Fertility Prospects in the Arab Region

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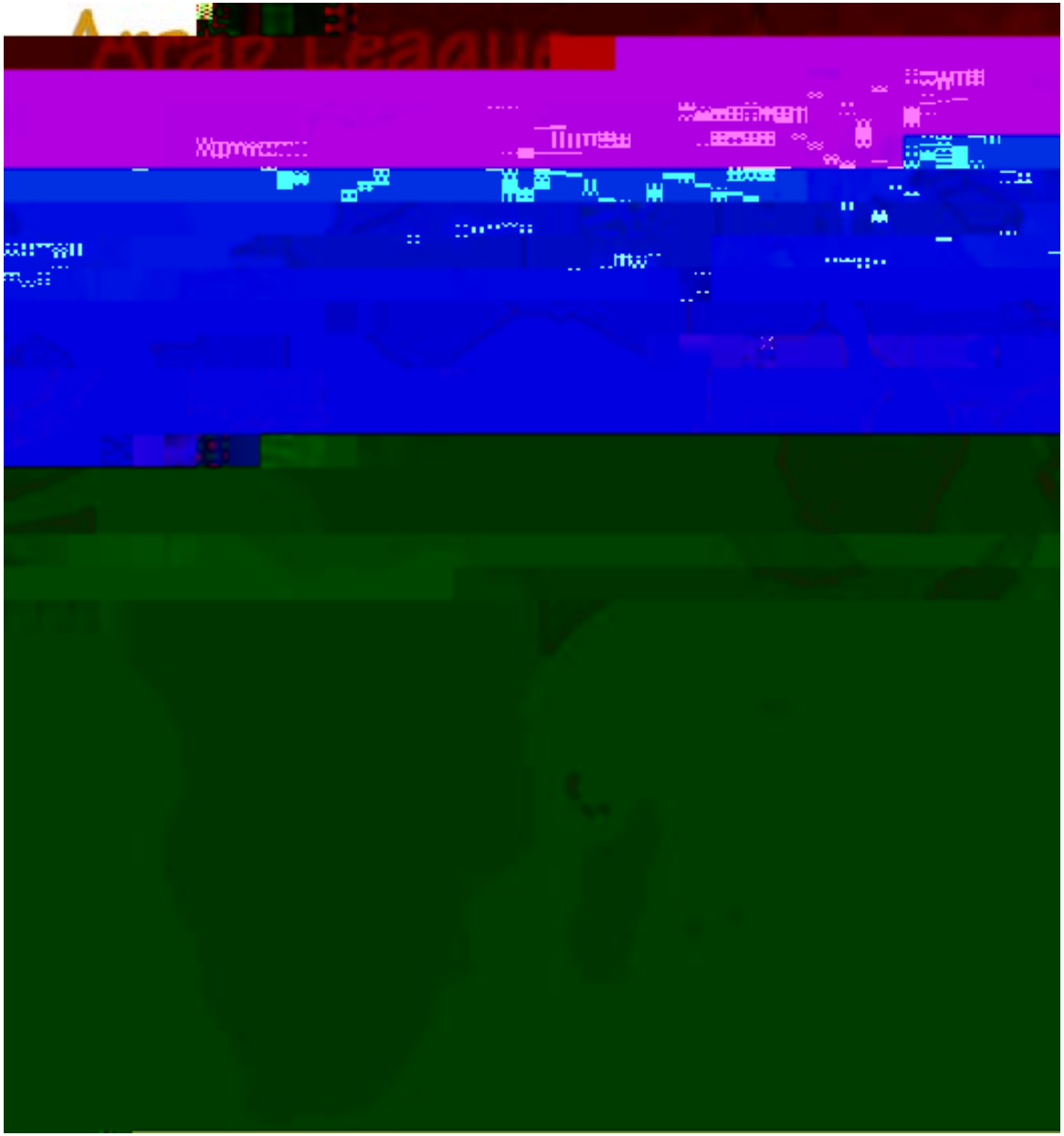
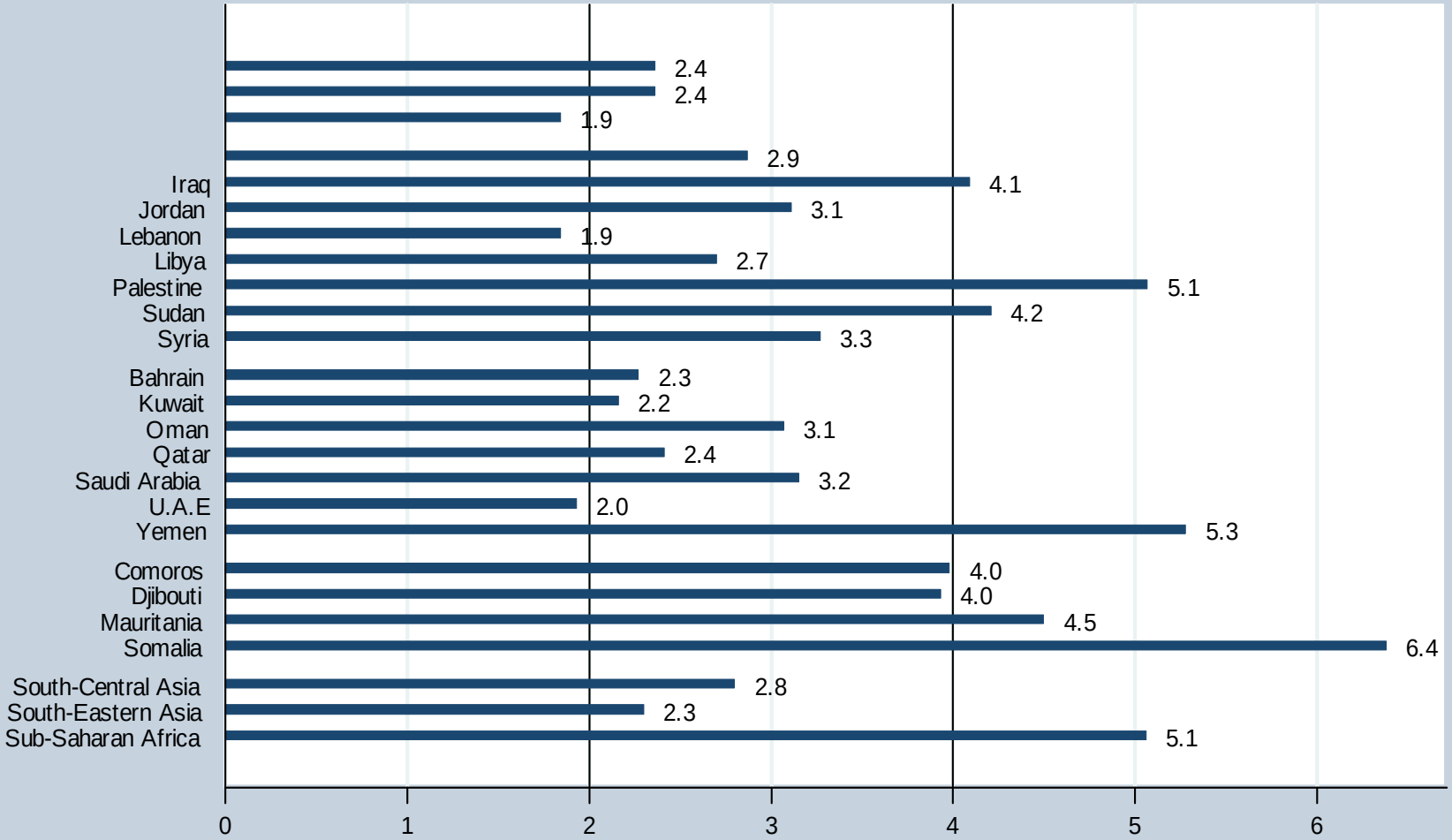
Table 1. Arab Region: Current Population Size (2009), and Availability of Survey Data

Country	*Population Size (millions)*	*Most Recent Survey*	
		Date	*Program*
Algeria	34.9	2002	PAPFAM
Morocco	32.0	2003	DHS/PAPFAM
Tunisia	10.3	2001	PAPFAM
Total	***77.2***		
Egypt	83.0	2008	DHS
Iraq	30.7	-	
Jordan	6.3	2007	DHS
Lebanon	4.2	2004	PAPFAM
Libya	6.4	2007	PAPFAM *
Palestine	4.3	2006-07	PAPFAM *
Sudan	42.3	2006	PAPFAM *
Syria	21.9	2001	PAPFAM
Total	***199.1***		
Bahrain	0.8	-	
Kuwait	3.0	-	
Oman	2.8	-	
Qatar	1.4	-	
Saudi Arabia	25.7	-	
U.A.E	4.6	-	
Yemen	23.6	2003	PAPFAM
Total	***61.9***		
Comoros	0.7	1996	DHS
Djibouti	0.9	2002	PAPFAM
Mauritania	3.3	-	
Somalia	9.1	-	
Total	***14.0***		
Arab Total	***352.2***		




2.4
2.4
1.9
2.9
Iraq
4.1
Jordan
3.1
Lebanon
1.9
Libya
2.7
Palestine
5.1
Sudan
4.2
Syria
3.3
Bahrain
2.3
Kuwait
2.2
Oman
3.1
Qatar
2.4
Saudi Arabia
3.2
U.A.E
2.0
Yemen
5.3
Comoros
4.0
Djibouti
4.0
Mauritania
4.5
Somalia
6.4
South-Central Asia
2.8
South-Eastern Asia
2.3
Sub-Saharan Africa
5.1
0
1
2
3
4
5
6

Fertility Decline to Date in Arab Region

- Pre-decline fertility was higher than most other regions
- Majority of fertility decline has occurred since 1980-85
- Regional average (median) is 3.1 births per woman
- TFR < 2.5 in eight countries: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, and four Gulf states (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, U.A.E.)
- TFR > 4.0 in eight countries: Iraq, Palestine, Sudan, Yemen, Comoros, Djibouti, Mauritania, Somalia

Further Decline: Opportunities and Constraints

Will consider :

- Nuptiality [exposure

Nuptiality

Substantial changes in past few decades – sharp decline in percentage of women ever married before age 30.

Major contributor to fertility decline to date – roughly one-half

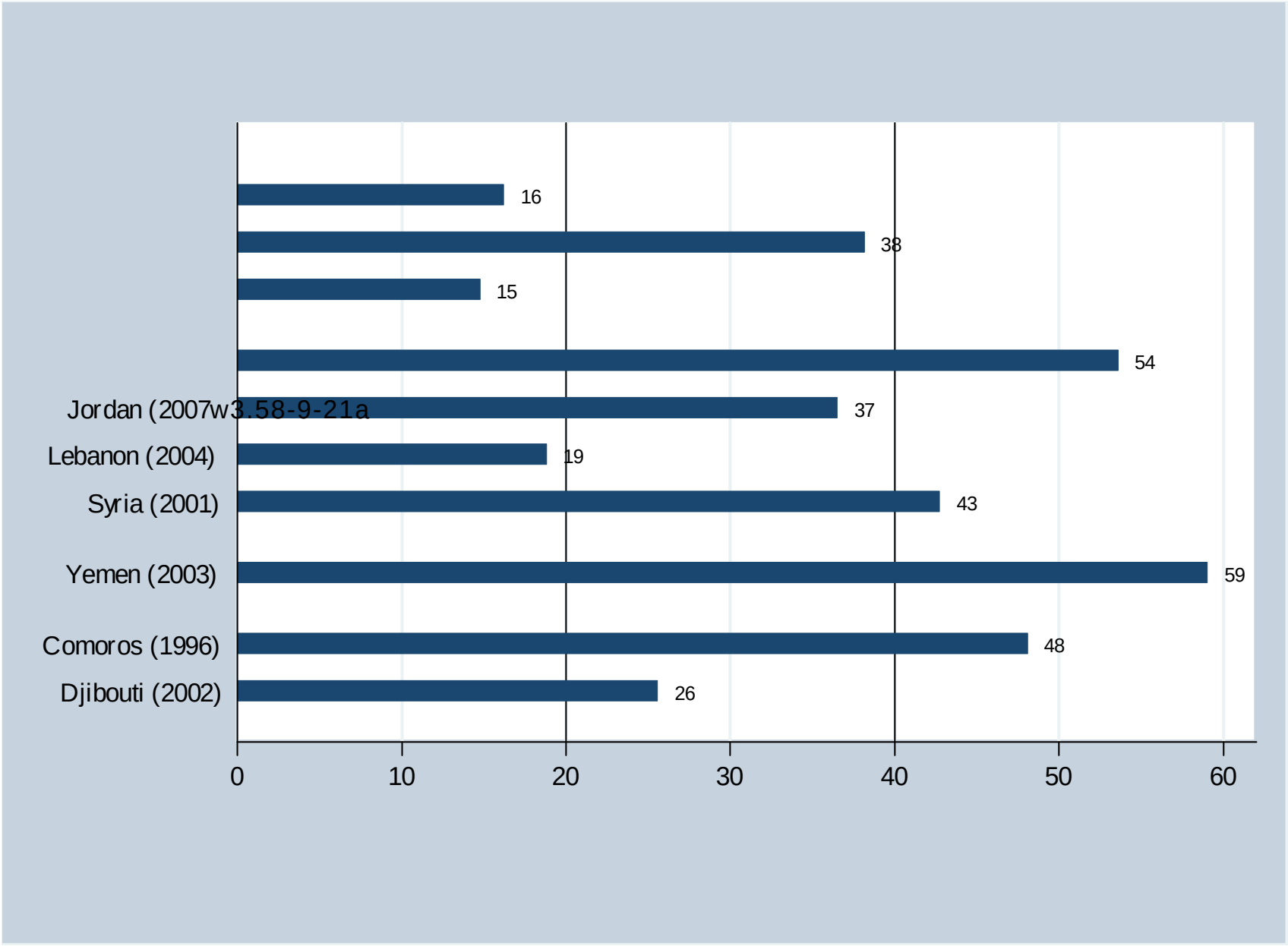
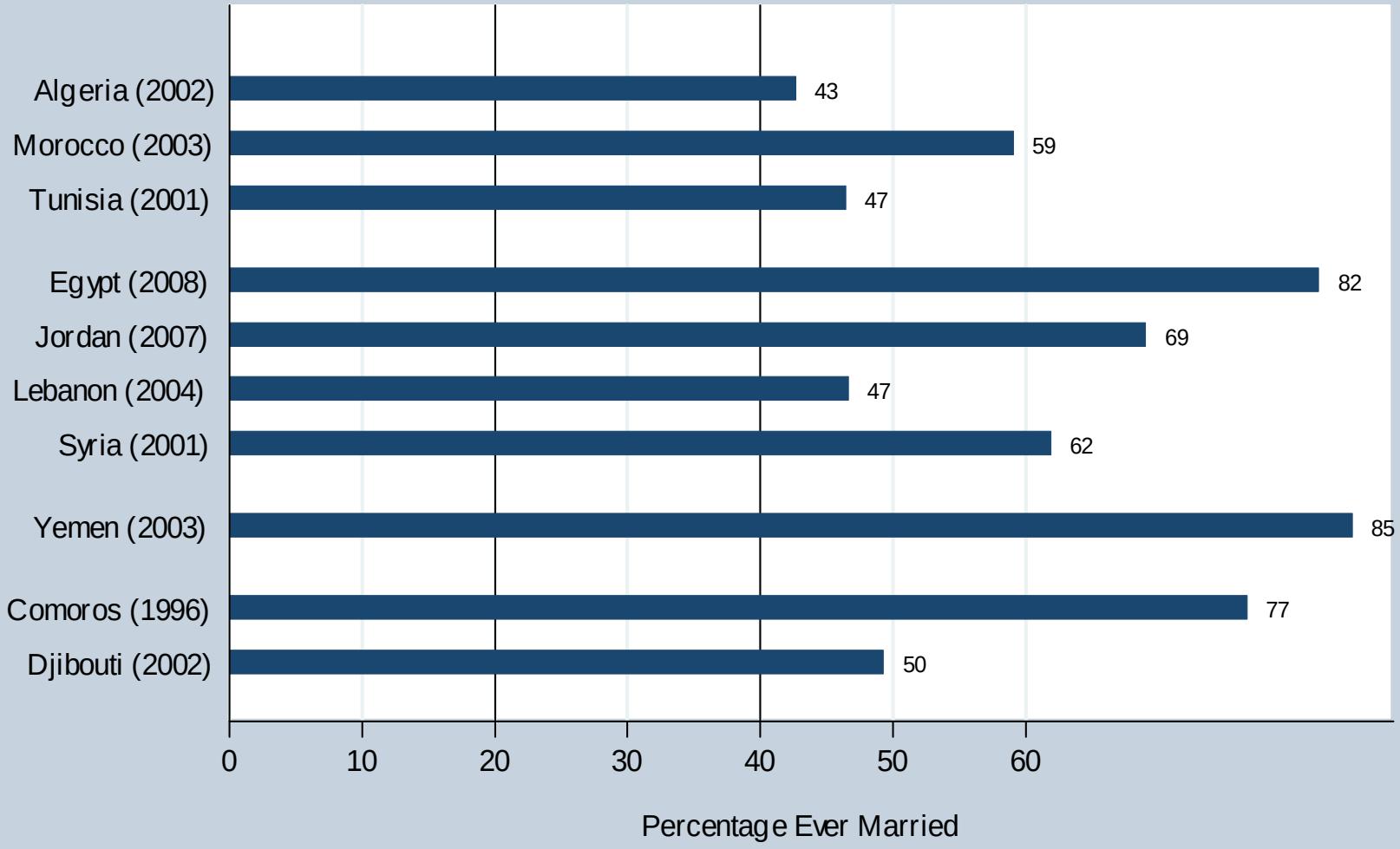

16
38
15
54
Jordan (2007w3.58-9-21a
37
Lebanon (2004)
19
Syria (2001)
43
Yemen (2003)
59
Comoros (1996)
48
Djibouti (2002)
26
0
10
20
30
40
50
60

Figure 2b: Percentage Ever Married, Women Aged 25-29



Source: DHS and PAPFAM surveys

Nuptiality: summary

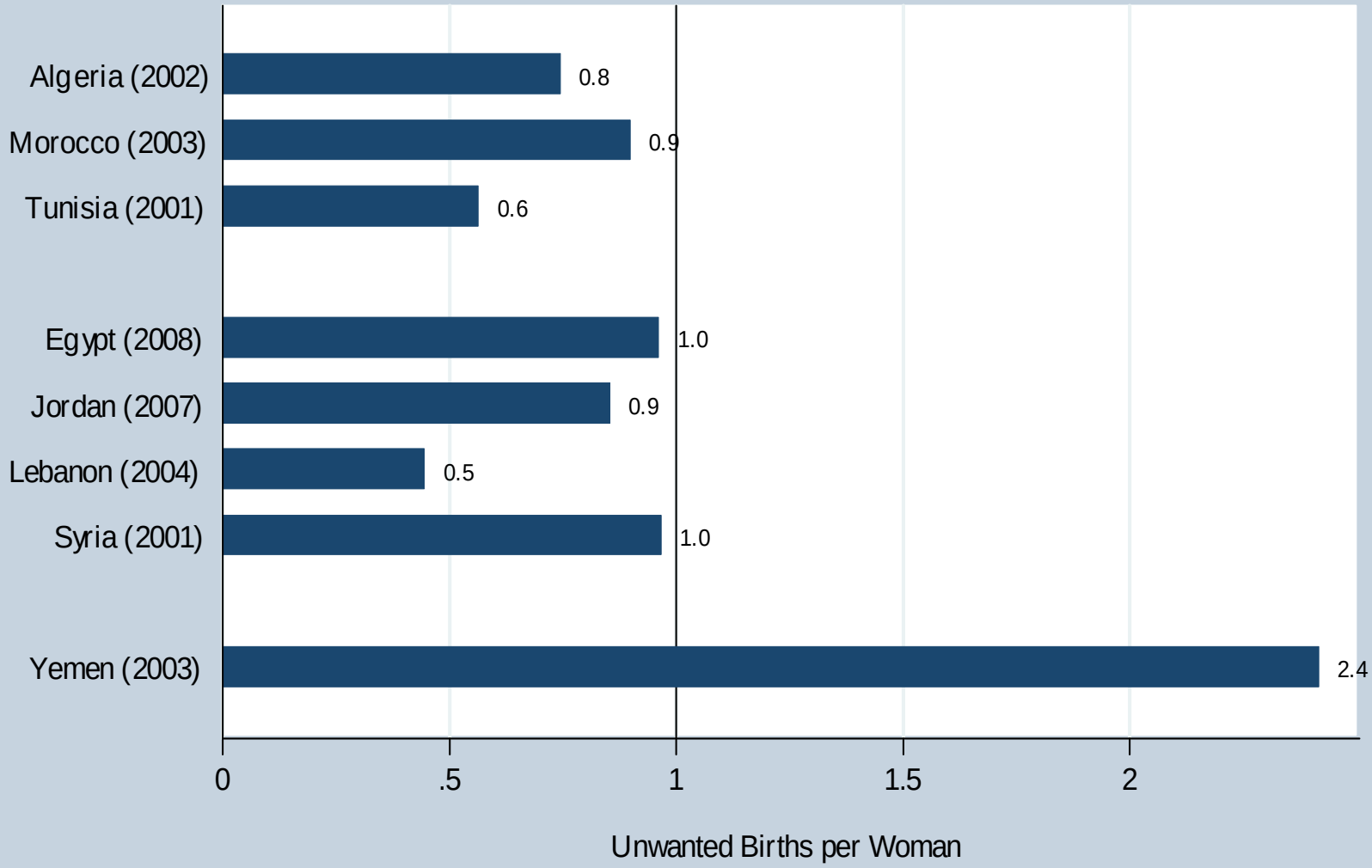
- Potential for nuptiality change to cause further fertility decline in many countries (Morocco, Egypt, Syria, Yemen).
- Late marriage or non-marriage?

Fertility Desires

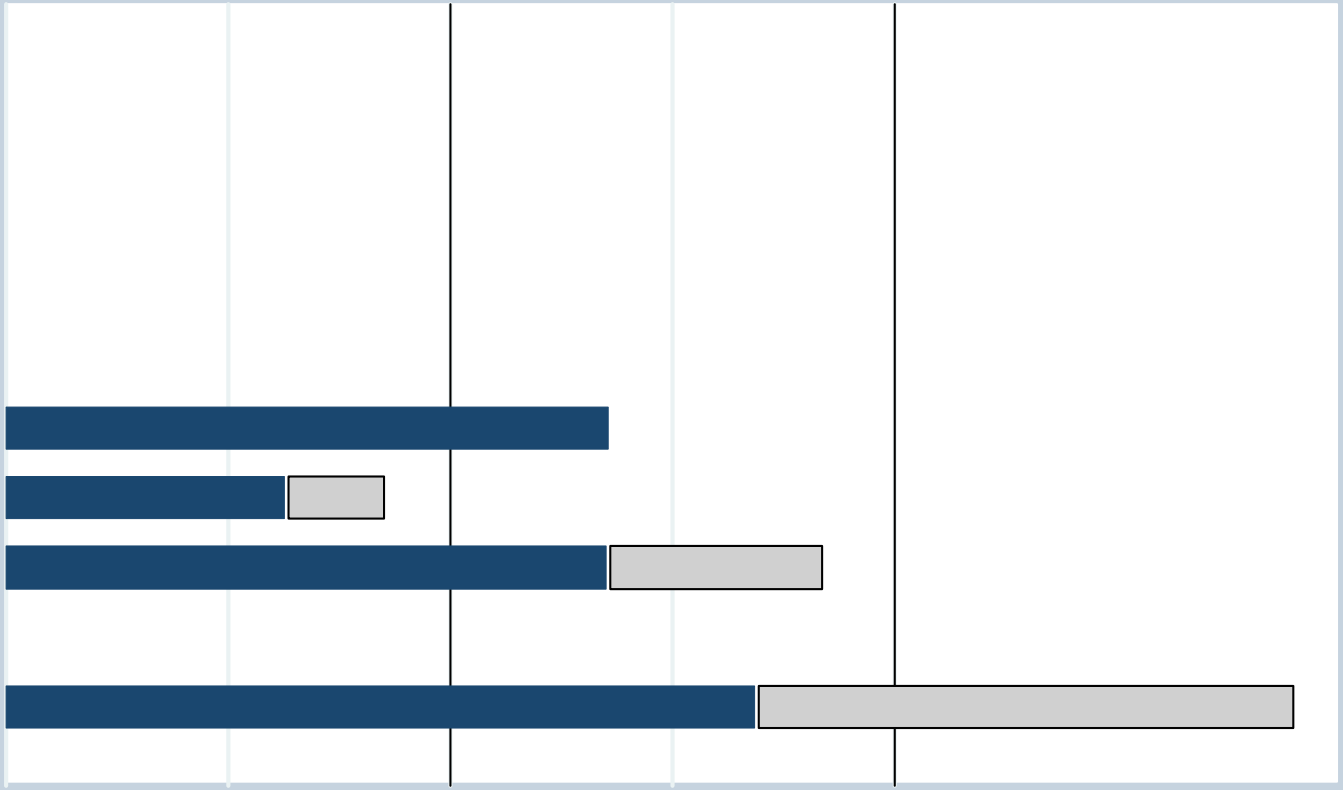
Will examine:

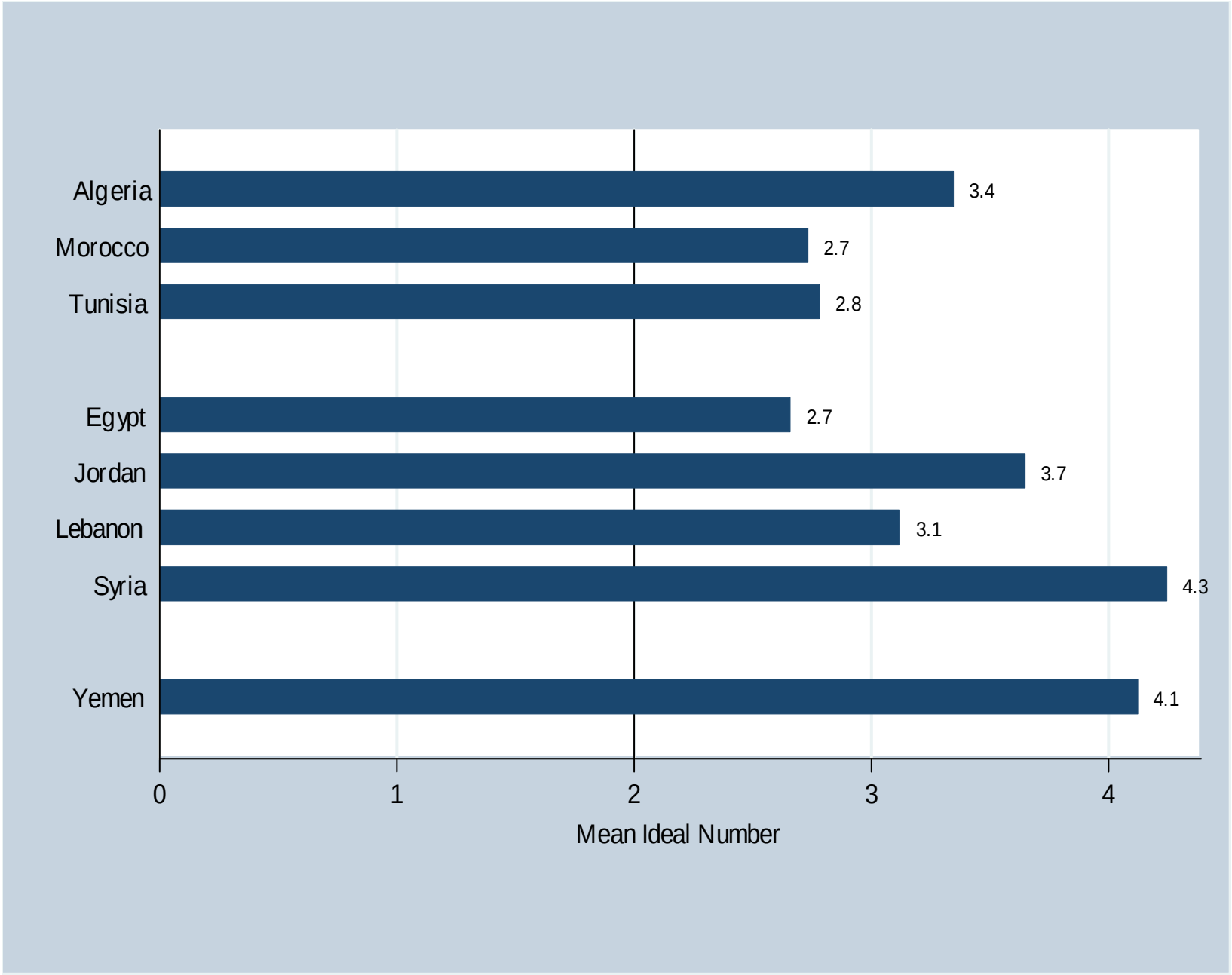
- Wanted and unwanted TFRs
- Ideal number of children
- Parity- and age-specific preferences

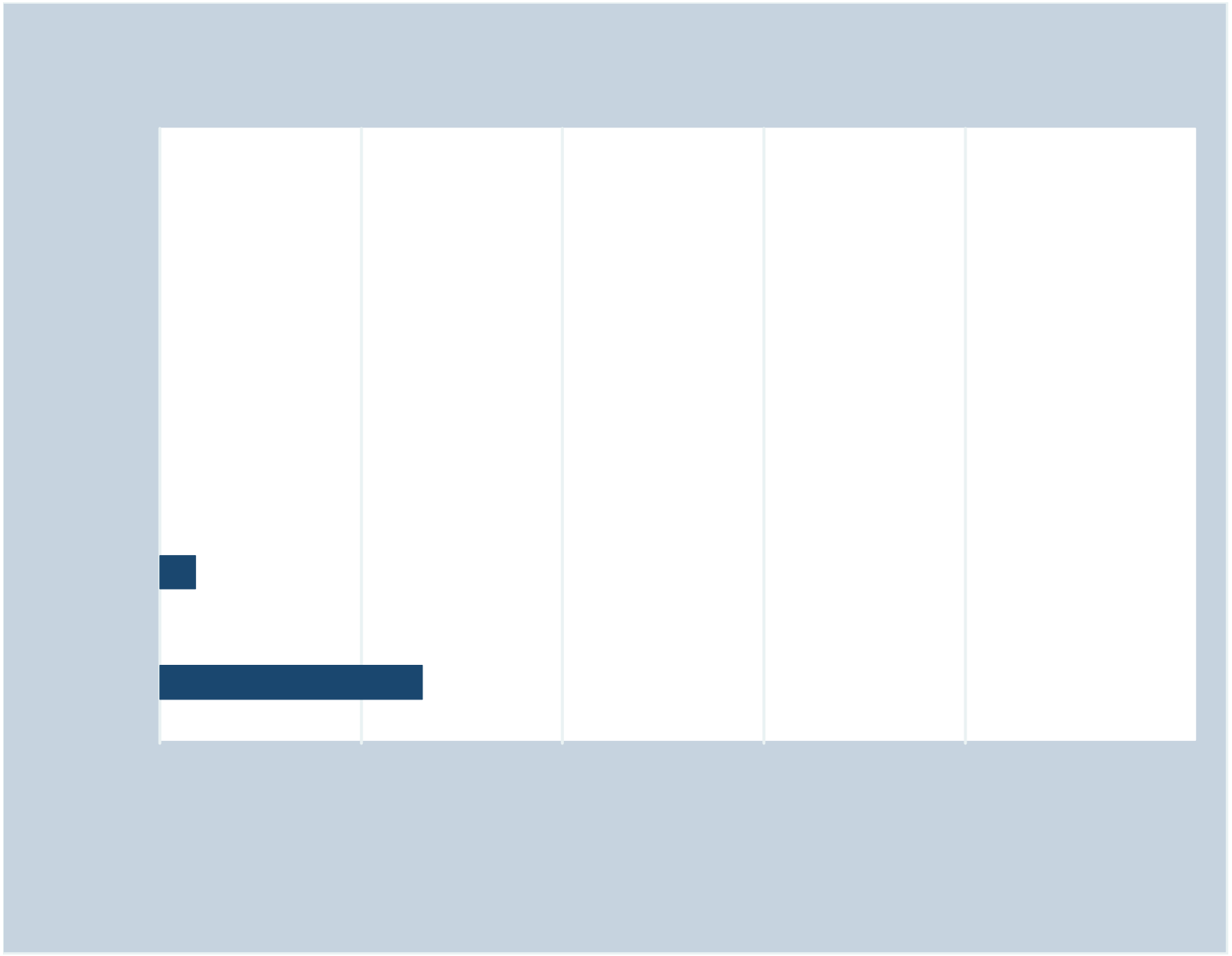
Figure 4: Unwanted Total Fertility Rate



Note: Aggregate Prospective estimates, births during 36 months before survey




Algeria
Morocco
Tunisia
Egypt
Jordan
Lebanon
Syria
Yemen
3.4
2.7
2.8
2.7
3.7
3.1
4.3
4.1
0
1
2
3
4
Mean Ideal Number



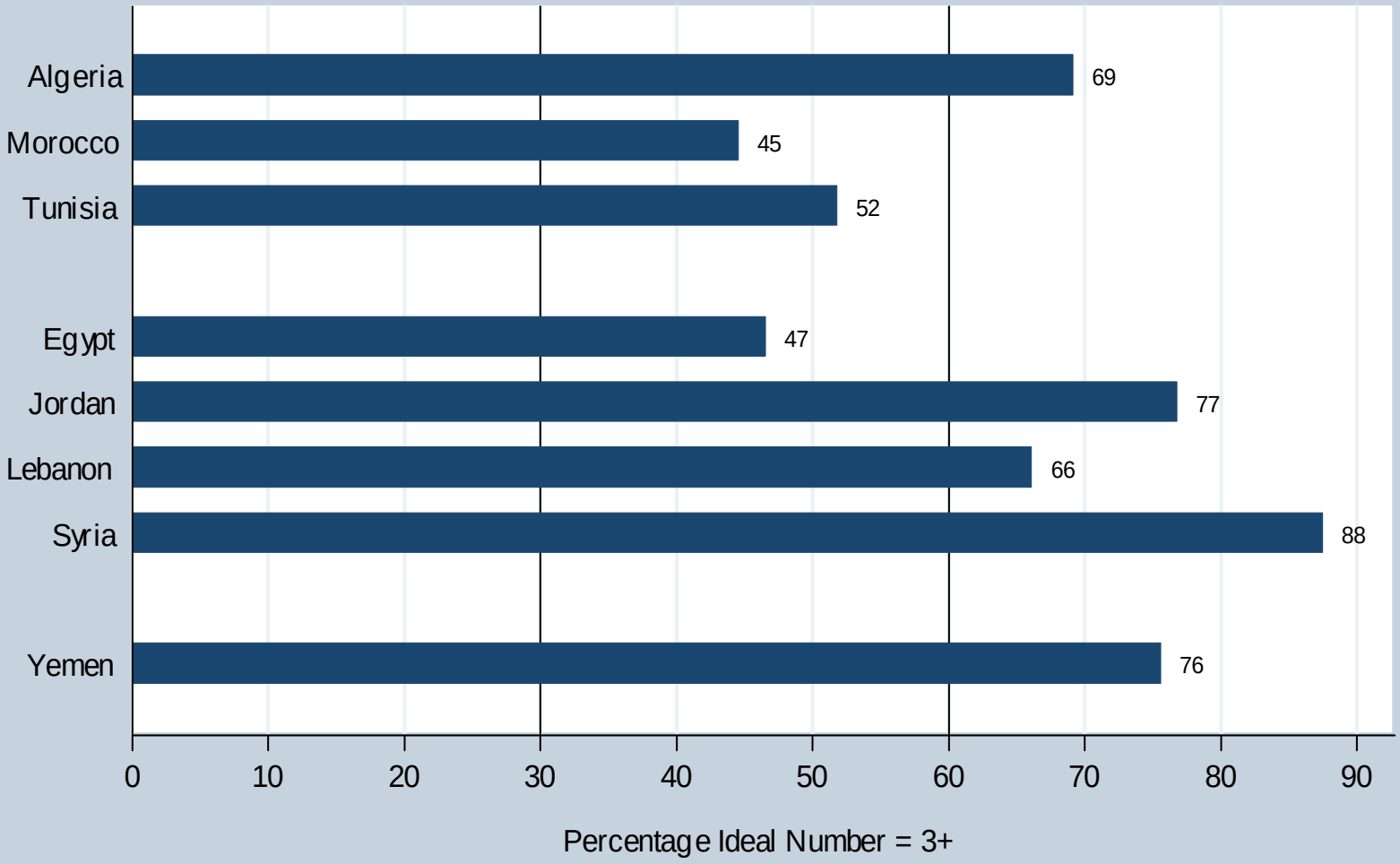
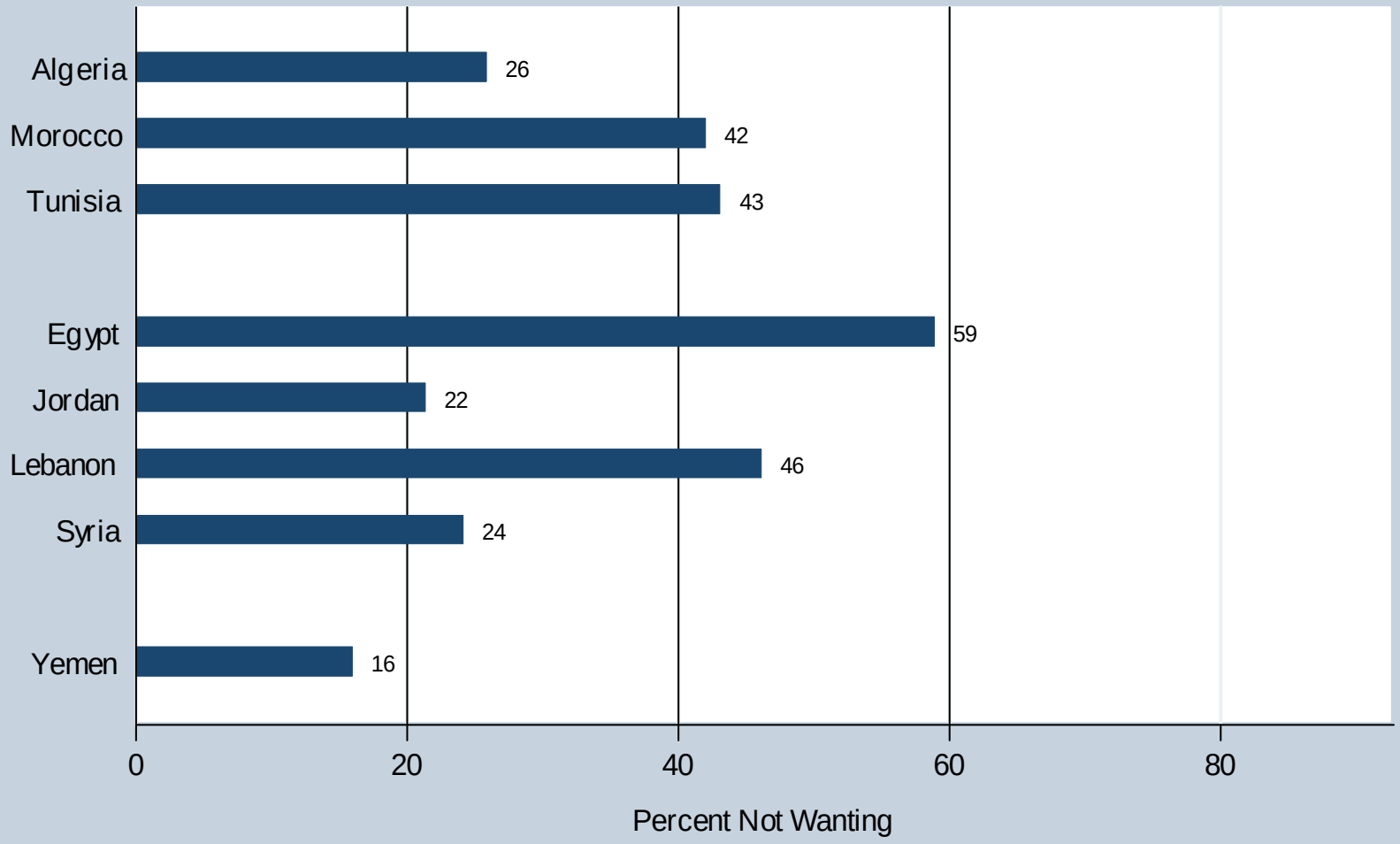
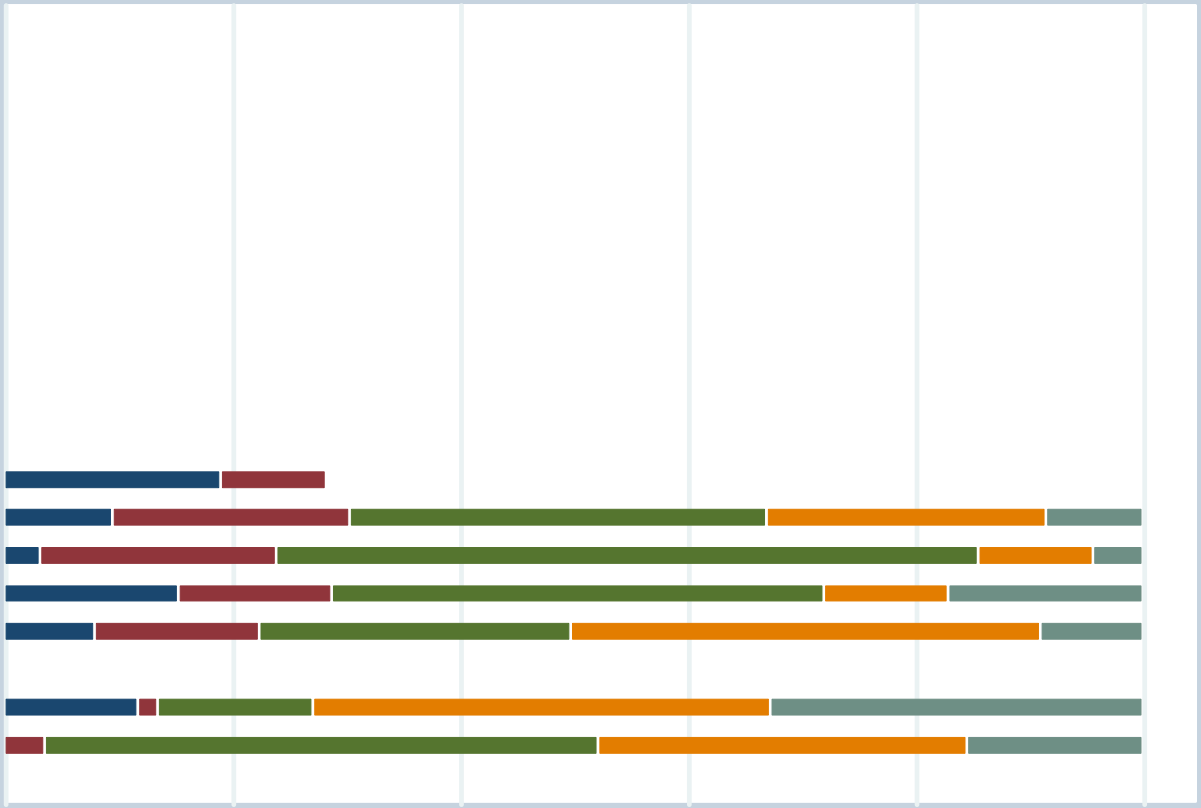

Algeria
Morocco
Tunisia
Egypt
Jordan
Lebanon
Syria
Yemen
69
45
52
47
77
66
88
76
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
Percentage Ideal Number = 3+

Figure 8a: Percentage Not Wanting Another Birth, Parity 2



Source: DHS and PAPFAM survey data



Concluding Comments

Significant, and possibly robust, factors acting against the achievement of low fertility in the short-term in the Arab region:

- Two-child norm is not firmly and widely established
- Neither sterilization nor induced abortion are generally available as methods of birth control

Arguing to the contrary – sharp changes in nuptiality, and the potential for further such change.

Will low fertility in the Arab region be achieved via non-marriage?

Should not assume that most countries in the region will follow the pathways of Lebanon and Tunisia . . .