

10 Facts You Probably Didn't Know About Women in Israel (2010)

1

POPULATION

The population of Israel (end of 2009) is 7.5 million. While the majority of Israeli citizens are Jewish, Israel has a large Arab minority. Out of approximately 2.8 million women (15 years and older) living in Israel, about 2.3 million are Jewish (82%) women and about 470,000 are Arab women (17%).

2

POLITICS

Israeli women have yet to achieve political power:
22 out of 120 legislators (18%) are women; only one is an Arab woman;
350 (13%) out of 2,700 local council members are women.
2 out of 30 Cabinet ministers are women.

3

EMPLOYMENT

Employment rates are high for Jewish women but low for Arab women, due to lack of local development, jobs, and public transportation in Arab localities: 56% of Jewish women but only 19% of Arab women are in the labor force. The percentage of Israeli working women employed in part-time jobs is approximately 38%, compared with 17% for men.

4

CHILDCARE

Israel has a system of day care centers and family day care that receives public support; however, the facilities are much more accessible to Jewish women than to Arab women. Arab preschool children constitute 27% of their age group but only 6% of pre-schoolers in approved day care facilities.

5

WAGES

Women continue to earn less than men, no matter how you figure it. Women's average hourly wages are 83% of men's; no breakdowns are available on the national level for Jewish and Arab women.

6

INCOME

Women's earnings are increasing, but they still lag far below men's. Women constitute 12% of persons in the highest income bracket but 65% of persons earning the minimum wage or less. On average, Arab women earn less than Jewish women.

7

TAXES

As women earn less than men, they pay less in income taxes: women pay 18% of income tax revenues. No breakdown is available for Jewish and Arab women.

8

MARRIAGE AGE

Women's marriage ages are on the rise. The average marriage age (first marriage) for Jewish women is 25.7, for Christian women, 25.3, for Druze women, 22.5 and for Muslim women 21.8. In 2008, 11 Jewish and 622 Muslim women got married, despite the fact that they were below the minimum age of 17.

9

DIVORCE

The fact that in Israel personal status matters are relegated to the religious rather than the civil courts results in divorce being a serious problem for women of all religious denominations.

10

EDUCATION

Over half (62.6%) of Jewish girls graduate high school with a matriculation certificate ("bagrut"); however, only slightly over a third (34.4%) of Arab youngsters (no breakdowns are available by gender) graduate high school with a matriculation certificate. As for college, among Jews 20% of women enter academic institutions with 8 years of graduating high school, compared with 15% of men; among Arabs, the figures are 9% for women and 7% for men.