

**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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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.

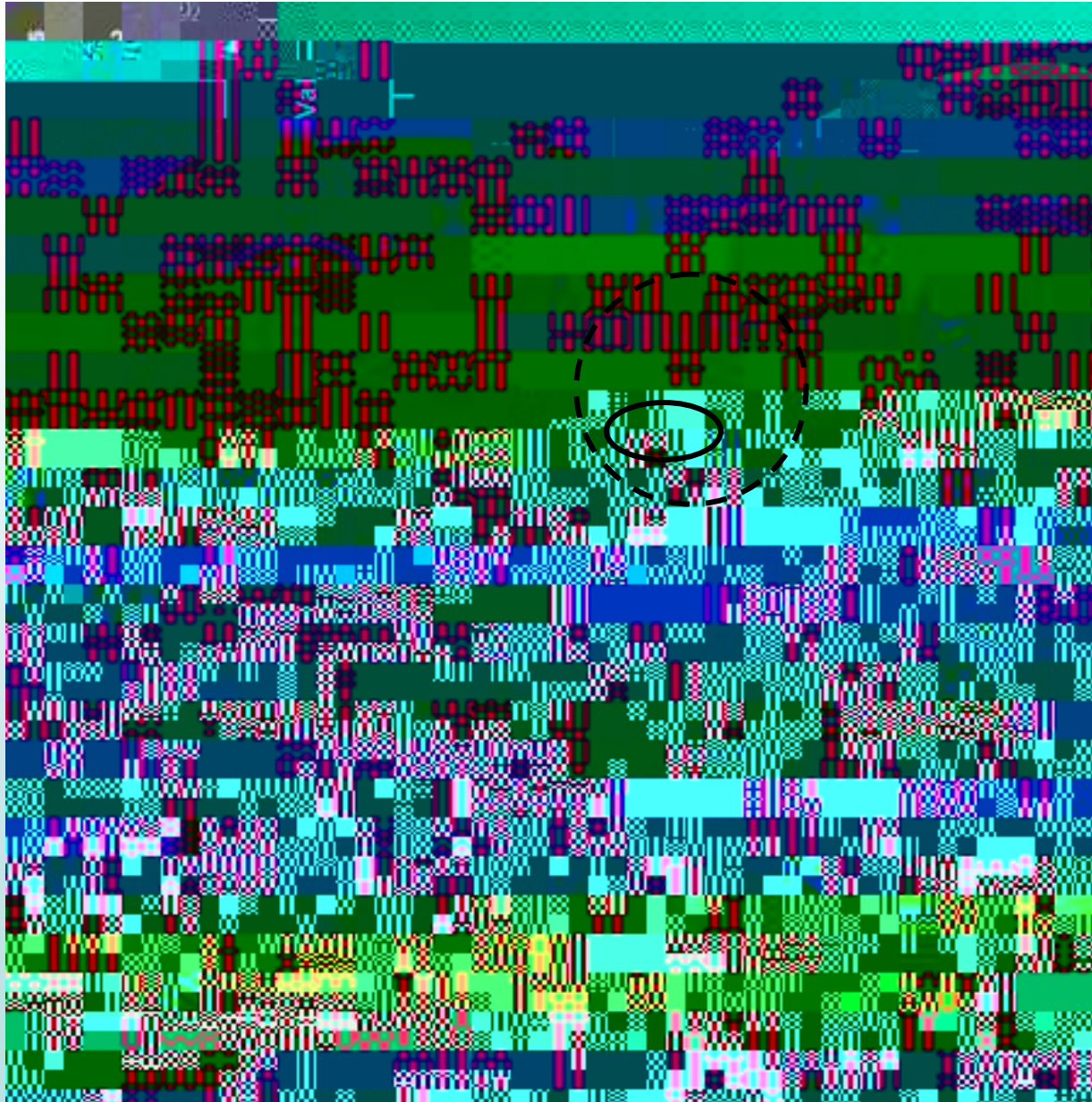
Hence the lead question: **ever below replacement level?**

One of the crucial analytic issues is whether relatively high levels of fertility essentially reflect the **failure to curb**

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.

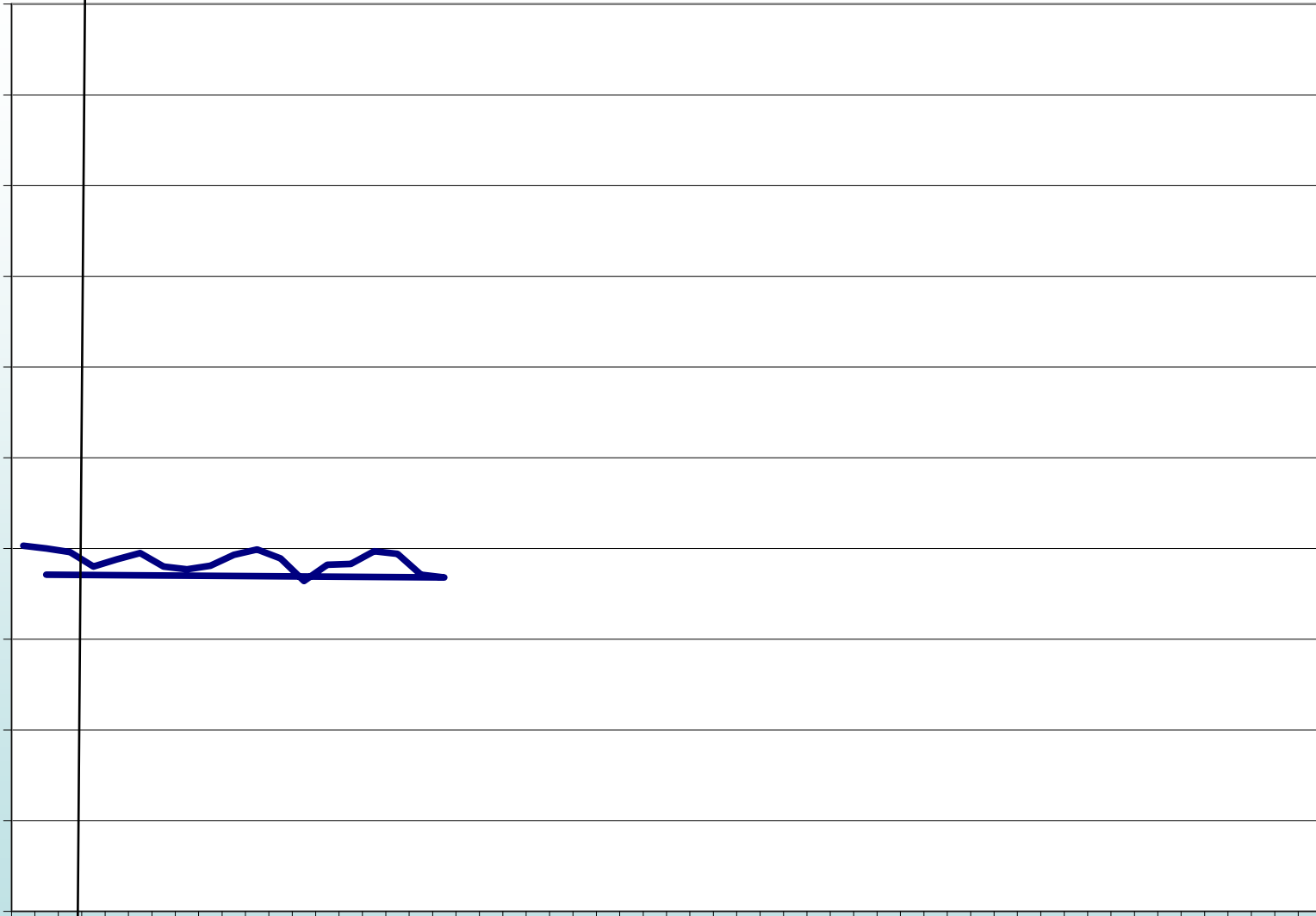
We also question whether **country population projections relying on a single set of demographic assumptions** are appropriate for societies that, like Israel's, encompass several sub-populations with significantly different demographic patterns.

WHERE IS ISRAEL?

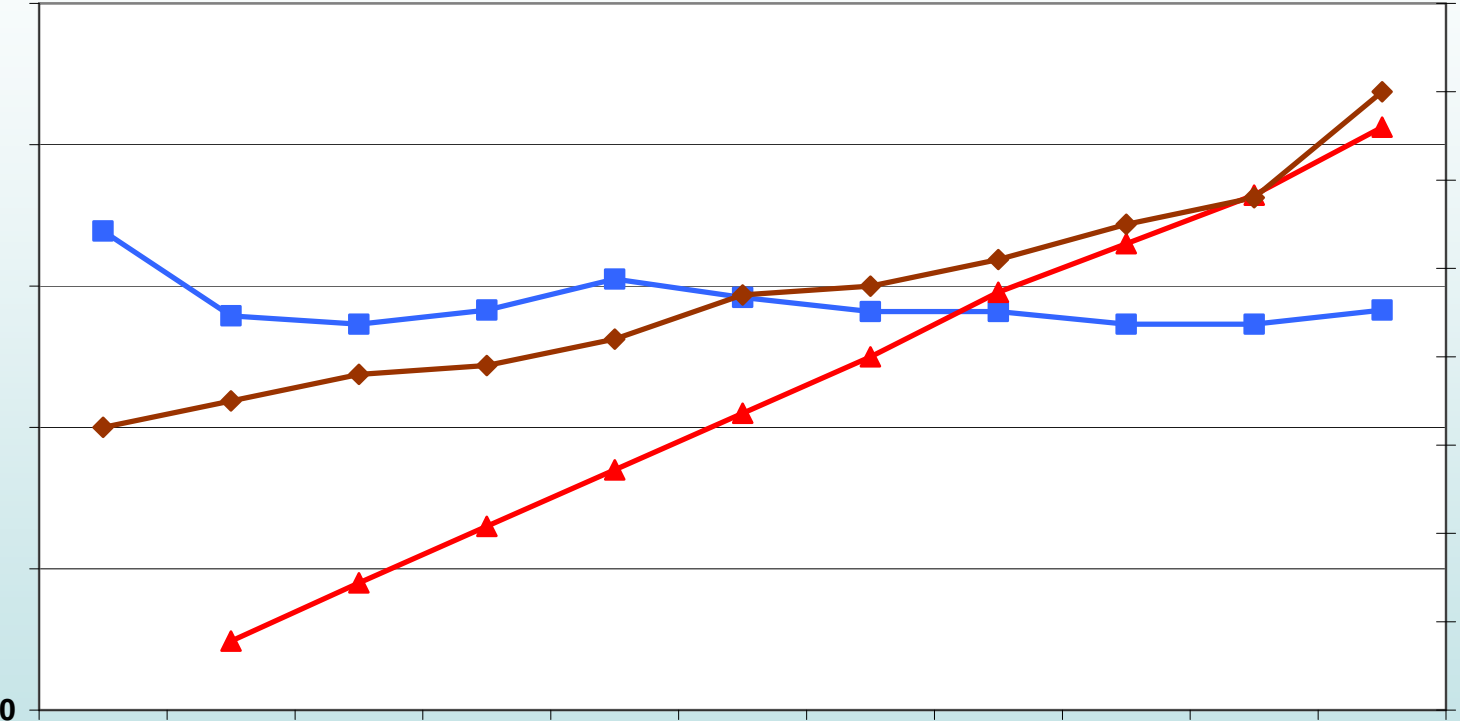


Source: Inglehart and Welzel, 2005.

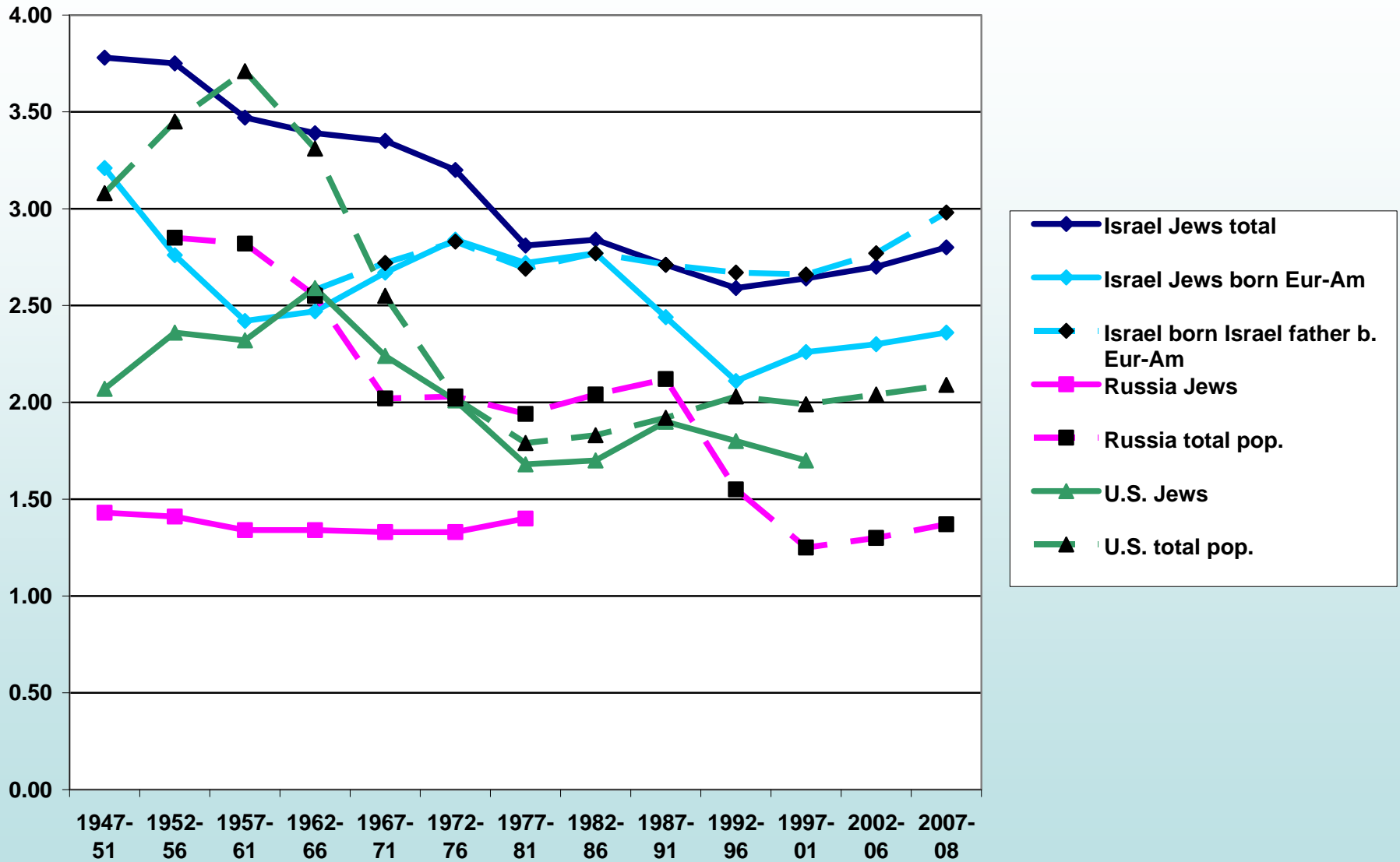
Total fertility rates, by religion groups – Israel, 1955-2008



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



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

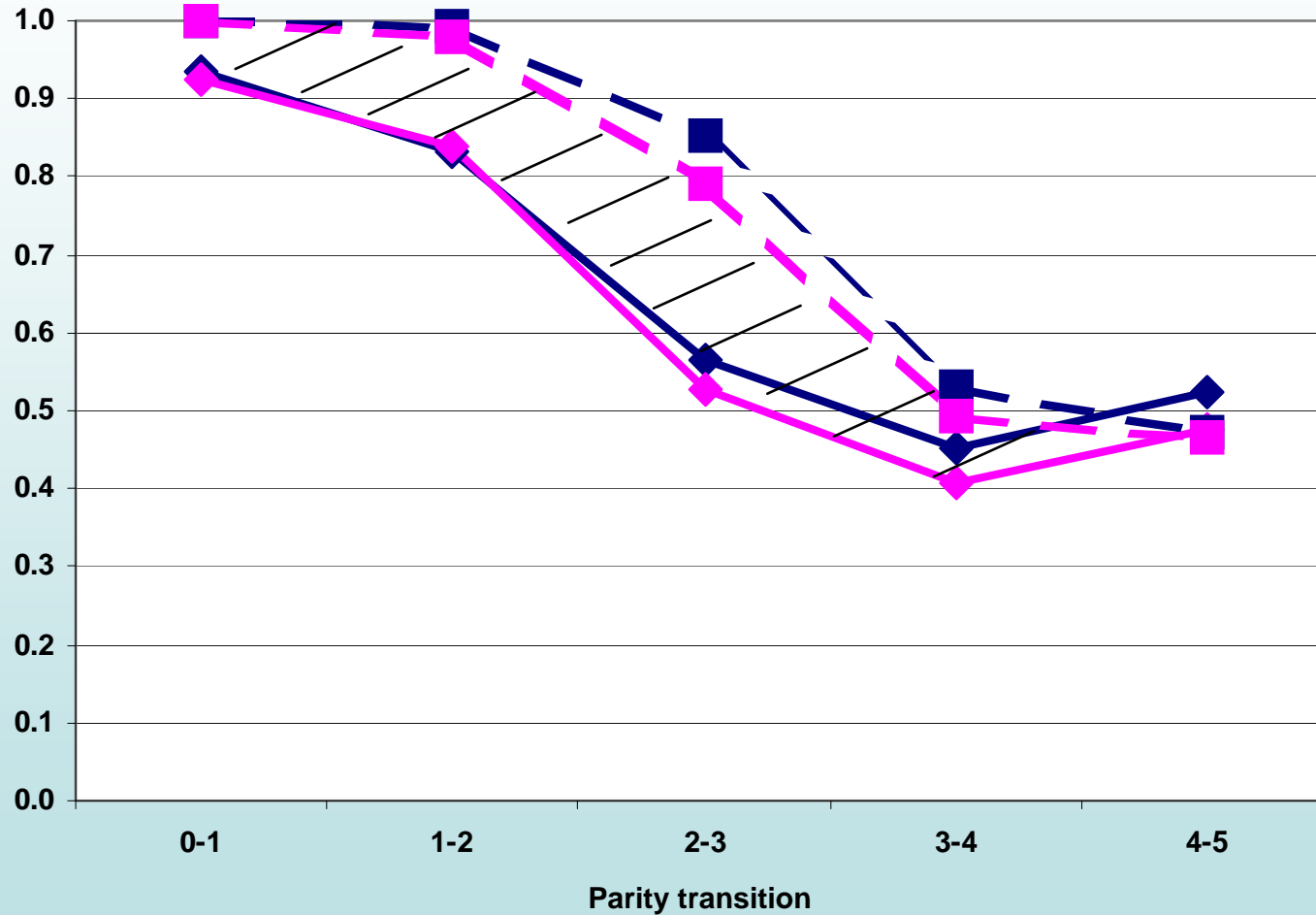
Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics; United Nations, Population Division (2008).

Percent satisfied with life, by sele

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

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	

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS OF INCONSISTENCIES: INTENDED > APPROPRIATE TOTAL CHILDREN

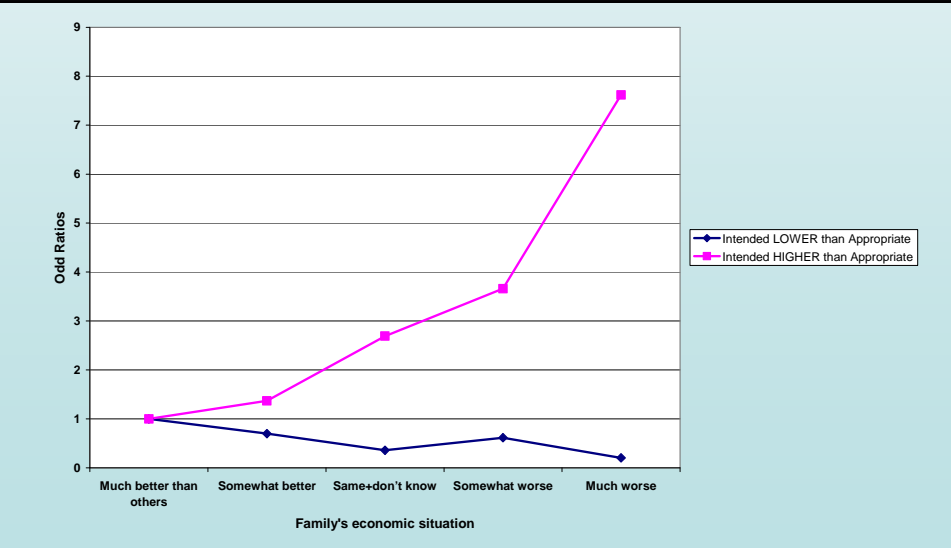
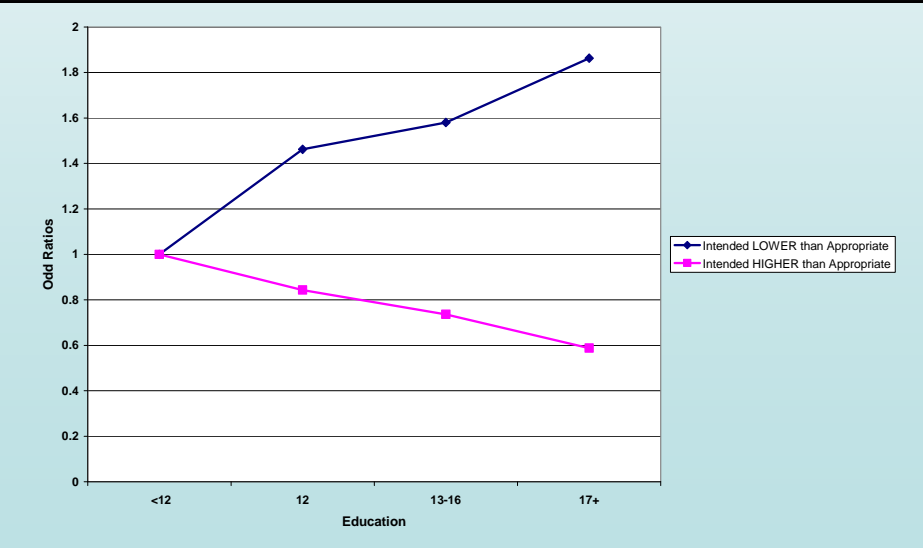
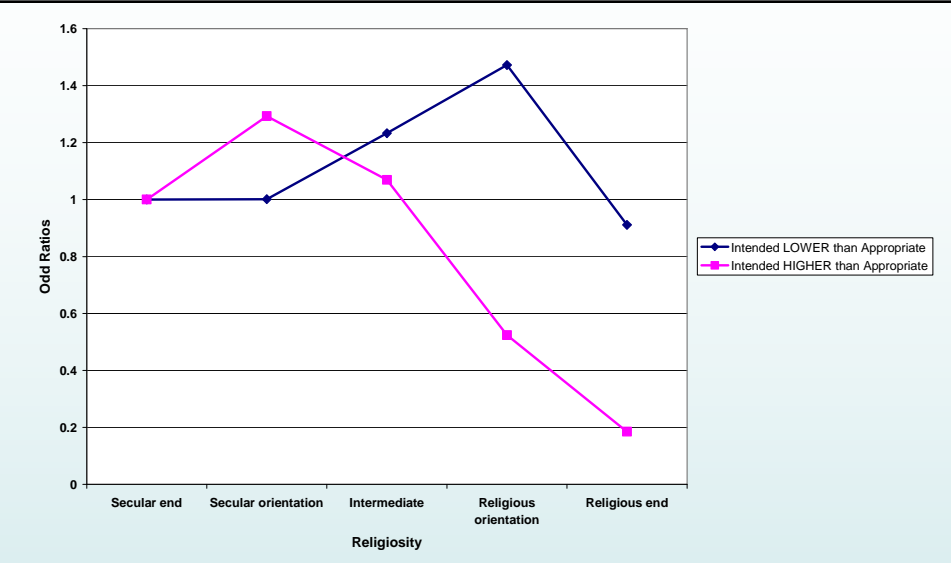
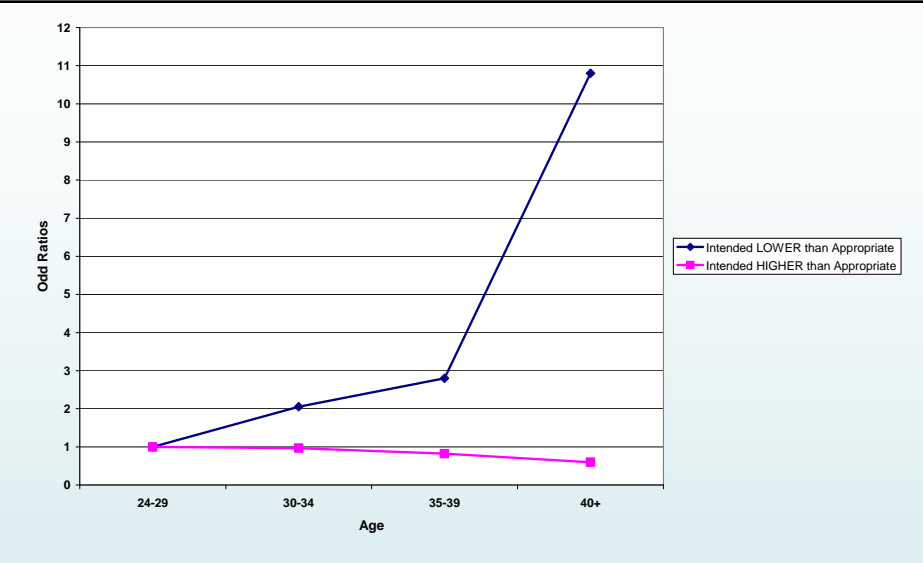
N. of children
appropriate to
repondent's
social status

N. of children
actually
intended by
respondent

N. of children
actually
intended by
respondent

N. of children
appropriate to
repondent's

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

Desirability

History
and
society

Social
values
and norms:
*Family and
reproduction*

Legislative,
executive,

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	

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

The evidence reviewed points to a **conservative pattern of family formation in spite of substantial societal change at the micro- and macro-level**