

**UNITED NATIONS EXPERT GROUP MEETING
ON RECENT AND FUTURE TRENDS IN FERTILITY**

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Fertility Prospects in Israel: Ever Below Replacement Level?

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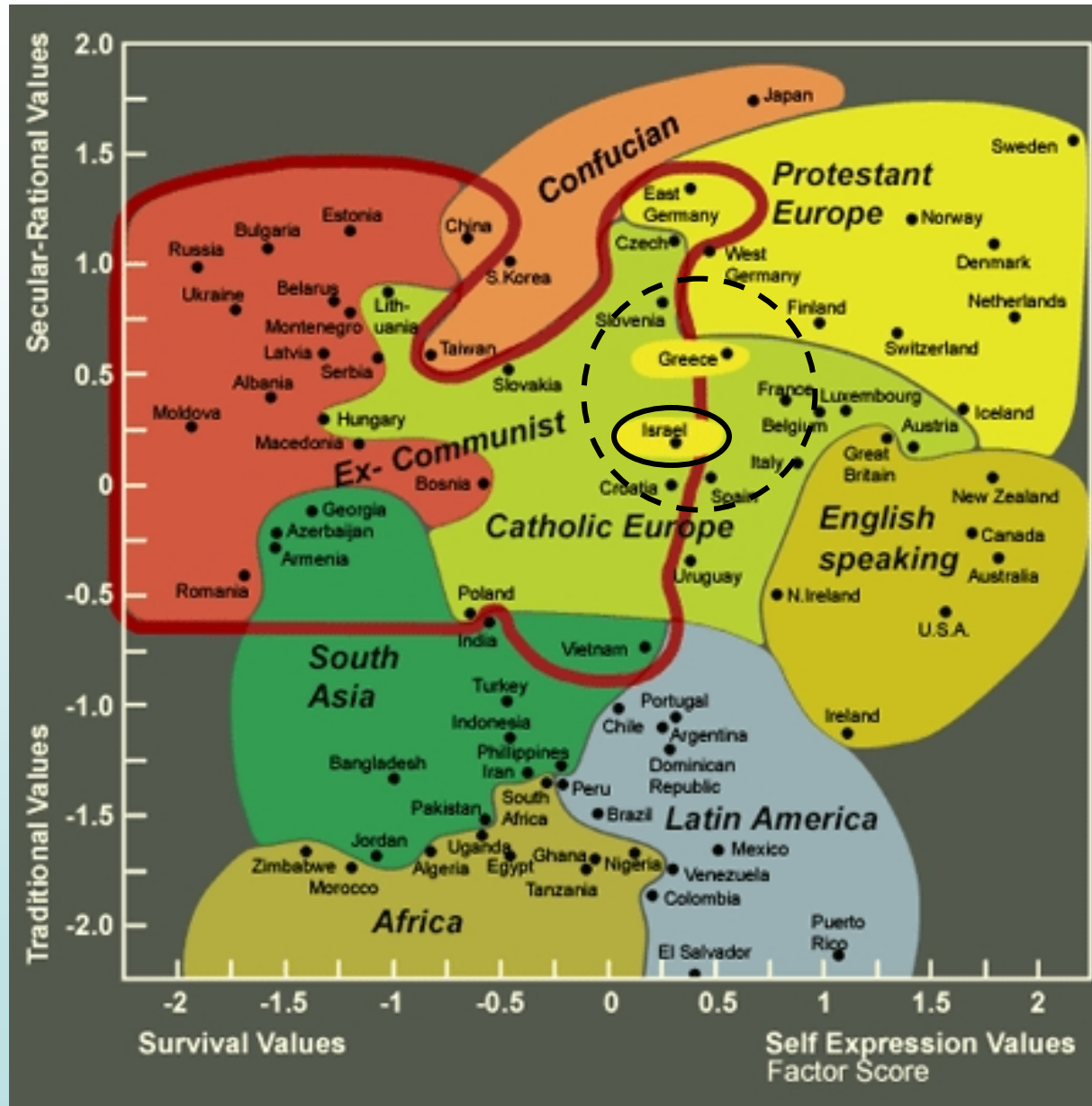
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- Israel's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) was **2.98 in 2008**.
- In the 2009 HDI assessment Israel's ranked 27th out of 182 countries. **Israel's projected TFR was the highest among 38 countries with very high human development**. A higher TFR obtained in only six additional countries ranked up to 100th.
- Hence the lead question: **ever below replacement level?**

- One of the crucial analytic issues is whether relatively high levels of fertility essentially reflect the **failure to curb** the birth rate or rather **wanted children**?
- Are relatively high fertility rates a transitional stage toward the **unavoidable decline** toward and below replacement or a societal feature bound to **stay in the long run**?
- We explain fertility patterns in the past in the light of socio-economic, demographic and cultural determinants that operated both at the **individual** and at the **broader societal** level.

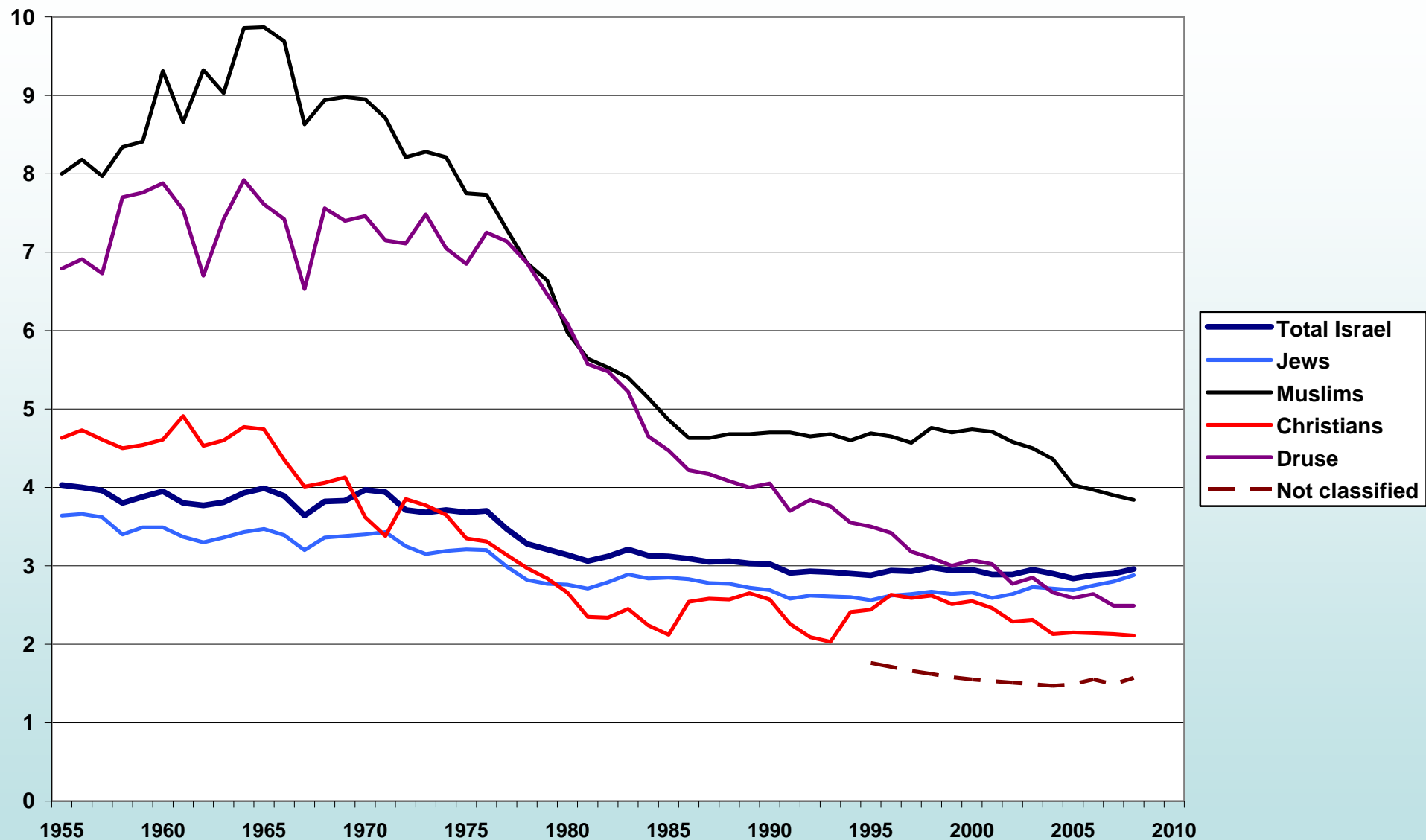
- We analyze fertility goals through different measures of **attainment, intention and appropriateness**, and outline public attitudes towards **possible policy interventions** aimed at affecting fertility in the future.
- We also question whether **country population projections relying on a single set of demographic assumptions** are appropriate for societies that, like Israel's, encompass several sub-populations with significantly different demographic patterns.

WHERE IS ISRAEL?



Source: Inglehart and Welzel, 2005.

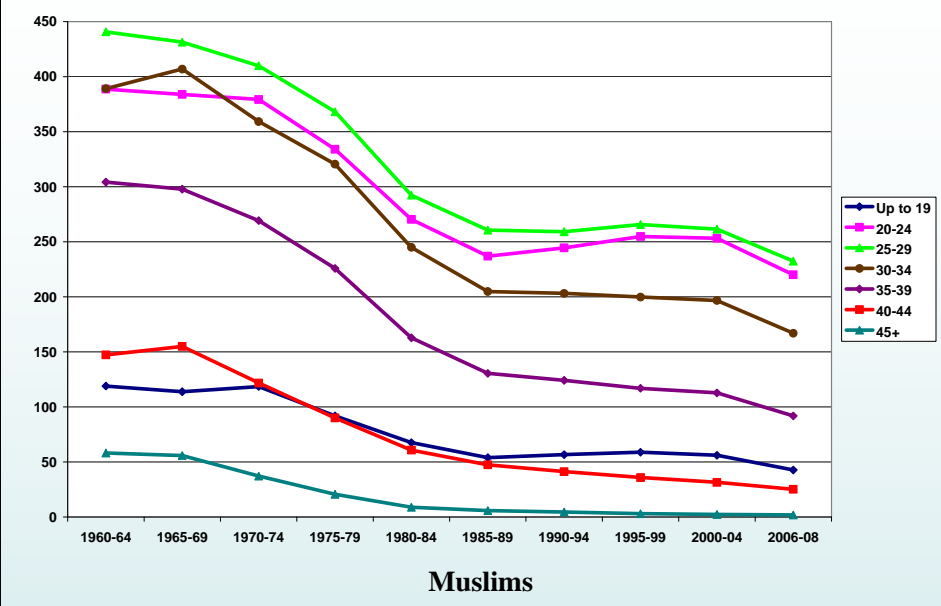
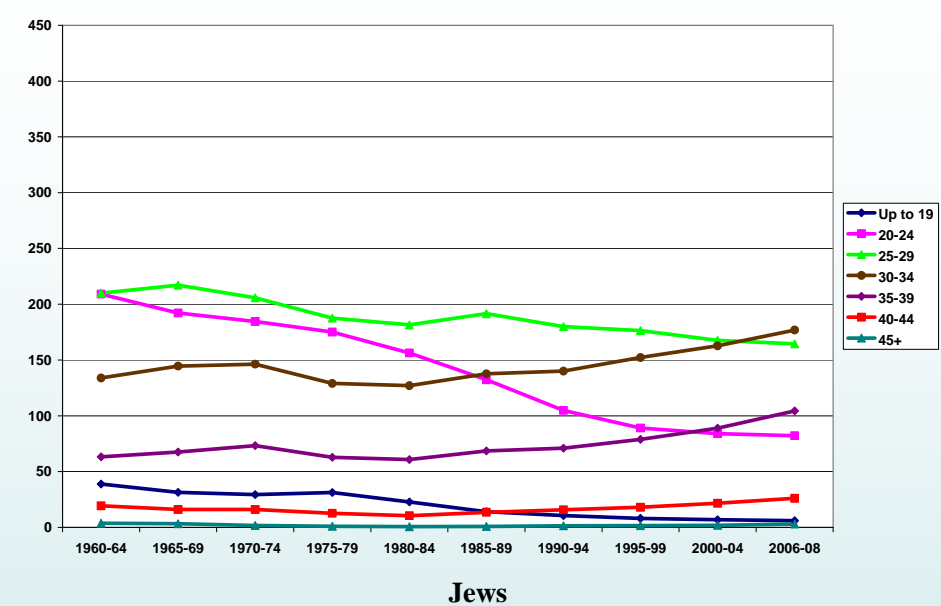
Total fertility rates, by religion groups – Israel, 1955-2008



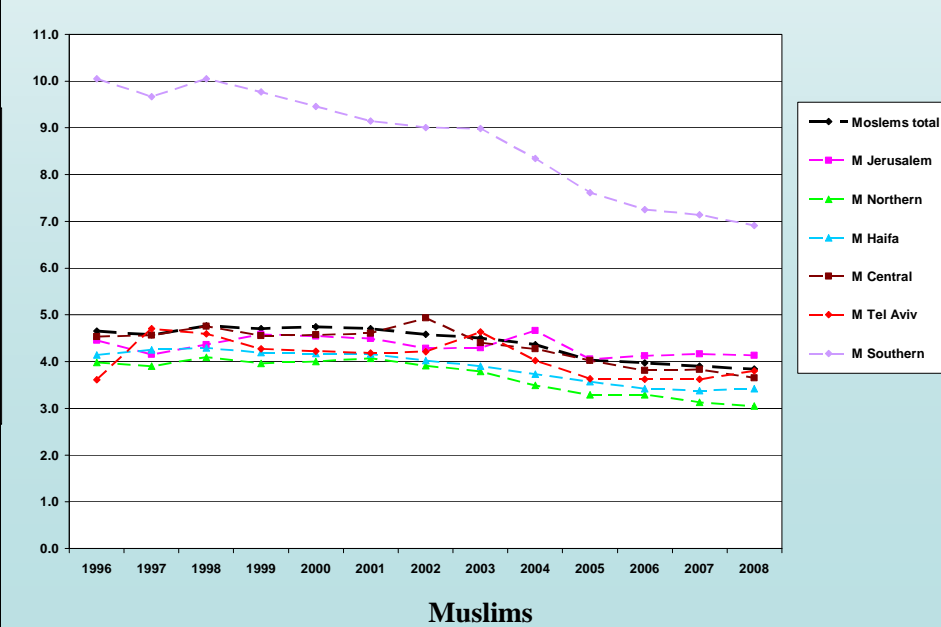
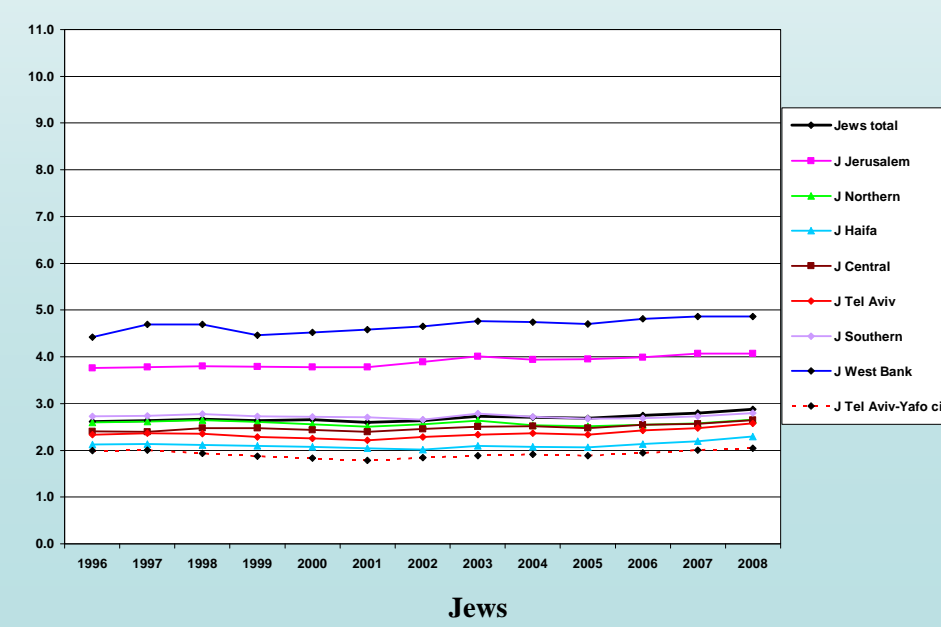
Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics.

Total fertility rates, Jews and Muslims – Israel, by age, 1960-2008, and by district, 1996-2008

a. Age

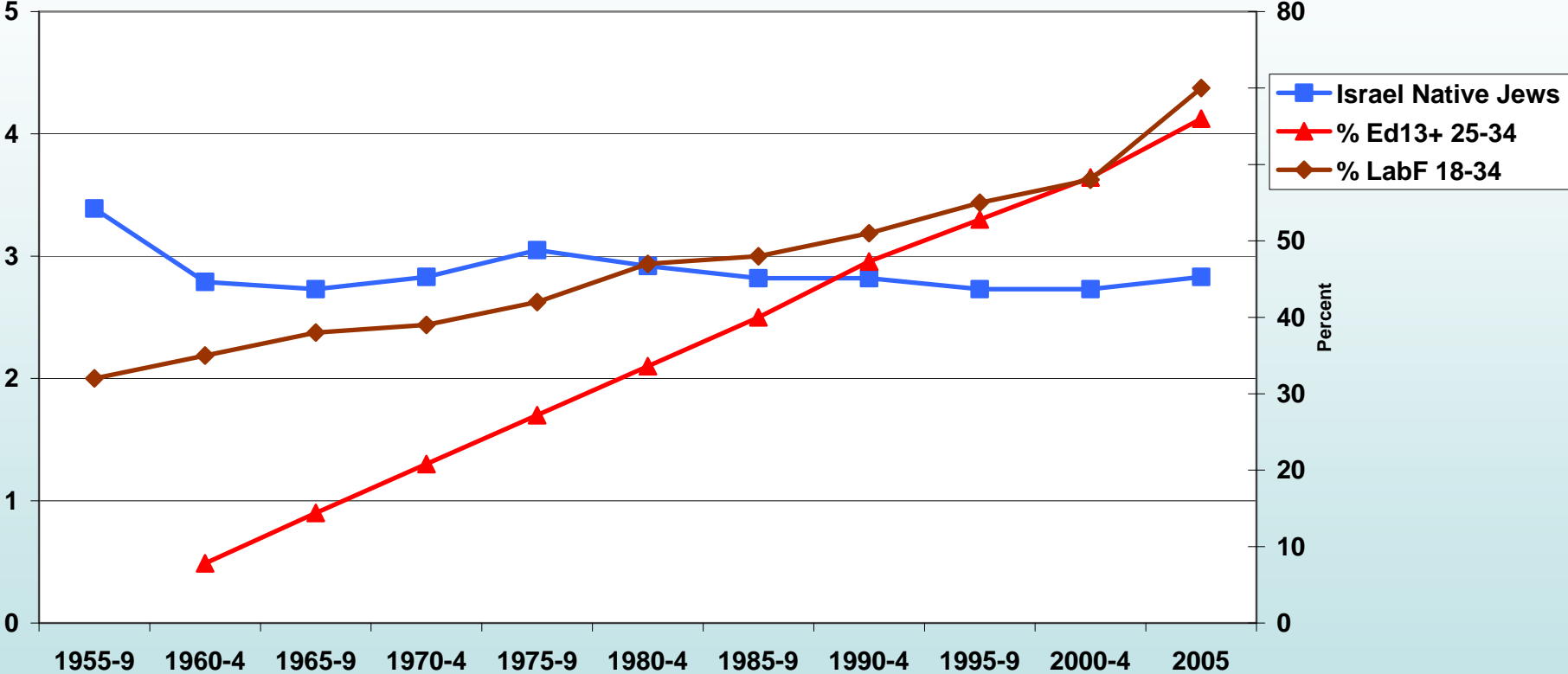


b. District



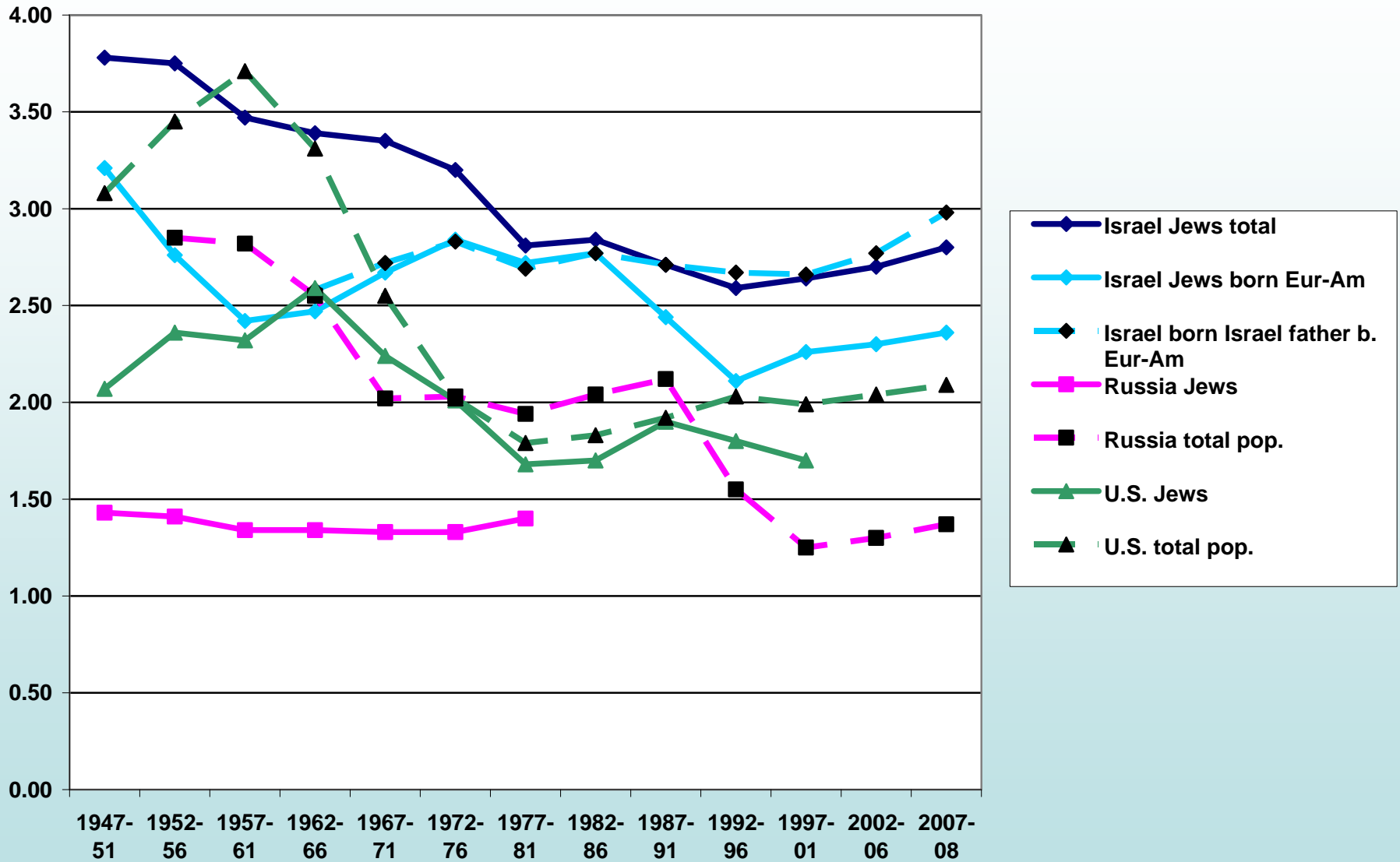
Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics.

TFR of Israel born, post-secondary education attained, and labor force participation – Jewish women, Israel, 1955-2005



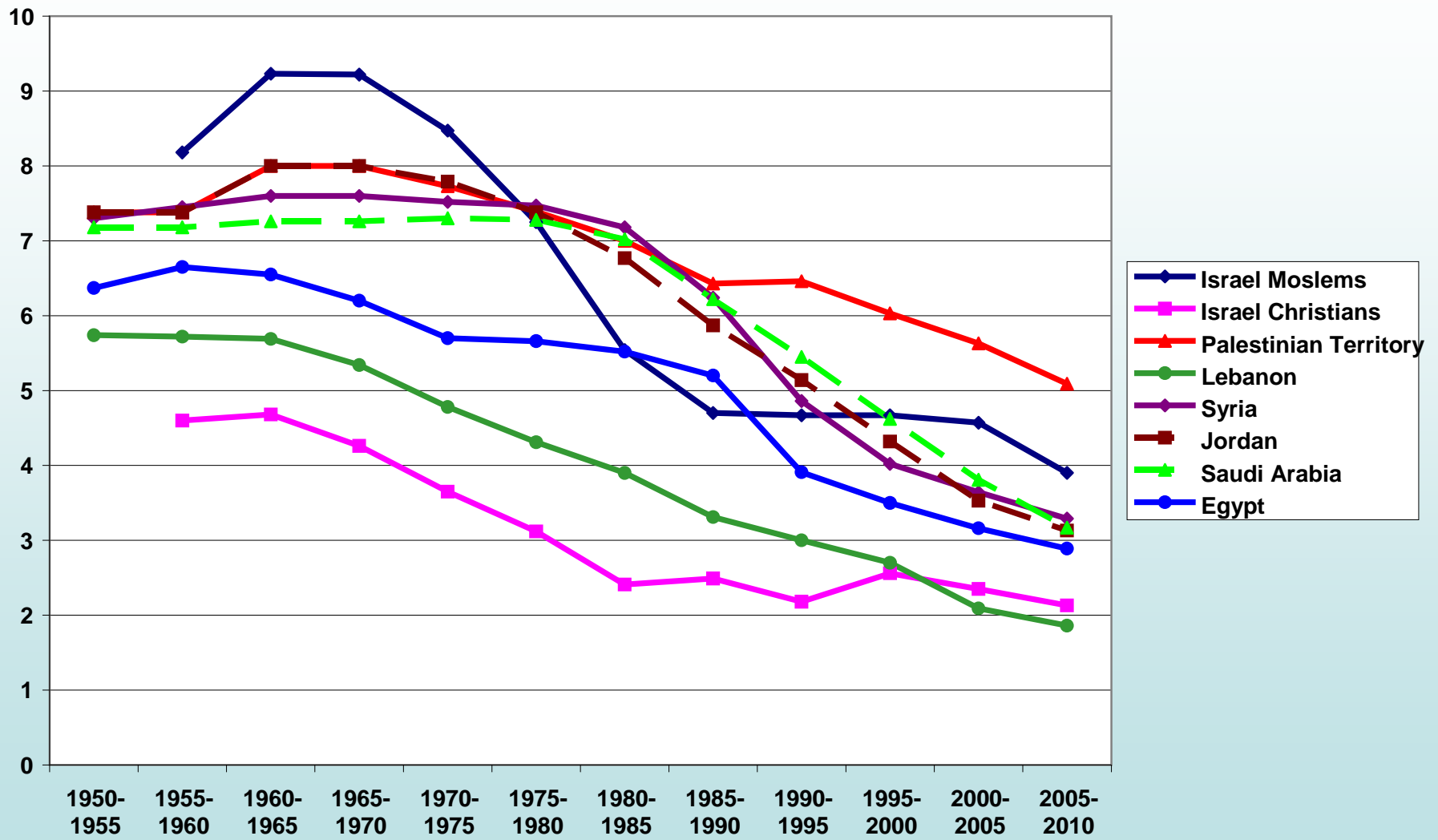
Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics.

Total fertility rates among Jews – Israel, Russia and the United States, 1947-2008



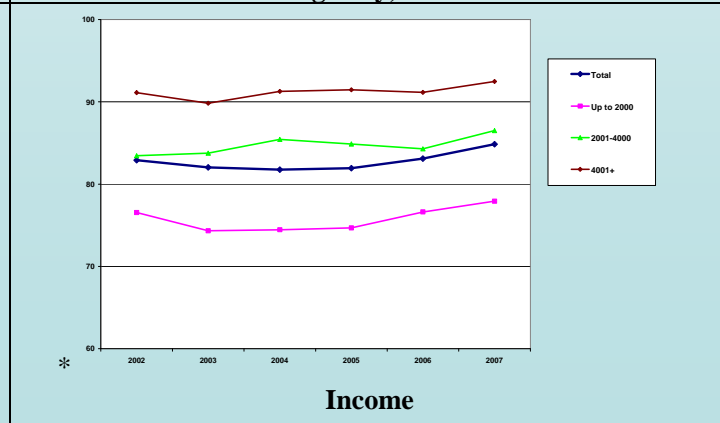
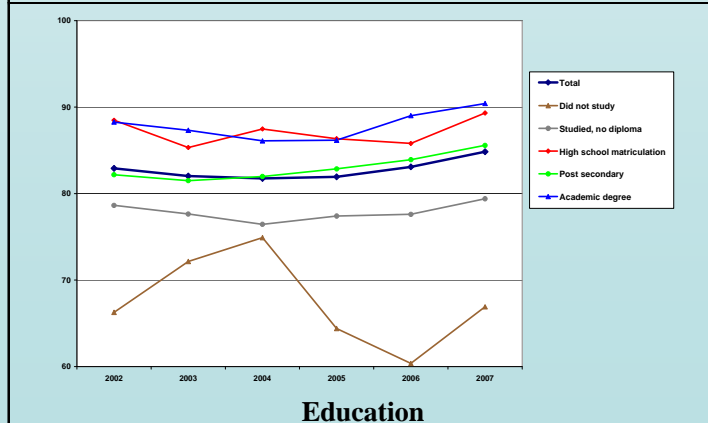
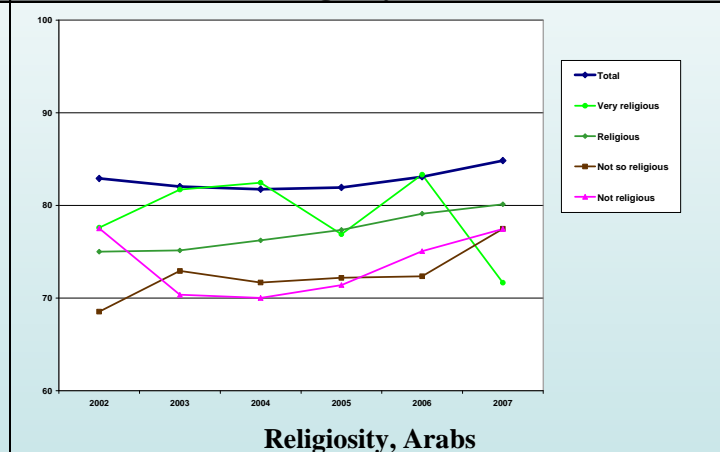
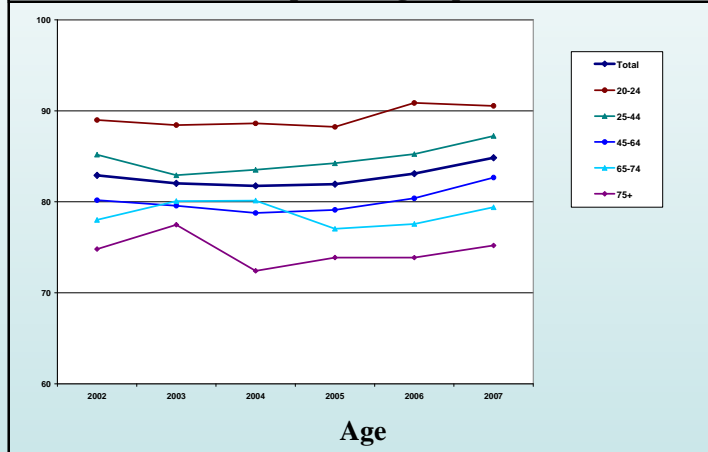
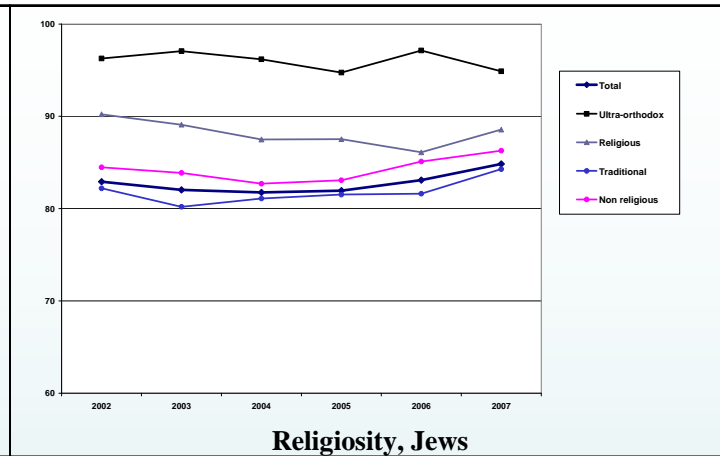
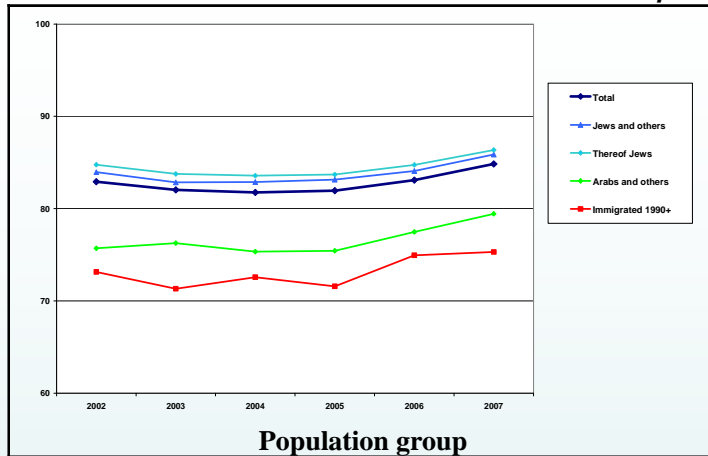
Source: Central Bureau of Statistics; United Nations, Population Division (2008); DellaPergola, 2009; Tolts, 2008

Total fertility rates among Muslims and Christians in Israel, Palestinian Territory and neighboring countries – 1955-2010



Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics; United Nations, Population Division (2008).

Percent satisfied with life, by selected population characteristics – Israel, 2002-2007



Family Size Preferences of Married Jewish Women – Israel, 1974-2005

Number of children	1974-75 ^a	1988 ^b	2005 ^c	
	Total	Total	Total	Without Haredim ^d
Currently born		2.5	2.5	2.3
Personally intended	3.8	3.5	4.1	3.5
Most appropriate for an Israeli family of social status same as respondent's		3.4	4.0	3.8
Ideal for an Israeli family	4.3	3.7	4.1	3.6

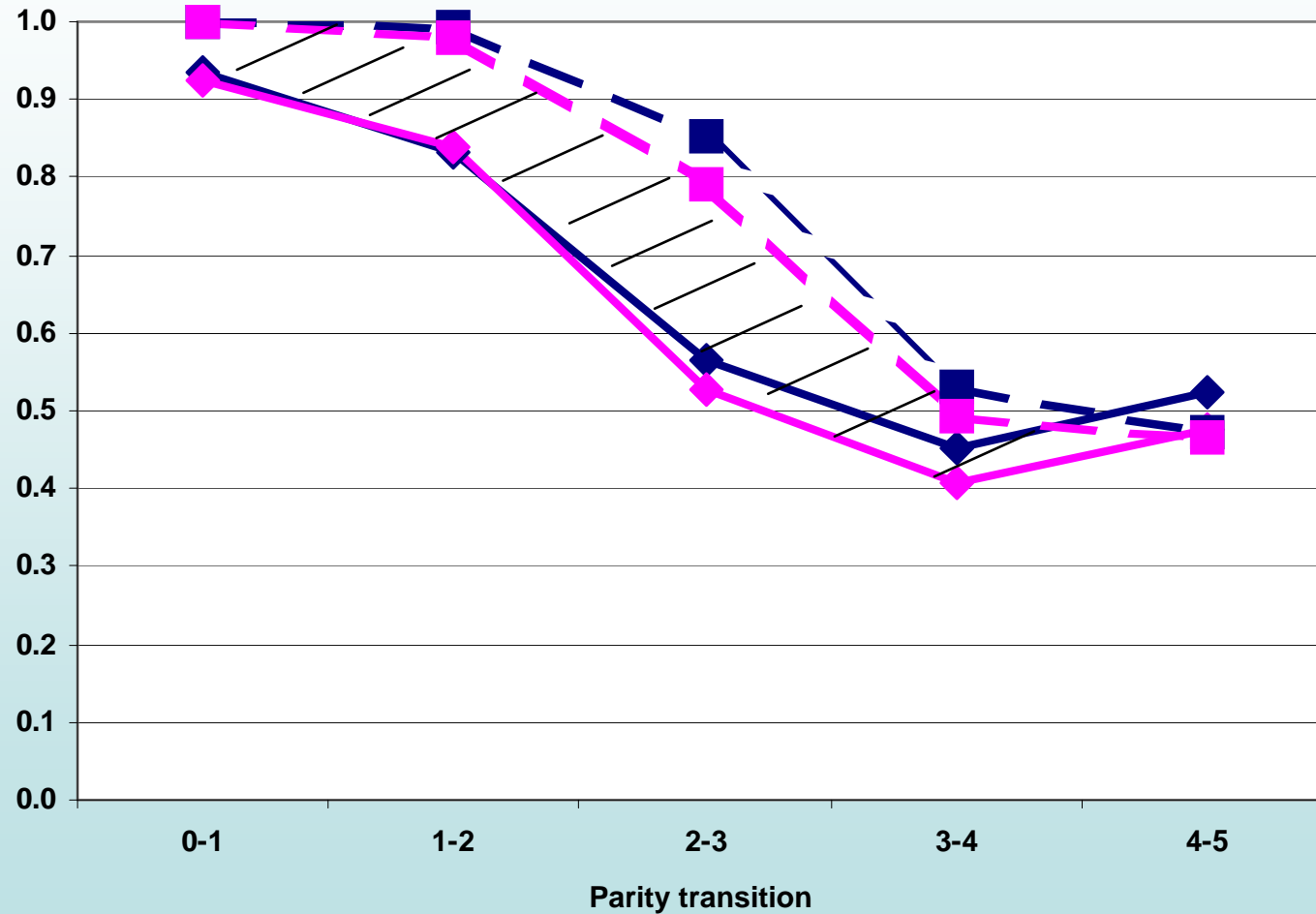
a Source: Goldscheider and Friedlander (1986).

b Source: Kupinsky (1992b).

c Source: *Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Family Size among Israel's Jewish Population, 2005*.

d Very religious, residentially concentrated.

ACTUAL AND INTENDED PARITY TRANSITIONS ISRAEL, MARRIED JEWS, 2005



—◆— Women actual —◆— Men actual -■- Women intended -■- Men intended

NUMBER OF INTENDED^a VS. APPROPRIATE^b CHILDREN AMONG CURRENTLY MARRIED^c JEWS - ISRAEL, 2005

Gender and age	Number of Intended vs. Appropriate Children							Total	N
	Same				Different				
	0-2 ^d	3 ^d	4 ^d	5+ ^d	I < A ^e	I > A ^f			
Women, 25-45	12	25	11	16	8	28	100	975	
Men, 25-50	14	26	11	11	15	22	100	481	
Women % difference	-14	-4	=	+45	-47	+27	=		

- a. Sum of total number of children born so far plus total additional children expected.
- b. Number of children most appropriate for family with standard of living same as respondent's.
- c. Including non-married persons in stable couple relations.
- d. Same number of children Intended and Appropriate.
- e. Number of children Appropriate 3, 4, or 5, and fewer children Intended.
- f. Number of children Appropriate 2, 3, or 4, and more children Intended.

Source: *Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Family Size among Israel's Jewish Population, 2005*

Measures of fertility by self-assessed religiosity – Currently married Jews, Israel, 2005

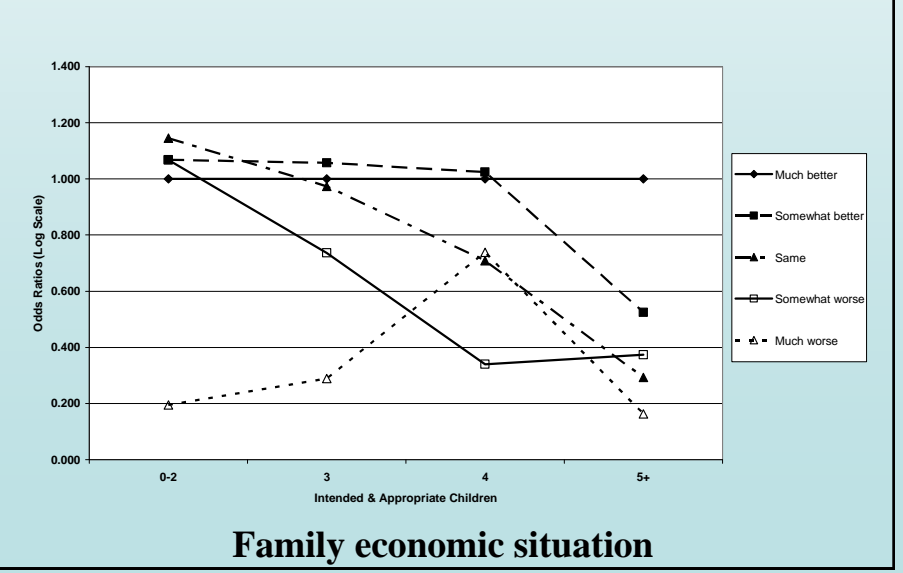
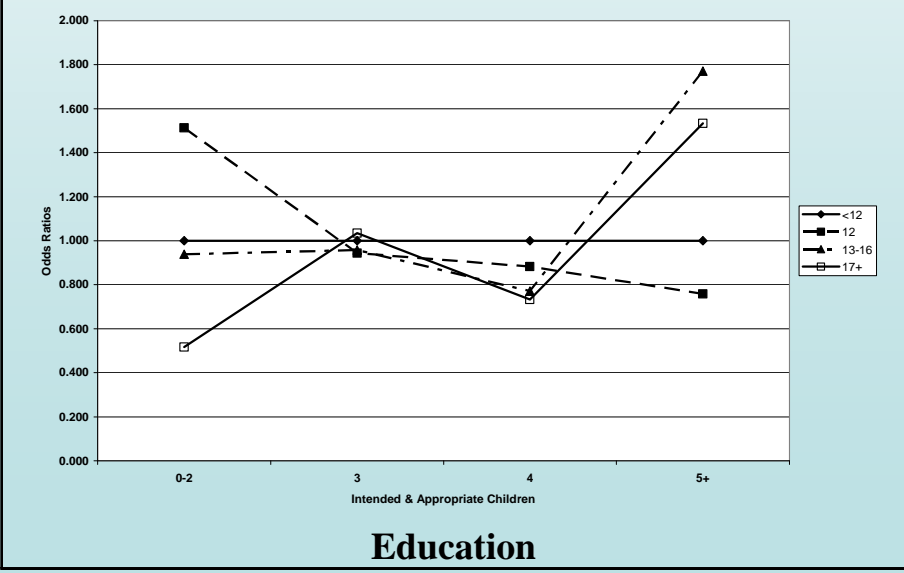
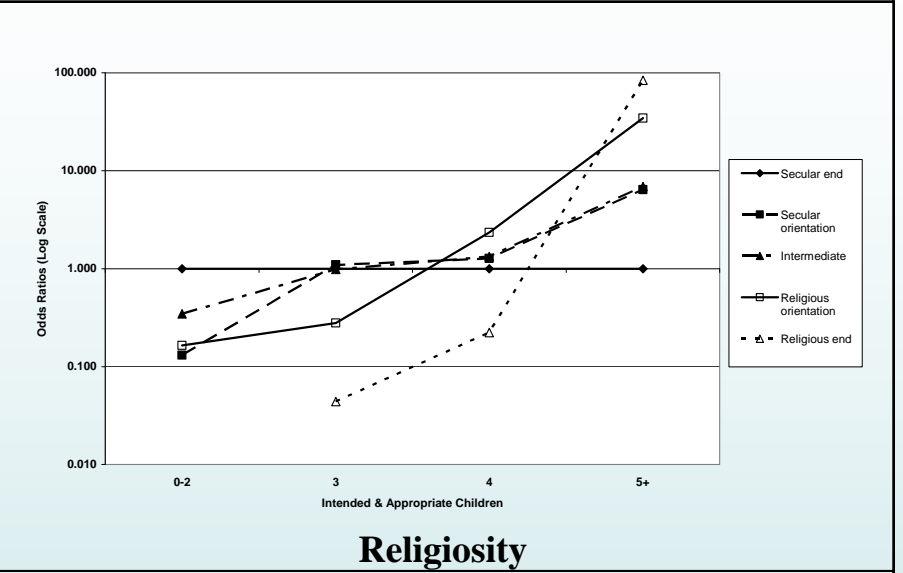
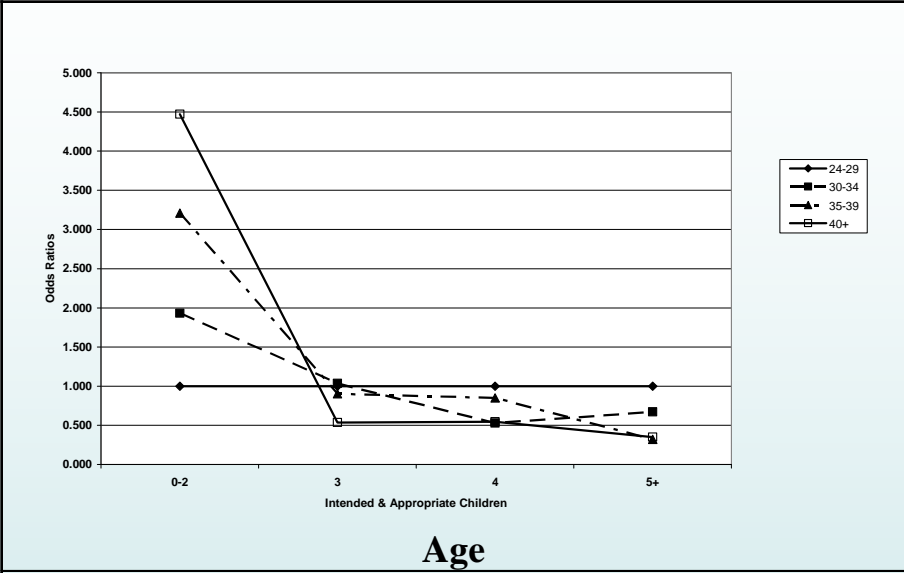
Religiosity self-assessment ^a	Current children		Intended children	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Total	2.54	2.45	4.11	3.74
Religious end	4.69	4.24	8.76	8.77
Religious	3.78	(3.05) ^b	7.08	6.94
Religious orientation	3.21	3.74	5.37	5.04
Intermediate	2.77	2.94	3.99	4.23
Secular orientation	2.27	2.36	3.53	3.64
Secular	1.98	2.05	3.07	3.04
Secular end	1.72	2.00	2.82	2.66

a. Cross-classification of normative and behavioral self assessments (reduction of 4 x 4 table).

b. Less than 20 cases.

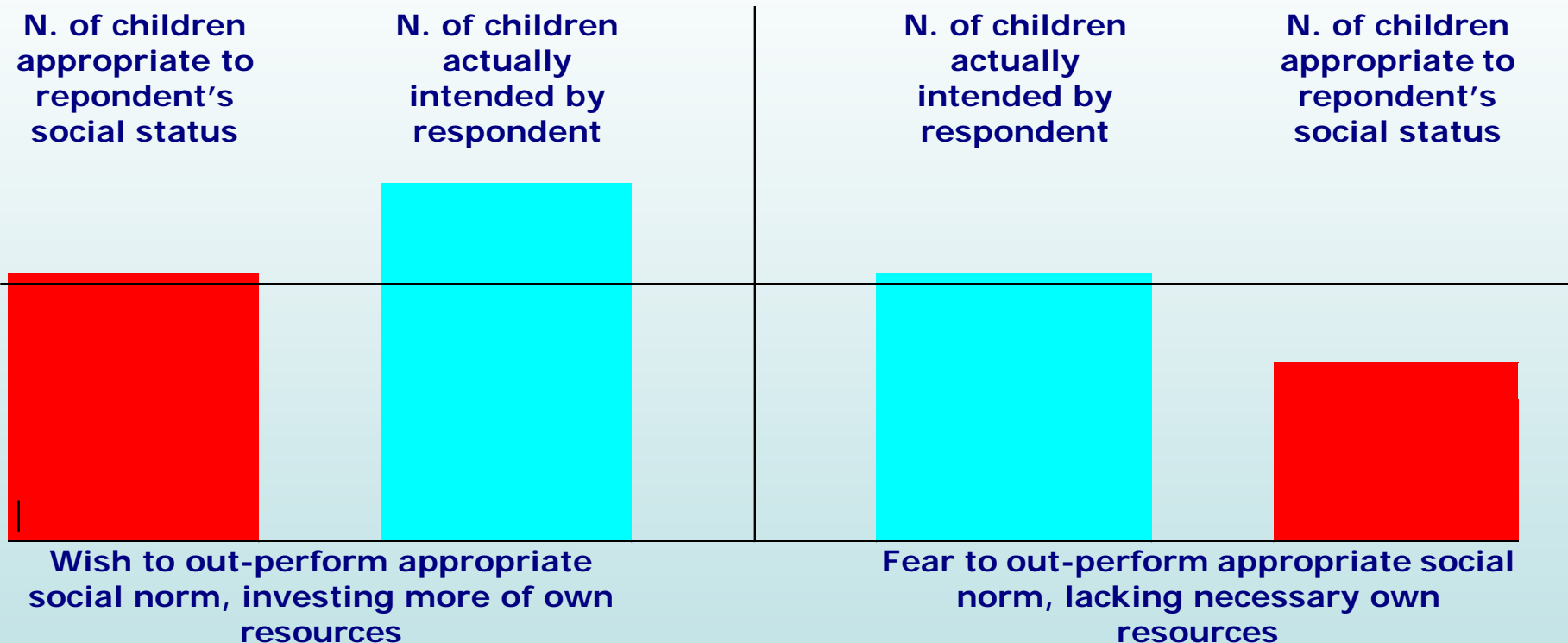
Source: *Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Family Size among Israel's Jewish Population 2005*

Logistic regression odd ratios for selected characteristics of Jewish couples with consistent intended and appropriate n. of children – Israel, 2005

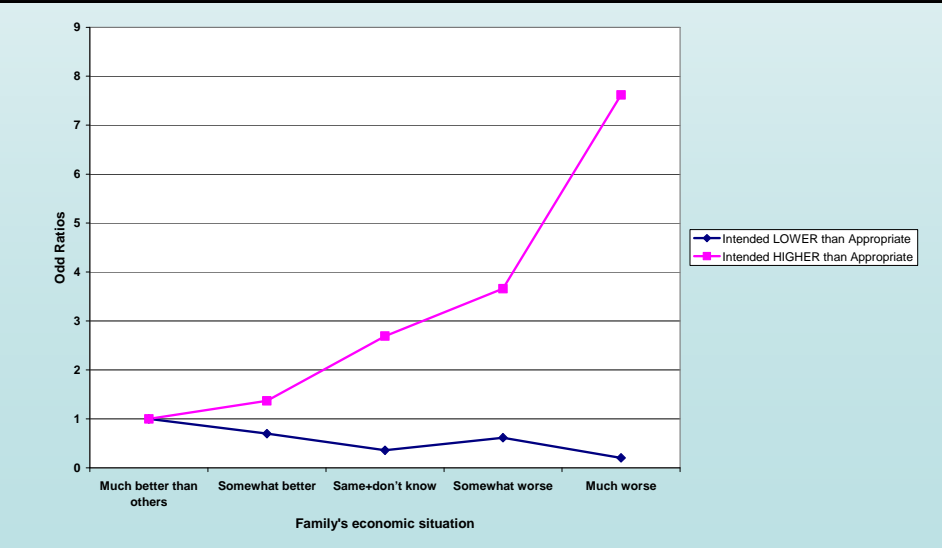
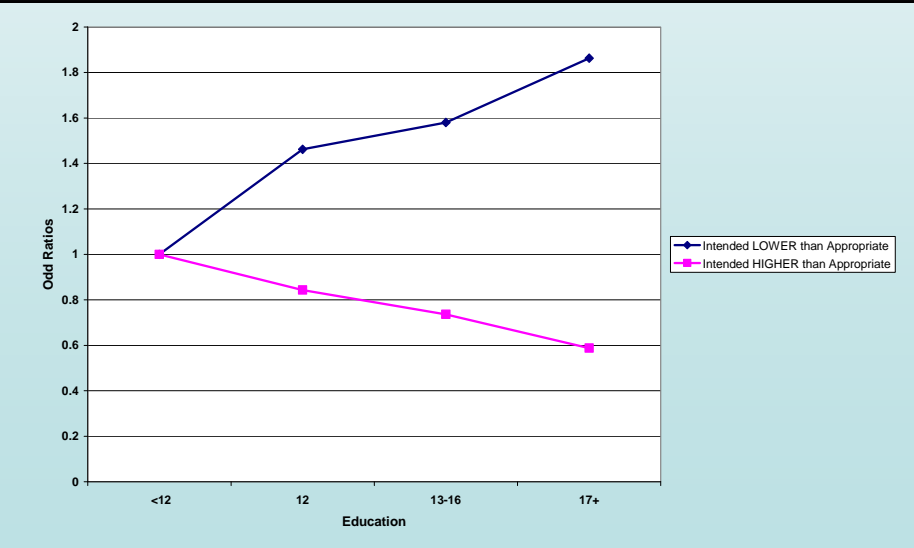
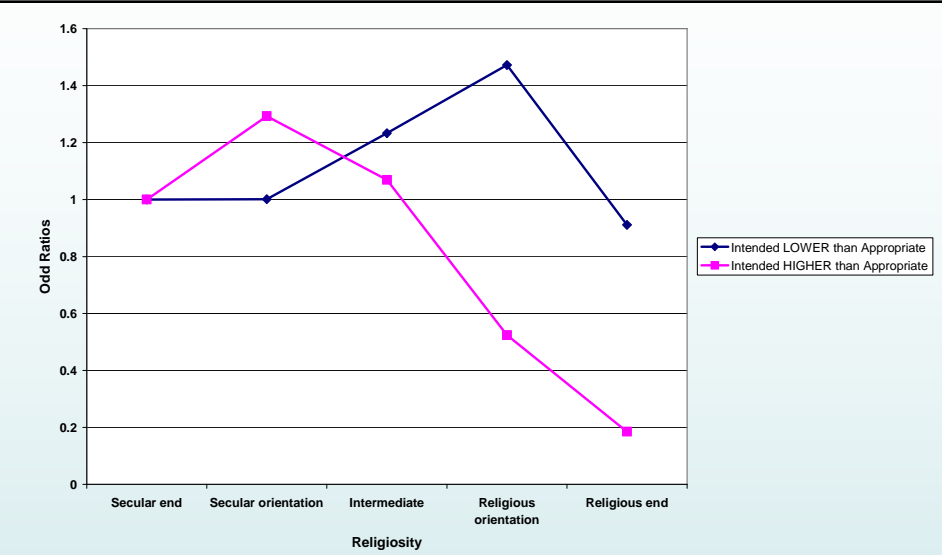
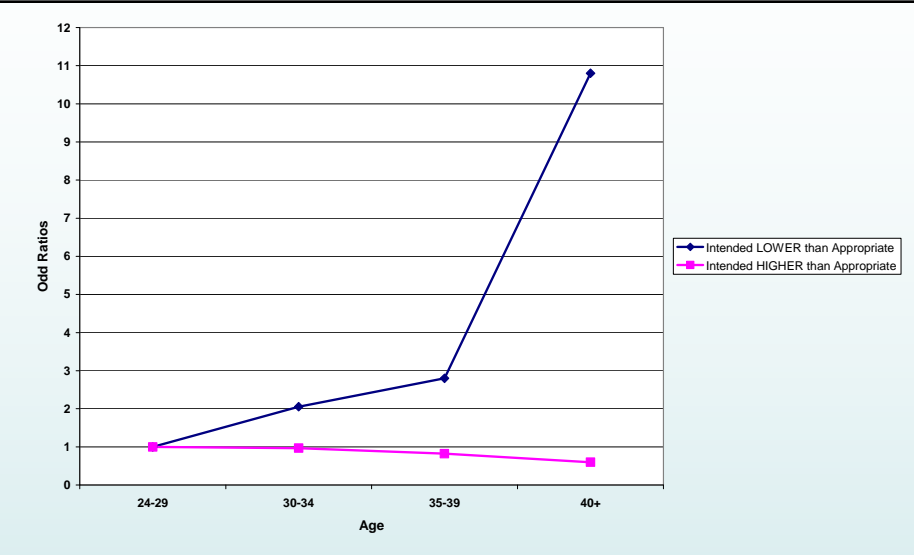


Source: Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Family Size among Israel's Jewish Population, 2005

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS OF INCONSISTENCIES: INTENDED > APPROPRIATE TOTAL CHILDREN

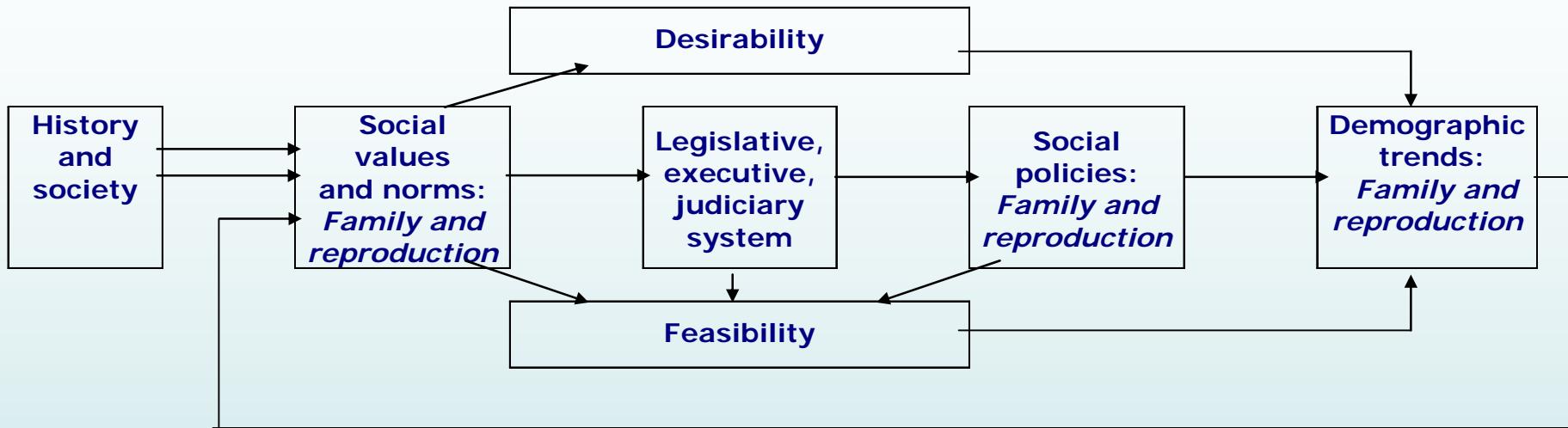


Logistic regression odd ratios for selected characteristics of Jewish couples with inconsistent intended and appropriate n. of children – Israel, 2005



Source: Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Family Size among Israel's Jewish Population, 2005

DIRECT AND INDIRECT SOCIETAL ROLES OF VALUES AND NORMS AFFECTING FAMILY AND REPRODUCTION IN ISRAEL



Main factor affecting having one additional child above number intended – Currently married Jewish women, Israel, 2005

Factors	Number of Intended vs. Appropriate Children						
	Same				Different		Total
	0-2	3	4	5+	I < A	I > A	
Response rate, %	47	82	80	70	70	83	78
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Early childhood care	44	27	24	11	33	31	28
Child education	10	9	8	7	10	14	10
Woman employment	17	22	16	14	19	15	18
Housing	10	13	19	11	10	18	14
Money transfers	2	3	2	16	2	6	5
Tax exemptions	7	6	7	5	0	4	5
Fertility treatment	1	1	4	6	4	2	3
Good to children	8	19	20	30	23	10	17

Source: *Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Family Size among Israel's Jewish Population, 2005*

- **Our survey of fertility trends in Israel, beyond measurement, has focused on the cultural and socioeconomic context and causality of family formation.**
- **Two main conclusions emerge – one of method and one of substance.**

- Israeli society includes **population groups less prone to social change**, whose fertility is high and whose share of total population consequently tends to grow. These groups swallow the weighted average of national fertility levels and slow down fertility decline.
- **The analytic imperative** is not to consider Israel society as one demographic bloc but a conglomerate of different sub-populations. **In population projections**, after disaggregating society into its components, **separate paths of change need to be considered**. Different schedules should be developed for different sub-populations later reconstituting the total.

- The evidence reviewed points to a **conservative pattern of family formation in spite of substantial societal change at the micro- and macro-level**. Children are still a much wanted good. While often under stress, Israeli society and its major sub-populations display resilience.
- Under the hopefully realistic assumption that no major security-related disruption would occur, the unique interplay of **ideational and social structural** options and constraints in Israel likely leads to **continuing relatively high and stable fertility levels** in the foreseeable future.