 years of education, Arab men and women, Jewish men and women



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 8 illustrates the large percentage gap between Arab and Jewish women having more than 16 years of education. The gap has decreased in recent years by half, from 4.53 in 1998 to 2.27 in 2010. In comparison, the gap between Arab and Jewish men remained almost the same, around 2.2, throughout the period.

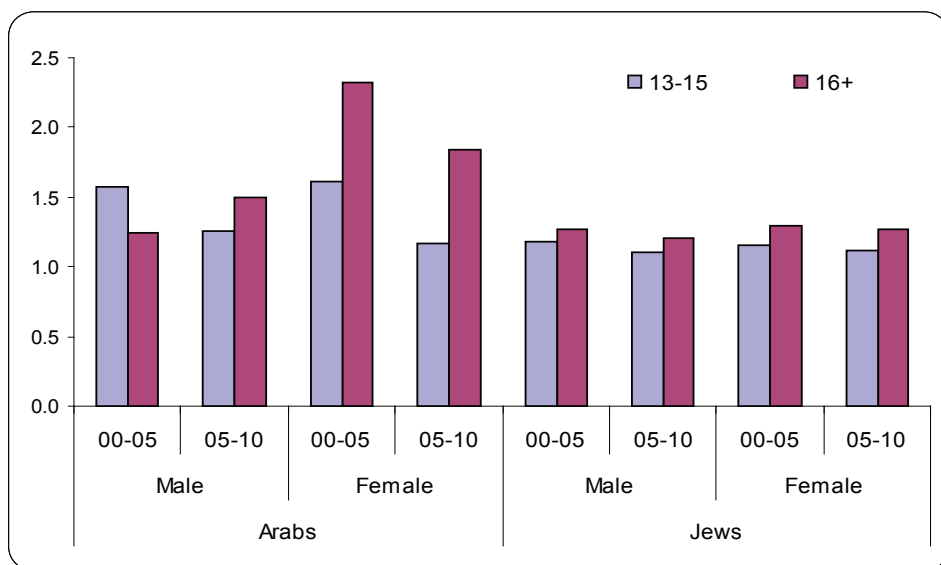
Graph 8: Persons having more than 16 Years of education, comparative relation between Jewish and Arab women, Jewish and Arab men



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 9 shows that the most significant change that occurred in education among Arab men and women in the decade of 2000-2010, particularly between the years 2000 and 2005, was among Arab women who had 16 or more years of education. The figure can be explained by the readiness of Arab women to continue their studies to obtain academic degrees, along with the increase in educational opportunities and the realization that a higher level of education enables them to cope better with obstacles facing them in the labor markets and improves their socioeconomic status.

Graph 9: Persons in labor force having 13-15 and more than 16 years of education in 2000 compared with 2005, and 2005 compared with 2010

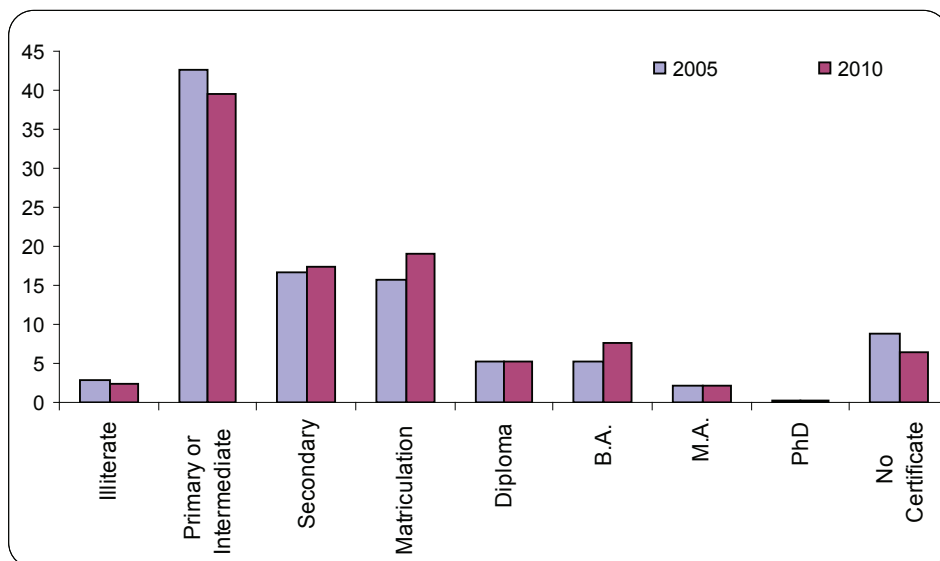


Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

2.2 Academic Arab women

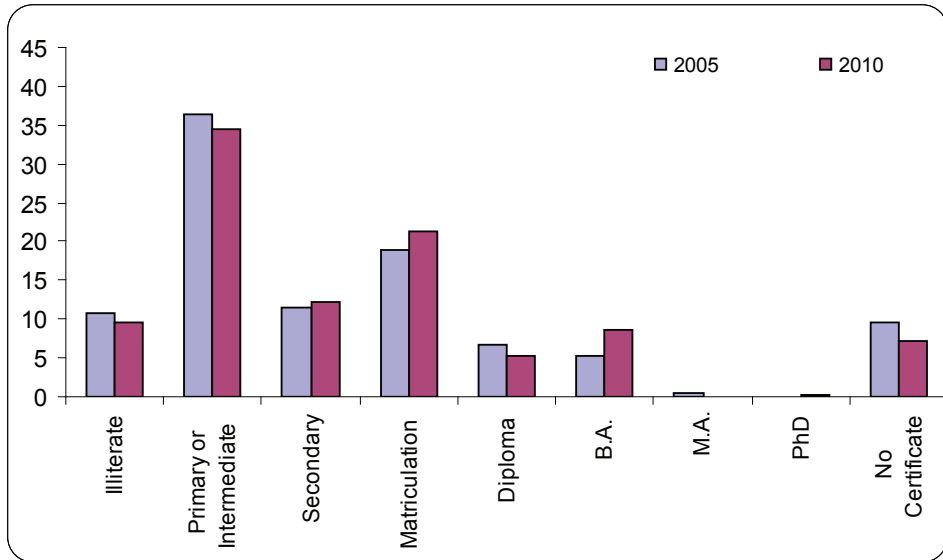
The increase in the level of education and years of schooling of Arab women has resulted in a higher percentage of Arab women acquiring academic degrees. As Graph 10 shows, in the years 2005-2010, there was a significant increase in the percentage of Arab women in this category, especially for the bachelor's degree and a full matriculation certificate. Arab men also recorded a higher percentage of academic degrees and full matriculation certificates during this period (Graph 11).

Graph 10: Distribution of Arab women, by level of education and degree or certificate acquired, 2005-2010



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

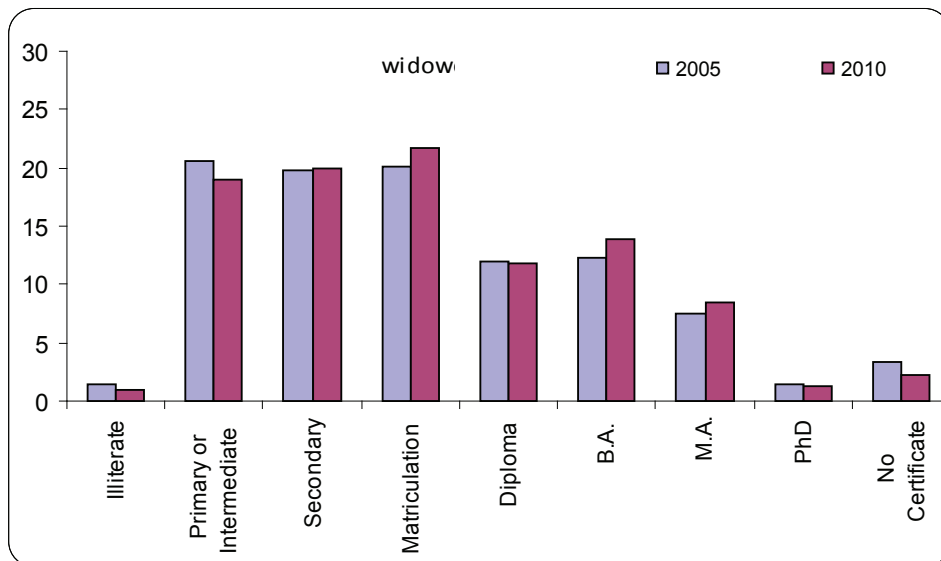
Graph 11: Distribution of Arab men, by level of education and degree or certificate acquired, 2005-2010



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 12 shows a significant increase between 2005 and 2010 in the percentage of Jewish women holding a bachelor’s degree and a slight increase in the percentage holding a master’s degree and matriculation certificate, and a drop in the percentage of women holding no certificate, or hold a high school diploma.

Graph 12: Distribution of Jewish women, by level of education and degree or certificate acquired, 2005-2010

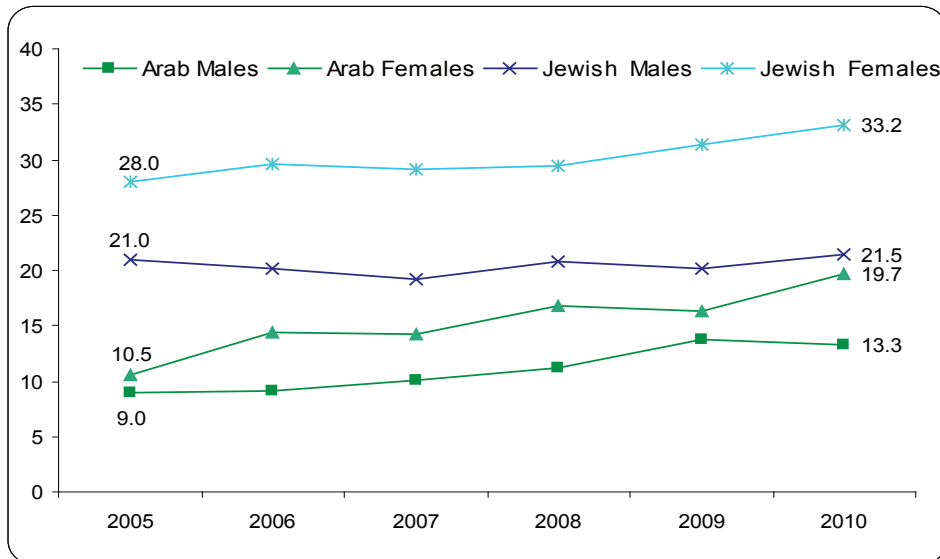


Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

2.3 Education by Age

The distribution of level of education by age, presented in Graph 13, indicates a trend of increasing level of education that is expected to continue in coming years, with the gap in favor of Arab women over Arab men continuing to grow and the gap between Arab women and Jewish women diminishing. As the graph shows, regarding the bachelor’s degree, Arab women aged 25-34 opened a gap of 50 percent over Arab men in 2010, and reduced the gap between them and Jewish women from 2.66 in 2005 to 1.68 in 2010. If this trend continues, it will bring about a drastic change in participation of Arab women in the workforce and in their socioeconomic status in Palestinian society. However, the change was moderated by the alteration in the mix of specialty fields of study of Arab women, both in post-high school studies and in academic studies.

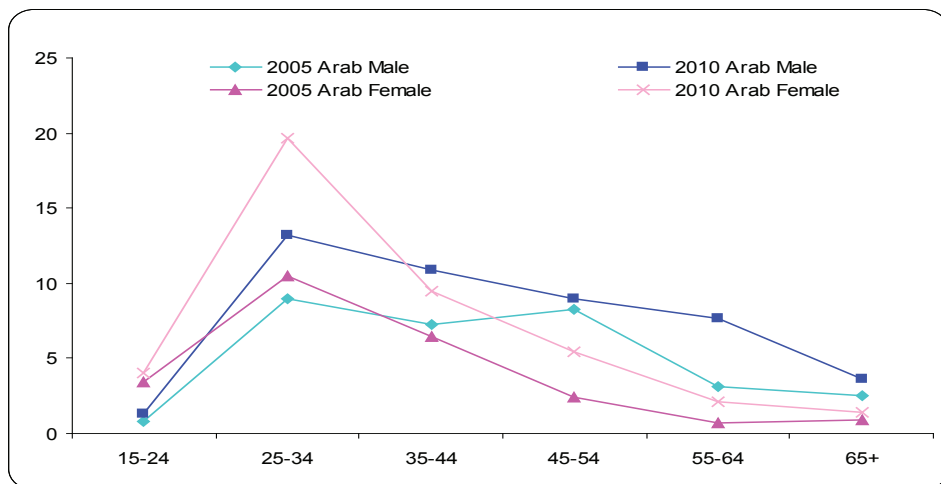
Graph 13: Holders of a bachelor's degree, 25-34 age group, by nationality and gender



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

We see from Graph 14 that Arab women's greater number of years of education in comparison with Arab men is true among young women, up to age 34, and that by age 44, men have a slightly higher percentage (10.9 percent to 9.5 percent), with the men's advantage increasing past age 44. In comparison, since 2005, the trend in Jewish society has been for the gaps to increase in women's favor, especially among the younger members of the population (Graph 16).

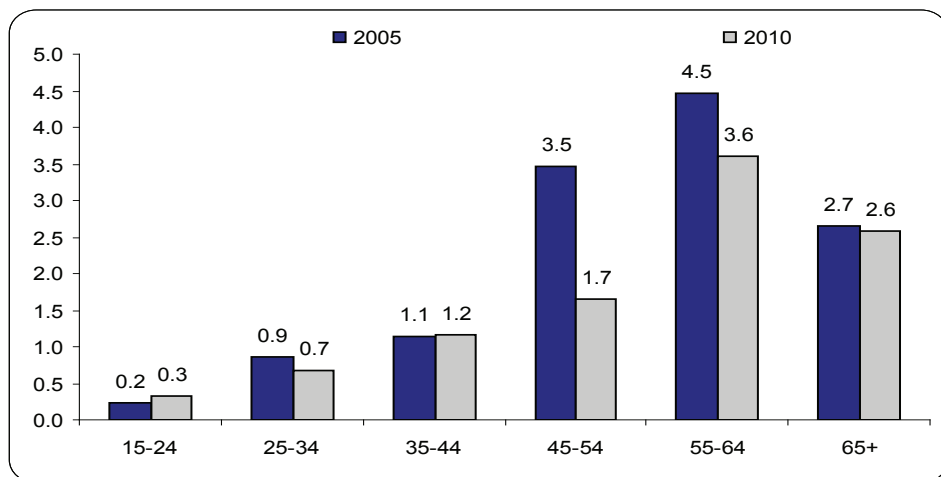
Graph 14: Bachelor’s degree among Arabs by age and gender



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 15 presents the relation in obtaining a bachelor’s degree between Arab men and women by age, from which we see that, at young ages, women have a higher percentage (a relation of less than 1), while in the older age groups, the men have a higher percentage (the relation being greater than 1).

Graph 15: Bachelor’s degree, Arab men and women, by age group

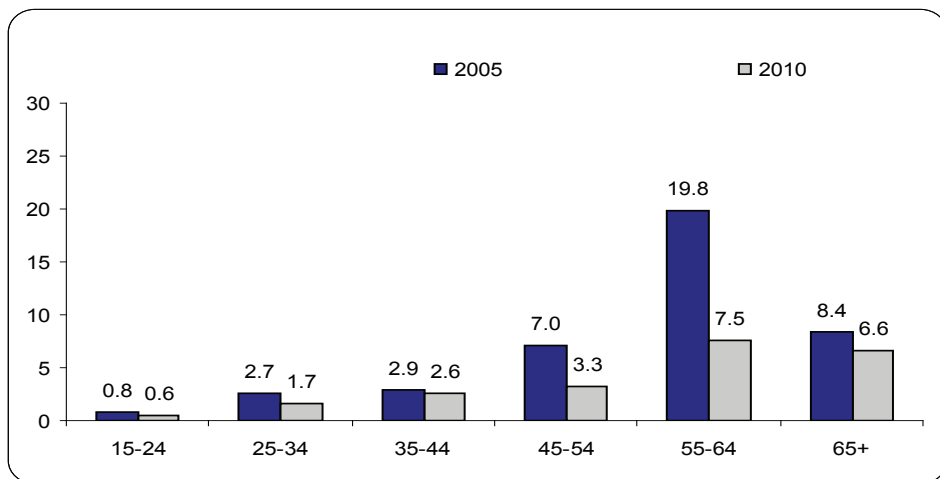


Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

The closing of educational gaps between Arab men and women is reflected among young Arabs: in the 25-34 age group, the gap was in favor of women in 2010, whereas in 2005, the men had a relatively large advantage. At older ages, Arab men still have the advantage. If the trend of the advantage among young Arab women continues, they will eventually have a higher percentage of bachelor's degree holders than the men.

Comparison of bachelor's degree holders among Arab women and Jewish women gives a clear advantage to the latter, especially at older ages, but the gaps have diminished in recent years. For example, in 2005, the figure was 2.7 in favor of Jewish women aged 25-34, 7.0 for women aged 45-54, and almost 20 for women aged 55-64. By 2010, the gaps had diminished sharply: the figure fell to 1.7 for the 25-34 age group, to 3.3 for the 45-54 age group, and to 7.5 for the 55-64 year olds (Graph 16). These data indicate a growing readiness of Arab women to acquire an education, which is perceived as an entry card into the labor market and to improved socioeconomic status. The question remains whether the improvement in educational attainments of Arab women has in fact resulted in improved status in the labor market and in a lower poverty rate.

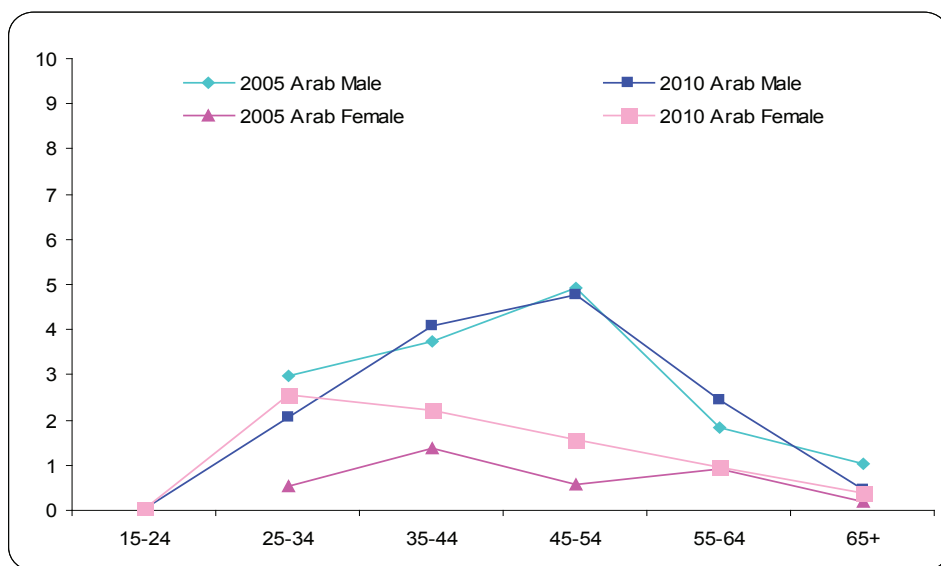
Graph 16: Holders of bachelor's degree, Arab women and Jewish women
(by comparative relation)



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Regarding the master’s degree as well, there was a change between 2005 and 2010: in 2005, Arab men had a higher percentage in all age groups, while in 2010, the numbers favored young Arab women (the 24-35 age group). In older age groups, the men had a higher percentage, which might explain that, as women get older, it is harder for them to continue their studies for a master’s degree due to the difficulty in caring for their family and working simultaneously. Based on the data we have presented, it is almost certain that the present situation will change and the percentage of Arab women obtaining a master’s degree will increase.

Graph 17: Holders of master’s degree, Arab women and men, by age group

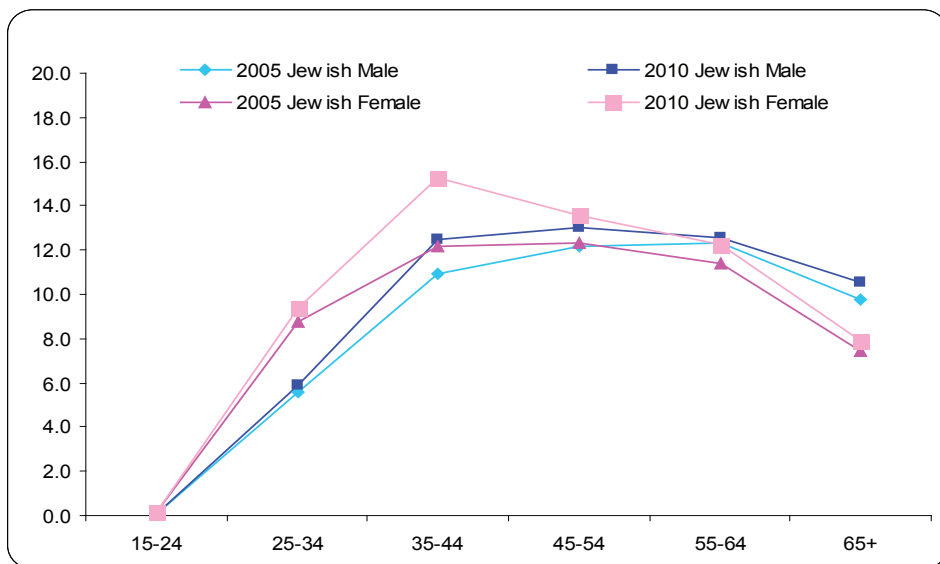


Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

The higher level of education of young women exists also among the Jewish population. Graph 18 shows a clear advantage of young Jewish women compared to young Jewish men in obtaining a master’s degree, both in 2005 and in 2010, although with the advance in age, the gap diminishes slightly. If

this trend continues, the women will have a large advantage over the men in level of education.

Graph 18: Holders of master degree, Jewish women and men, by age group



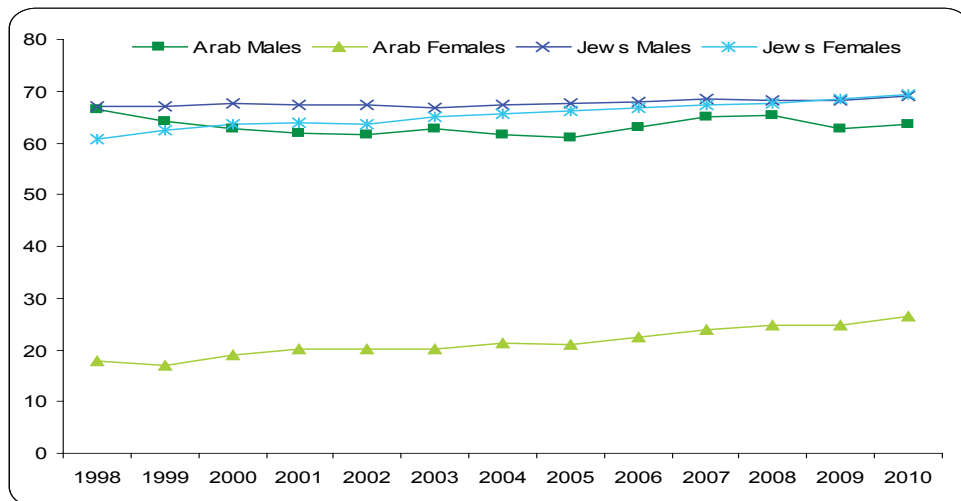
Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

In this part of the report, we described the development in the level of education of Arab women compared with Arab men and Jewish women in the past decade. The data show a fine improvement in the educational attainments of Arab women, both in the level of education and in the number who acquired bachelor's and master's degrees. Arab women closed the gaps between them and Arab men, and they now have a higher percentage of degree holders among young Arabs. Despite the steady improvement, Arab women still lag behind Jewish women in most education indicators. The question remains whether this improvement has affected their participation in the workforce and in their employment status.

3. Arab Women in the Labor Force

The continuous rise in the level of education of women contributed, apparently, to the rise in the percentage of Arab women who participate in the workforce and to improvement in their employment status. In 1998, 17.9 percent of Arab women were employed, and the figure rose to 19.1 percent in 2000 and 20.9 percent in 2005 and then to 26.4 percent in 2010, an increase of almost 8 percent in a decade. Still, the participation rate of Arab women, and their employment status, is much lower than that of Jewish women. As for Arab men, their participation in the workforce dropped from 66.4 percent in 1998 to 63.6 percent in 2010, while the participation rate of Jewish women rose, from 60.8 percent in 1998 to 69.5 percent in 2010, closing the gap between their participation rate and that of Jewish men by some 7 percentage points. The participation for Jewish men rose slightly, from 67 percent in 1998 to 69 percent in 2010. The figures are depicted in Graph 19.

Graph 19: Percent participation in the workforce, by nationality and sex, 1998-2010



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

The rise in the participation rate of Arab women was not uniform among all groups of the women, but occurred primarily among the young and educated women, with the rate falling for the older and uneducated groups of women. This situation greatly affected the employment opportunities of Arab women, as we shall describe below, and the composition of the workforce of Arab women over the past decade.

3.1 Participation in the Labor Force by level of Education

The composition of the workforce of Palestinian women – all Arab women in the 15-64 age group – improved over the past twenty years. During this period, there was a drop in the percentage of Arab women with little education and a significant increase in the percentage with a higher education: the figure for Arab women with up to eight years of schooling fell from 30 percent in 1998 to 20 percent in 2010, and for those with more than 13 years of education, the figure rose from 11 percent in 1998 to 22 percent in 2010, as we see from Table 4.

Table 4: Composition of workforce of Arab women, by years of education

Years	1998	2000	2005	2010
1-4	6.3	5.9	4.3	3.7
5-8	23.9	22.0	18.7	16.6
9-10	16.3	16.0	16.0	13.7
11-12	27.1	31.0	31.3	34.4
13-15	8.6	8.4	11.4	10.9
16 or more	3.5	3.7	7.1	10.7

Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Improvement in the level of education among Arab women was reflected in the composition of Arab women who participated in the labor market (employed and unemployed). There has been an over-representation of educated women in the workforce, meaning that having a higher education improves their chances to find a job. In 2010, more than one-half of working women had more than 13 years of education, compared with 44.5 percent in 1998, a jump

of six percentage points in a decade (Table 5). This improvement is directly connected to the employment opportunities available to Arab women.

Table 5: Percent participation of Arab women in the workforce, by years of education

Years	1998	1999	2005	2010
1-4	2.4	1.3	2.1	1.4
5-8	8.9	10.1	10.5	7.6
9-12	44.1	43.4	34.9	38.13
13 or more	44.5	45.11	52.5	52.8

Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Examination of the figures shows a correlation between level of education and participation in the workforce for the women in each group. In 2010, only some 11 percent having no more than a secondary-school education were in the workforce; Participation was 26 percent for women who did not have a matriculation certificate and for women who had a matriculation certificate. For those women who had a certificate at a higher level than a matriculation certificate, but less than an academic degree, the participation rose to 63 percent. Arab women with a bachelor's degree had a participation of 80.7 percent, and almost 90 percent for women having more than a bachelor's degree. The problem is that the percentage of Arab women with more than a bachelor's degree is still low (no more than 22 percent in 2010). Therefore, their high percent of participation can be explained by the lack of serious competition within this group, or by hidden unemployment and underemployment (employment in an occupation other than the one for which the person studied and received a diploma).

Participation of educated Arab women is almost the same as that of Jewish women, and that of Arab and Jewish men. The main problem is the very low participation rate of Arab women with little education, both in comparison with Jewish women and with Jewish and Arab men. This situation requires a higher level of education for Arab women and creation of employment

opportunities for uneducated Arab women. In 2010, the participation rate of Arab women who did not finish high school was 11 percent, compared with 8.5 percent in 2005. For Jewish women in the same level of education category, the figure was 31 percent in 2010; for Arab men, it was 52.5 percent and for Jewish men, about 41 percent. The participation rate of Arab women who finished high school was 26 percent in 2010, compared with 22.4 percent in 2005. Among Jewish women having a high school education, the figure was 69 percent in 2010; for Arab men, it was 76.5 percent and for Jewish men, 72 percent.

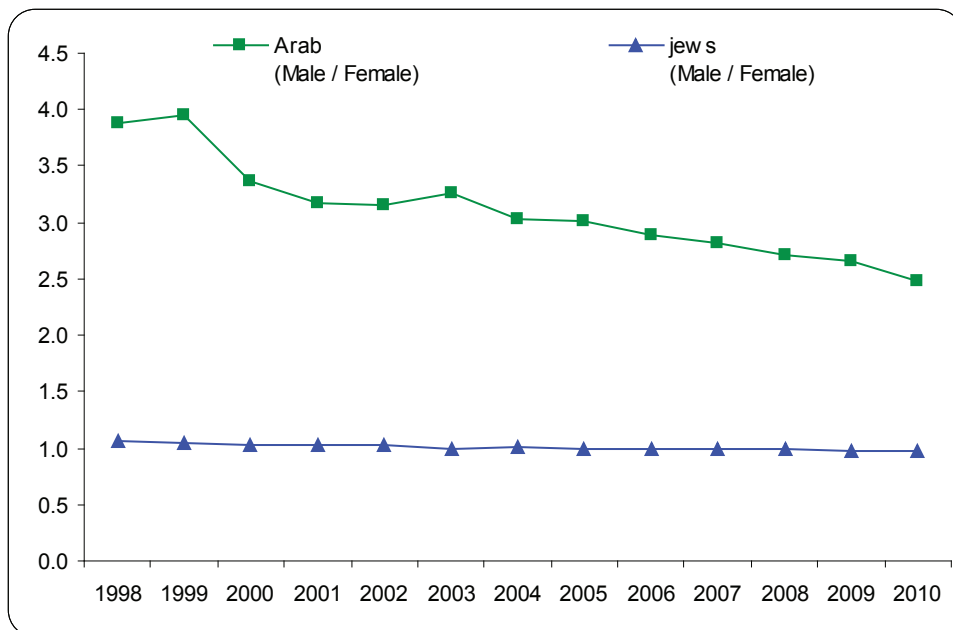
Table 6: Participation rate in the workforce, by level of education

	Arab Men		Arab Women		Jewish Men		Jewish Women	
	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010
Elementary school and middle school	52.1	52.5	8.5	11.0	42.3	41.9	31.1	30.6
High school	73.9	76.5	22.4	25.9	73.0	72.0	65.6	68.8
Matriculation certificate	60.9	62.4	22.2	26.5	60.3	61.7	64.8	67.3
Diploma	78.5	84.7	60.1	63.0	84.0	85.8	78.3	79.2
Bachelor's degree	85.1	89.0	78.5	80.7	88.4	89.4	85.2	84.9
Master degree	95.1	90.7	89.4	89.8	90.9	91.8	86.5	87.8

Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

In general, the participation rate of Arab women has been rising in comparison with that of Arab men. Graph 20 shows that the rise has been continuous, while among Jewish women and men, the rate has been equal between the two groups, a result of the women's high participation rate. The Jewish labor market has the mechanisms and tools needed to integrate women in the labor market.

Graph 20: Number of participants in the workforce, men and women, Jews and Arabs (by comparative relation)



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

3.2 Participation in the Labor Force by Age

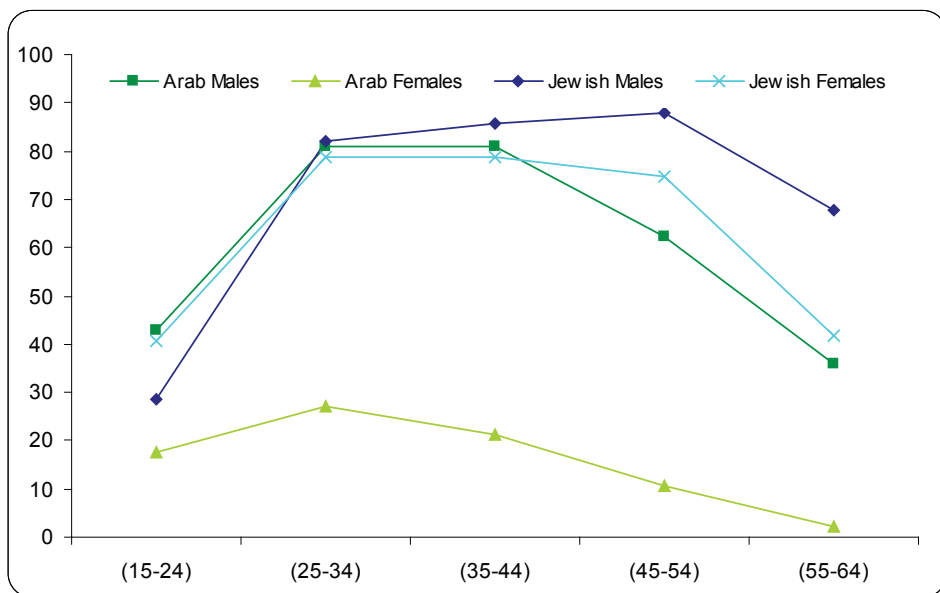
In addition to the differences in participation rate of Arab women based on level of education, differences also exist by age group. These differences were not uniform: there was an increase in participation particularly among young Arab women, and a drop among the uneducated, older women.

Graph 21 shows that, in 2000, the participation rate of Arab women was lower than for other groups in all age categories, the low rate being most severe among Arab women over age 44, at which age the participation rate drops sharply. The rate also drops for Arab men as they age, with the drop starting in the 45-54 age group. In this age group, the participation rate of Jewish women is higher than that of Arab men, and women and the rate of Jewish men is the highest. The reason may be connected to the distribution of Arab employees by economic sector and occupation, described below, which makes it difficult

for Arab men and women to remain in the labor market. The tendency for the participation rate to fall as Arab women and men get older, compared with the figures for Jewish men and women, continued in 2005 (Graph 22).

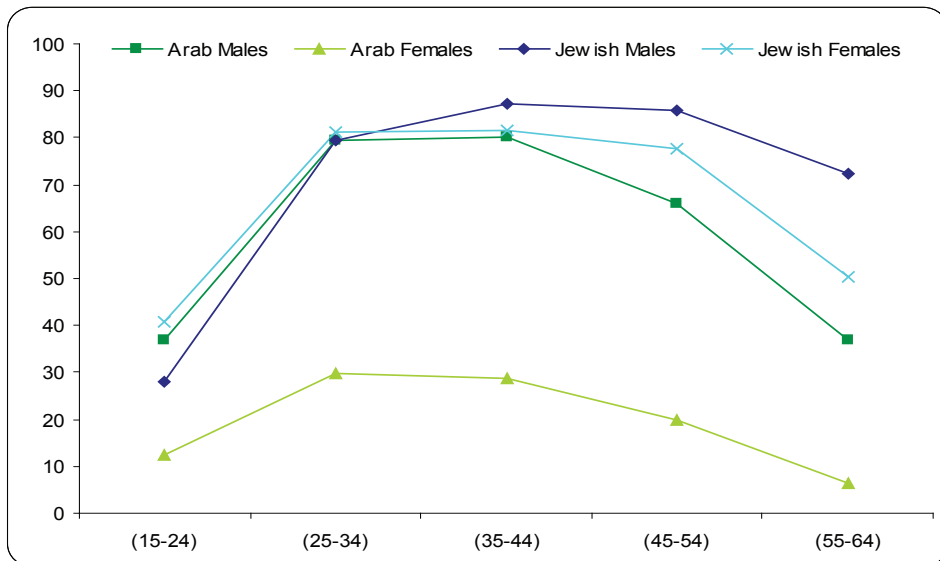
The figures for 2010 show a change in the patterns of participation of Arab women, with higher rates for all age groups, compared with 2000 and 2005. In other words, Arab women now manage to survive in the workforce for more years. The change might be explained by the participation of educated women in economic sectors and occupations that do not call for skilled and unskilled manual labor, so they manage to remain in the labor market and not burn out at an early age.

Graph 21: Participation rate in the labor market, by nationality, gender, and age, 2000



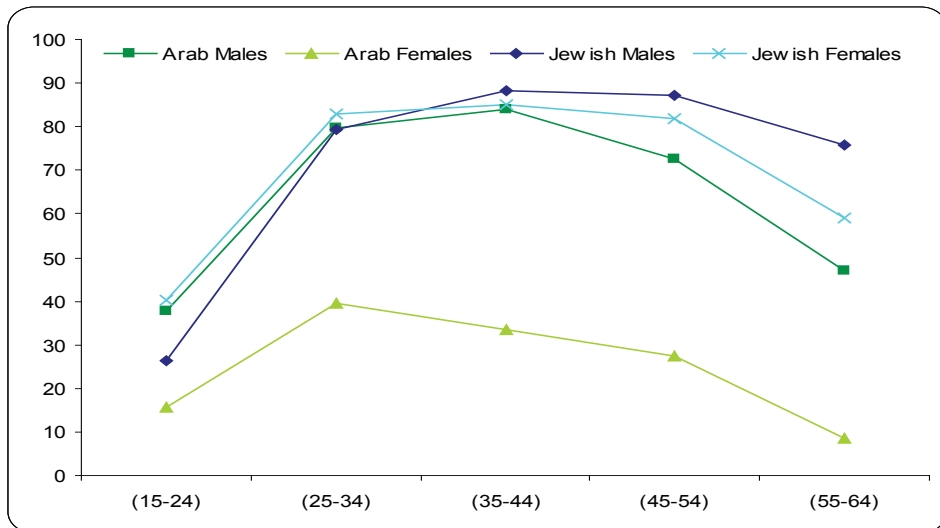
Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 22: Participation rate in the labor market, by nationality, gender, and age, 2005



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 23: Participation rate in the labor market, by nationality, gender, and age, 2010



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

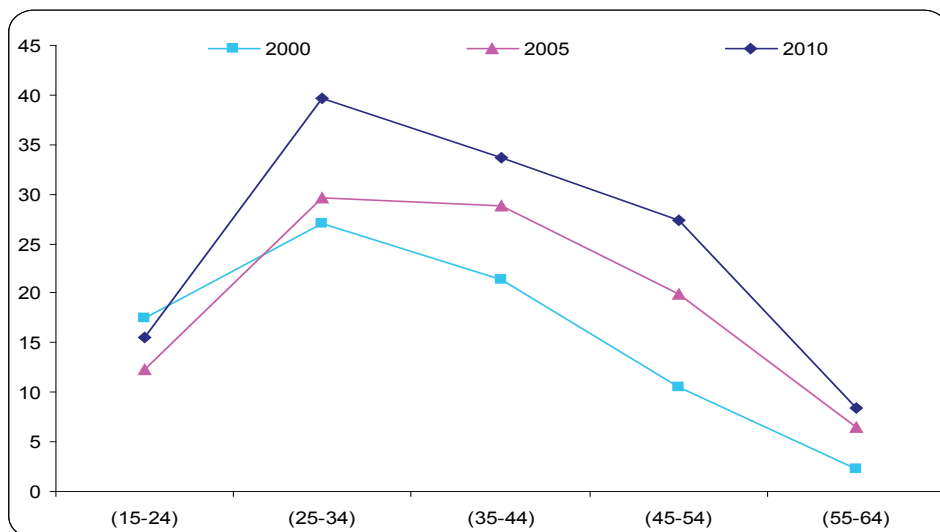
Table 7: Participation rate of Arab women, by age

Age	1995	2000	2005	2010
15-24	19.8	17.6	12.3	15.6
25-34	25.3	27.0	29.6	39.7
35-44	22.0	21.4	28.8	33.6
45-54	13.7	10.5	19.9	27.4
55-64	5.3	2.3	6.5	8.4

Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

We see that the most significant increase in participation rate of Arab women between 1995 and 2010 was in the 25-54 age groups. For the women aged 25-34, there was an impressive increase from 25 to 40 percent; for those aged 35-44, there was an increase from 22 to 33.6 percent, and among 45-54 year olds, the figure rose from 13.7 to 27.4 percent. The rise testifies to both the readiness to join the workforce and to remain in it. The drop in the youngest age group, 15-24, results essentially from the increase in years of schooling before joining the labor market. The biggest drop occurs over age 55: only 8.4 percent of Arab women of this age were in the workforce in 2010 (although this figure is 50 percent higher than it was in 1995).

Graph 24: Participation rate of Arab women in the labor market, 2000-2010



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

3.3 Employment of Arab women- Economic Sectors and Occupations

Participation of Arab women in the workforce is affected by economic sector and occupation, in large part by the features and needs of the ethnic-local market, which functions as an “employment enclave” for Arab women, and the needs of the central-Jewish labor market in Israel. The economic system in the ethnic-local, Arab market is characterized by a lack of industrialization and a lack of a developed and modern private sector that matches the local supply of labor. The local market has been good for the persons having a higher education and for women, in particular in the public service. Arab women have preferred to work in their communities, rather than leave them in an attempt to assimilate in the central labor market. To some extent, their desire to join the workforce, on the one hand, and to maintain their traditional role as mothers and wives, on the other hand, limits their job opportunities and directs them to certain “employment refuge” branches of the economy that the ethnic-local market provides. Also, the lack of suitable transportation makes it difficult for them to integrate in both the central and local labor market. Another factor that holds them back is discrimination and racism against Arabs in the central labor market, which turn work into a troublesome experience. Thus, Arab women are affected by events in the local labor market, which itself is affected by conduct of the national labor market.

In the local labor market, Arab women have had a higher employment status than in the central labor market, where they were discriminated against both as women and as Arabs (Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov 1990) and were not paid a proper wage. Educated women are filling many positions in the local public sector and in public services, and they have increasingly been engaging in academic occupations, in the free professions, and in personal services. A small percentage of women have gone to work in industry. These processes have taken place simultaneous with the increase in education of Arab women, but the participation rate has remained about the same: it was approximately

23 percent until 2009 and rose to 28 percent in 2010. This explains the exit of uneducated women from the workforce, the increase in competition among educated women for jobs in the local market, and continuation of the difficulties in assimilating in the central economy.

3.3.1 Participation by Economic sector

Table 8: Employment of Arab women, by economic sector

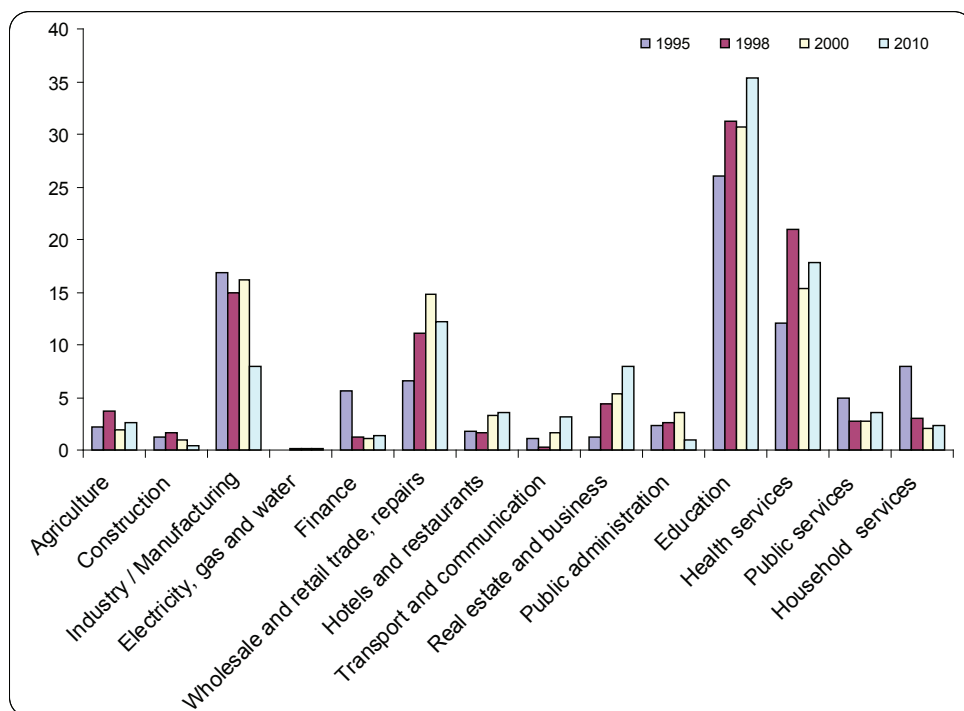
Economic sector	1995	1998	2000	2010
Agriculture	2.2	3.7	1.9	2.6
Construction	1.2	1.7	1.0	0.4
Industry	16.8	15.0	16.1	7.9
Electricity and water	-	0.1	0.1	0.1
Banking, insurance, finance	5.6	1.3	1.1	1.4
Wholesale and retail trade and repairs	6.6	11.1	14.8	12.2
Hospitality and food	1.8	1.7	3.3	3.5
Transportation, storage, communications	1.1	0.3	1.6	3.2
Business services	1.3	4.4	5.4	7.9
Public administration	2.3	2.6	3.6	1.0
Education	26	31.3	30.7	35.4
Health, welfare and social work services	12	20.9	15.4	17.8
Community, social, personal, and other services	5	2.7	2.7	3.6
Household services and unknown	8	3.0	2.0	2.3

Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

The above figures show the fixed features of Palestinian women in the labor market, which shall be noted again in the data on employment of Arab women by occupation. The data indicates a significant change in employment patterns of Arab women. In 1995, the industrial sector served as their main employment refuge, along with education and health, welfare and social work services, which together employed some 55 percent of working Arab women. This picture changed in the period of time under review: there was a significant drop in employment in the industrial sector (to 7.9 percent in 2010) and a sharp rise (about 10 percent) in the education sector, with a

moderate rise in health, welfare and care services. There were moderate rises in sectors that are not traditional fields of employment of Arab women, such as retail and wholesale trade, in which the percentage almost doubled. This jump can be explained by the entry of uneducated women in this field in Arab communities due to the increase there in the trade and services centers after 2000. There has also been a rise in the food services, transportation, and storage sectors. No less interesting is the spike in the business services sector, from 1.3 percent in 1995 to 8.0 percent in 2010, indicating a willingness of Arab women to work in new, non-traditional occupations, both in the case of uneducated women (where they work primarily in services and trade) and of women with higher education, who began to penetrate the business, insurance, and finance sectors.

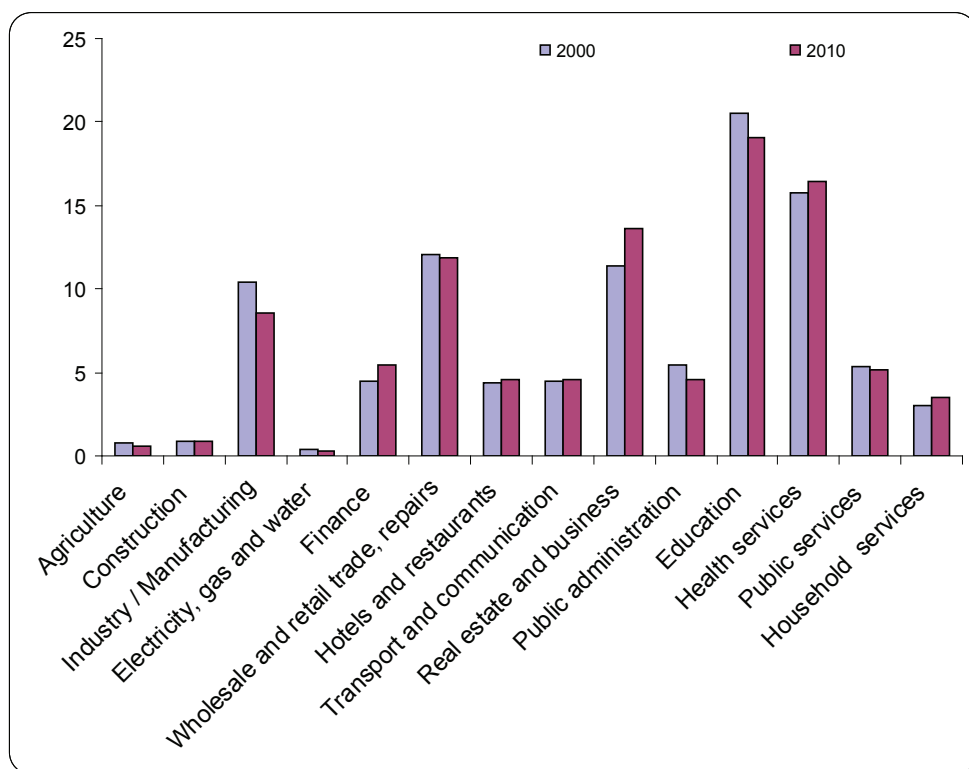
Graph 25: Employment of Arab women, by economic sector



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

The economic sectors in which Arab women and Jewish women work differ: more than half of Arab women (53 percent) are engaged in education and health services, which together with trade amounts to almost 65 percent, while Jewish women are not concentrated in a few sectors and occupations. In 2010, Jewish women were employed not only in the female sectors, such as education (19 percent) and health services (16.4 percent), but also were well represented in the new, modern sectors, such as business services (13.6 percent), banking and insurance (5.5 percent), public administration (5.2 percent), wholesale and retail trade (11.8 percent). Being spread throughout the various sectors reduces the economic danger facing Jewish women, inasmuch as they are less susceptible to harm resulting from changes or crises occurring in a specific sector or two, and have a greater variety of employment opportunities. Also, they do not encounter the structural barriers that make it difficult for Arab women to assimilate in modern sectors of the economy. In addition, the employment status of Jewish women is superior to that of Arab women, as is illustrated in the breakdown of employment by occupation.

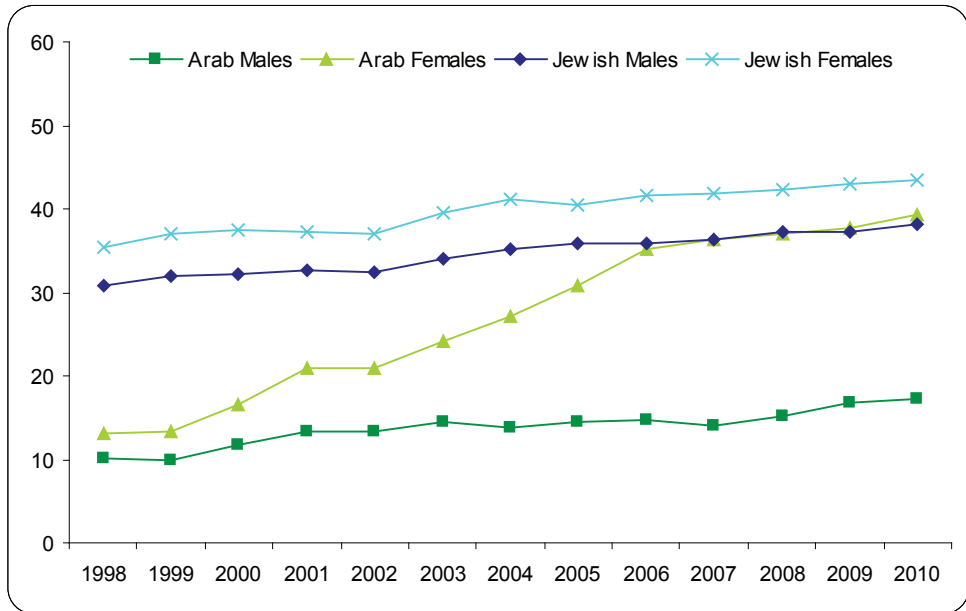
Graph 26: Employment of Jewish women, by economic sector



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

The percentage of employed Arab women who are academics is very high compared with Arab men and Jewish men, and almost as high as that of Jewish women. Graph 27 depicts the percentage of persons in the workforce who have an academic degree, by nationality and gender. The figures show that the proportion of Arab women in the workforce who have academic degrees was three times higher in 2010 than it was in 1998, rising from 13 percent to 39 percent; among Jewish women, the proportion rose from 35.5 to 43.5 percent in the same period. Among Arab men, there was an increase from 10 to 17 percent, and for Jewish men, the rise was from 31 to 38 percent. The greatest jump, we see, was among Arab women.

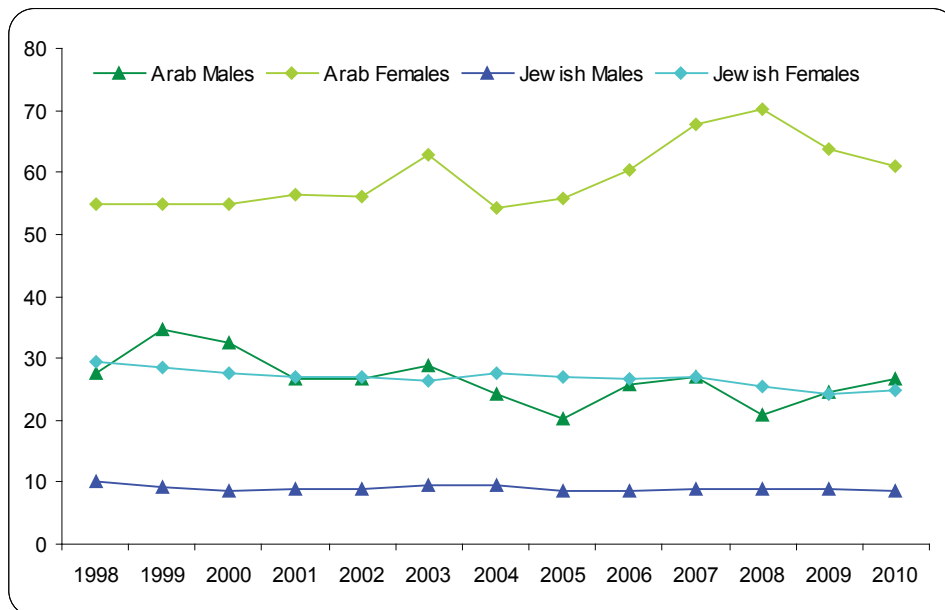
Graph 27: Percentage of employed persons having an academic degree, by nationality and gender, 2000-2010



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

These figures are ostensibly encouraging. However, upon deeper examination, we see that, in 2010, 61 percent of Arab women with an academic degree were employed in education, compared with 55 percent in 2000 and 70 percent in 2008 (Graph 2008). Only 25 percent (an average from 2000 to 2010) of Jewish women with an academic degree were working in education, and the number of Jewish men with an academic degree working in education was extremely small (average of 8.5 percent for the years 2000 to 2010); the figure was about 25 percent for Arab men. The education sector became an economic refuge for Arab women academics.

Graph 28: Percentage of academics employed in education, by nationality and gender, 2000-2010



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

We see a change since the 1990s: then, Arab women were primarily employed in industry and education, whereas now only a small number work in industry and other traditional sectors, and are concentrated more in education and health services. In addition, there has been a rise in their participation in the workforce and a substantial increase in the percentage of Arab working women who have an academic degree, even though most Arab women academics are employed in education. Have these changes affected the employment of Arab women in terms of occupation? If so, how? And has their employment status changed as a result? We shall discuss these questions in the next paragraphs.

3.3.2 Participation by Occupation

Arab women in the workforce are no longer concentrated in the lower-level occupations and in positions with low status. The breakdown by occupation indicates nice improvement over the past two decades. The most significant change has occurred in the percentage of Arab women employed in academic occupations, with a rise in scientific academic occupations from 6.4 percent in 1995 to 11 percent in 2000 and to 15 percent in 2010, in the free professions from 21 percent in 1995 to 25.4 percent in 2010, and in agency, sales, and service occupations from less than 20 percent in 1995 to 26 percent in 2010. The percentage remained the same in clerical and administration, and there was a drop of 50 percent of skilled work in agriculture and industry, and an increase in the number of unskilled workers. In other words, the increase in level of education of the women, with their concentration in education and health services, is reflected also in their occupations. At the same time, there has been a rise in the number of unskilled workers, which explains part of the increase in the participation of uneducated women in the labor market.

The distribution of Arab women in the workforce by occupation in 2010 shows a more favorable distribution than that of Arab men, only 8.7 percent of whom are employed in academic occupations, and only 6.1 percent in the free professions. Also, 51 percent of Arab men are still engaged in skilled occupations in industry, agriculture, and construction, and 11 percent in unskilled positions. The percentage of Arab managers is twice as high as that of Arab women.

Although Arab women had better figures than Arab men with respect to occupations in 2010, they were still inferior to that of Jewish women. In 2010, 15.1 percent of Jewish women were working in scientific academic positions, 18.3 percent in the free professions, 5.3 as managers (which is five times the percentage of Arab women), 27 percent in clerical work, and only 3 percent in skilled work in agriculture, industry, and construction, and 6.1 percent in unskilled jobs.

Table 9: Employment of Arab women, by occupation

Level of employment	1995	2000	2010
Scientific/ academic	6.4	11	14.8
Free professions	21.1	28.4	25.4
Managers	1	0.8	1.1
Clerical workers	16.7	20.7	15.8
Agents sales workers	7.8	8	25.5
Agents service worker	14	11	*
Skilled workers in agriculture and industry	14	9.4	6.3
Unskilled	9.0	9.6	11.4

* Sales and services were joined in 2010.

Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Graph 29: Employees, by occupation, nationality, and gender, 2010



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

3.4 Unemployment among Arab Woman

Above we described the changes in the level of participation of Arab women in the labor market and noted the rising level over the past decade or so. The rise took place alongside an impressive increase in the level of the women's education. These two phenomena contributed to a change in the nature of the employment of the women, both with respect to the sectors of the economy in which they worked and in the occupations they engaged in. In this part of the report, we shall examine if these phenomena affected the level of unemployment among Arab women, and if so, how.

The unemployment data in Table 15 and Graph 30 provide important facts. In general, the level of unemployment among the Jewish population (men and women), is lower than among the Arab population (men and women): until 2003, unemployment among Arab women was close to the national average, and lower than that of Arab men. This fact is explained by the low rate of participation of Arab women in the labor market. Since 2003, with the increase in Arab women's participation in the labor market, their unemployment rate rose noticeably and has been higher than the other groups.

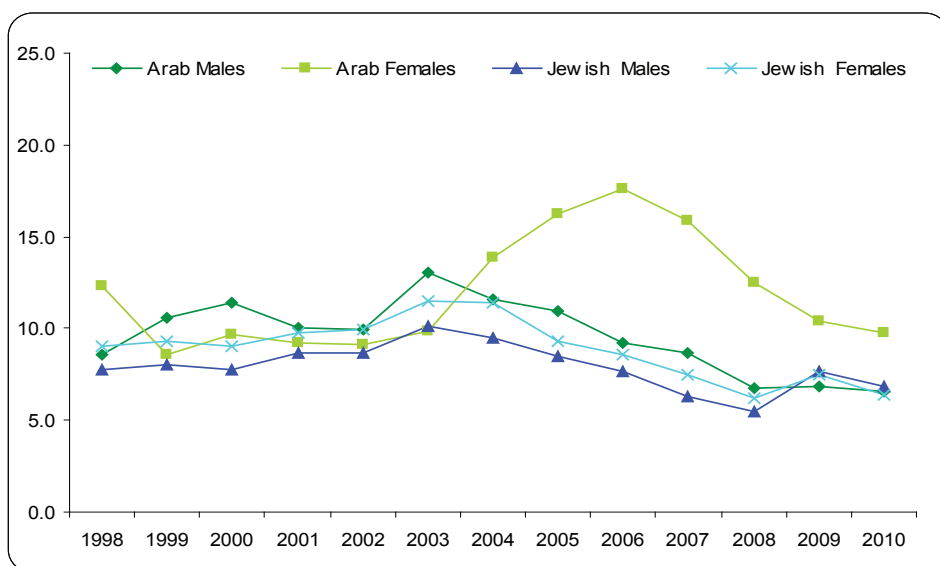
From 2003 to 2007, the unemployment rate of Arab women rose while it dropped among the other groups. Since then, the rate of all groups has dropped. The highest rate of unemployment of Arab women occurred in 2005-2006; in those two years, it was about twice as high as the other groups (16 percent compared with 9 percent for Arab men and Jewish women, and 8 percent for Jewish men). Apparently, Arab women in the labor market are more severely and rapidly affected by economic recession, and benefit more slowly in times of economic growth. Despite the drop in unemployment among Arab women in 2010, it was still 50 percent higher than the unemployment rate of the other groups.

Table 10: Unemployment rate in selected years, by nationality and gender

	1998	2000	2005	2010
Arab women	12.4	9.7	16.3	9.8
Arab men	8.6	11.4	11.0	6.6
Jewish women	9.0	9.1	9.3	6.4
Jewish men	7.7	7.7	8.5	6.8

Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

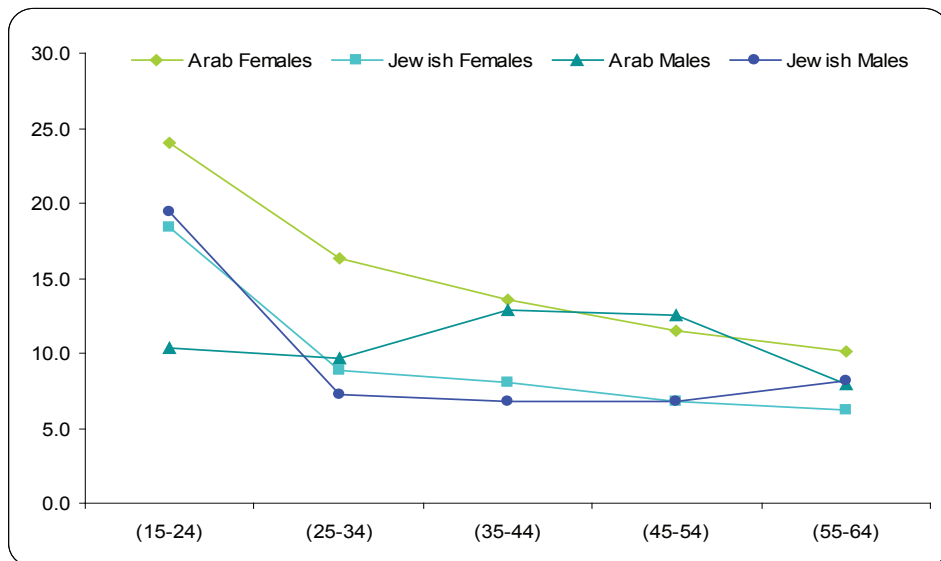
Graph 30: Unemployment rate, by nationality and gender



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Like the rate of participation in the workforce, the unemployment rate of Arab women changes by age group, as depicted in Graph 31. We see that the gap between Arab women and the other groups has grown: in 2005, the rate for Arab women was highest in all age groups, except for the 35-54 age groups, in which the rate for Arab men and women was similar. These are the years, as noted, in which participation in the workforce is the highest. Among Arab women, unemployment drops with a rise in age, as is the case with the other groups; this phenomenon is explained, in part, by the drop in participation in the workforce among older persons.

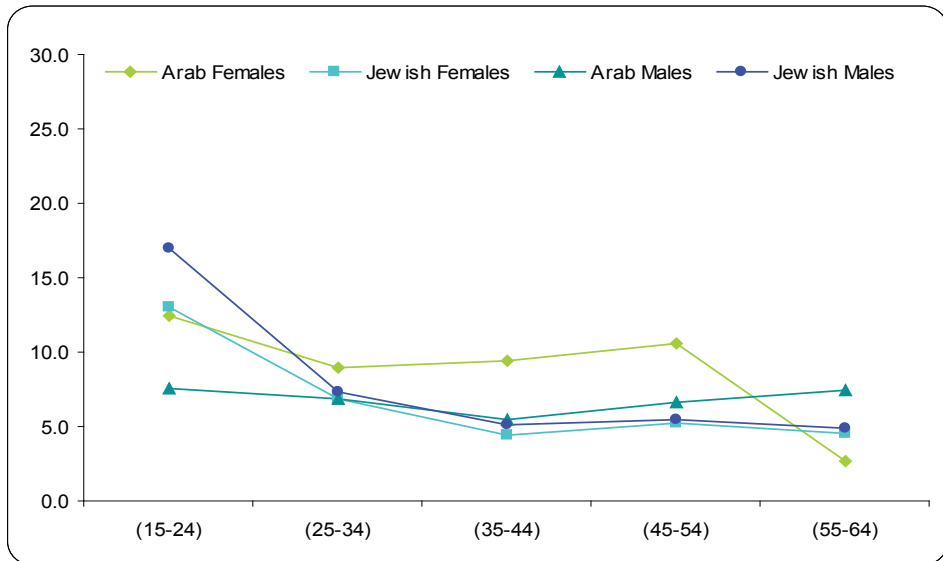
Graph 31: Unemployment rate, by nationality, gender, and age group (2005)



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

The unemployment rate changed slightly between 2005 and 2010. In the young age group (15-24), the rate was similar for Arab women and Jewish women. In the age groups with the highest percentage of participation in the workforce, 25-54, the unemployment rate of Arab women was the highest, but lower than it was in 2004. Over age 55, the rate again dropped for Arab women and was lower than the other groups. This fact is explained first of all by the drop in Arab women’s participation in the workforce at these ages, and second, by the principal areas of employment of Arab women – education and health services – which ensure higher job security at older ages than do other sectors of the economy.

Graph 32: Unemployment rate, by nationality, gender, and age group (2010)



Source: Rikaz – Databank, website: www.rikaz.org

Having presented an overview of participation in the workforce, level of education, nature of employment, and unemployment of Arab women compared with other groups, we shall now examine the principle characteristics of income and incidence of poverty among Arab women.

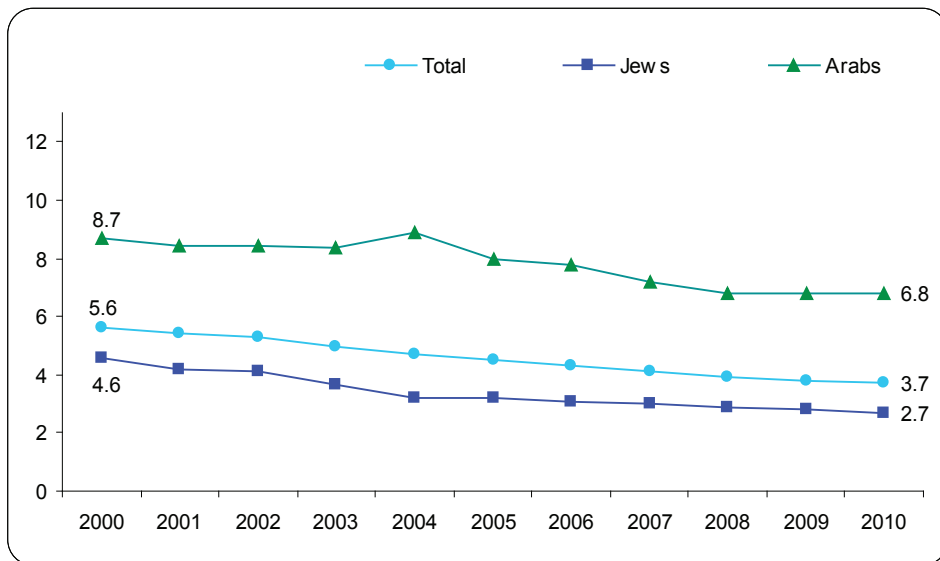
4. Health Status of Arab Women

Most surveys and research studies on the health of Israelis indicate great gaps in the health indicators between the diverse population groups, particularly between Arabs and Jews. The surveys that focus on the health of the Arab segment of society paint a grave picture of high incidence of chronic illness, certain types of cancerous growths, genetic diseases, and birth defects. They also show a low life expectancy, for both men and women, in comparison with the Jewish population, and especially high infant mortality, especially among the Muslim population. The health of Arab women is the poorest of all the state's population groups.

4.1 infant mortality rates

One of the principle indicators of the health of population groups, and for assessing the health gaps between the groups, is the infant mortality rate. In the past decade, there has been a steady drop in infant mortality rates among the Arab population (6.8 per thousand births in 2010 compared with 8.7 in 2000). However, the present rate is still 2.5 times greater than among the Jewish population. Birth defects are the primary reason for infant deaths among Arabs, while premature births account for the largest number of infant deaths among Jews.

Graph 33: Infant mortality rates



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Abstract of Israel 2011, No.62

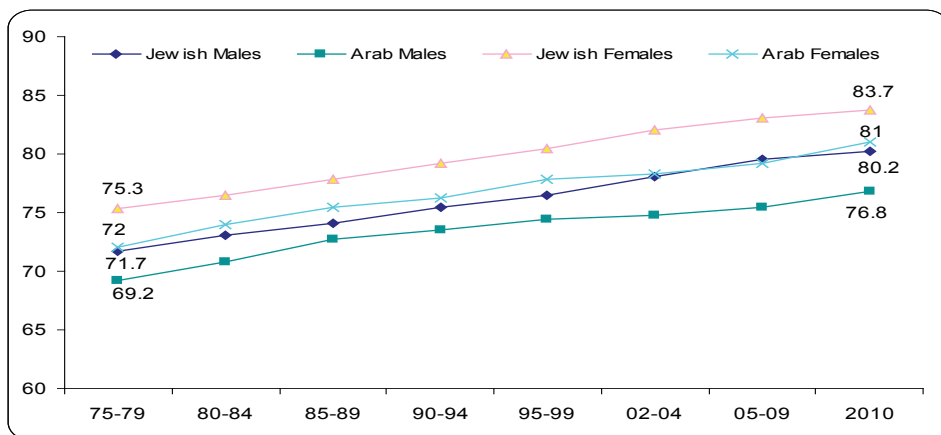
The health of a particular population is assessed on the basis of a few indicators, among them life expectancy, incidence of chronic diseases, overweight, and health behavior.

4.2 Life Expectancy at Birth

A person’s life expectancy is affected by various factors: biological, social, and environmental as well as by economic and educational status and health behavior. The combination of these factors largely determines life expectancy. So, too, does availability and accessibility of health services.

Life expectancy among Arab women in Israel in 2010 was 81 years, and 76.8 for Arab men (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The statistical data indicate substantially higher life expectancy among Jews, both men and women. In the case of both Arabs and Jews, there has been a continuous increase in life expectancy (OECD report).

Graph 34: Life expectancy at birth

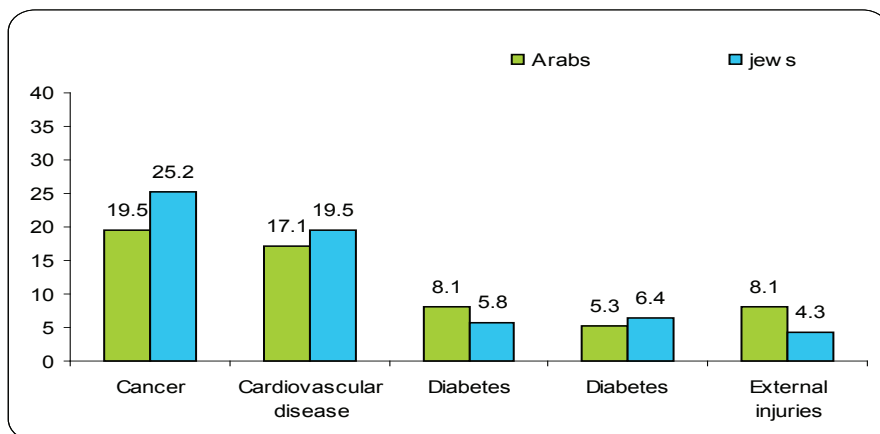


Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Abstract of Israel 2011, No.62

4.3 Causes of Death

According to the report *Health in Israel 2010* (Central Bureau of Statistics, August 2011), the leading cause of death among the entire population in Israel is cancer.¹¹ Graph 35 shows that 19.5 percent of Arabs in Israel die of cancer, compared with 25.2 percent of the country's Jews.

Graph 35: Cause of death, by nationality (by percentage)

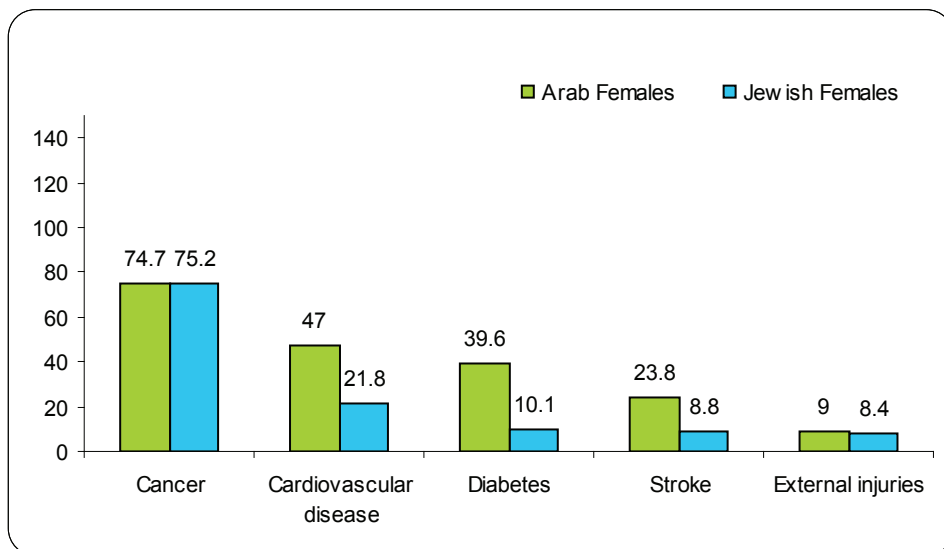


Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

¹¹ *Health in Israel 2010*, Central Bureau of Statistics (August 2011).

There is almost no difference between Arab women and Jewish women in the category of death by cancer (about 75 per 100,000). The rate among men is higher.

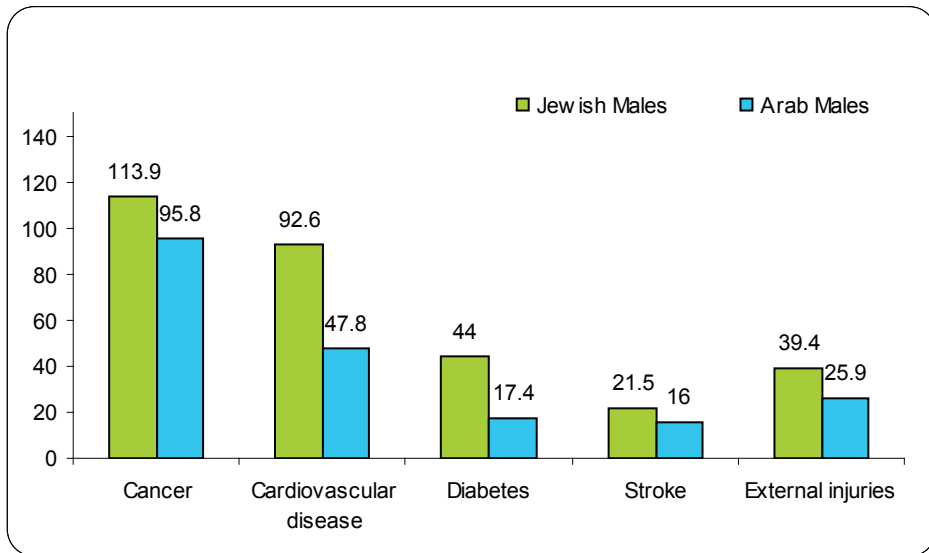
Graph 36: Various causes of death among women, by nationality
(per 100,000 persons)



Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

Cardiovascular disease is the second highest case of death. Among Arab men, the rate was 92.6 per 100,000, a figure twice as high as among Jewish men. The rate for Arab women was comparable to that of Jewish men (47.8/100,000), and twice as high as for Jewish women.

Graph 37: Various causes of death among men, by nationality
(per 100,000 persons)



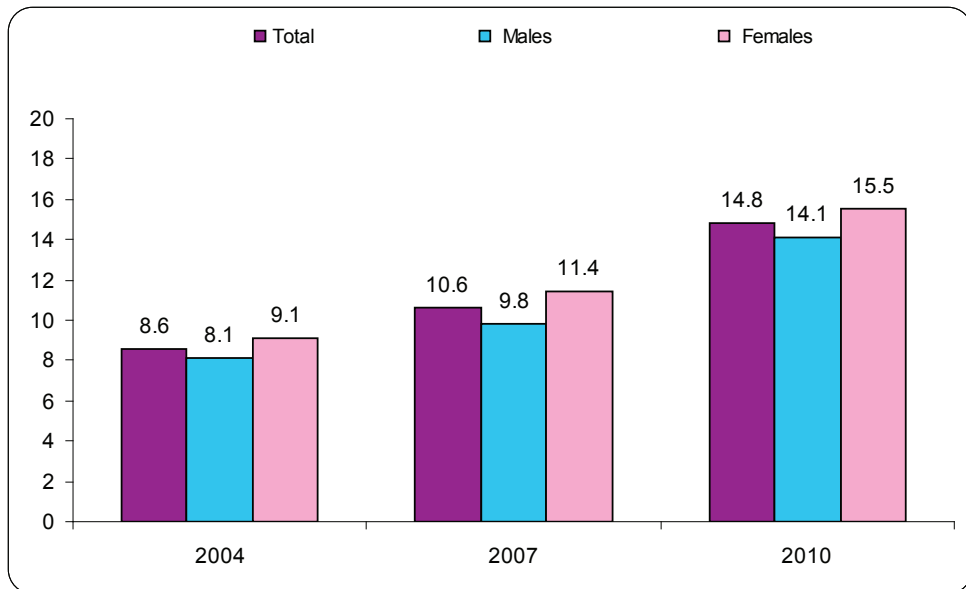
Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

4.4 Chronic Diseases

Diabetes is the third largest cause of death, being responsible for 39.6/100,000 among Arab women and 10.1/100,000 among Jewish women. Stroke was the cause in 23.8/100,000 deaths among Arab women, compared with 8.8/100,000 among Jewish women (*Health in Israel 2010*).

Figures from The Galilee Society's *Third Socioeconomic Survey* show that 14.8 percent of the participants related that they suffered from at least one chronic disease (15.5 percent of women, 14.1 percent of men). There were also differences by geographic areas and types of community.

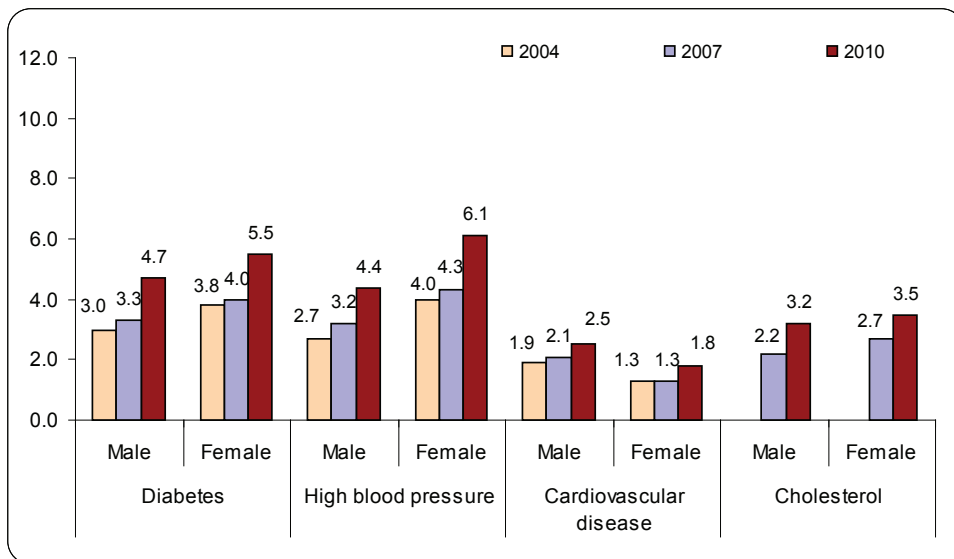
Graph 38: Chronic diseases among Arabs, by age group and gender
(per 100,000 persons)



Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey* (2010), Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society

As appears from the surveys of diseases taken in 2004 and 2010, diabetes and high blood pressure are the most common medical conditions, and they have been steadily rising among men and women. In The Galilee Society's *Third Socioeconomic Survey*, conducted in 2010, 5.5 percent of Arab women in Israel said they were diabetic, 61 percent reported high blood pressure, 1.8 percent cardiovascular disease, and 3.5 percent high cholesterol levels.

Graph 39: Chronic diseases among Arabs, by age group, selected years (per 100,000 persons)

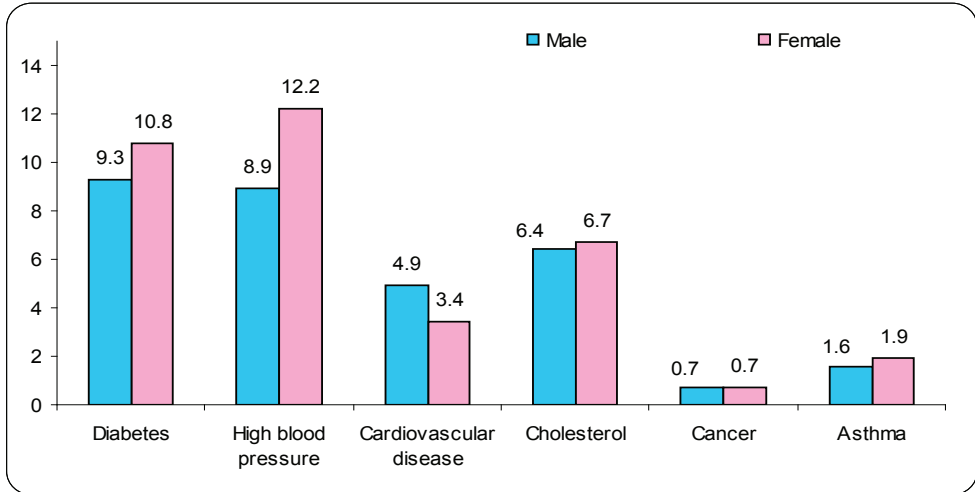


Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey* (2010), Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society

The survey's data show that about 10 percent of the adult population (age 21 and above) suffer from diabetes (9.3 percent of men, 10.8 percent of women); 10.5 percent have high blood pressure (8.9 percent of men, 12.2 percent of women).

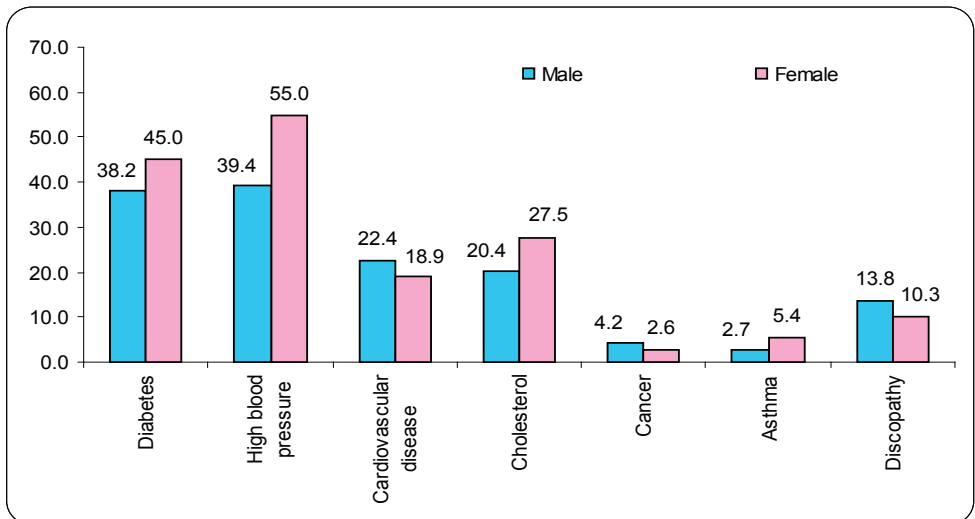
In the 60 and above age group, 41.7 percent (45 percent of women, 38.2 percent of men) suffer from diabetes. High blood pressure is the most common medical condition in this age group, at 45 percent (55 percent of women and 39.4 percent of men).

Graph 40: Incidence of selected chronic diseases among Arabs aged 21 and above, by sex



Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey (2010)*, Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society

Graph 41: Incidence of selected chronic diseases among Arabs aged 60 and above, by sex

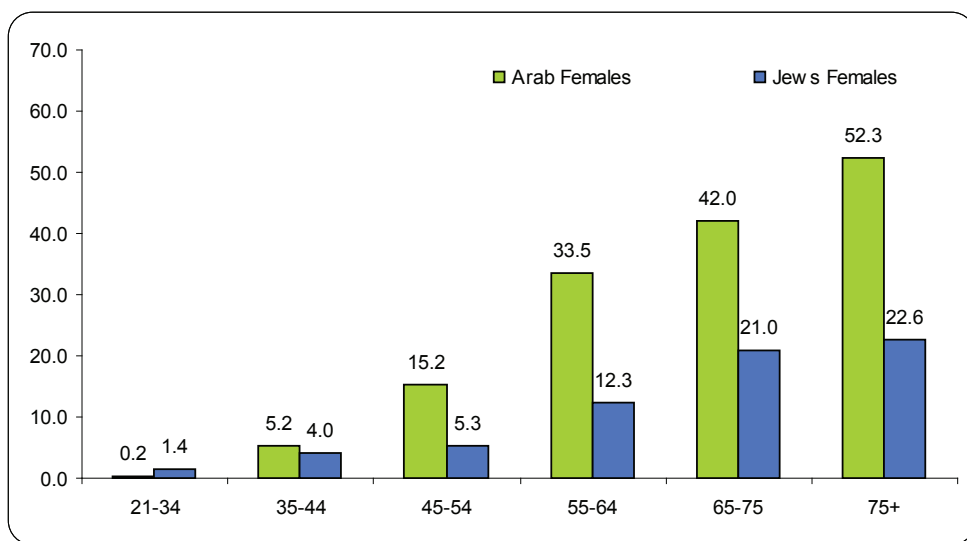


Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey (2010)*, Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society

4.4.1 Prevalence of Diabetes

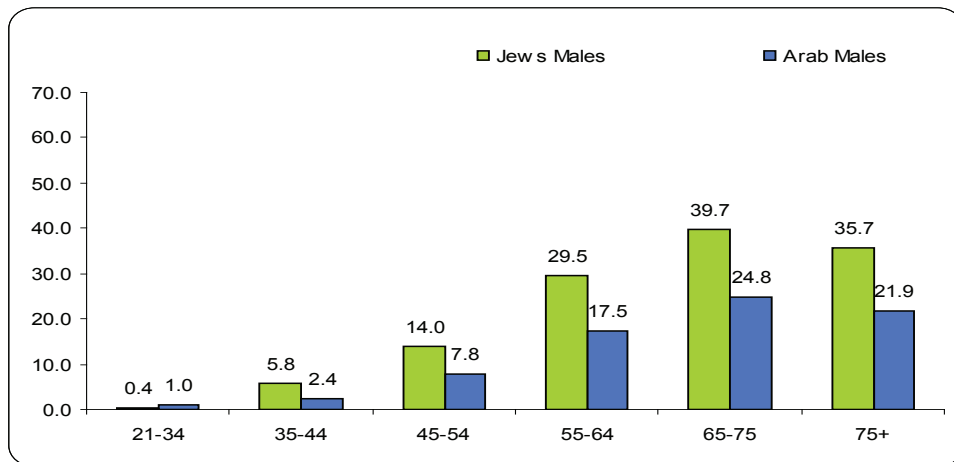
The incidence of diabetes has increased in Israel in the past decade. An INHIS survey for the years 2007-2008 indicated that 7.6 percent of the population aged 21 and above reported they had been diagnosed as having diabetes (8.1 percent of men and 7.2 percent of women), representing an increase of 29 percent and 39 percent, respectively, compared with 2003-2004. The incidence of diabetes rises with age in all groups. The largest gap between population groups appears in the over-45 age group of Arab and Jewish women (with the rate of Arab women being 2-3 times higher than for Jewish women).

Graph 42: Incidence of diabetes among women, by nationality and age
(by percentage)



Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey* (2010), Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society
Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

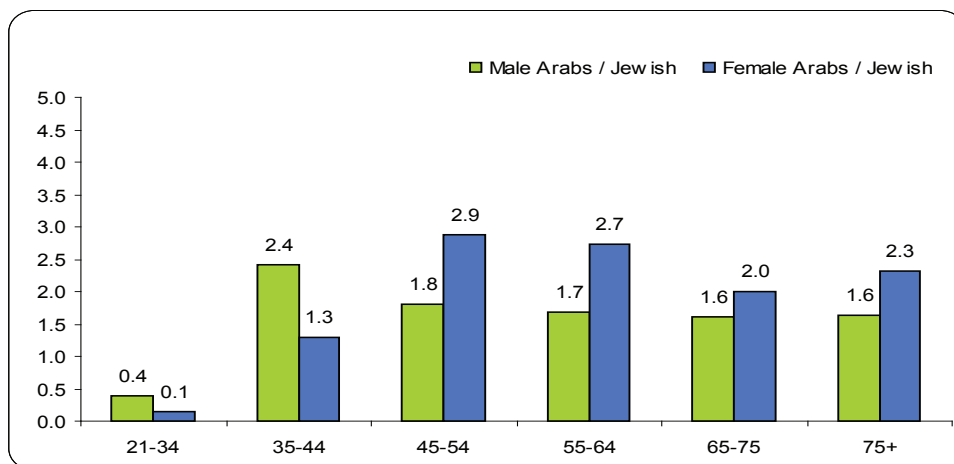
Graph 43: Incidence of diabetes among men, by nationality and age (by percentage)



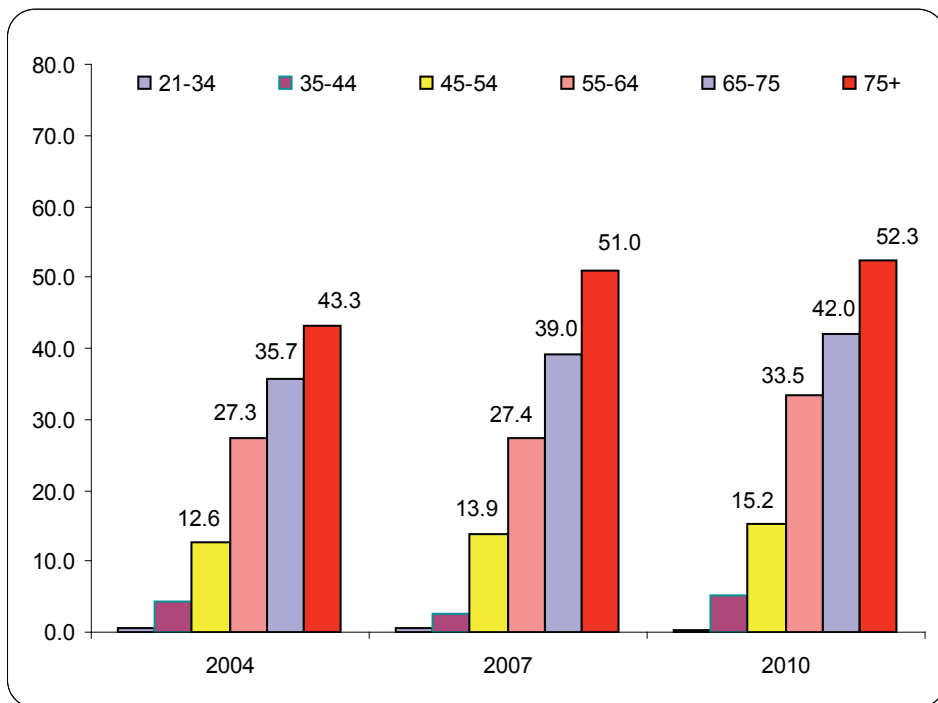
Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey (2010)*, Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society
 Source: *Health status in Israel 2010*, the Ministry of Health

The survey findings indicate that 9.3 percent of women aged 21 and above are diabetetic. Incidence of the disease rises with age, reaching 45 percent for women 60 and older. A comparison of the incidence of diabetes among Arabs and Jews is presented in Graph 44.

Graph 44: Comparative relation of incidence of diabetes, by nationality and sex



Graph 45: Comparative relation of incidence of diabetes among Arab women in selected years, by age group

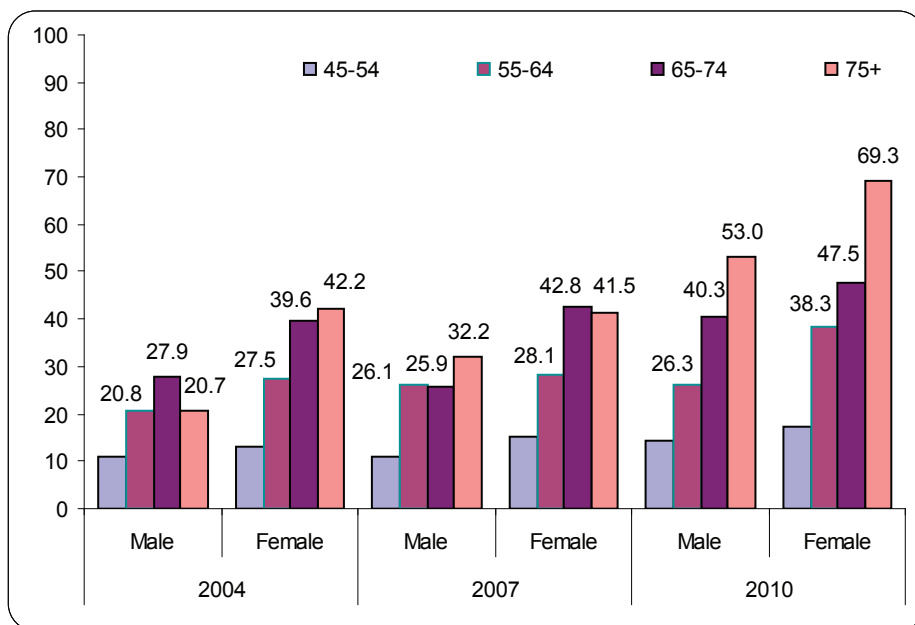


Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey (2010)*, Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society

4.4.2 High Blood Pressure and Cardiovascular Disease

The socioeconomic survey conducted by Rikaz – the data bank center of The Galilee Society – indicates a steady rise with age in the percentage of Arab women with high blood pressure. The problem is greatest among women over 75. In all age groups, Arab women have more prevalence than Arab men, as seen from the following graph.

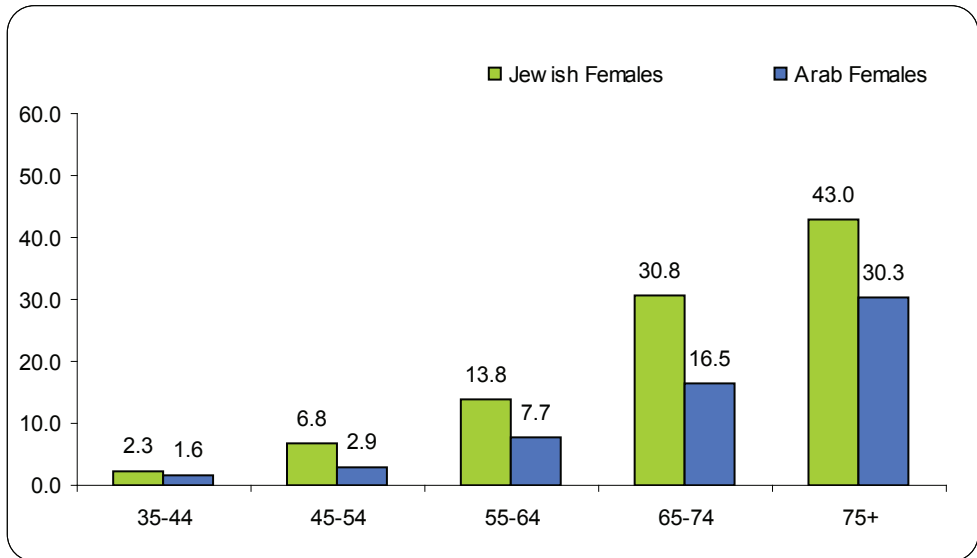
Graph 46: Prevalence of high blood pressure among Arabs, by age group and gender



Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey (2010)*, Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society

3.4 percent of Arab women suffer from some cardiovascular disease, a figure that is less than that for Arab men. The incidence of cardiovascular disease increases with age, reaching 30 percent for women aged 65-74 and 43 percent for women 75 and over. In all age groups, the incidence of cardiovascular disease is higher than for Jewish women.

Graph 47: Prevalence of cardiovascular disease among women, by nationality and age group

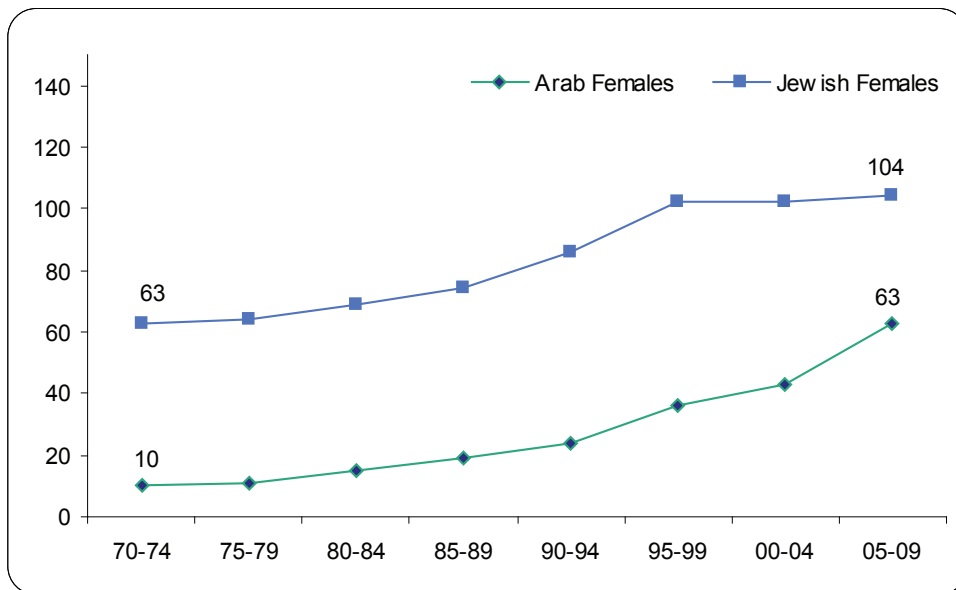


Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

4.5 Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the commonest form of cancer among women in Israel, accounting for 30 percent of cancer cases among women. Since 1970, the incidence of breast cancer has risen more than 600 percent among Arab women, compared with 65 percent among Jewish women. It should be noted that 27.2 percent of breast-cancer cases among Arab women occur in the 40-50 age group; only 15 percent occur under age 40 (*Health in Israel 2010*). The mortality rates are higher among Arab women with the disease, and survival rates of five years following discovery of the disease are lower.

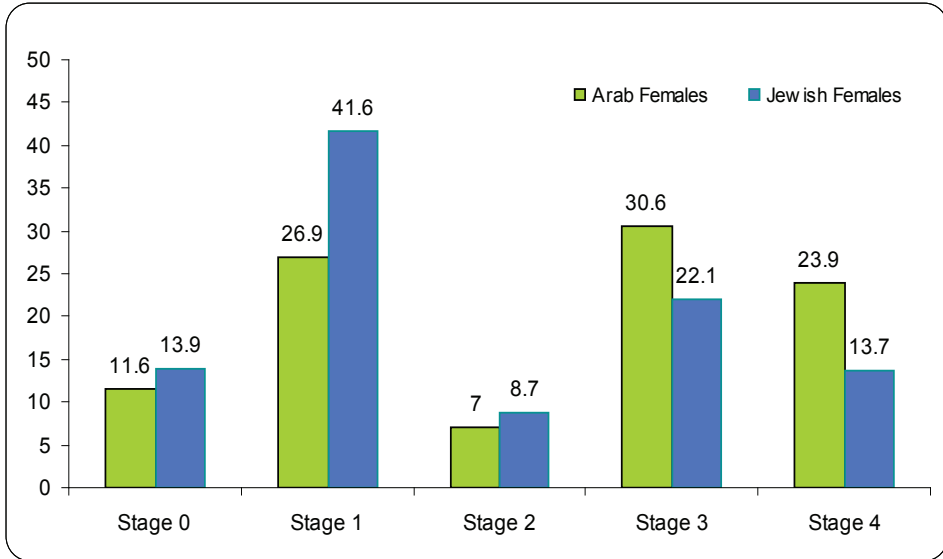
Graph 48: Prevalence of breast cancer among women in Israel, selected years (per 100,000 persons)



Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

Among Jewish women who develop breast cancer, the disease is usually diagnosed early (Stage 1) whereas for Arab women, the figure is lower. Arab women are more often diagnosed at an advanced stage (Stages 3 or 4) of breast cancer; 54.5 percent of Arab cases, compared with 35.8 percent of Jewish cases.

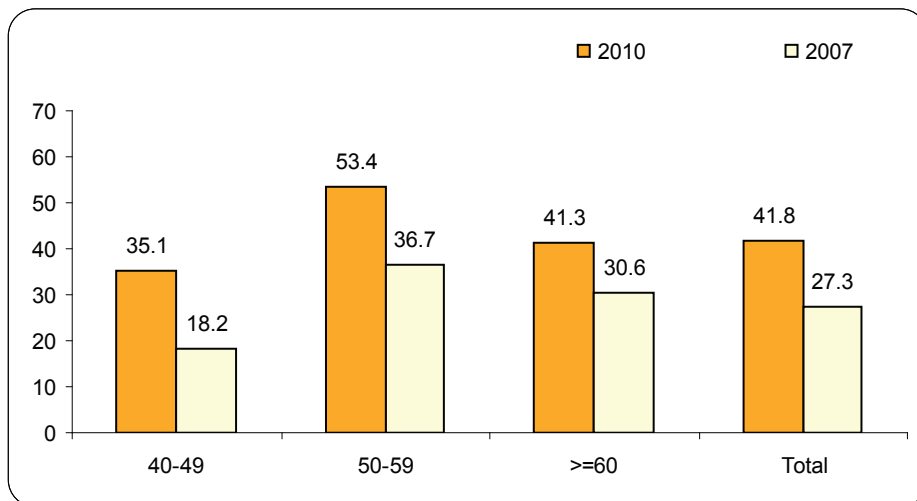
Graph 49: Distribution of women with breast cancer in Israel, by nationality and stage at which the disease was first diagnosed



Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

In recent years, there has been an increase in the percentage of Arab and Jewish women who undergo mammograms. In 2007, 27.3 percent of Arab women took a mammogram test; in 2010, the figure was 41.8 percent.

Graph 50: Arab women taking mammogram test, 2007 and 2010
(by percentage)



Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey* (2010), Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society

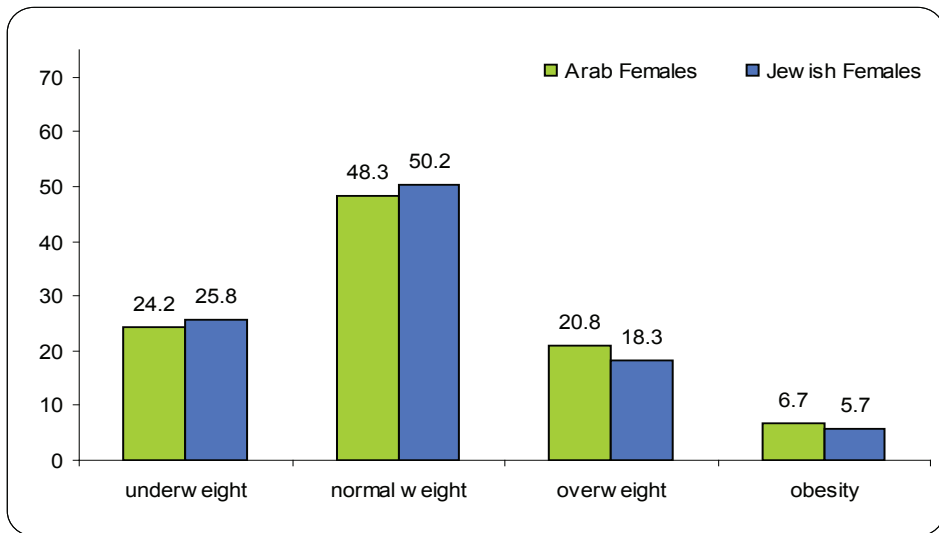
4.6 Health Behavior

4.6.1 Overweight

The percentage of overweight (BMI>30) Arab women is higher than among Jewish women in all age groups (*Health of the Arab Population in Israel 2008*). The findings of the survey conducted by The Galilee Society in 2010 show that the percentage of Arab women who are overweight increases with age (from 6.7 percent for women aged 21-34 to 45 percent for the 50-64 age group). In the 65 and above age group, the percentage falls to 27.8 percent (22.2 percent for Jewish women). Also, 20.8 percent of women in the 21-34 age group and 42.3 percent in the 35-49 age group are overweight (BMI 25-30), compared with 18.3 and 26.4 percent, respectively, of Jewish women.

Graph 51: Weight category of 21-34 year old women in Israel

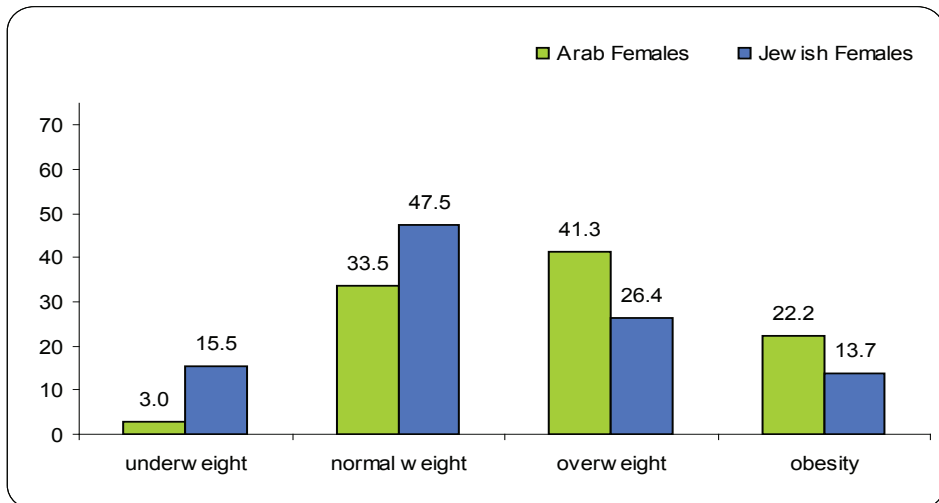
(by Body Mass Index)



Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

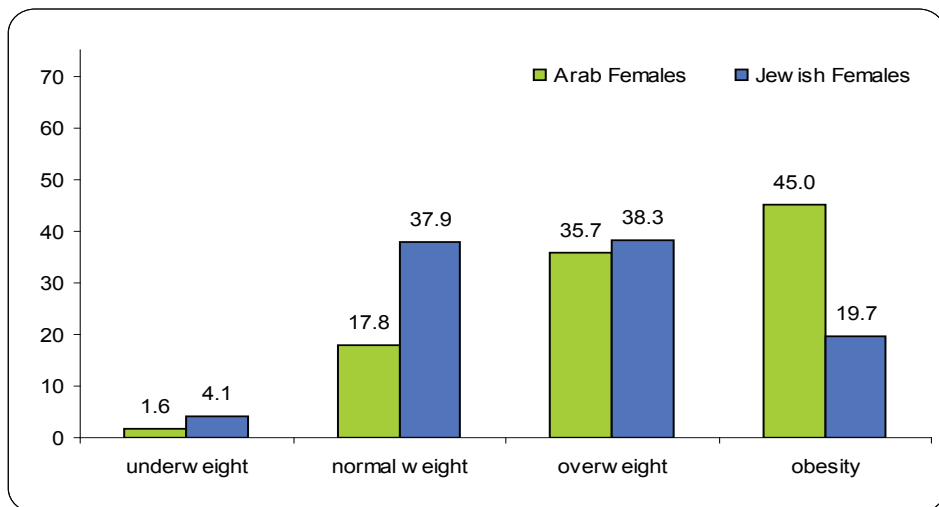
Graph 52: Weight category of 35-49 year old women in Israel

(by Body Mass Index)



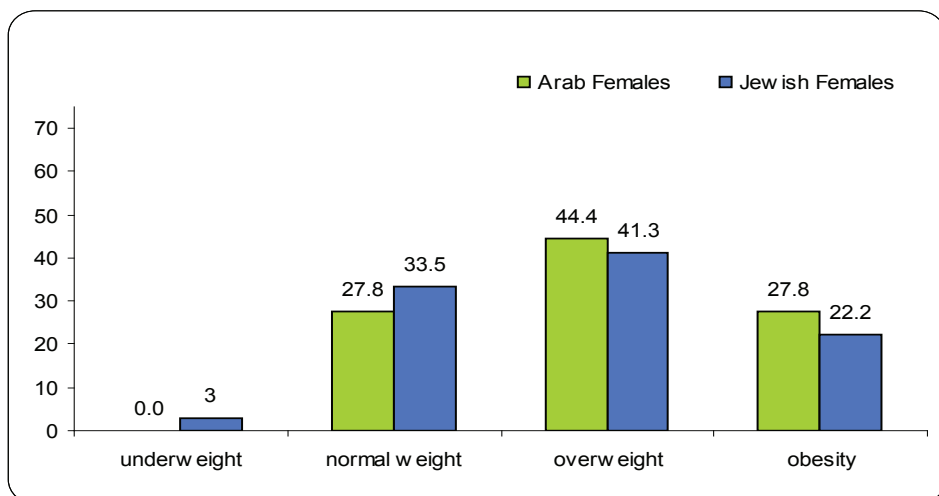
Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

Graph 53: Weight category of 50-64 year old women in Israel
(by Body Mass Index)



Source: *Health in Israel 2010*

Graph 54: Weight category of women 65 years old and older in Israel
(by Body Mass Index)



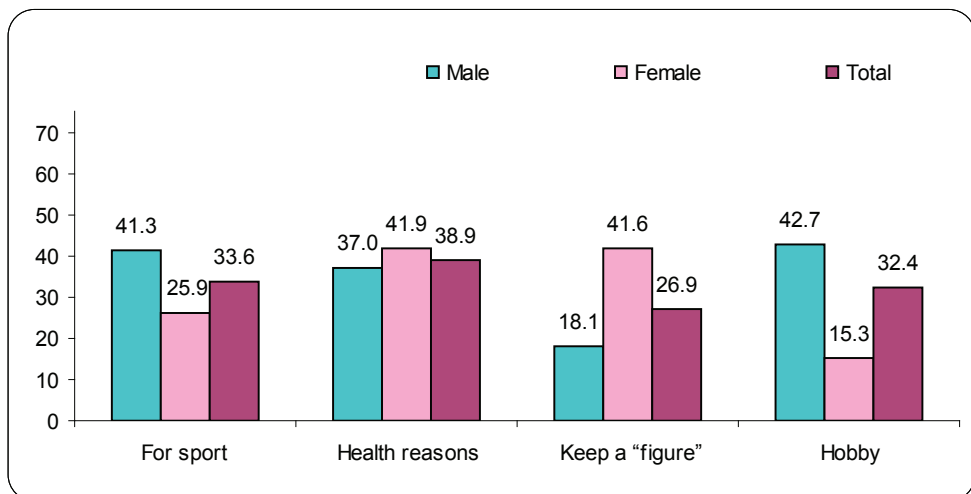
Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

Without doubt, the problem of overweight, with all its ramifications, is increasing. Consumption and nutrition patterns among the population are a major cause of people being overweight, so it is important to adopt a national program that will address the problem. The program must include intervention at the regional and local level, along with health education, physical exercise, and systemic changes that will provide healthier food.

4.6.2 Physical Exercise

Systematic and organized physical exercise of various kinds is healthy behavior that has increased in popularity in recent years among the Arab population, particularly among the women. About one-third (33.6 percent) of the entire Arab population (age 10 and above) said that they engage in one sort or another of physical exercise (41.3 percent of the male population, 25.9 percent of the female population). Walking is the most common sport (21 percent of the entire Arab population).

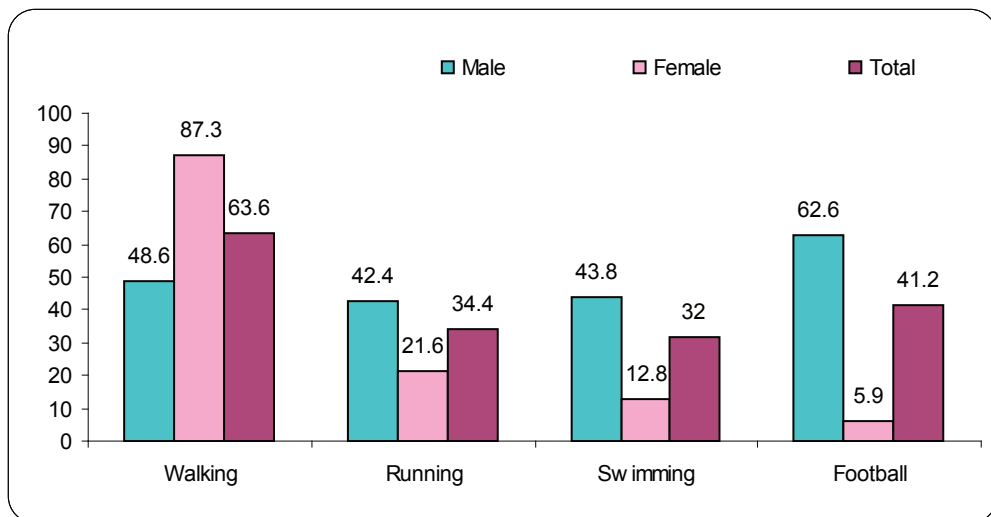
Graph 55: Physical exercise among the Arab population, by gender and purpose of the exercise (by percentage)



Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey* (2010), Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society

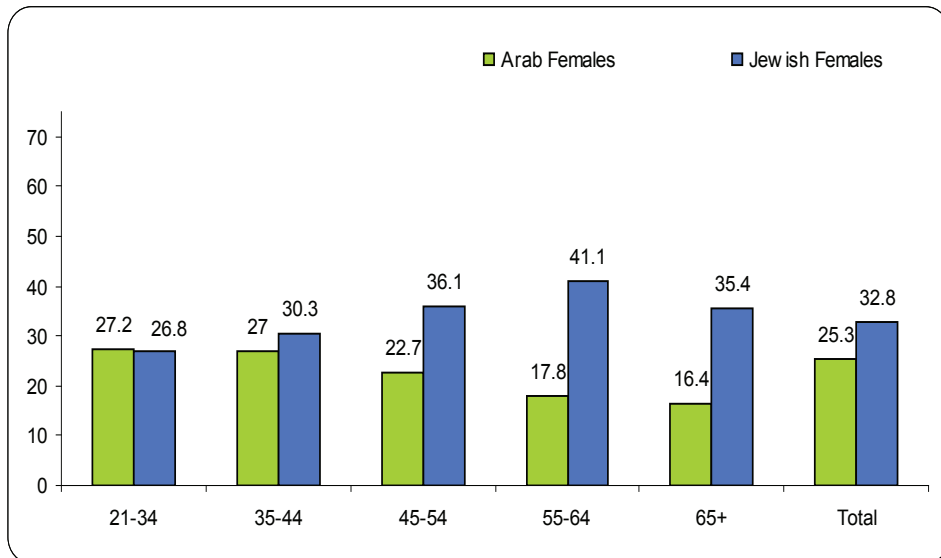
87.3 percent of the women who engaged in physical exercise said walking was the preferred activity, while almost half (48.6 percent) said walking was the activity they engaged in. The figures also indicated that the higher the level of education, the more likely the person will engage in organized physical exercise. Of those who engaged in sports, 65.8 percent said they did it for health reasons or to maintain their “figure.” The health consideration was the main motivation for older persons. Maintaining health was the motivation for 17.8 percent of 10-17 year olds, 54.5 percent for the 30-39 age group, and 81 percent for those 50 and above who engaged in sport.

Graph 56: Physical exercise among the Arab population, by type of exercise (by percentage)



Source: *Third Socioeconomic Survey* (2010), Rikaz Center, The Galilee Society

Graph 57: Physical exercise among women, by nationality and age group
(by percentage)



Source: Health status in Israel 2010, the Ministry of Health

The survey's findings indicate a positive change with respect to physical exercise, with more persons, especially women, adopting a healthy way of life and engaging in organized physical exercise. It is very important to maintain this positive trend by encouraging the public and by developing the infrastructure needed to instill in the population the desire to adopt this behavior. Toward this end, it is important for government ministries in addition to the Ministry of Health, such as the Ministry of Sport and Culture and the Ministry of National Infrastructures in particular, to work together.

5. Poverty Among Arabs in Israel

Having presented a general report of the current situation on participation in the workforce, on the level of education, and the main characteristics of employment and unemployment of Arab women compared with other groups in society, In addition to health status, we shall now examine the principal elements regarding income and incidence of poverty among Arab women in Israel in the years 2001 to 2009. We compare that data with the figures for the Jewish population, with emphasis on the difference in the poverty indicators between families in which the woman works and families in which the woman does not work. Special emphasis will be given to the effect Arab women's participation in the labor market has had on the poverty indicators in the two populations.

The data in this report were adapted from data of the National Insurance Institute, so the method of calculation of poverty comports with the NII's definition of poverty. The NII defines the poverty line as one-half of median available income. The method of translating the number of persons in a family to the number of standard persons is based on the Engel Curve, whereby families of different size whose food expenses as a proportion of expenses for consumption are identical are equivalent from the aspect of the families' wellbeing. In 2009, the poverty line per standard person stood at NIS 1,815/month. To calculate the poverty line for a particular family, it is necessary to multiply the poverty line per standard person by the number of standard persons in the family. T able 11 presents the number of standard persons and the poverty lines for families of various sizes in 2009.

Table 11: Poverty line, by family size, 2009

Number of persons in family	Number of standard persons	Poverty line – shekels//month	Marginal addition, in NIS
1	1.25	2,268	-
2	2.00	3,629	1361
3	2.65	4,809	1179
4	3.20	5,807	998
5	3.75	6,805	998
6	4.25	7,712	907
7	4.75	8,619	907
8	5.20	9,436	817
9	5.60	10,162	726

Source: National Insurance Institute of Israel

The General Situation

A view of poverty among the Arab population of Israel does not offer much reason for hope. The figures show very large gaps in incidence of poverty between the Arab population and Jewish population over the years. Table 12 shows the expanding gap between the two populations.

Table 12: Poverty rate of Arab and Jewish families in selected years from 1990 to 2010

Year	Arab families %			Jewish families %		
	Gross income	Net income	Drop	Gross income	Net income	Drop
1990	47.2	34.5	26.9	33.5	13.2	60.6
1994	51.9	38.5	25.8	33.1	16.8	49.2
1998	52.8	37.6	28.8	31.3	13.5	56.9
2002	55.6	44.7	20.1	30.0	14.8	45.6
2005	58.6	52.1	11.1	29.8	15.9	46.6
2007	58.3	46.8	11.8	28.3	15.0	46.8
2008	57.1	46.2	13.5	28.4	15.0	46.2
2009	60.3	53.3	11.4	28.9	15.2	47.4
2010	60.7	53.2	12.3	28.0	14.3	48.7

Source: National Insurance Institute of Israel

In 2010, 21 percent of families in Israel lived under the poverty line. Statistics by segments of the population indicate a huge gap between the Jewish and Arab populations: 53.2 percent of Arab families compared with 14.3 percent of Jewish families, a difference of 38.9 percentage points.

Viewing the entire Arab population or Arab women as one block conceals the heterogeneity in this population, and makes it difficult to propose a feasible policy to deal with the poverty problem. The problem is indeed deep, touching on almost half of all Arab families and women. However, emphasizing the differences in poverty among the Arab population, and their source, offers a prospect for dealing with the problem if proper resources are allocated and decision-makers are ready to make the effort.

The following sections of the report illustrate that solutions to the poverty exist, but to work, they must be implemented. Assimilation of Arab women in the labor market is an effective tool for reducing the incidence of poverty among the women and among Arab families; participation of women in the labor market contributes both to substantial reduction of poverty of both groups and reduces the poverty gaps between Arabs and Jews; increase in Arab women's participation in the labor market requires removal of obstructions to their participation, both structural obstructions and obstructions to improving human capital; improvement in the human capital of Arab women will contribute to reduction in the poverty rate; improvement of the human capital will likely result in improvement in the level of education and engagement in post-high school and academic studies of Arab women.

This improvement can change the distribution of Arab women in the various economic sectors and occupations. In other words, the solution of the problem of poverty among Arab families and women calls for structural change that will deal with the obstructions to the participation of the women in the labor market and in improvement in their employment status, which is connected to the level and nature of their education, and to their integration in the economic growth.

Table 13: Poverty among Arab women and Jewish women

Year	Arab women	Jewish women
2001	40.7	11.4
2002	41.4	10.6
2003	44.9	12.1
2004	46.5	12.4
2005	48.8	12.5
2006	51.1	12.1
2007	47.5	11.9
2008	45.4	12.0
2009	48.6	12.7

Source: National Insurance Institute of Israel

In 2009, the income gap reflecting the depth of poverty of the families (i.e., the difference between the income and the poverty line) was 38.3 for Arabs, compared to 33.1 for Jews. Thus, not only are there more poor people among the Arab population, the poor Arabs are also poorer. Indeed, FGT (Foster Greer Thorbecke), which measures the severity of the poverty and combines the effect of incidence of poverty with depth of the poverty by giving more weight to the poorer segments of the families living in poverty, was 0.1204 among Arabs, compared with 0.0284 among Jews.

5.1 Changes in the Incidence of Poverty over the Years

The poverty rate is defined as the percentage of families living under the poverty line among all families in the population. Table 20 presents the poverty rate for Arab and Jewish families, in which the woman works, in which the woman does not work, before and after direct transfer and tax payments, and the contribution of the direct transfer and tax payments in reducing poverty (percentage drop poverty rate following direct transfer and tax payments) for the years 2001-2009. Tables 21 and 22 present these figures based on number of persons and children.

The general picture arising from the data of the tables is one of rising poverty

over the years, among both the Arab and Jewish populations, and of much more severe poverty among the Arab population, regardless of whether the woman in the family works. In Arab families in which the woman worked, the average poverty rate, before the direct transfer and tax payments (based on income from work and capital), was 22.4 percent over the years, compared to 12.3 percent for Jewish families; in families in which the woman did not work, the figures were 65.1 percent for Arab families compared with 49.6 percent for Jewish families.

The gap between the two populations grew after the direct transfer and tax payments were taken into account: in families in which the woman worked, the average poverty rate was 14.7 percent for Arab families and 6.5 percent for Jewish families; where the woman did not work, the figures were 57.8 percent for Arab families compared with 33.7 percent for Jewish families. In other words, the average poverty rate based on available income among the Arab population was 8.1 percentage points higher than among the Jewish population in families in which the woman worked, and 24.1 percentage points higher in Arab families in which the woman did not work. The conclusion: participation of women in the labor market reduces the gaps in poverty rates between Arabs and Jews by almost two-thirds.

Another important point arising from the statistics is that, in families in which the woman works, in the case of both Jewish and Arab families, the poverty rate is substantially lower than where the woman does not work. In the Jewish population, the likelihood of a family in which the woman works finding itself under the poverty line is, on average over the years, one-fifth that of families in which the woman does not work. For Arab families, this figure is one-fourth, since the wages of Arab women is lower than those of Jewish women; also, the depth of poverty in Arab families is greater.

Table 14: Poverty rate of Arab and Jewish families, in which the woman works, does not work, 2001-2009

Type of household	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	Before direct transfer and tax payments								
Jewish – woman works	11.8	11.4	11.8	12.0	12.9	13.0	11.9	12.9	13.3
Arab – woman works	20.8	20.1	22.1	25.1	23.4	24.5	21.2	21.7	22.9
Jewish – woman does not work	49.5	48.9	50.8	50.4	49.4	49.1	50.3	47.1	50.8
Arab – woman does not work	64.9	64.0	62.3	64.6	63.7	66.3	64.9	65.5	69.4
	After direct transfer and tax payments								
Jewish – woman works	5.3	5.0	5.7	6.5	7.4	7.1	6.6	7.1	8.1
Arab – woman works	8.9	12.4	14.0	18.3	14.2	19.6	13.3	15.5	15.8
Jewish – woman Does not work	30.6	30.7	32.8	34.3	34.2	33.6	36.1	35.3	35.6
Arab – woman does not work	52.8	53.1	54.4	57.6	58.5	62.3	59.6	57.4	64.5
	Percentage drop after direct transfer and tax payments								
Jewish – woman works	54.9	56.3	51.6	45.7	42.7	45.0	44.8	44.9	39.2
Arab – woman works	57.2	38.2	36.4	27.1	39.1	20.1	37.3	28.4	31.1
Jewish – woman does not work	38.1	37.3	35.4	32.1	30.8	31.7	28.1	25.0	29.9
Arab – woman does not work	18.7	16.9	12.6	10.7	8.2	6.1	8.1	12.3	7.0

Source: National Insurance Institute of Israel

Table 15: Poverty rate of Arab and Jewish persons, in families in which the woman works, does not work, 2001-2009

Type of household	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Before direct transfer and tax payments									
Jewish – woman works	12.1	11.9	12.7	13.0	13.7	13.7	13.1	14.3	15.0
Arab – woman works	22.9	22.5	24.5	27.0	29.1	27.8	22.4	23.6	25.1
Jewish – woman does not work	50.9	50.3	52.1	52.1	51.2	51.4	52.5	49.8	53.1
Arab – woman does not work	68.1	67.1	65.3	67.1	66.7	69.2	68.0	69.6	72.3
After direct transfer and tax payments									
Jewish – woman works	5.5	5.2	6.3	7.6	8.5	8.2	7.9	8.6	9.7
Arab – woman works	11.1	14.8	15.6	19.4	16.9	22.6	15.1	17.8	18.1
Jewish – woman does not work	33.5	35.0	36.2	39.1	39.4	39.5	41.6	40.4	41.5
Arab – woman does not work	55.5	54.6	56.6	60.1	61.9	65.4	63.4	62.1	68.0
Percentage drop after direct transfer and tax payments									
Jewish – woman works	54.2	55.9	50.6	41.2	37.9	40.2	39.6	40.1	35.0
Arab – woman works	51.8	34.3	36.3	28.2	42.0	18.6	32.4	24.6	27.9
Jewish – woman Does not work	34.1	30.4	30.4	24.9	22.9	23.1	20.8	18.9	21.9
Arab – woman does not work	18.6	18.6	13.3	10.4	7.1	5.5	6.7	10.7	5.9

Source: National Insurance Institute of Israel

Table 16: Poverty rate of Arab and Jewish children, in families in which the woman works, does not work, 2001-2009

Type of household	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Before direct transfer and tax payments									
Jewish – woman works	15.1	14.9	17.1	17.7	18.5	18.3	17.9	19.4	20.6
Arab – woman works	23.8	24.0	26.0	27.2	31.1	27.6	24.7	26.0	27.1
Jewish – woman does not work	58.8	59.0	59.4	59.9	59.1	59.9	60.9	59.5	62.3
Arab – woman does not work	74.5	72.3	70.1	73.0	72.0	75.5	73.7	76.2	79.5
After direct transfer and tax payments									
Jewish – woman works	6.8	6.5	8.3	10.5	12.4	12.3	12.0	12.7	14.6
Arab – woman works	13.2	17.2	18.2	20.2	20.2	24.1	17.8	21.5	21.0
Jewish – woman does not work	42.0	45.1	44.9	49.7	50.5	51.2	53.4	51.9	53.9
Arab – woman does not work	61.6	60.8	61.8	67.5	69.7	74.1	71.2	71.1	77.7
Percentage drop after direct transfer and tax payments									
Jewish – woman works	55.0	56.6	51.3	40.5	33.1	32.9	32.8	34.4	29.2
Arab – woman works	44.5	28.2	30.0	26.0	35.0	12.6	28.2	17.0	22.4
Jewish – woman does not work	28.6	23.6	24.3	17.1	14.6	14.5	12.3	12.8	13.5
Arab – woman does not work	17.3	16.0	11.8	7.5	3.2	1.9	3.4	6.7	2.3

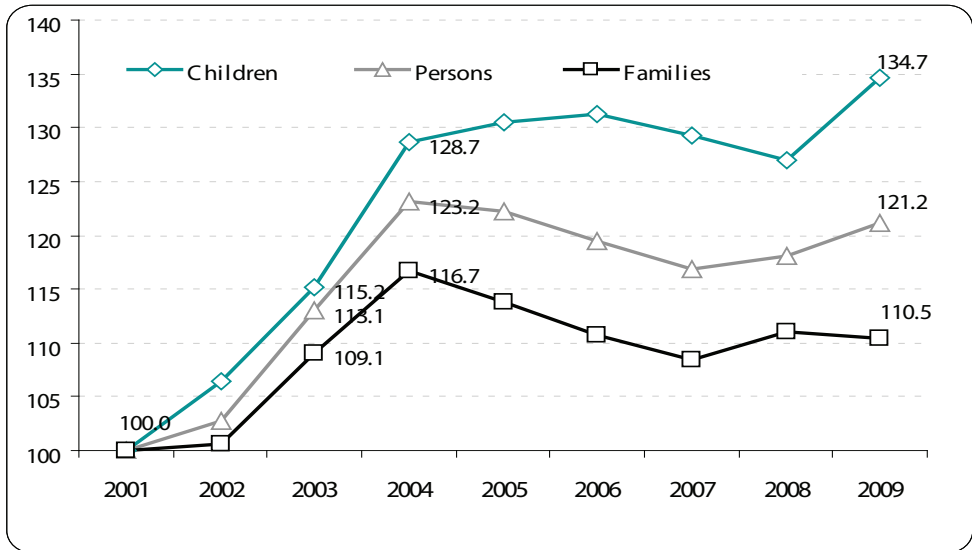
Source: National Insurance Institute of Israel

The benefit of government intervention by means of the transfer and tax payments in reducing the poverty rate has diminished appreciably over the years with respect to both the Arab and Jewish populations. In comparing the two populations, the chance of a Jewish family escaping the cycle of poverty after receiving transfer payments is greater than that of an Arab family; it is 2.9 times greater in families in which the woman does not work (among the Arab population, the likelihood was 11.2 percent, compared with 32 percent for Jews), and 14 times greater in families in which the woman works (for Arabs, the likelihood was 35 percent, for Jews 47.2 percent). These findings show that poverty among Arabs is more severe not only from the perspective of the number of families living in poverty, but also with respect to the depth of the poverty. Although Arabs receive more governmental transfer payments, since their wages from work are so low, they are unable to escape their poverty.

5.2 Development of the Poverty Rate of Families, Persons, and Children

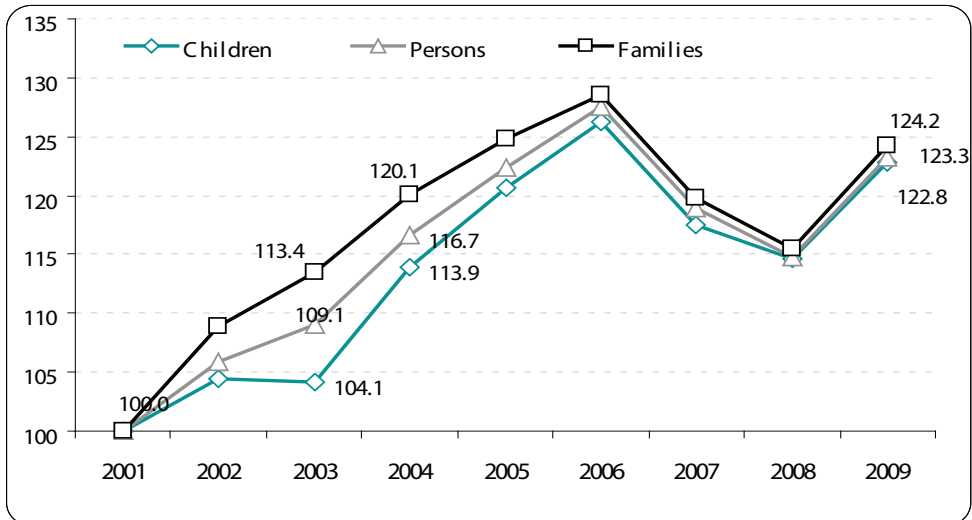
When we examine the poverty rate of families versus that of persons and children, we find a difference between the Arab and Jewish populations with respect to the type of families that joined the cycle of poverty over the years. Graph 58 presents the development of the poverty rate of families, persons, and children among the Jewish population in the years 2001 to 2009, using 2001 as the basis. Graph 59, presents the relevant figures for the Arab population.

Graph 58: Poverty rate of families, persons, and children in the Jewish population, 2001-2009 (2001 = 100 percent)



Source: National Insurance Institute of Israel

Graph 59: Poverty rate of families, persons, and children in the Arab population, 2001-2009 (2001 = 100 percent)



Source: National Insurance Institute of Israel

Among the Jewish population, the increase in the poverty rate of children was sharper than for families, indicating that the families that fell under the poverty line during these years were primarily families with many children. Among the Arab population, the rise in the incidence of poverty among was less than that of families, that is, the new families that fell into the cycle of poverty did not necessarily have many children. This finding contradicts the oft-repeated claim over the years that Arabs are poor because they have more children.

5.3 Changes in Income over the Years

Table 23 presents the economic income (from labor and capital only) and gross income (including transfer payments before direct taxes) and average available monthly income (net income after direct transfer and tax payments) in NIS per family, for Jewish and Arab households in which the woman works and in which the woman does not work, for the years 2001-2009.

Table 17: Monthly average gross and available economic income per family, for Jewish and Arab households, in which the woman works, does not work, 2001-2009

Type of household	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Economic income per family									
Jewish – woman works	14,851	15,061	14,293	14,656	14,926	15,792	16,485	16,962	17,220
Arab – woman works	10,330	11,063	10,835	11,080	11,748	11,682	12,013	12,156	11,891
Jewish – woman does not work	6,729	6,733	6,488	6,822	7,252	7,766	8,151	8,971	8,396
Arab – woman does not work	4,885	4,442	5,248	4,984	4,865	5,005	5,824	5,579	5,401
Gross income per family									
Jewish – woman works	15,917	16,241	15,344	15,656	15,957	16,865	17,533	18,063	18,453
Arab – woman works	11,676	12,332	12,017	12,129	12,967	12,697	13,130	13,216	13,111
Jewish – woman does not work	9,165	9,038	8,671	8,913	9,366	9,965	10,395	11,158	10,898
Arab – woman does not work	7,081	6,684	7,105	6,620	6,505	6,669	7,340	7,188	7,044
Available income per family									
Jewish – woman works	11,798	11,963	11,754	12,153	12,573	13,430	13,859	14,580	15,151
Arab – woman works	9,379	9,784	9,761	9,861	10,684	10,770	11,112	11,300	11,423
Jewish – woman does not work	7,175	7,017	6,908	7,177	7,579	8,178	8,425	9,053	9,101
Arab – woman does not work	5,916	5,734	5,799	5,634	5,621	5,854	6,325	6,462	6,326

Source: National Insurance Institute of Israel

The figures show that average economic income of Arab families was lower than that of Jewish families, regardless of whether the woman was working. This gap results from the lower compensation received by Arabs in the labor market, which might be due to a number of reasons, such as higher concentration of Arabs in occupations and sectors that pay relatively low wages. In families in which the woman does not work, the average income of an Arab family was 69 percent that of a Jewish family. In families in which the woman joined the workforce, average income in an Arab family was 73 percent that of a Jewish family. We see, therefore, a smaller gap in income in families in which the woman works compared with families in which the woman does not work.

The figures also show that Arab families are more dependent on transfer payments, which accounted for an average of 9 percent of the income of families in which the woman worked, compared with 7 percent in Jewish families in which the woman worked. Where the woman did not work, transfer payments accounted for 26 percent of income in Arab families and 23 percent in Jewish families. This gap (the percentage transfer payments represented of total income), it should be noted, narrowed over the years.

In summary, the poverty and income figures teach us the following:

- The average Arab family's income from wages and capital (before governmental transfers) is less than that of Jewish families. The gap is less in families in which the woman works.
- Poverty has been much more severe among the Arab population than among the Jewish population. The gap in poverty rate between the two populations is more than twice as high in families in which the woman does not work.
- The likelihood a family will be under the poverty line in a family in which the woman works is 1/4 to 1/5 that of a family in which the woman does not work, in the Arab and Jewish populations, respectively.

-
- The contribution of government transfer and tax payments in reducing the poverty rate is less among the Arab population, a result of the more severe poverty of the Arab population.
 - Among the Jewish population, the poverty rate of children rose more sharply than that of families, while the opposite phenomenon occurred among the Arab population. This finding indicates that the reason for Arabs falling into the cycle of poverty is not a function of many children in the family.

The above findings illustrate the large contribution made by participation of Arab women in the labor market, both in reducing the poverty rate among the Arab population and in reducing the gap in the poverty indicators between Arabs and Jews. The low participation rate of Arab women has negative ramifications both for the economy and for the Arab population, particularly Arab women. Poverty that mostly strikes a specific group in society leads to waste of human capital and failure to utilize the potential in that group to increase national product. Therefore, it is important, not only for ethical reasons but also to advance economic objectives, to encourage Arab women to join the labor market and thereby reduce poverty among the Arab population. Encouragement of women to join the labor market and reduction of the economic and social gaps between Arabs and Jews will also improve the status of Arab women in society in general, and in Arab society in particular.

6. Poverty and Law

States have the responsibility to eliminate poverty among their citizens, out of concern for the human rights of the entire population. This responsibility is enshrined in international human rights and civil rights conventions and instruments.

Elimination of poverty requires guaranty of the social rights of the state's citizens. Social rights are primarily positive rights; that is, rights that obligate the state to act to realize them. As such, they differ from civil rights that impose a duty on the state to refrain from doing an act that violates these rights.

Ensuring social rights requires the state to allocate resources and thus entails the setting of budgetary priorities and decision-making by the executive authorities. As a result, the difficult question of the justiciability of social rights arises. This difficulty is connected both to the issue of separation of powers and to vagueness of the definition, dimensions, and boundaries of the social right. The principle "proper governmental act" requires that no governmental authority, the judicial authority included, interfere in the positive exercise of discretion of the governmental authority (relating to setting the priorities), so long as it does not deviate from the authority's power by law.

Nevertheless, courts in Israel have at times accepted petitions seeking to realize social rights, if only indirectly. The courts do so on grounds of protecting the principle that discrimination is forbidden and equality is demanded in the realization of social rights, on grounds that the state is obligated to act gradually to ensure realization of social rights, and on grounds of extremely unreasonable exercise of administrative discretion, and, in the case of legislative enactments, on grounds that the law does not meet the conditions of the limitations clause of the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty. In addition, the state is obligated to act to remove obstructions that prevent equal

access of vulnerable groups.

The state is required to intervene to ensure social rights also on the grounds of the principle of social justice, the pillar of which is substantive equality. The doctrine of substantive equality developed primarily in the sphere of discrimination against women as a group, and it rests primarily on recognition of the different nature of the group.

As presented in the preceding chapters of this report, the socioeconomic status of women in Israel in general, and of Arab women in particular, is affected by a long list of social factors, including employment, level of education, health, social status, economic variables and social variables, among them discrimination and inequality between men and women, biological variables, such as differences between the sexes, and also political considerations.

These factors affect, to various degrees, realization of social rights – the right to housing, the right to live in dignity, the right to equality of opportunity at work, the right to equal education, the right to social security, and so forth. Injury to these rights or breach of these rights is part of the puzzle that constitutes the poverty experience.

Poverty is a relevant consideration in law – both in shaping the legal rule and in interpreting it in the judicial proceeding. For interpretation to bring about a reduction of gaps between the “haves” and the “have nots,” it is necessary to prefer the interpretation that promotes the narrowing of gaps, in accordance with the general principle whereby preference is to be given to an interpretation that fulfills the principle of equality.¹²

As stated above, the legal system in Israel deals with the question of poverty in the context of inequality, the primary argument being that, in addition to the harm created by inequality in social justice and in benefiting from economic growth, poverty also contributes to creation of absolute poverty. For this reason, Israel has enacted a few statutes in an effort to cope with situations of inequality that lack of means can cause. Relevant in this regard

12 Netta Ziv, “Poverty, Reduction of Gaps and Equality,” *supra*.

is welfare legislation – national-insurance allotments, guaranteed-income payments, and so forth. In this situation, the objective of the legal system is to improve the condition of poor people, in an attempt to close the gaps created by inequality.

The legal system also intervenes by means of review of decisions of state authorities related to budget allocations affecting various spheres of wellbeing – health, protected tenants, education, and division of public resources. The courts interfere infrequently, out of concern for the principle of separation of powers. The few cases in which they do interfere involve claims of discrimination allegedly involving infringement of the right to equality, as the term is defined in administrative law or constitutional law.¹³

International bodies, too, have often dealt with the question of protection of social rights, among them the right to education, the right to housing, the right to live in dignity, the right to social security, the right to fair conditions at work, and so forth. They have also intervened, in striving to attain social welfare, in cases in which states are obligated to act to protect these rights.

Below we describe the principal international instruments and conventions that seek to establish equality, primarily gender equality, with the objective of achieving social welfare and justice. It should be noted there is no specific international convention having the objective of eliminating poverty; however, there are instruments that speak of eliminating poverty as a tool for achieving equality between men and women in order to ensure social justice.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948

The Universal Declaration establishes a standard that all countries in the world should strive to achieve. Based on principles of dignity and equality

13 See HCJ 240/98, *Adalah v. Minister of Religious Affairs*, P. D. 52(5) 167; HCJ 2814/97, *High Follow-up Committee on Matters of Arab Education in Israel v. Ministry of Education*, P. D. 54(3) 233. See, also, articles of Yoram Rabin and Michal Lutzky Arad, “Continuing Budgetary Discrimination of the Arab Sector,” *Hamishpat* (5761 – 2001) 42, in which the authors survey the rulings of the Supreme Court in cases claiming budgetary discrimination against the Arab population in diverse budgetary allocations.

as universal rights, it enshrines a few social rights: in article 22, the right to social security; in article 23, the right to work; in article 25, the right to an adequate standard of living, health and wellbeing, housing, and necessary social services; in article 26, the right to education, The Universal Declaration also states, in article 2, the prohibition on discrimination.

The Universal Declaration provided the basis for two of the most important international conventions, both dating from 1966 – the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which enshrined a large number of social rights, such as the right to work that provides a decent living, the right to health, the right to education, and primarily, the right to equality.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966

Article 3 requires the state-parties to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the Covenant.

Articles 6 and 7 recognize the right to work and the right to the enjoyment of just and favorable conditions of work, including fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value without distinction, especially on grounds of gender, and equal opportunities to work and to be promoted at work.

Article 11 enshrines the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing, and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The article emphasizes the need for the state-parties to take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right.

Article 11.2 recognizes the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, and prescribes that the states shall cooperate among themselves to take measures to achieve this objective.

Article 12 prescribes the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

Article 13 recognizes the right of everyone to education, including the right to

secondary education, including technical and vocational secondary education.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966

Article 3 enshrines the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all the rights set forth in the Covenant.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Article 5 relates to the right to the enjoyment of all social rights without discrimination.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979

This Convention establishes the principal normative framework for the human rights of women. Israel ratified the Convention in 1991.

The preamble to the Convention states that, in the social reality in which women are discriminated against in various spheres of life – social, political and economic, and also in the family circle – women suffer greater harm in the situation of shortage and poverty, and an orderly system of justice and fairness will contribute in promoting equality between men and women. Based on these declarations, a list of rights warranting protection was established, with the intent to enshrine the rights of women and to strive for viable equality.

The preamble states, inter alia:

Concerned that in situations of poverty women have the least access to food, health, education, training and opportunities for employment and other needs,

Convinced that the establishment of new international economic order based on equity and justice will contribute significantly towards the promotion of equality between men and women.

The Convention's provisions do not deal explicitly with the issue of poverty. However, the UN Commission on the Status of Women, operating under article 17, adopted, at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, held in 1995, the "Beijing Platform for Action" as a basis for implementing the

Convention. The Platform for Action emphasizes that the makers of economic policy of the various states are not aware of the different effects economic policy has on women and men. It also directs attention to methods of analysis that take into account the differences between men and women in broad areas of policy and programs, especially with respect to strategies to eradicate poverty among women. Toward this end, the Platform for Action states, it is necessary to ensure that women and men receive equal opportunities to fully participate in planning economic policy and strategies to eliminate poverty. Change in economic structure is necessary to ensure that women have equal opportunities and access to public resources and services.

The point of departure of the Platform for Action is that poverty is a multifaceted problem, including shortage of resources and income, hunger and malnutrition, disease, restrictions and inability to obtain education and other basic services, discrimination and social exclusion. The problem also involves denial of participation in decision-making in civic, social, and cultural life. The Platform for Action demands that all governments guarantee women's rights, among them the right to suitable and modern education that comports with labor-market needs, professional training appropriate for the labor markets, the right to work, the right to housing, the right to health, and the right to transportation.

Section 35 of the Platform for Action specifically states the need to:

Ensure women's equal access to economic resources including land, credit, science and technology, vocational training, information, communication and markets, as a means to further the advancement and empowerment of women and girls, including through the enhancement of their capacities to enjoy the benefits of equal access to these resources, inter alia, by means of international cooperation.