



Women in the Labor Force Of the Israeli Welfare State

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Introduction

In Israel today, women constitute a major portion of the labor force - 45.2% in 1999, compared with 29.7% in 1970, only three decades earlier.

The largest employer of women in Israel is the government: Almost half the women who work are employed by the government, either directly or indirectly.

Women employed by the government are largely concentrated in education, health, and social services. Few women work in the defense or business activities of the state.

Education, health, and social services are the main components of what is called a "welfare state" - services that western governments began to provide its citizens at the end of the 19th century. Western countries greatly expanded these welfare services following World War II. To a large extent, this increase was based on the employment of women, especially educated women from the urban middle class.

For western women, social services provided by the state were the main entrée into the labor force - at an unprecedented rate following the industrial revolution. Prior to industrialization, women had been full partners in agricultural work in agrarian societies; they continued this level of involvement in societies that remained agrarian even after the industrial revolution. In the west, the industrial revolution drew families from rural areas into the city, but the tendency was to hire men, even though the early industries were largely dependent on the labor of women. As a result, women, especially from the middle class, moved from farmstead to homestead. The urban women who entered the labor force came primarily from the poorest members of the working class.

In formerly Communist countries, intensive industrialization - from the end of the nineteenth and through the twentieth centuries - led to the employment of both men and women: Women found themselves in a wide variety of jobs in industry, agriculture, and public services. Even today, ten years after the fall of the Communist regimes, the proportion of women in the labor force remains higher in these countries than in the west.

The entry of women into the labor force, whether in the service of the welfare state or the production line, was accompanied by expectations of far-reaching change in the status of women. These expectations were especially high in western countries, where women's movements at the beginning of the twentieth century advocated for equal rights, and feminist movements in the last decades of the century aspired to even more profound change. Despite significant positive developments, many social barriers between women and men still exist. Some of these barriers are drawn from the patterns of women's participation in the labor force:

First, women are not treated equally in the labor force: All countries treat women and men differently - in ranking, wages, promotions, terms of employment, and severance rights. This is true even for well-educated women, and even in countries having a broad consensus about social-democratic values, such as Sweden.

Second, women in the labor force continue to carry the full burden of responsibility for their households. Despite this fact, household work is still not perceived to be productive labor, not calculated into the Gross National Product, and generally not taken into account for matters of taxation or division of property between a couple.

Third, women in the labor force continue to be the primary caretakers of dependent members of the household - children, the elderly, the infirm. The work involved in this care, like household work, is also not perceived to be productive labor nor calculated into the Gross National Product, and is generally not taken into account for matters of taxation or division of property between a couple.

Fourth, increased participation in the labor force does not generally provide women with financial independence. A woman's wages are often considered a family's "extra income", while the man is considered the primary wage earner. As a result, women continue to be dependent upon the family - on their husbands, to be precise - as their source of livelihood.

The above holds true not only in the labor market at large, but also for public sector employment, including the labor force of the welfare state. The following will show how the welfare state provides women with employment conditions that are better than most other sectors of the economy. Yet, labor conditions even for employees of the state welfare services have a long way to go before eradicating the barriers between women and men.

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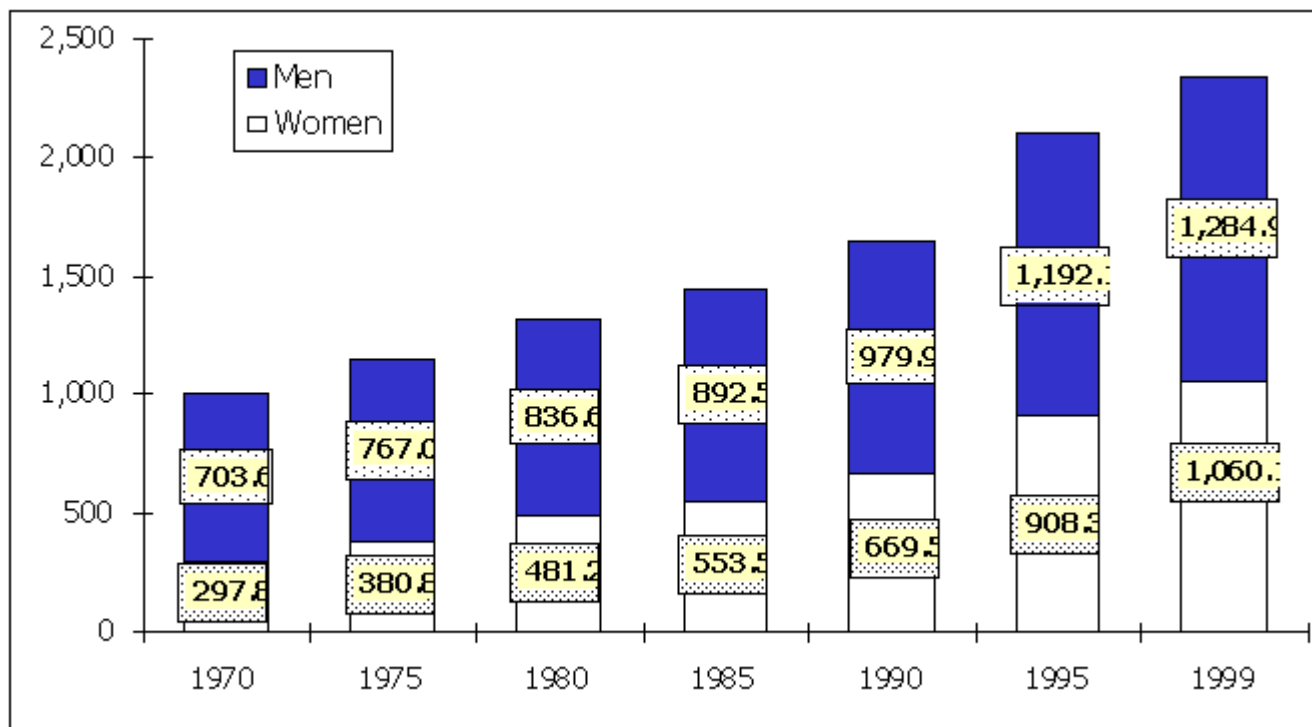
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Women in the Israeli Labor Force 1970-1999

Between 1970 and 1999, the civilian labor force in Israel grew by a factor of 2.3 - from 1,001,400 to 2,345,100. During this same period, the number of women in the civilian labor force increased by a factor of 3.6 - from 297,800 to 1,060,100.

Figure 1. Civilian labor force by gender, 1970-1999
in thousands



Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years.

The proportion of women in the labor force is higher in most western countries than in Israel

Although the proportion of Israeli women participating in the labor force is on the increase - and much higher today than even one generation ago - it is still low compared to that in many western countries. The proportion of men in the labor force is also lower in Israel than in most western countries.

**Table 1. Participation in the labor force of persons aged 15-64
by gender, in OECD countries and Israel, 1999**

by ascending order for women

Country	Men	Women
Turkey	77.9	34.4
Mexico	86.4	40.7
Italy	73.7	45.6
Greece	77.1	48.5
Spain	78.3	49.9
Luxemburg	75.7	50.2
Korea	77.1	50.8
Hungary	67.8	52.3
Ireland	78.3	54.3
Israel	67.1	55.0
Belgium	73.0	56.0
Japan	85.3	59.5
Poland	72.8	59.7
France	74.4	61.3
Germany	79.7	62.3
Austria	80.5	62.7
Portugal	78.7	62.8
Czech Republic	80.2	64.1
Holland	82.6	64.4

Australia	82.7	64.5
New Zealand	83.2	67.4
Britain	84.1	68.4
Canada	82.0	69.8
United States	84.0	70.7
Finland	75.9	71.2
Switzerland	89.6	74.5
Sweden	80.9	76.0
Denmark	85.0	76.1
Norway	85.0	76.1
Iceland	89.4	82.3
<i>European Union</i>	<i>78.4</i>	<i>59.5</i>
<i>OECD - Europe only</i>	<i>78.4</i>	<i>56.6</i>
<i>OECD - Total</i>	<i>81.5</i>	<i>59.5</i>
Notes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data are for ages 15-64, although Israeli data presented earlier in this paper were for ages 15+. To ensure comparability, data for Israel used in this table are for ages 15-64 only. 2. Data for Greece and Poland are from 1998. 3. OECD is the Organization for Economic Cooperation, founded in 1960 to foster development and economic stability in the west. In June 2000 the OECD included 29 countries, most in North America and western Europe. <p>Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from OECD <i>Employment Outlook 2000</i>, Table B, pp. 204-5.</p>		

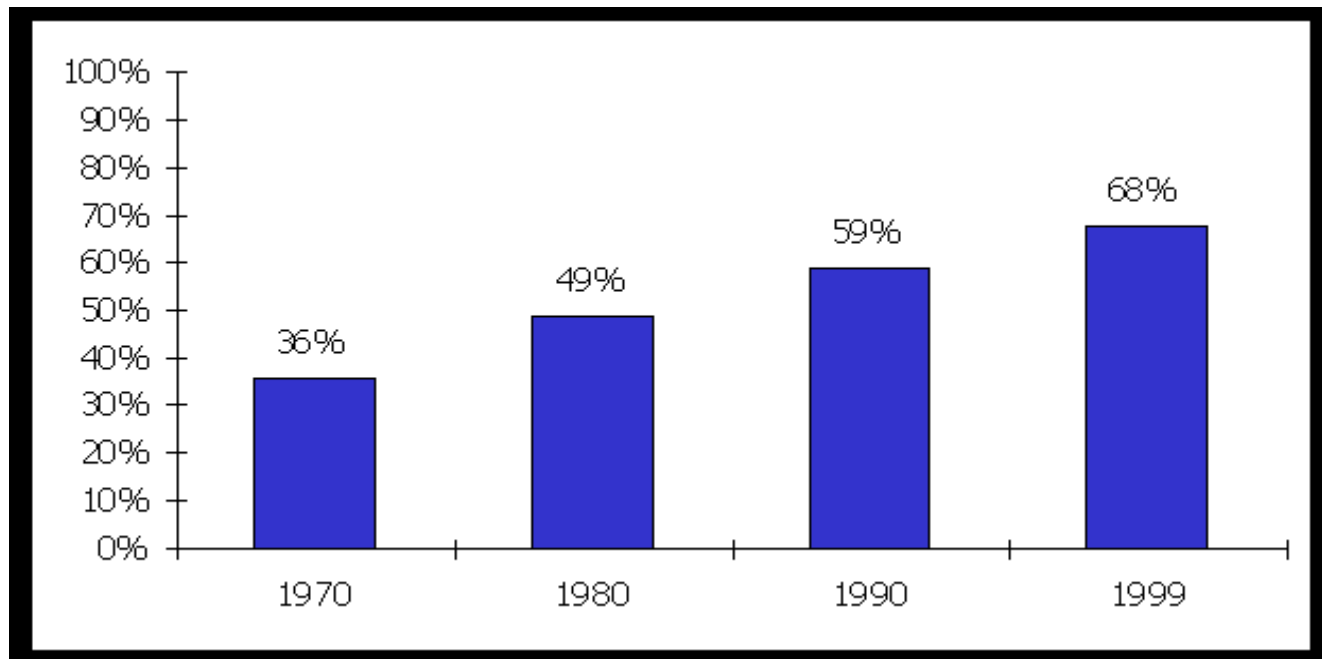
During the primary working years - ages 25 to 54 - two-thirds of Israeli women participate in the civilian labor force

So far, we have been referring to women 15 years old and over (and 15-64 in the previous table). Clearly, however, the prime working years are usually shorter: At age 15-24, most people are still in school, and at age 60 and over, many are leaving jobs.

The most significant working years are 25-54. Within this age group, 68% of Israeli women participate in the labor force (1999).

It can also be seen that during the decade 1970-1980, approximately 13% of all women aged 25-54 entered the labor force, and an additional 10% joined during each of the following two decades.

Figure 2. Participation of women aged 25-54 in the civilian labor force, 1970-1999



Note: Age groups in 1970 are 18-34 and 35-54.

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years.

Women's participation in the labor force during the primary working years, ages 25-54, is higher in most western countries than in Israel

In most western European countries, the proportion of women working at ages 25 to 54 is higher than in Israel. The only countries of the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation) in which participation in the labor force is lower than in Israel are countries outside Europe or in southern Europe.

Table 2. Participation of women aged 25-54 in the labor force in OECD countries and Israel, 1999

in ascending order

Country	Women
Turkey	32.9
Mexico	44.8
Korea	56.6
Italy	57.3
Greece	59.9
Spain	60.2
Luxemburg	62.0
Ireland	63.1
Japan	66.4
<i>Israel</i>	<i>68.0</i>
Australia	69.5
Hungary	70.0
Holland	72.4
Belgium	72.9
New Zealand	73.5
Germany	75.7
Portugal	75.7
Britain	75.8

Austria	76.3
Poland	76.5
United States	76.8
Switzerland	77.6
Canada	78.2
France	78.4
Czech Republic	82.0
Norway	83.2
Denmark	83.5
Finland	84.8
Sweden	85.7
Iceland	87.0
<i>European Union</i>	<i>71.7</i>
<i>OECD - Europe only</i>	<i>67.2</i>
<i>OECD - Total</i>	<i>67.8</i>
<p>Note: Data for Greece and Poland are from 1998.</p> <p>Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from OECD <i>Employment Outlook 2000</i>, Table C, pages 212-214.</p>	

Jewish and Arab women

Not all Israeli women participate equally in the labor force: There are proportionately many more Jewish than Arab women working at jobs outside the home.

The proportion of Arab women in the labor force has grown in the past thirty years, especially in the 25-44 age group. A very significant increase in employed women from this age group was recorded in the 1990s. Nevertheless, in none of the age groups are more than a third of Arab women working in the labor force.

Among Jewish women, the proportion of women in the labor force in the 25-54 age category ranges from 76% to 79%.

Table 3. Percentage of women in the labor force by age and ethnic group, 1970-1999

1999		1990		1980		1970		Year/ Age group
Arab women	Jewish women	Arab women	Jewish women	Arab women	Jewish women	Arab women	Jewish women	
--	9%	(3%)	11%	6%	12%	5%	20%	15-17 ¹
22%	52%	17%	45%	20%	44%	11%	43%	18-24
30%	76%	20%	67%	17%	58%			25-34
27%	79%	12%	70%	8%	57%	5%	36%	35-44
21%	76%	(5%)	62%	4%	46%			45-54
(7%)	39%	(3%)	33%	5%	28%	4%	23%	55-64
--	5%	(1%)	7%	1%	7%	--	(6%)	65+

Notes:

1. For the years 1970 and 1980, the age category was 14-17.
2. The civilian labor force of Arab women in 1970 and 1980 was calculated from CBS data.
3. Data given in parentheses have a high chance of sampling error.

The category used by the CBS is "Arabs and Others" and includes, especially during the past decade, Christians who are not Arab, but who immigrated from the former USSR.

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years.

There are major differences among Arab women from various religious groups. Christian Arabs have the highest proportion of women in the labor force - 42% of women aged 15 years or older. (Christian Arabs also have the highest proportion of men in the labor force among Arabs in general).

Muslim women have the lowest participation in the civilian labor force - only 13% of women aged 15 years or older work. Muslims comprise the largest category of Arab citizens of Israel.

The proportion of Druze women who are part of the civilian labor force is almost identical to that of Muslim women.

Table 4. Muslims, Christians, and Druze aged 15+ in the civilian labor force, by gender, 1999		
Percentages		
	Women	Men
Christians	42%	68%
Druze	15%	54%
Muslims	13%	64%
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, <i>Labor Force Surveys</i> 1999, Table 7.		

Ashkenazi and Mizrahi women

There are marked differences in the labor force participation of women from different Jewish groups, particularly Ashkenazi and Mizrahi women [see the following box].

The proportion of Ashkenazi and Mizrahi women in the labor force in 1970 was 38.4% and 35.4%, respectively.

In the ten years between 1970 and 1980, the Israeli welfare system grew and hired a large number of primarily middle-class and educated women. During this time, the proportion of Ashkenazi women in the labor force increased to 54.1%, and the proportion of Mizrahi women in the labor force rose to 40.2%.

Between 1980 and 1999, the proportion of Mizrahi women in the labor force rose rapidly; the proportion of Ashkenazi women in the labor force increased, but at a slower rate than in the previous decade. By 1999, the proportion of working women from the two groups was again similar - 64.4% of Mizrahi and 68.2% of Ashkenazi women were employed outside the home.

The participation of Mizrahi women in the labor force was accompanied throughout these last three decades by high unemployment levels. The unemployment rate for

Mizrahi women was double that of Ashkenazi women, except in the 1990s, when new immigrants from the former Soviet Union increased the ranks of unemployed Ashkenazi women.

Table 5. Israeli-born Jewish women aged 15 or over, by father's continent of birth civilian labor force participation, and unemployment rate, 1970-1999

Israeli-born women, father born in Europe or America	Israeli-born women, father born in Asia or Africa	
		1970
38.4%	35.4%	In the civilian labor force
5.0%	(11.6%)	Unemployed
		1980
54.1%	40.2%	In the civilian labor force
4.9%	12.3%	Unemployed
		1990
62.9%	51.4%	In the civilian labor force
7.8%	18.4%	Unemployed
		1999
68.2%	64.4%	In the civilian labor force
6.1%	12.0%	Unemployed
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, <i>Labor Force Surveys</i> , various years.		

Ashkenazi and Mizrahi women: The Central Bureau of Statistics does not publish data about the ethnic origin of those born in Israel whose fathers were also born in Israel. Therefore, the only data that allow us to accurately compare women from different ethnic groups are those for Jewish women born in Israel whose fathers (mothers are not included in CBS definitions) were born abroad. Hence "Ashkenazi women" refers here to Jewish women born in Israel whose fathers were born in Europe or one of the Americas; while "Mizrahi women" refers to Jewish women born in Israel whose fathers were born in Asia or Africa.

New immigrants

In 1999, 51% of women aged 15 and over who had immigrated to Israel after 1990 were part of the civilian labor force.

This figure is slightly higher than for the general population of women in Israel: In 1999, 47.3% of all Israeli women were in the civilian labor force.

On the other hand, the proportion of male immigrants in the labor force was identical to that of Israeli men in general - approximately 60.5%.

Table 6. Participation in the civilian labor force of persons aged 15 or more, among post-1990 immigrants and the general population, by gender, 1999

	Post-1990 immigrants	Total population
Men	60.5%	60.7%
Women	51.0%	47.3%

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys 1999*, Tables 1 and 86.

Today women work many more years than they did in the past

On average, Israeli women today spend more years in the labor force than they did in the past.

Many women today begin work at a later age because they are still pursuing their education. Once they enter the labor force, they work for more years than women did in the past.

During the course of one generation - between 1975 and 1999 - the proportion of employed women aged 15-17 dropped from 12% to 8%.

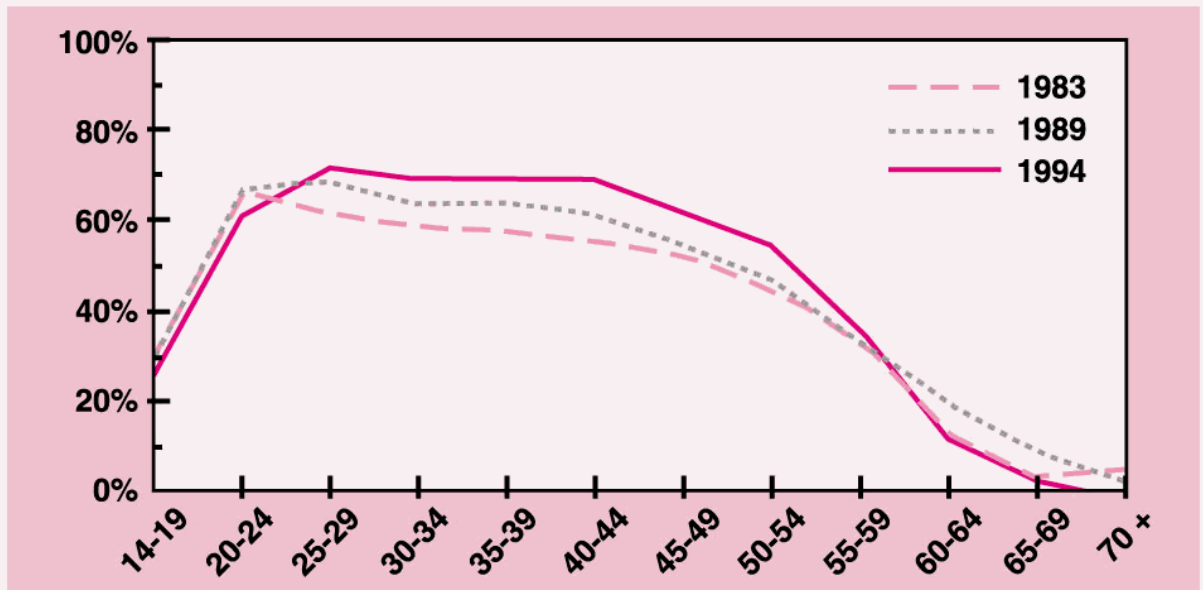
During that same period, the proportion of women aged 45-54 in the civilian labor force increased from 37% to 69%, while the proportion of those aged 55-64 increased from 22% to 35%.

Table 7. Women in the civilian labor force, by age group 1975-1999 percentages in each age group				
1999	1990	1980	1975	
8%	9%	11%	12%	15 - 17*
46%	38%	40%	41%	18 - 24
66%	58%	53%	44%	25 - 34
69%	63%	50%	41%	35 - 44
69%	54%	42%	37%	45 - 54
35%	30%	26%	22%	55 - 64
5%	7%	7%	5%	65+
Note: For 1975 and 1980, data were calculated for the age group 14-17. Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, Labor Force Surveys, various years.				

Also in Europe, women work more years than they did in the past

The figure below presents the data for countries of the European Union at three points in time - 1983, 1989, and 1994. It can be seen that in 1983, the proportion of women in the labor force was highest in the 20-24 age category, and decreased thereafter. In 1994, on the other hand, the proportion of women in the labor force remained high throughout ages 45-49, and only then began to drop off.

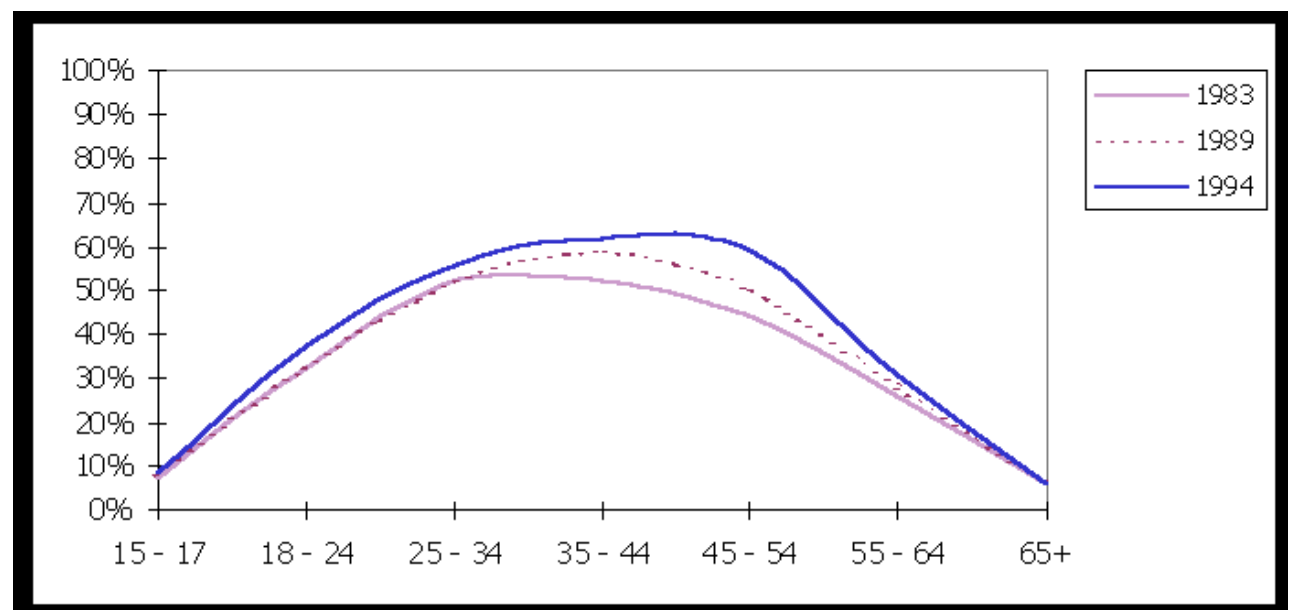
Figure 3 - Women in the labor force in EU countries, by age group: 1983, 1989 and 1994



Source: Rubery, Jill, Mark Smith and Colette Fagan. 1999. *Woman's Employment in Europe: Trends and Prospects*. London: Routledge, p.85.

The following figure presents comparable data for Israel in 1983, 1989, and 1994. In 1983, the proportion of women in the labor force was highest in the 25-34 age category, and dropped off thereafter. In 1994, however, the proportion of women in the labor force remains high throughout the 45-54 age group, and drops off only thereafter.

Figure 4. Women in the labor force in Israel, by age group, 1983, 1989, and 1994



Note: In 1983, the age category was 14-17.

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years.

Women work fewer months a year than men do

On average, women today work more years than in the past; within each year, however, working women spend fewer months at work than men do. This means that a relatively large number of women are employed in temporary or seasonal jobs.

In 1998, only 57% of employed women worked twelve months of the year. The other 43% worked for periods ranging between one and eleven months. Among men, the proportions are 62% and 38%, respectively.

The fields with the highest proportion of temporary employment among women were commerce - only 46% worked 12 months a year - and personal services - only 45% worked 12 months a year.

The fields with the lowest rates of temporary employment for women were public services and agriculture.

Among men as well, public services showed the highest proportion of men who worked 12 months a year. However, while 75% of the men in public services worked 12 months a year, this was true for only 65% the women in the same field of work.

Table 8. Persons employed, by field number of months worked per year and gender, 1998				
Women		Men		
12 months	1-11 months	12 months	1-11 months	
57%	43%	62%	38%	Total
65%	35%	69%	31%	Agriculture
59%	41%	70%	30%	Industry
62%	38%	68%	32%	Electricity and water
50%	50%	48%	52%	Construction
46%	54%	55%	45%	Commerce
58%	42%	66%	34%	Transport
54%	46%	55%	45%	Financing services
65%	35%	75%	25%	Public services
45%	55%	52%	48%	Personal services
61%	39%	72%	28%	Not known
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from the National Insurance Institute, <i>Wages and Income by Locality and Various Economic Variables, 1997-1998</i> , Survey 170, Jerusalem, 2000, Table 49.				

Women in management

Despite the increased participation of women in the labor force, the proportion of women in management positions is still significantly lower than men.

The most general data about management positions is drawn from the number of women in the occupation category "Managers."

The Central Bureau of Statistics categorizes Israeli wage-earners into nine occupation categories: (1) scientific and academic; (2) other professional, technical and related workers; (3) managers; (4) clerical workers; (5) sales workers; (6) service workers; (7) skilled agricultural workers; (8) skilled industrial workers, construction, etc.; and (9) other and unskilled workers.

The table below presents data for women and men in the category "administrators and managers." As evident, the proportion of women managers is significantly lower than male managers. However, the proportion of women in management positions has increased in the past three decades, from 0.7% to 3.4% - a higher growth rate than for men. Nevertheless, even today (1999), there are almost 2.5 times the number of men than women in management positions.

Table 9. Proportion of employees in management positions by gender, 1972 and 1999		
	1972	1999
Men	4.1%	8.6%
Women	0.7%	3.4%
<p>Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from:</p> <p>1972: CBS, <i>Statistical Abstract of Israel 1973</i>, No. 24, Table 12/1.</p> <p>1999: CBS, <i>Labor Force Surveys 1999</i>, Table 57.</p>		

Among all those employed in management in 1975, 7% were women; among all those employed in management in 1999, 25% were women (CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years).

Wage gaps between women and men, by field of work

Women's average monthly wage is 60% of men's.

Construction is the only field of work in which women's wages closely resemble those of men. This stems from a combination of two factors: men's wages in construction are generally low, and women in construction are usually employed in office jobs.

In agriculture as well as health, welfare, and social services, the average monthly wage of women is no more than 51% of men's wage.

The field of public administration stands out for its relatively even-handed treatment of men and women in regard to wages, much the same as in the fields of transport,

storage and communication, as well hotels and restaurants. The latter, however, is marked by exceptionally low wages for both men and women.

Table 10 - Gross average monthly wages for women as a percentage of the wages of men, by economic branch, 1985 and 1999

	1985	1999
Total	53%	60%
Agriculture	41%	48%
Industry	48%	59%
Electricity and water	71%	n/a
Construction	72%	79%
Vehicle sales and repairs	44%	56%
Hotels and restaurants		69%
Transport, storage, communication	52%	70%
Banking and insurance	50%	55%
Real estate, business services	N/a	57%
Public services (in 1999, public administration)	61%	67%
Education	N/a	60%
Health, welfare, social services	N/a	51%
Community services	N/a	56%
Household services	39%	n/a

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Income Survey 1999*, volume 4/2001, Table 2; *Income of Employees (Individuals)*, 1985, 1987, 1988, Publication 884, Table 2.

Among male and female industrial workers the wage gap is smaller in Europe than it is in Israel

In Israel in 1999, the average monthly wage of women employed in industry was 59% that of men.

In most European countries, the average wage of women is closer to that of men. The following data distinguish between production-line and office workers in industry.

In Sweden and Denmark, in particular, the wages of women on the industrial production line are similar to those of men.

Finally, the data show that the wage gap between men and women is larger among office workers, including management - presumably because men have higher positions.

Table 11. Wages of women production-line workers in industry as a percentage of the wages of male production-line workers, 1993

Bel-gium	Den-mark	West Germ.	Greece	Spain	France	Ire-land	Luxem-burg	Hol-land	Port-ugal	Britain	Fin-land	Swe-den
75.7	84.5	74.4	77.1	73.2	80.8	69.7	70.6	77.8	72.7	68.4	78.3	89.5

Source: Jill Rubery, Mark Smith and Colette Fagan, *Women's Employment in Europe: Trends and Prospects*. London, Routledge, 1999, p. 225.

Table 12. Wages of women office workers in industry as a percentage of the wages of male office workers, 1993

Belgium	West Germany	Greece	Spain	France	Luxembourg	Holland	Portugal	Britain
66.9	68.1	69.0	60.8	68.4	59.4	67.8	70.3	59.7

Source: Jill Rubery, Mark Smiand Colette Fagan, *Women's Employment in Europe: Trends and Prospects*. London, Routledge, 1999, p. 225.

Women and the Welfare State

The government is the single largest employer of women.

In the last generation, the government's role in employing women has increased:

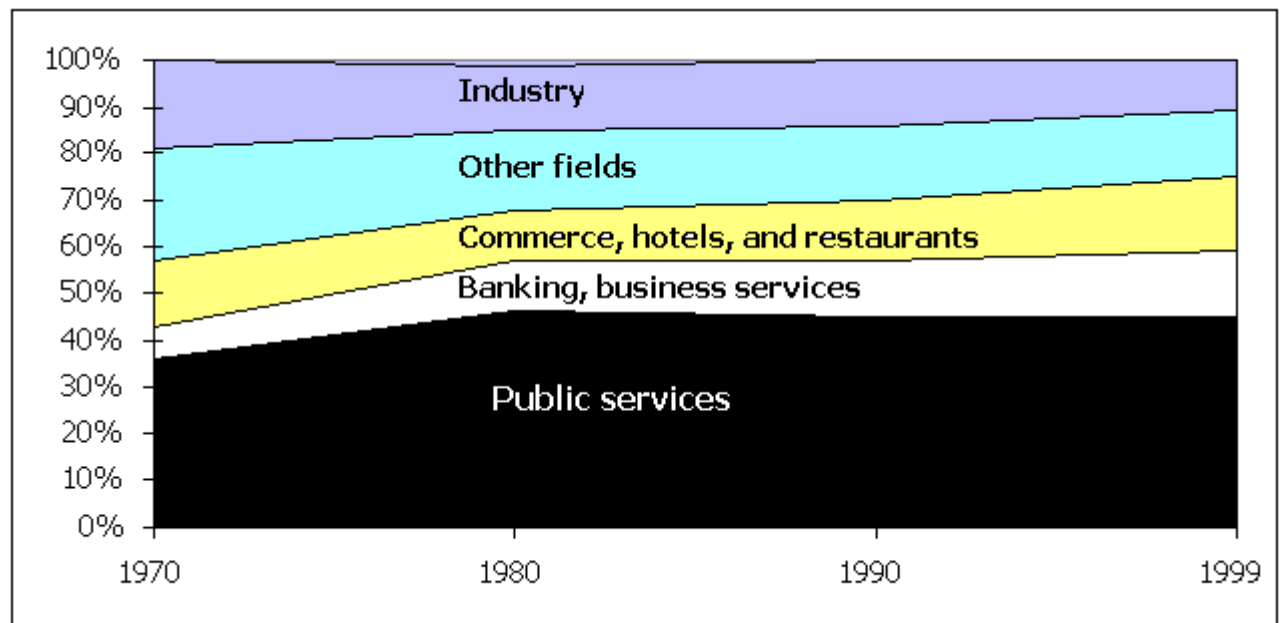
In 1970, 36.1% of all employed women worked in public services.

In 1999, 45% of all employed women worked in public services.

Between 1970 and 1999, the number of employed women working in public services increased by a factor of 4 - from 102,300 to 435,200.

Above all, these findings reflect, above all, the expansion of the welfare state in Israel during the past three decades.

Figure 5. Working women in Israel, by field of work, 1970-1999
percentage of working women in field



Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years.

Public Services

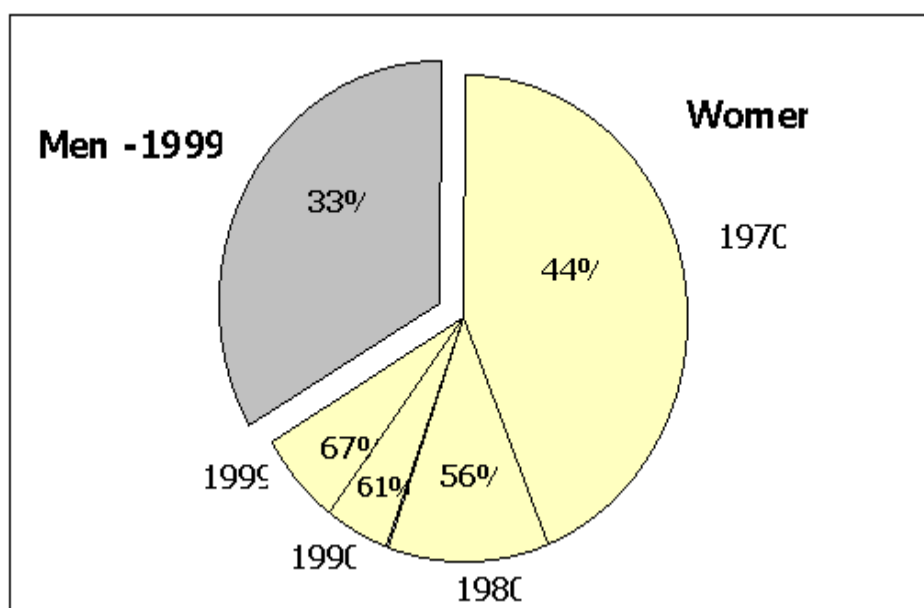
Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics publishes employment data for various fields. The field that represents the state apparatus is called "public services".

Public services include public administration (government ministries, local governments and institutions such as the Jewish Agency), the school system (education employees at all levels and under all forms of ownership), health services (health employees at all levels and under all forms of ownership), community and social services (community and social services workers at all levels and under all forms of ownership), and also persons working in the research and development sector of business services.

Women - the mainstay of the public services

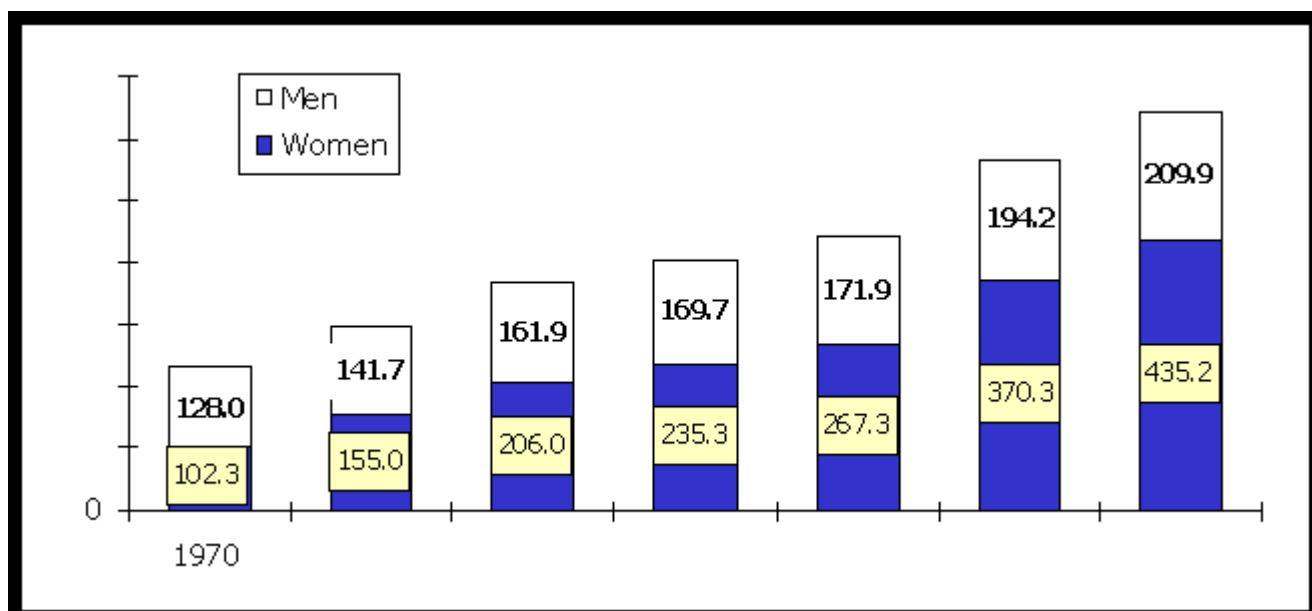
Between 1970 and 1999, the proportion of female public service employees rose from 44.4% to 67.4%. Today, women are the mainstay of the public services.

Figure 6. Public service employees, by gender, 1970-1999



Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years.

Figure 7. Employees in the public services, by gender, 1970-1999
in thousands



Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years.

Table 13. Women as a proportion of total public service employees

1999	1995	1990	1985	1980	1975	1970
67.4%	65.6%	60.9%	58.1%	56.0%	52.2%	44.4%
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, <i>Labor Force Surveys</i> , various years.						

Women are the mainstay of the public services in Western countries

The public services sector is based primarily on the work of women, not just in Israel but in western countries as well.

In most of the member countries of the OECD, women are over-represented in the service sector and under-represented in the production sectors. Within the service sector, the highest over-representation is in the public services (classified by the OECD as "social services"). In all but three countries of the OECD, the number of women employed in the public services is higher than the number of men.

**Table 14, Ratio of women to men in selected sectors
Israel and OECD countries, 1998**

by descending order in the social services column

Country	Production sector	Services sector	Thereof: Social services
Finland	0.36	1.46	3.48
Sweden	0.30	1.34	2.98
Denmark	0.34	1.23	2.44
Norway	0.26	1.26	2.25
Hungary	0.47	1.24	2.16
United States	0.33	1.17	2.09
Britain	0.28	1.16	2.07

Canada	0.37	1.15	1.98
Israel	0.29	1.12	1.98
Czech Republic	0.45	1.23	1.97
Australia	0.29	1.04	1.84
OECD (average)	0.35	1.04	1.77
Portugal	0.57	1.15	1.75
Germany	0.33	1.20	1.67
Belgium	0.25	1.02	1.66
Ireland	0.25	1.07	1.65
Austria	0.35	1.18	1.62
France	0.34	1.14	1.62
Switzerland	0.33	1.09	1.58
Holland	0.24	0.96	1.50
Spain	0.22	0.86	1.21
Italy	0.34	0.76	1.15
Greece	0.42	0.74	1.08
Mexico	0.28	0.76	1.00
Luxemburg	0.15	0.84	0.98
New Zealand	0.35	1.18	0.86
Japan	0.45	0.82	n/a
Korea	0.50	0.83	n/a
Turkey	0.54	0.12	n/a

Notes:

Production sector: Agriculture; mining and quarrying; industry; electricity, gas, and water; and construction.

Services sector: *Services for production:* business and financial services, insurance, and real estate; commercial services, transport and communication; *Personal services:* hotels, restaurants, leisure and culture services, household services; *Social services:* government services, civil or military; *Health services;* *Education services;* *Various social services.*

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from *OECD Employment Outlook 2000*, Tables 3-4, p. 94; CBS, *Labor Force Surveys 1998*, Publication 1004, Table 28, 158-159.

Public services - women's gateway to the labor force

Over the past three decades, about half the women who entered the civilian labor force began work in the public services.

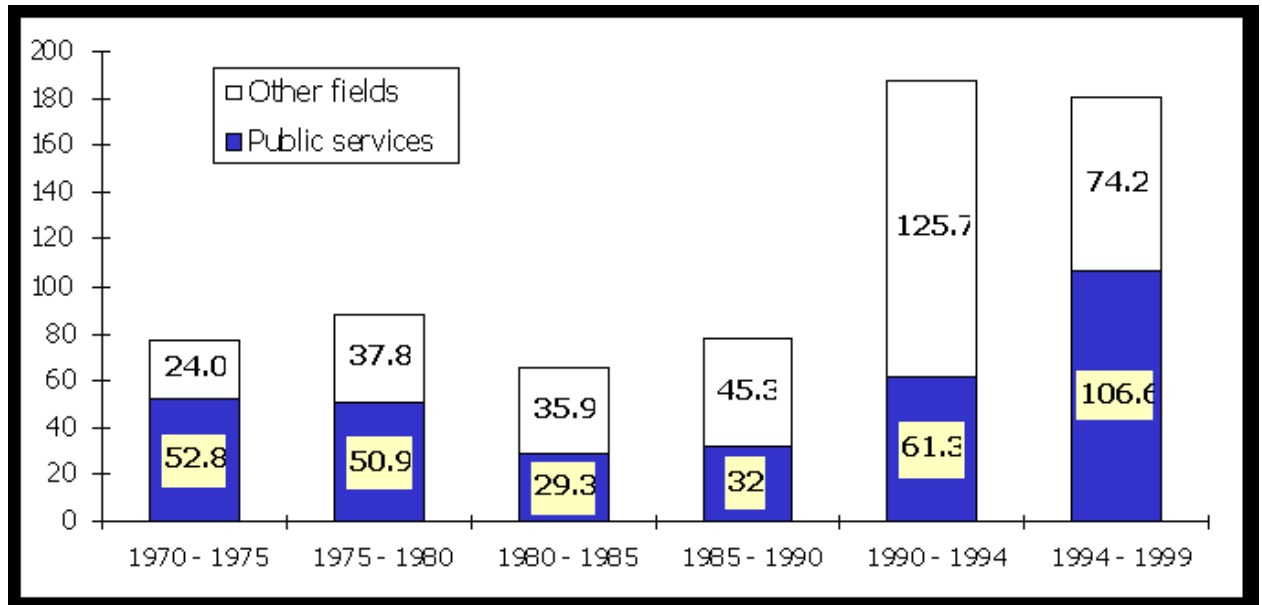
In the 1970s, most women who joined the labor force found themselves in the public services; as noted, the 1970s saw major growth in the Israeli welfare state.

The 1980s, however, were marked by a halt in growth and by budget cuts, especially in services such as the school system, which employs a great many women. Although many women who joined the civilian labor force still opted for the public services, most were absorbed into other fields of work.

In the first part of the 1990s, the number of women who joined the labor force increased, due primarily to the large waves of immigration. This was a period of intense economic growth, and twice as many women entered public service professions as did in the second half of the 1980s; nevertheless, most of the new women in the work force went to other sectors of the economy. When economic growth stagnated in the second half of the

1990s, most new recruits to the labor force were absorbed by the public service sector.

**Figure 8. New hirings of women in the public services
and other fields, 1970-1999**
thousands



Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years.

Women in the public services, by ethnicity

Public services constitute the main source of employment for middle class women in Israel and in other parts of the world.

In Israel, this can be seen by comparing women from various ethnic groups. After the establishment of the state of Israel, in the 1950s and 60s, middle class, primarily Ashkenazi women, were the first to join the public service work force.

Large numbers of Mizrahi women joined the work force in the 1970s and, more so, in the 1980s. During the 1980s and 1990s, the number of Arab women in public services increased.

These trends can be seen in data from the census polls of 1972, 1983, and 1995. To compare ethnic groups within the population of Jewish women, we focused on the first generation born in Israel (Almost all Arab women are born in Israel). The category of first generation Israeli-born is the only one that allows for accurate comparison across ethnic groups, as the Central Bureau of Statistics does not publish ethnic data for persons born in Israel whose parents were also born in Israel.

The 1972 census found that most of the women born in Israel who were employed in the public services were Ashkenazi (i.e., Israeli-born Jewish women whose fathers

were born in Europe or the Americas). They constituted the absolute majority (71%) of all Israeli-born women employed in public services (Table 16). About half of all the Israeli-born, Jewish women of Ashkenazi origin who were employed that year worked in the public services (Table 15).

Israeli-born Mizrahi women (i.e., fathers born in Asia or Africa) constituted only 21% of all those born in Israel and employed in the public services (Table 16). Among all the Israeli-born, Mizrahi women employed that year, only 25% worked in the public services (Table 15).

Arab-Israeli women constituted only 7.2% of all Israeli-born women employed in the public services (Table 16). Of all the Arab women employed that year, about one third worked in the public services - proportionately more than Mizrahi women. This reflects the scarcity of employment opportunities available to Arab women: Public service was among the few types of employment available to them.

The 1983 census found a drop in the dominance of Israeli-born, Ashkenazi women working in the public services, from 71.4% to 55.7%. At the same time, the proportion of Israeli-born, Mizrahi women increased, from 21.4% to 35.4%. In addition, among all the Mizrahi women employed that year, those working in the public services rose from 25% to 37%; among Ashkenazi and Arab women, the proportion of those working in public services barely changed.

The 1995 census found that Israeli-born Mizrahi women had become the largest group of Israeli-born women employed in the public services - 44.7% of all native-born Israeli women working in this sector. The relative number of Arab women increased, from 8.9% to 13.6%. In contrast, the proportion of Ashkenazi women declined: In 1995, only 45% of them worked in public service, and these comprised only 41.7% of all the women employed in the sector.

Table 15. Israeli-born women employed in public services by ethnicity, 1972, 1983, and 1995			
	1972	1983	1995
Total Israeli-born women in public services	45,920	104,165	184,640
<i>Ashkenazi Women</i>			
% employed in public services	49%	51%	45%
Number employed in public services	32,785	58,040	76,930
<i>Mizrahi Women</i>			
% employed in public services	25%	37%	35%

Number employed in public services	9,845	36,825	82,510
<i>Arab Women</i>			
% employed in public services	34%	36%	37%
Number employed in public services	3,290	9,300	25,200
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, <i>Labor Force Surveys</i> , Publications of the Census of Population and Housing 1972, No. 14, Table 8; Publications of the Census of Population and Housing 1983, No. 13, Table 8; analysis of data from the geography volume of the Census of Population and Housing 1995.			

Table 16. Israeli-born women employed in public services by ethnicity, 1972, 1983, and 1995

percentages

	1972	1983	1995
Ashkenazi women as a percentage of all Israeli-born women employed in public services	71.4%	55.7%	41.7%
Mizrahi women as a percentage of all Israeli-born women employed in public services	21.4%	35.4%	44.7%
Arab women as a percentage of all Israeli-born women employed in public services	7.2%	8.9%	13.6%

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, Publications of the Census of Population and Housing 1972, No. 14, Table 8; Publications of the Census of Population and Housing 1983, No. 13, Table 8; analysis of data from the geography volume of the Census of Population and Housing 1995.

The education of Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, and Arab women in public service

University-educated

The public services constitute the single largest employer of educated Israeli women. This fact alone supports our assertion that public services provided in the past and continue to provide women, especially those from the middle class, with an entryway to the labor force.

This is true for each ethnic group in Israel. However, the importance of public services as an employer of educated women is in decline.

The 1972 census indicated that the public services employed 77% of university-educated (16+ years of schooling), Ashkenazi women born in Israel, 73% of university-educated Mizrahi women, and 71% of university-educated Arab women.

The 1983 census showed almost identical proportions: 71% of university-educated Ashkenazi women, 73% of university-educated Mizrahi women, and 73% of university-educated Arab women.

The 1995 census revealed a change as the proportion of university-educated women working in the public services declined in all three groups: 63% of university-educated Ashkenazi women, 58% of university-educated Mizrahi women, and 60% of university-educated Arab women.

Underlying the similarity in percentages, however, are absolute numbers that reveal large disparities among the three groups in everything having to do with the level of education:

In 1972, the public services employed 6,680 Ashkenazi women with 16+ years of education, but only 345 Mizrahi women and 120 Arab women with the same level of education.

In 1983, although the number of women with 16+ years of education employed in the public services increased greatly in all three groups, the gaps remained significant - 19,960 Ashkenazi women, 4,095 Mizrahi women, and 1,185 Arab women.

In 1995, education gaps between women from the three groups continued to decline: The number of university-educated, Ashkenazi women employed in public services increased by a factor of 1.6 to 31,375; the number of university-educated Mizrahi women increased by 3.7 to 15,145; and the number of university-educated Arab women increased by 4.9 to 5,820.

Complete or partial high school education

While the largest group of Ashkenazi women employed in the public services are those with 16 or more years of schooling, the largest group of Mizrahi women in the public services are those with complete or partial high-school education (9 to 12 years of schooling). Most of these Mizrahi women began working in public services between the 1983 and 1995 census.

From these data, it is evident that while Ashkenazi women constitute a clear majority of professional women in public service, Mizrahi women constitute a decisive majority of those employed as clerks or administrators.

Among Arab women employed in the public services, about a third have 9-12 years of school, another third 13-15 years of schooling, and about a quarter 16 years or more.

Table 17. Women employed in the public services, by years of schooling and ethnicity, 1972, 1983, and 1995

Years of schooling	Number employed in public services			Percent of public service employees, by education level			Within each education level, percent employed in public services		
	1972	1983	1995	1972	1983	1995	1972	1983	1995
<i>Israeli-born Ashkenazi Women</i>									
<i>Total</i>	32,785	58,040	76,925						
0-8	435	590	760	1%	1%	1%	16%	28%	24%
9-12	9,665	13,340	18,825	29%	23%	24%	31%	30%	29%
13-15	15,770	24,150	25,965	48%	42%	34%	70%	60%	49%
16+	6,680	19,960	31,375	20%	34%	41%	77%	71%	63%
<i>Israeli-born Mizrahi Women</i>									
<i>Total</i>	9,845	36,825	82,510						
0-8	1,600	2,410	3,755	16%	7%	5%	14%	25%	32%
9-12	5,270	18,970	40,795	54%	52%	49%	24%	28%	28%
13-15	2,575	11,350	22,815	26%	31%	28%	73%	64%	45%
16+	345	4,095	15,145	4%	11%	18%	73%	73%	58%
<i>Arab Women</i>									
<i>Total</i>	3,290	9,300	25,200						
0-8	545	1,265	2,125	17%	14%	8%	11%	12%	19%
9-12	1,780	3,365	8,375	54%	36%	33%	60%	39%	29%
13-15	795	3,485	8,880	24%	37%	35%	81%	76%	50%

16+	120	1,185	5,820	4%	13%	23%	71%	73%	60%
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, <i>Labor Force Surveys</i> , Publications of the Census of Population and Housing 1972, No. 14, Table 8; Publications of the Census of Population and Housing 1983, No. 13, Table 8; analysis of data from the geography volume of the Census of Population and Housing 1995.									

New immigrant women

Women who arrived in Israel in the 1990s immigration wave participate in the civilian labor force in higher proportion than the general population of women aged 15 and over - 51.0% compared with 47.3% (in 1999).

For new immigrant women, as for other Israeli women, the public services are the single largest employer, albeit at a lower proportion than for Israeli women in general.

In 1999, the public services employed 36% of all women who immigrated to Israel after 1990 - compared with 45.3% of Israeli women in general.

In contrast, the proportion of immigrant women employed in industry is higher than of Israeli women in general - 20%, compared with 11%.

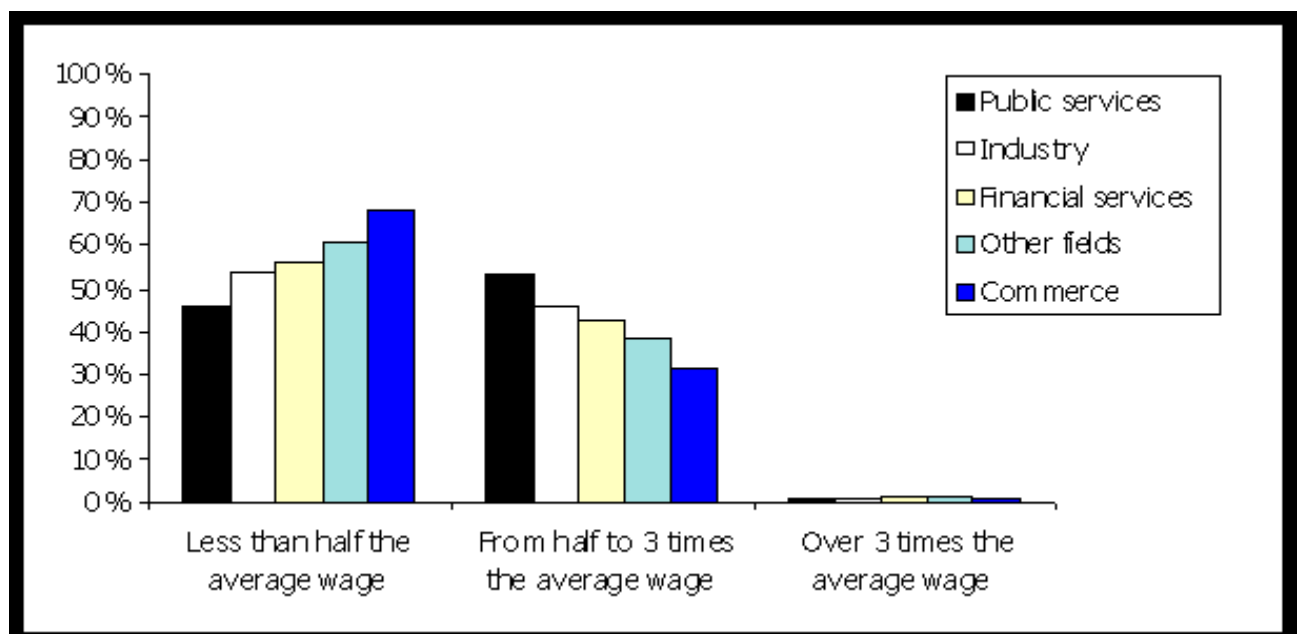
Table 18. Women immigrants (post-1990) aged 15+ in the civilian labor force, by economic branch, 1999	
In the civilian labor force	51%
Unemployed	12%
<i>Employed, by economic branch</i>	
Public services	36%
Industry	19%
Commerce, vehicle repair, hotels	20%
Banking and insurance, business services	12%
Other branches	12%
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, <i>Labor Force Surveys 1999</i> , Tables 3 and 86.	

Women's wages in public service is higher than in other fields of the economy

The public services pay higher wages to women than other branches of the economy.

In the public services, the proportion of women who earn between half and three times the average wage is higher than in other branches, while the proportion of women who earn less than half the average wage is lower than in all the other economic branches.

Figure 9. Distribution of employed women by field and wage categories, 1998
annual average, in percentages



Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from the National Insurance Institute, *Average Wages and Income by Locality and Various Economic Variables*, Survey No. 170, Table 46, October 2000.

In the public services, 1.7 times fewer men than women earn less than half the average wage, while 11 times more men than women earn over three times the average wage.

The wages earned by women in the public services, though higher on average than the wages they earn elsewhere, are still insufficient to accord women a strong, independent status. This becomes clear upon comparison with the wages of women and men in the public service.

For women, the highest wages are paid in public services. For men, on the other hand, industry is the best paying economic branch: Approximately two-thirds of the men in industry earn between half and three times the average wage, and 6.1% earn more than three times the average wage.

Women's wages are significantly lower than men's wages in all areas of the public service

In 1999, the average monthly wage of men in the public services was NIS 8,515; the average monthly wage of women in the public services was NIS 4,836.

Data from different categories:

In public administration - NIS 9,666 for men, NIS 6,490 for women.

In education - NIS 8,062 for men, NIS 4,866 for women.

In health, welfare, and social services - NIS 8,610 for men, NIS 4,430 for women.

In community, social, and personal services - NIS 6,805 for men, NIS 3,829 for women.

In 1999, the average hourly wage of men in the public services was NIS 46.90; the average hourly wage of women in public services was NIS 36.30.

Data from subgroups:

In public administration - NIS 47.60 for men, NIS 38.70 for women.

In education - NIS 51.40 for men, NIS 39.40 for women.

In health, welfare, and social services - NIS 46.20 for men, NIS 32.70 for women.

In community, social, and personal services - NIS 38.90 for men, NIS 29.90 for women.

Table 19. Gross income in public service subgroups by gender, 1999 in NIS at constant 2000 prices						
			Average income in public services, by subgroup:			
	Average income - total population	Average income - public services	Public administration	Education	Health, welfare, and social services	Community, social and personal services
Men						
Average gross monthly income	7,833	8,515	9,666	8,062	8,610	6,805
Average gross hourly income	40.5	46.9	47.6	51.4	46.2	38.9
Women						
Average gross monthly income	4,714	4,836	6,490	4,866	4,430	3,829
Average gross hourly income	32.6	36.3	38.7	39.4	32.7	29.9
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, <i>Income Surveys 1999</i> , Volume 4/2001.						

It should be noted that information about wages in the public sector is not available to the public. Although the information is on file in the Wage Department of the Finance Ministry as well as the Civil Service Commission, neither makes this detailed

information available on a regular basis. Therefore, we present only data culled from the income surveys of the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Public services - the main employer of educated women

In Israel, as in western countries, public services are the main employer of university-educated women (16+ years of schooling).

In 1999, 66% of all Israeli women with a university education were employed in the public services - 159,400 out of 241,800 women.

Table 20. Employed women with 16+ years of education by economic branch, 1980-1999			
	1980	1990	1999
Total	56,900	105,400	241,800
Public services	43,400	75,800	159,400
Industry	2,300	6,100	18,000
Commerce and hotel services	1,800	4,200	15,400
Financial and business services	5,500	11,500	33,000
Other branches	3,900	7,800	16,000
<p>Note: Other branches include: agriculture, electricity and water, construction, transport, storage and communication, household services by individuals, and personal and social services.</p> <p>Public services include those employed in research and development from the business services and some employees in community and social services (see appendix for redefinition of category).</p> <p>Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, <i>Labor Force Surveys 1980</i>, 1980, Table 46; <i>Labor Force Surveys 1990</i>, Table 39; <i>Labor Force Surveys 1999</i>, Table 39; data for 1999 were submitted by Ms. Ruth Skheik, Central Bureau of Statistics</p>			

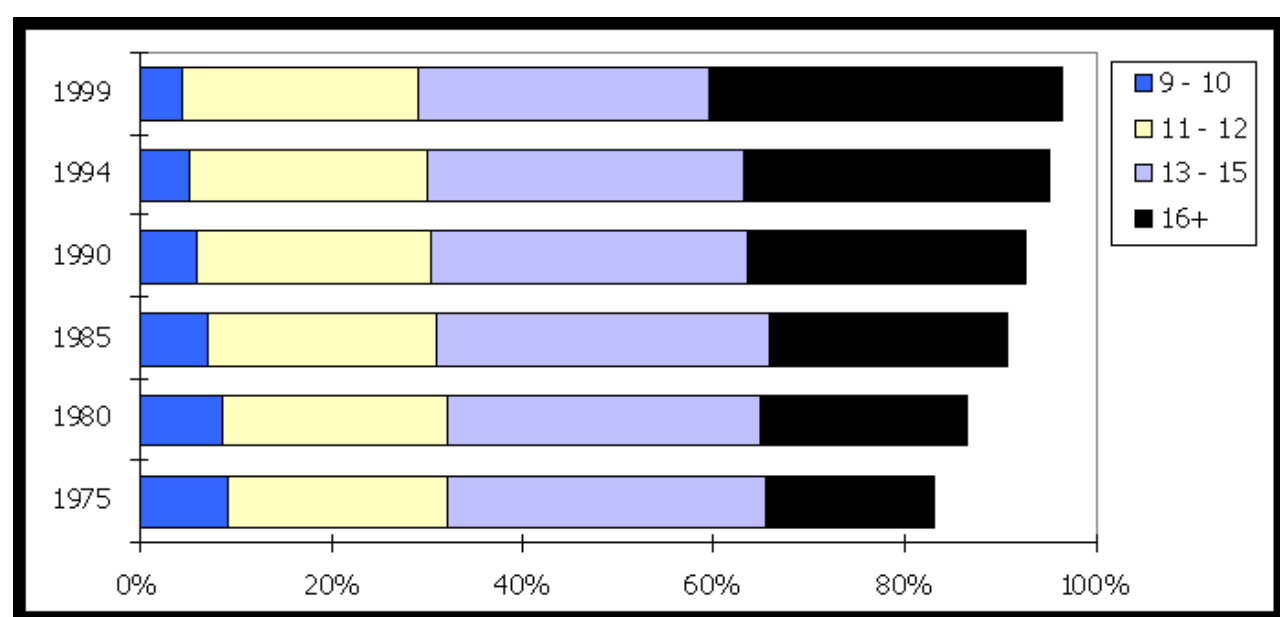
Public services are also the single largest employer of educated Arab women in Israel

In 1999, only 7% of all female public service employees were Arab. This is a significant increase from 2.4% in 1975, but still far from reflecting the representation of Arab women in Israeli society.

As with Jewish women, educated Arab women constitute a large portion of Arab women employed in the public services: In 1999, 33% of Arab women employees had 16 or more years of schooling.

Also, public services are the single largest employer of well-educated Arab women. In 1999, public services employed 60% of Arab women with 13+ years of schooling and 76% of Arab women with 16+ years of schooling (CBS, *Labor Force Survey 1999*, Table 39).

Figure 10. Jewish women employed in public service branches by years of schooling, 1975-1999



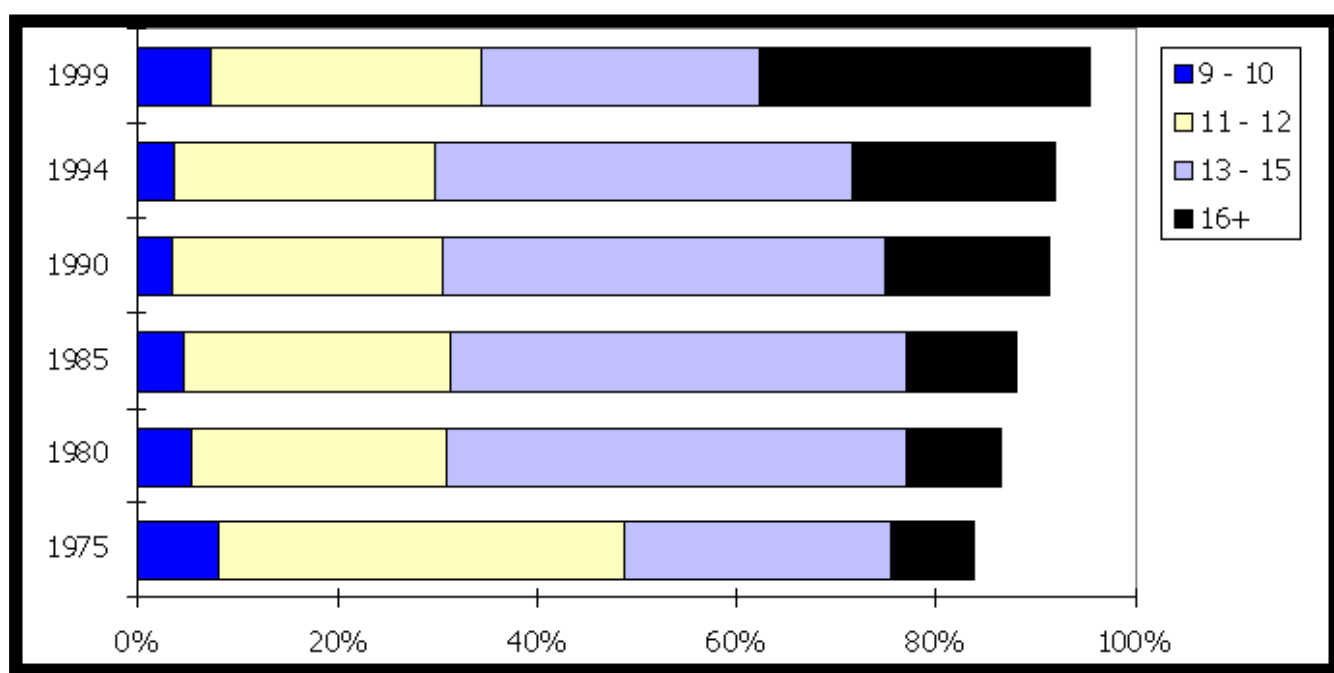
percentages

Notes:

1. Total years of schooling does not add up to 100% because women with fewer than 9 years of schooling were not hired.
2. Since data from 1995 about the education of public services employees were not available, data for 1994 were used instead.

Source: Analysis by Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years; data for 1999 were provided by Ms. Ruth Skheik, CBS.

**Figure 11. Arab women employed in public service branches
by years of schooling, 1975-1999**



percentages

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years; data for 1999 were provided by Ms. Ruth Skheik, CBS.

Women - mainstay of the education system

In 1998, approximately 47% of the women employed by public services were working in the education system.

Since the public service sector employs 45.7% of all employed women, this means that in 1998, the education system had hired over one-fifth of all employed women: simply put, one out of every five employed women worked for the education system.

Today, women constitute the absolute majority of the teaching faculty at all levels of Jewish education - kindergarten, elementary school, intermediate school, and high school. In the Arab school system, women are a majority only in kindergartens and elementary schools.

Table 21. Teachers in the school system, by gender and ethnicity, 1970-1998

	1970/71	1980/81	1985/86	1992/93	1997/98
Elementary Schools					
Jewish teachers	21,645	32,132	32,128	40,375	41,445
Thereof: women	75.1%	85.4%	88.7 %	90.4%	89.7%
Arab teachers	2,967 ¹	5,442	6,331	7,345	9,642
Thereof: women	31.2%	47.4%	42.7%	53.7%	63.6%
Intermediate Schools					
Jewish teachers	--	9,479	12,236	15,582	15,028
Thereof: women	--	69.1%	74.1%	77.8%	82.5%
Arab teachers	--	815	1,494	2,770	3,281
Thereof: women	--	22.8%	28.8%	32.6%	38.8%
High Schools					
Jewish teachers	--	16,795	19,864	27,472	31,567
Thereof: women	--	59.5%	62.4%	65.4%	68.5%
Arab teachers	--	1,318	1,885	3,057	3,771
Thereof: women	--	19.5%	19.8%	26.4%	33.8%

¹Includes 317 secondary school teachers.

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Survey of Jewish and Arab teaching staff 1992-1993*, Publication 1063, September 1996; CBS, *Survey of teaching staff 1997-98*, Publication 1143, January 2001.

Women on the teaching staff - few principals

Women today constitute the absolute majority of the teaching staff in Israeli schools, but not at the management level.

The highest proportion of women principals exists in Jewish elementary schools, where in 1998 women constituted 72.8% of the principals, compared with 89.7% of the teaching staff.

In Arab elementary schools, women were 63.6% of the teaching staff, but only 14.6% of the principals.

In Jewish secondary schools, the proportion of women principals is particularly low: In 1998, women constituted 73% of the teaching staff, but only 36.7% of the principals.

In Arab secondary schools, the proportion of women principals is even lower: Women were 37% of the teaching staff, but only 7.4% of the principals.

The table below shows the proportion of women serving as principals in the various Israeli school systems.

State secular (Jewish) schools have the highest proportion of women principals. In the secular elementary schools, the proportion of women principals - 89.1% (see table below) - resembled (in 1998) the proportion of women in the teaching staff - 89.7% (see table on the previous page). At the high school level, however, where women comprise 73% of the teaching staff, their representation among principals is only 53.3%.

In the other Jewish school systems - the state-religious and the (independent) ultra-Orthodox - the proportion of women who are principals is significantly smaller. In the state religious schools, women are 46.5% of the principals in elementary schools and 20% in secondary schools. In the ultra-Orthodox (independent) system, women are 44.9% of the principals in elementary schools and 14% in secondary schools.

In Arab schools, the proportion of women principals is the lowest - 7.4% in secondary schools and 14.6% in elementary schools.

Table 22 - School principals, by school level and system - 1992/93 and 1997/98

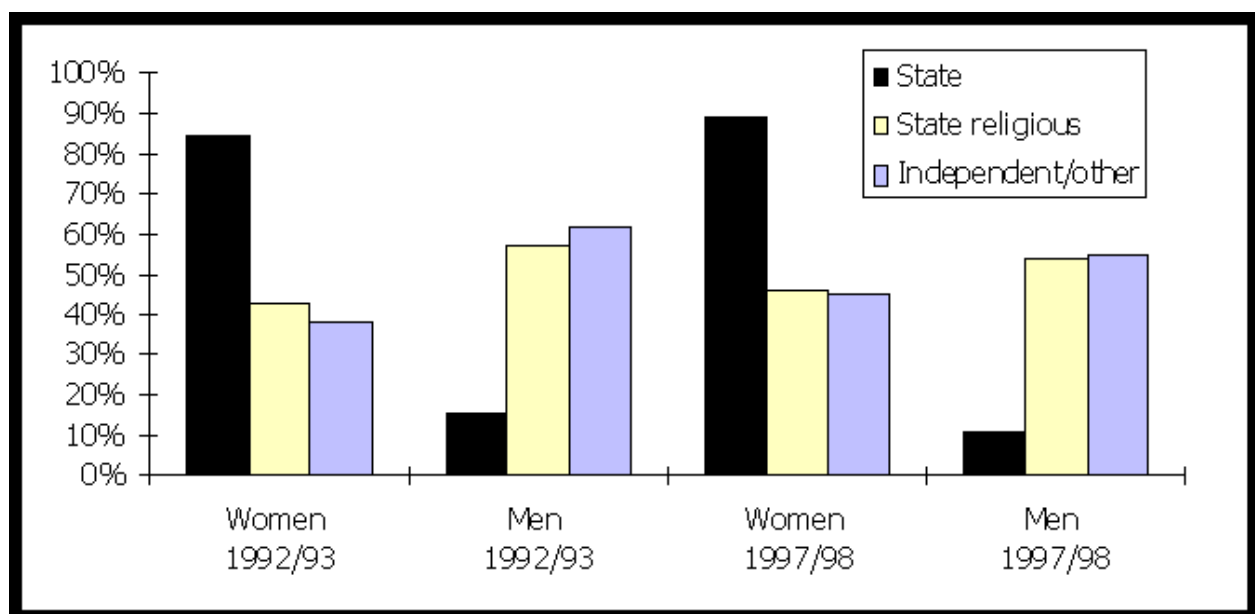
	1992/1993		1997/98	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
	<i>Jewish Schools</i>			
	<i>Elementary Schools</i>			
Principals - total	31.2%	68.8%	27.2%	72.8%
State	15.6%	84.2%	10.9%	89.1%
State religious	57.0%	43.0%	53.5%	46.5%
Independent/other	62.1%	37.9%	55.1%	44.9%
	<i>Secondary Schools</i>			
Principals - total	69.2%	30.8%	63.3%	36.7%
State	60.2%	39.8%	46.7%	53.3%
State religious	82.6%	17.4%	80.0%	20.0%
Independent/other	79.5%	20.5%	86.0%	14.0%
	<i>Arab Schools</i>			
Elementary school	90.8%	9.2%	85.4%	14.6%
Secondary school	93.0%	7.0%	92.6%	7.4%

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from:

1992/93 - Esther Herzog, "Aspects of Gender Inequality in the Educational System", *Zmanim B'Hinukh*, June 1996.

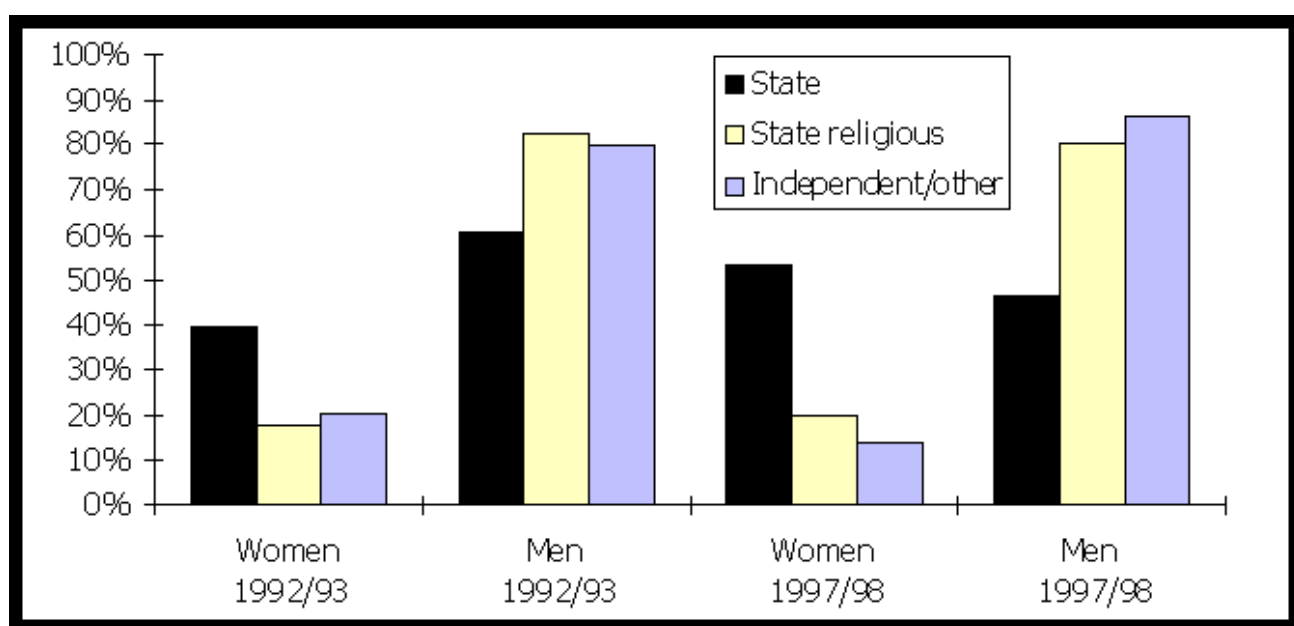
1997/98 - CBS, *Survey of Teaching Staff 1997-98*, Publication 1143, January 2001.

**Figure 12. Principals in Jewish elementary schools
by school system and gender, 1992/93 and 1997/98**
percentages



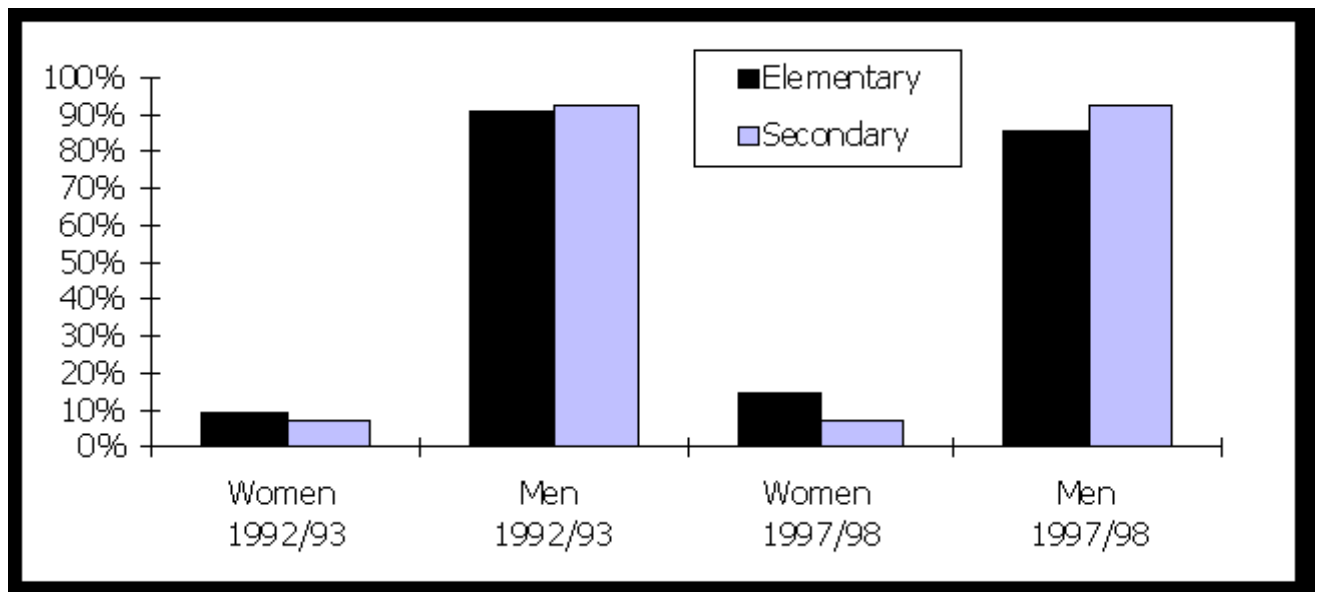
Source: Analysis by Adva Center of data from CBS, *Survey of Teaching Staff*, various years.

**Figure 13. Principals in Jewish secondary schools
by school system and gender, 1992/93 and 1997/98**
percentages



Source: Analysis by Adva Center of data from CBS, *Survey of Teaching Staff*, various years.

**Figure 14. Principals in Arab schools, by school level and gender
1992/93 and 1997/98**
percentages



Source: Analysis by Adva Center of data from CBS, *Survey of Teaching Staff*, various years.

On average, women's wages are significantly lower than men's

Data on the wages of employees in the school system, broken down by level of institution and gender, are not made public regularly, although such information is on file in the Finance Ministry and the Civil Service Commission. Adva's request for this information was turned down by both offices. Even the officer for the status of women in the Civil Service Commission could not obtain this information for us.

The only regularly published information is that which appears in the income surveys carried out by the Central Bureau of Statistics. However, the data published by the CBS do not allow for significant gender analysis, as the only subdivision by gender is for the entire education sector. This does not allow us to distinguish between principals and teachers, and not even between different levels of schooling, as all educational institutions, from kindergarten through university, are combined.

In 1999, the average wage for women in the education system was NIS 4,866, while the average wage for men was NIS 8,062 (at constant 2000 prices). On average, women's wages were 60% of men's wages.

The wage gap between men and women in the education system is identical to the wage gap between men and women in the general economy.

These wage gaps primarily reflect the differential positions held by women and men in the education system: Women constitute the majority of the teaching staff at the

lowest levels - kindergartens and elementary schools - where relatively low wages prevail - while men are over-represented in secondary and post-secondary school management and senior staff positions - which pay higher wages.

Table 23. Average gross monthly income of employees in the economy in general and the school system, 1999

in NIS at constant 2000 prices

	Men	Women	Women's wage as percentage of men's wage
Total	7,833	4,714	60%
Educational services	8,062	4,866	60%

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Income Surveys 1999*, Volume 4/2001.

Women employed in education earn less than women in most other public service jobs

On average, women employed by the education system earn less than women in several other fields, including banking and insurance, public administration, transport and storage services, and real estate and business services.

The average wage for women in the education system is higher only than that of women in the health sector (health, welfare, social services), production (industry and agriculture), and service branches (hotels and restaurants, household services, trade, and community, social and personal services).

Table 24. Gross monthly income of employed women by branch of the economy, 1999

in NIS, at constant 2000 prices, in descending order

Total	4,714
Banking and insurance	7,268
Public administration	6,490
Transport, storage, and communication	5,648

Real estate and business services	5,173
<i>Education services</i>	<i>4,866</i>
Industry	4,760
Health, welfare, and social services	4,430
Construction	4,295
Community, social, and personal services	3,829
Trade, repair of vehicles	3,550
Hotel and restaurant services	2,805
Agriculture	2,481 ¹
Household services by individuals	2,032
Electricity and water	n/a
¹ Possibility of sampling error. Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, <i>Income Surveys 1999</i> , Volume 4/2001.	

Women - the mainstay of welfare and social services

Women comprise approximately 87% of those employed by the welfare and social services in Israel.

The table below presents data from the Central Bureau of Statistics about employees in the welfare and social services between 1995 and 1999.

**Table 25. Employees of the welfare and social services
by gender, 1995-1999**

	Total Employees	Thereof: women	Women as percent of all employees
1995	51,900	43,900	84.6%
1996	54,100	46,200	85.4%
1997	52,800	44,900	85.0%
1998	61,200	52,200	85.3%
1999	67,100	58,400	87.0%

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years; the figures for 1999 were provided by Ms. Ruth Skheik.

Social Services Department Employees in Local Government

The Department of Personal and Social Services in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs publishes data about the employees of the social service departments in local governments (*Profile of Employees in Municipal Social Services*, Jerusalem: October 1998).

These include 6,000 male and female employees, most of whom are social workers. This is a small portion of those who work in the social and welfare services, which employ some 52,000 people. However, a close look at this group affords a view into the employment conditions of women and men at an important juncture of the social service system of Israel.

In June 1998, a total of 3,903 social workers were employed by municipal social service departments. Additional information was published for 3,564 of them: Of the 3,564 social workers, 417 were men and 3,147 were women.

Many more men are employed in full-time positions

In 1998, women constituted 89% of all the social workers in local social service departments; 77% were full-time employees.

In contrast, men constituted 11% of the social workers, but comprised 23% of those employed full-time.

Table 26. Social workers in local government social service departments by gender and employment group, 1998

	Total	Men	Percent of total	Women	Percent of total
Total	3,903	438	11%	3,465	89%
Whereof: full-time	1,083	244	23%	839	77%

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from pages 67-68 of the *Report of Employees in Local Government Social Service Departments*, October 1998.

The picture is similar for all employees of municipal social service departments.

Men, who comprise 13% of all these employees, constitute 26% of those employed full-time.

Women, who comprise 87% of these employees, constitute just 74% of those employed full-time.

Table 27. Employees in local social service departments by gender and employment group, 1998

	Total	Men	Percent of total	Women	Percent of total
Total	6,330	835	13%	5,495	87%
Whereof: full-time	1,969	516	26%	1,453	74%

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from pages 70-71 of the *Report of Employees in Local Government Social Service Departments*, October 1998.

More men in senior positions

In 1998, 442 social workers served in management positions in municipal social service departments.

Men, who constituted 12% of all the social workers in the social service departments, held 34% of the positions of director and 19% of the deputy director positions.

Only at one level was the number of women commensurate with their representation among employees in general - as counselors/team leaders.

The proportion of men holding full-time positions was higher than their proportion among social workers in general.

**Table 28. Social workers in management positions
by gender and employment group, 1998**

	Total		Men		% of Total		Women		% of Total	
Total	442		107		24%		335		76%	
<i>Whereof: full-time</i>		332		99		30%		233		70%
Directors	266		91		34%		175		66%	
<i>Whereof: full-time</i>		221		84		38%		137		62%
Deputy directors	21		4		19%		17		81%	
<i>Whereof: full-time</i>		18		4		22%		14		78%
Counselors/ Team leaders	155		12		8%		143		92%	
<i>Whereof: full-time</i>		93		11		12%		82		88%

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from pages 55-56 of the *Report of Employees in Local Government Social Service Departments*, October 1998.

Wages

Data on wages by gender or position are not regularly published for the social services, just as they are not for the education system, even though this information is on file in the Finance Ministry and the Civil Service Commission. Adva's request for this information was turned down, and even the officer for the status of women in the Civil Service could not obtain this information for us.

Women - mainstay of the health services

Women constitute 70% of the labor force in the health services branch of the economy.

In 1999, 144,800 people were employed by the health services; of these, 101,300 were women.

The proportion of women in this sector rose from 58% in 1970 to 70% in 1999.

Table 29. Employees in health services, 1970-1999

	Total employees	Whereof: Women	Women as % of total employees
1970	41,700	24,200	58%
1980	63,800	43,200	68%
1990	88,200	61,800	70%
1999	144,800	101,300	70%

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Labor Force Surveys*, various years; data for 1999 were provided by Ms. Ruth Skheik, CBS.

Employees in the health system

Two institutions publish information about the labor force in the health system - the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Health. The number of employees cited by the CBS is somewhat higher than the number cited by the Health Ministry:

The CBS notes that there were 142,100 people employed by the health services in 1998; the Ministry of Health reports 131,400 people employed in 1997, just one year earlier. Our assumption is that the CBS includes commercial establishments in its data, which are not included by the Ministry of Health.

In the pages that follow, we discuss the health system using data from the Ministry of Health, as presented in *Health in Israel 1998*. According to this booklet, the number of employees in the three main occupation categories are as follows:

Occupation	Employed in 1997
<i>Total employed in health services</i>	<i>131,400</i>
Doctors, dentists, pharmacists	40,497
Registered and practical nurses	45,437
Paramedical professionals	25,670
<i>Other</i>	<i>(19,796)</i>
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from the Ministry of Education, <i>Health in Israel 1998</i> , p. 103.	

Two main bodies employ most of those who work in the health system - hospitals (with 74,800 employees) and medical clinics and institutions (36,600 employees).

Below we present information about the gender distribution of employees in the health services, first by profession and then by place of work.

Doctors, dentists, pharmacists

In 1997, there were 40,500 doctors, dentists or pharmacists in Israel, who comprised approximately 31% of all those employed in health services.

Most of the doctors and dentists were men - 62.8% and 64.5%, respectively. Women, however, form the majority of pharmacists - 55.1%.

Table 30. Employees in health professions, December 1997			
	Doctors	Dentists	Pharmacists
<i>Total</i>	27,873	7,779	4,845
Women	10,353	2,758	2,669
% of Total	37.1%	35.5%	55.1%
Men	17,512	5,014	2,169
% of Total	62.8%	64.5%	44.8%
Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from Ministry of Health, <i>Health in Israel 1998</i> , p. 105.			

Increase in women doctors

In the two decades between 1980 and 1997, the total number of doctors in Israel increased by about 10,000.

Of this increase, 7,195 were immigrants (during 1989-1996), most from the former Soviet Union. Among immigrant doctors, 53% were women (Ministry of Health, *Doctors, Dentists, Pharmacists, 1970-1996*, p. 16).

This explains the impressive rise in the number of women doctors from 1980 to 1997 - up from 31% to 37%.

Table 31. Doctors, by gender, 1980 and 1997		
	1980	1997
Female doctors	31%	37%
Male doctors	69%	63%
Source: Ministry of Health, <i>Doctors, Dentists, Pharmacists, 1970-1996</i> , p. 12; Ministry of Health, <i>Health in Israel 1998</i> , p. 105.		

The proportion of specialists among women is lower than the proportion of specialists among men

Proportionately, there are fewer female than male doctors who are certified specialists -29% compared with 44%.

Women constitute just over a quarter of all the specialists. As evident in the following table, this percentage has barely changed over the past two decades.

Table 32. Doctors with specializations, 1980 and 1996		
	1980	1996
Female specialists	27%	28%
Male specialists	73%	72%
Source: Ministry of Health, <i>Doctors, Dentists, Pharmacists, 1970-1996</i> , p. 23.		

The highest proportion of female specialists is in family medicine and pediatrics. The lowest is in surgery and gynecology (Ministry of Health, *Doctors, Dentists, Pharmacists, 1970-1996*, pp. 48-49).

Registered and practical nurses

The largest group of professionals in the health services is nurses. In 1997 there were 25,612 registered nurses and 19,825 practical nurses, for a total of approximately 45,500 nurses, constituting 35% of all health services employees.

The Ministry of Health does not publish information about the gender distribution of health care workers, nor does the Central Bureau of Statistics. It is common knowledge, however, that almost all nurses are women.

Paramedical professionals

In 1997, there were 25,670 people employed in the paramedical professions in Israel.

Unfortunately, the Ministry of Health does not publish data about the gender distribution of these employees.

Table 33. Employees in the paramedical professions, 1997	
Dental hygienists	616
Dental technicians	3,135
Optometrists	689
Physiotherapists	1,909
Dieticians	1,035
Communication clinicians	1,084
Occupational therapists	1,465
Medical lab technicians	5,990
X-ray technicians	1,022
Dentists' assistants	3,668
Psychologists	5,057
<i>Total</i>	<i>25,670</i>
Source: Ministry of Health, <i>Health in Israel 1998</i> , p. 115.	

Summary

A balance sheet of the state as an employer of women

The data in this paper present a complex picture of the state as an employer of women. On the positive side is the fact that government ministries and their services - education, health, and social services - constitute the single largest employer of women in Israel. Public services provide employment to a large variety of women: They hired tens of thousands of women with higher education, and also provide a convenient and stable place of employment for less educated women.

Also on the positive side is the fact that the public services provide women with a higher average wage than do other sectors. In the public services, the proportion of women who work year long, and not just for part of the year, is higher than in other sectors. As noted above, some would also credit the system with the "convenience" of

public service jobs compared with other sectors - providing women with many part-time jobs, as well as full-time jobs, like teaching, that are in effect part-time.

Finally, on the positive side is the fact that a significant number of public service sectors have become stable job strongholds, ensuring employment for future generations of women.

On the debit side, first, is the fact that public service jobs do not offer women an opportunity for the full realization of their potential as employees. Career promotion opportunities are not as fully accessible to women as to men: Most management positions are held by men, while women occupy most of the lower rungs. On average, the wages of women are significantly lower than those of men. Most full-time positions are held by men, while most part-time positions are held by women. Women enjoy fewer fringe benefits. And when downsizing takes place, most of those fired are women.

In the 1970s, at the height of the expansion of the welfare state in western countries, scholars tended to regard the public services as an employer offering better conditions to women than other branches of the economy, thereby improving the economic status of women throughout the industrialized world (Kolberg, 1991). In the 1990s, however, women scholars presented a more qualified assessment of the relative advantages of the public services (Gornick and Jacobs, 1998). The picture that emerges in this paper more closely conforms to the re-assessment: Although public service became the primary stronghold of women in the Israeli labor force, it does not fundamentally differ from other economic sectors in terms of offering women an opportunity for full and independent participation in the labor market.

From a 'big' to a 'small' state

For some two decades now, the welfare state has been under attack in western countries, and the stability of the main stronghold of women in the labor force - their employment in the public services - has also been threatened.

It should be borne in mind that welfare states in the west were shaped following World War II, a period of strong economic growth. This growth increased general prosperity and enabled expansion of the social safety net and the public services in health and education. Economic growth halted in the mid-1970s, with the 1980s marked by slow growth and even recession. Western Europe experienced increased unemployment, with high unemployment becoming a permanent feature of life in a number of states. The social safety net, intended to help in such circumstances, turned out to be very effective, but its high cost began to arouse concern and criticism.

Until the 1970s, a relatively wide consensus prevailed in the west, especially in Europe, around the view that the state is a key factor in economic and social development, and since the state operates in the name of the social collective, it also bears responsibility for the employment, social security, health, and education of all its citizens. In the 1980s and 1990s, however, the role of the state appeared to be eroded by the global operations of large multinational corporations. At the same time,

economic theories that challenged the centrality of the state gained prominence. These looked toward private business - headed by multinationals - to replace the functions of the state. The new ideology sought to trim government budgets and reduce public services.

In the 1970s and 1980s, belief in the superiority of private ownership launched the trend to privatize companies and services which, until then, had been government run. Privatization was accompanied by other phenomena, such as "wage flexibility" in the public sector, diminished working conditions, and, in many cases, layoffs and dismissals. Women, who hold a significant role in the labor force of the public services, were particularly vulnerable to these new developments.

Terms of employment that had formerly existed only in the private sector now spread to the public sector, including the use of personal contracts rather than industry-wide wage agreements. This not only undermined the status of unionized employees, but also tended to work in favor of men, either because personal contracts give more discretionary power to managers (who preferred to hire men in positions parallel to their own) or because personal contracts are more common for higher entry positions, where men constitute the majority (Rubery, Smith and Fagan, 1999: 69-70).

Finally, the policies of budget cuts and "wage flexibility" also led to the hiring of more part-time workers, who are cheaper to employ, in both the public and private sectors. In most western European countries, between the years 1983 and 1992 more than half of the new employees were hired on a part-time basis (Rubery, Smith and Fagan, 1999: Chapter 7).

These changes reflect the desire to cut the costs of public services. In addition, the new ideology sought to limit the role and scale of the welfare state. Thus, for example, efforts were and are still being made to cut the budget for state-provided education and health; to reduce the state subsidy for housing; to shrink the social safety net, i.e., all the allocations paid by Israel's National Insurance Institute, including those for the elderly, the unemployed, children, and others needing income supplements.

The efforts have succeeded in some ways and failed in others. In fact, this process can be described as a tug of war that began in the 1980s and is not yet over between those who prefer a "small" and those who prefer a "big" state or, in this context, those who advocate a "small welfare state" and those who advocate a "big welfare state". In the two countries which represent this transformation best - the United Kingdom under Margaret Thatcher and the United States under Ronald Reagan - some efforts to downsize were successful, such as cutbacks in government-subsidized housing, while others failed, such as the attempt to reduce health services in Britain (Pierson, 1994: Chapter 6). President Clinton's effort to enact universal health insurance failed; on the other hand, the ongoing efforts - including those of President Bush - to increase privatization of the public school system by issuing vouchers that will allow parents to enroll their children in private rather than public schools are also facing serious opposition.

The ideology of a "small state" and the empowerment of the business sector, which first flourished in the 1980s under Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret

Thatcher in Britain, has also spread to western Europe, which had a tradition of a "big state", and especially a "big welfare state," and to Israel. Comparative research into the implications of The Third Way, an ideology that seeks to integrate the "American" belief in the centrality of the business sector with the "European" belief in the social principles on which the welfare state is based, found that the cutbacks in western Europe only peripherally affected the social provisions put in place after World War II (Merkel, 1999). Also in Israel, despite the many budget cuts, the foundations of the welfare state remain in tact.

Furthermore, the new ideology has not blurred the distinction between the two parts of the "west". Western European countries continue to conduct affairs in the tradition of a "big state," and a well-developed state welfare system survives; while the United States continues its "small state" ways and provides some of its welfare, health, and educational services through the business sector, and for payment.

Therefore, broadly speaking, therefore, the degree of success of the new ideology has been limited. The framework of the western welfare state remains in place, with all the traditional differences between the two parts of the "west." Damage was done to some social programs, but not all. The overall amount spent on social programs continues to increase, and, to be significant (ibid, 144).

The main damage wrought by the new ideology seems to have affected the terms of employment and wages of female and male employees in the public services. This will be illustrated below with regard to Israel.

The ideology and policies of a "small state" in Israel

In the 1980s, the ideology of a "small state" arrived in Israel. The turning point was the emergency plan for stabilizing the economy in 1985. This plan, intended to halt galloping inflation in Israel, launched a policy of ongoing budget cuts, privatizing state enterprises and public services, making wages "flexible," and transferring the responsibility for economic growth to the private sector.

Ever since the establishment of Israel, it should be recalled, the European perspective of a "big state" has prevailed. In the first decades of independence, the state leadership saw itself as responsible for the development of all economic sectors, both directly and through programs to stimulate growth. The political leadership also took responsibility for providing education, health, housing, and social services to the entire population.

As in Europe and the United States, in Israel, too, the new ideology of a "small state" did not lead to a fundamental change in the socio-economic system. In Israel it would be more correct to speak of an ongoing tug of war between those with different beliefs. At any rate, the state continues to constitute a key factor in economic policies, both directly and indirectly; the welfare state has preserved its status and forms; and the government continues to be the main employer of women, and even to provide women in its employ with certain advantages. Nevertheless, one can feel the winds changing.

Budget cutbacks have become a declared objective of Israeli governments. Due to the need to absorb a large wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union, the early 1990s saw a significant increase in the state budget. In the second half of the decade, budget cutbacks became a declared objective of successive Israeli administrations. The budget was frozen and even reduced. (This trend continues - June 2001). The portion of the budget in the GDP - a common way to measure budget size - decreased from 49.6% in 1995 to 45.5% in 2000. The freeze in overall budget size was linked to the freeze - and in some cases - cutbacks in the allocations for basic public services, including education and health. At the same time, constant attempts were made by the government to reduce social security payments. These seem to have borne fruit in the late 1990s, when the portion of these payments in the GDP remained constant, following several years of rapid increase (Bank of Israel, 2000: 165).

Below we examine four aspects - some overlapping - of the policy of budget reductions that directly affect employment in the public services - personnel cutbacks in government ministries, hiring through employment agencies, privatization, and wage attrition.

A. Personnel cutbacks in government ministries

Data about cutbacks in the number of positions available in government ministries can be drawn from the number of government positions, which appear yearly as part of the State Budget. This refers to the total number of full-time positions that government ministries are allowed to fill. The 1990s saw a trend to increase the number of personnel - from 64,753 positions in 1990 to 69,750 positions in 1996. One reason for this increase was the enlargement of the state apparatus necessitated by the absorption of new immigrants. However, since the large waves of immigration tapered off - in 1996, to be precise - there has been a steady decrease in the number of government positions, in keeping with the budget cuts. In the budget for fiscal year 2000 there were only 55,000 positions, about the same as in fiscal year 2001.

Had the number of positions continued to increase at the same rate after 1990-1996, there would have been 73,300 government positions in the year 2000. On this assumption, it could be said that budget cuts led to 18,300 fewer positions. If, as previously, women would still constitute 60% of the labor force in government ministries, then budget cuts have led to the loss of 11,000 jobs for women.

But even if the number of government positions had not increased at the 1990-96 rate, but merely remained at 1996 levels, we would not have seen a decrease from 69,800 employees in 1996 to 55,000 in 2000. This decrease involves a loss of 14,800 positions; assuming that 60% of those jobs would have been held by women, that is a loss of 9,000 positions for women.

Table 34. Number of government positions, 1990-2001	
1990	64,753
1991	65,332
1992	65,863
1993	66,573
1994	68,114
1995	68,906
1996	69,750
1997	68,868
1998	55,306
1999	55,125
2000	54,982
2001	55,080
Source: Finance Ministry, <i>Budget Summary</i> , various years.	

B. Hiring through employment agencies

In at least some cases, government positions that were eliminated were replaced by women or men working for employment agencies.

In the past decade, hiring through employment agencies has become a common practice in government ministries. Once hired, the job-seeker does not become an employee of the government, but rather remains an employee of the agency. The government does not publish data about how many of its staff members are actually employed by agencies. Only once did the Civil Service Commissioner publish some data - the 1993 Annual Report - which noted, "For low-level clerical positions, employees can be hired via employment agencies and the Employment Bureau. In the

year under review, we examined 3,178 job candidates, of whom about half were employed by agencies" (Civil Service Commissioner, 1993: 12). The Civil Service Commissioner no longer publishes information about those employed by agencies. The Office of the Controller General in the Finance Ministry told Adva that they have no such data: "However, we did conduct a survey among ministries several months ago, and found that approximately 4,200 people employed by agencies were on the staffs of government ministries at the end of the previous year. Most worked as secretaries (some 950 employees), typists (some 1,200), in administration (some 1,600) and a few in financial positions" (letter from Mr. Motti Meroz, Senior Deputy to the Controller General, 9 May 2001).

Mr. Eli Yishai, former Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, points to a much more extensive practice, noting on many occasions that about a third of government ministry staff members are employed by employment agencies. Figures provided by the Association of Chambers of Commerce are also higher than those cited by the Finance Ministry: Data collected from a number of employment agencies, which employ some 66,000 men and women, constituting some 60% of the total number of persons working for employment agencies in Israel, indicate that 33% of their employees work in the public sector (Association of Chambers of Commerce, January 2001). Research based on data provided by the six largest employment agencies in Israel also reveals that some 30% of their employees work in the public sector (Ronit Nadiv-Avraham, Ph.D. dissertation in preparation). These figures, however, are not an accurate indication of those employed by government ministries via employment agencies, since the public sector includes services provided by the ministries as well as by local governments.

Staffing through employment agencies, which flourishes in the wake of constant budget cuts, creates two distinct classes of women working in public services: In one group are women in government positions whose terms of employment and fringe benefits are determined by collective wage agreements; in another class are women employed by agencies, who have poorer terms of employment and lower fringe benefits, and who work under the ongoing fear of dismissal.

C. Privatization of public services

As part of the policy of budget cuts, the government outsources some work to private vendors, whose services it purchases. The government does not publish data about the scope of privatization, but an indirect estimate of this practice can be derived from data about the composition of civilian public expenditures. The economists Z'ira and Stravchinsky compared civilian public expenditures (excluding consumption of fixed capital) on labor input with the civilian public expenditures (excluding consumption of fixed capital) on purchases (Z'ira and Stravchinsky, 2000: 8). As can be seen in the table below, which we compiled based on the calculations of Z'ira and Stravchinsky, the proportion of labor input decreased, i.e., expenditures of the public sector for labor directly employed by it dropped from 83% of the civilian public expenditures (excluding consumption of fixed capital) in 1985 to 69% in 1999. On the other hand, expenditures on purchases, which include buying services from private companies - which in the past had been provided by the public sector, including the purchase of labor services from employment agencies - rose from 17% in 1985 to 31% in 1999.

According to Z'ira and Stravchinsky, "This is clearly a large increase, and reveals the scope of the privatization of services" (ibid.).

Table 35. Input from labor and purchases as a portion of civilian public expenditures (excluding consumption of fixed capital) 1985-1999

Purchases as a percentage of public expenditures (excluding consumption of fixed capital)	Labor input as a percentage of public expenditures (excluding consumption of fixed capital)	Year
17	83	1985
18	82	1986
20	80	1987
22	78	1988
22	78	1989
25	75	1990
26	74	1991
28	72	1992
27	73	1993
30	70	1994
29	71	1995
30	70	1996
30	70	1997
31	69	1998
31	69	1999

Source: Analysis by the Adva Center of data from CBS, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*, Table 6.4.

D. "Wage flexibility"

Budget cuts in general, particularly the replacement of employees in government positions with staff members employed by employment agencies, contribute to the erosion of the wages of public service workers.

An illustration from the field of education: Between 1996 and 2000, the number of teaching positions budgeted by the Ministry of Education rose from 77,320 to 88,360; however, the total amount budgeted by the Ministry of Education to pay for these positions barely changed at all: In 1996, it was NIS 14,734 billion, while in 2000 it was NIS 14,740 billion (at constant 1999 prices; see Adva Center, 2000: 7). A gradual decline in the labor costs of paying schoolteachers seems to be taking place, drawn from a combination of factors: the attrition of wages of teachers in government positions, and the hiring of more teachers under inferior working conditions.

Looking toward the future

One can assume that in the foreseeable future, the public services will continue to be a major source of employment for women, particularly educated women. By the same token, it is reasonable to assume that the public services will continue to rely heavily on the labor of women.

So far, the pairing of a female labor force with the public services has been convenient for both: For women, the public services provided entrée to the labor force and became a relatively stable employment stronghold for women; the public services, for their part, were able to provide education, health, and welfare services to the population at large at a lower price than if they had to rely on a predominantly male labor force.

When faced with the ideology and policies of a "small state," women have a vested interest in protecting and even strengthening the welfare state. In the public agenda of Israeli women, the fate of the welfare state should be given high priority, due to the fact that the welfare state is, first of all, an employer of women; secondly, a provider of services enjoyed by women, whether as citizens or as the main caretakers of the family; and, thirdly the provider of a social safety net - through social security pensions. In this sense, women have a clear interest in the question of whether Israel will continue to operate according to the western European model, or will adopt the American model.

Furthermore, women should have a vested interest not only in defending the survival of the welfare state in its western European form, but also in significantly improving their own status in the labor market of the welfare state. The public services constitute a worthwhile arena for improving the status of women in the labor market in general, for a number of reasons - firstly because of the relatively powerful positions women enjoy in this market, and secondly because public employers are more vulnerable to public criticism and more amenable to change than private employers. Thus far, the labor market of the welfare state has been friendly to women.

In the future, it should ensure that women employed in the public services achieve the same degree of independence that the public services provide for men.

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