

## *The Resilient Jewish State*

# A Jewish Majority in the Land of Israel

by Yakov Faitelson

Growth trends and population forecasts have played a significant role in the political landscape of the Middle East, especially over the thorny question of Israel and the disputed territories. The notion that the Jewish majority of Israel is in danger of being swamped by Arab fertility has repeatedly been used as a political and psychological weapon to extract territorial concessions from the Israeli government. In September 2010, U.S. president Barack Obama referred to the so-called “hard realities of demography” that threaten the survival of the Jewish state.<sup>1</sup>

Such a conclusion is wrong. Analysis of long-term demographic developments leads to quite the opposite conclusion: In the long run, a strong Jewish majority, not only in the state of Israel—as this author projected almost twenty-five years ago<sup>2</sup> and the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) recently reaffirmed<sup>3</sup>—but also in the Land of Israel,<sup>4</sup> is quite possible.

### MIDDLE EAST POPULATION ANNUAL GROWTH

It is useful to analyze the processes among world populations in general and in the Middle East and the Arab world in particular. Such scrutiny helps to determine whether demographic trends within the Jewish and Arab population groups living in the Land of Israel differ or resemble the general tendencies observable within the global population over the last sixty plus years, the same general time frame as that of the state of Israel.

Beginning in 1966, the annual population

growth in the Middle East rose consistently until it peaked at 3.24 percent in 1980<sup>5</sup> when it began to ebb—at a faster pace than in the developed world.<sup>6</sup> In the subsequent thirty-two years, the Middle East population increase has gone down

1 *NBC News*, Sept. 23, 2010.

2 Dan Petreanu, “Demography: Men or Myth,” *The Jerusalem Post*, Aug. 16, 1988, quoted in Yakov Faitelson, “Demography: Men or Myth’ – 24 years later,” Apr. 4, 2012.

3 *The Jerusalem Post*, June 25, 2013.

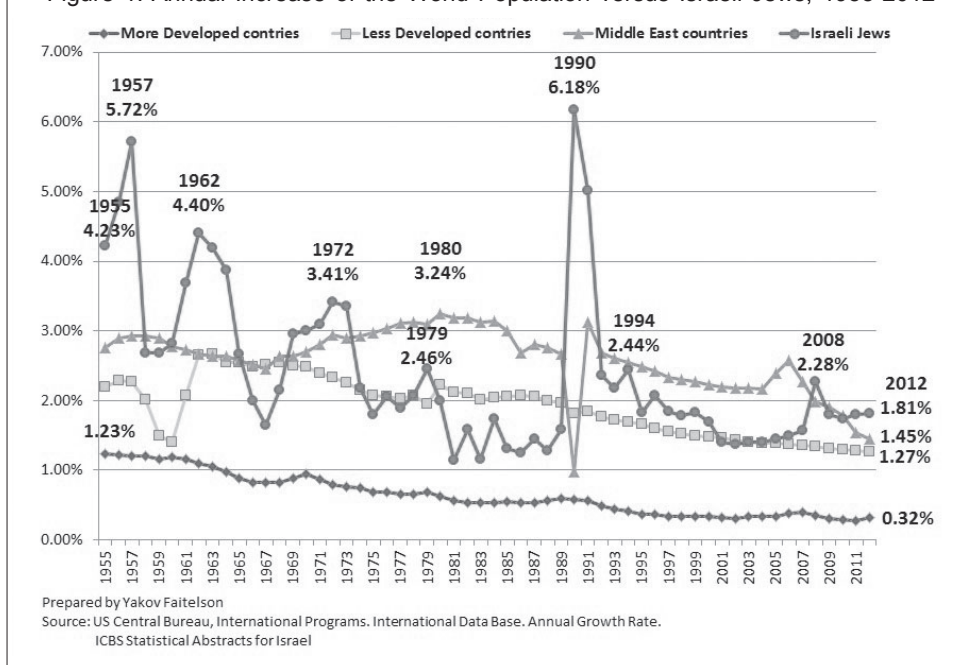
4 The term “Land of Israel” is used here to denote the areas of Mandatory Palestine west of the Jordan River, namely, the territories constituting the State of Israel as well as Judea and Samaria (the “West Bank”) and the Gaza Strip.

5 “Annual Growth Rate Percent, Near East Countries, U.N. Regions,” U.S. Census Bureau, International Programs, International Data Base, accessed Mar. 12, 2013.

6 Dominique Tabutin and Bruno Schoumaker, “The Demography of the Arab World and the Middle East from 1950 to the 2000s. A Survey of Changes and a Statistical Assessment,” *Population*, 2005/5-6, Institut de démographie, Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, pp. 505-615.

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Figure 1: Annual Increase of the World Population versus Israeli Jews, 1955-2012



by more than a half to 1.45 percent in 2012 (see Figure 1, this page).

During that same period, the annual growth rate of the Jewish population in Israel was much higher than in developed countries, largely due to the ongoing repatriation of Jews from various countries to Israel.<sup>7</sup> For the same reason, the annual increase of the Israeli Jewish population was, for the most part, higher than the population in less-developed countries. During the times of mass immigration to Israel, the Jewish growth rate was also significantly higher than the aggregated growth rate of Middle Eastern countries.

Since 2003, the annual increase of Jewish Israelis has grown steadily from 1.48 percent to 1.81 percent<sup>8</sup> while the aggregated annual increase of the Middle Eastern countries has decreased to 1.45 percent.

## POPULATION CHANGES AMONG ISRAELIS

After reaching its all-time peak of 2.89 percent in 1951, the natural increase rate of Israeli Jews began to decline, dropping to 1.07 percent by 1995. This sharp decrease was due to the influx of close to 600,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union in 1990-95,<sup>9</sup> which paradoxically lowered the natural increase rate for the Jewish population as it took approximately five years for the new citizens to settle in properly and start families. Thus, despite a lowered natural increase rate, the Jewish population grew in total by 24 percent. By 1995, the total fertility rate<sup>10</sup> of these new Israeli citizens increased, reaching 1.72 children per woman (compared to 2.66 for native-born Israelis), presumably due to their successful absorption into the larger society as well as a con-

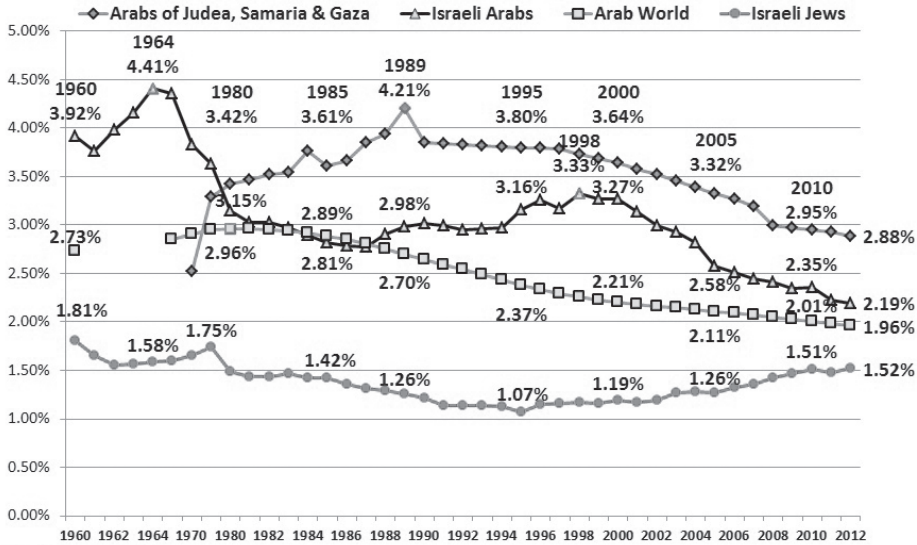
7 "Table 13: Jewish Population, by Sex and Age (1948, 1951, 1954, 1956)," *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 1956* (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, [hereafter ICBS], 1956), p. 19; "Table B/13: Jewish Population, by Sex and Age (1948-1965)," *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 1966* (ICBS, 1966), p. 38.

8 "Table B/1: Population, by Population Group," *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, May 2013* (ICBS, June 6, 2013), p. 4.

9 Petra Nahmias, "Fertility behaviour of recent immigrants to Israel: A comparative analysis of immigrants from Ethiopia and the former Soviet Union," *Demographic Research*, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Mar. 17, 2004, pp. 83-120.

10 The average number of children that would be born alive to a woman during her lifetime.

Figure 2: Natural Increase Arab World versus Israeli Arabs and Jews



Prepared by Yakov Faitelson

Source: World Bank International Data Indicators 2012 <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator>

U.S. Census Bureau, International Programs Demographic Indicators

ICBS Statistical Abstracts for Israel

tinued influx of others from the former Soviet Union along with Ethiopian immigrants during the 1980s and 1990s. Beginning in 1996, the natural increase rate of Israeli Jews has trended upward, rising to 1.5 percent in 2010, increasing by 25.2 percent in one decade.<sup>11</sup> The same natural increase rate of Israeli Jews was also maintained in 2011 and 2012.<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, the trend for Israeli Arabs has moved in the opposite direction. Having reached a peak of 4.41 percent in 1964<sup>13</sup>—a figure significantly higher than that of the rest of the Arab world (see Figure 2, this page)—the natural increase rate of the Israeli Arabs declined by 37.2 percent from 1964 to 1987.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, while

the natural increase rate for Israeli Jews rose by 41.6 percent from 1995 to 2012, the Arab natural increase rate declined during the same time by 30.6 percent, with the rate in 2012 at its lowest level since 1955.

The main reason for such decline is the rapid decrease in Arab birth rates from 36.4 births per 1,000 in 1998 to 24.7 births in 2012. While the Arab mortality rate also dropped from 3.37 deaths per 1,000 in 1995 to 2.69 in 2010, it has risen to 2.78 deaths per 1,000 in 2012.

## POPULATION AGE STRUCTURE

These demographic developments have an impact on the proportion of Israeli Jews versus Israeli Arabs. As a result of declining fertility, significant changes in the age structure of the Israeli Arab population have taken place during the past fifteen years. Figure 3 (see page 18) compares Jewish Israelis to Arab Israelis by age group structure and can help make better sense of both historical and future trends.

For example, in 2000, the number of Israeli Arabs born was 39,579 (including 34,667 Mus-

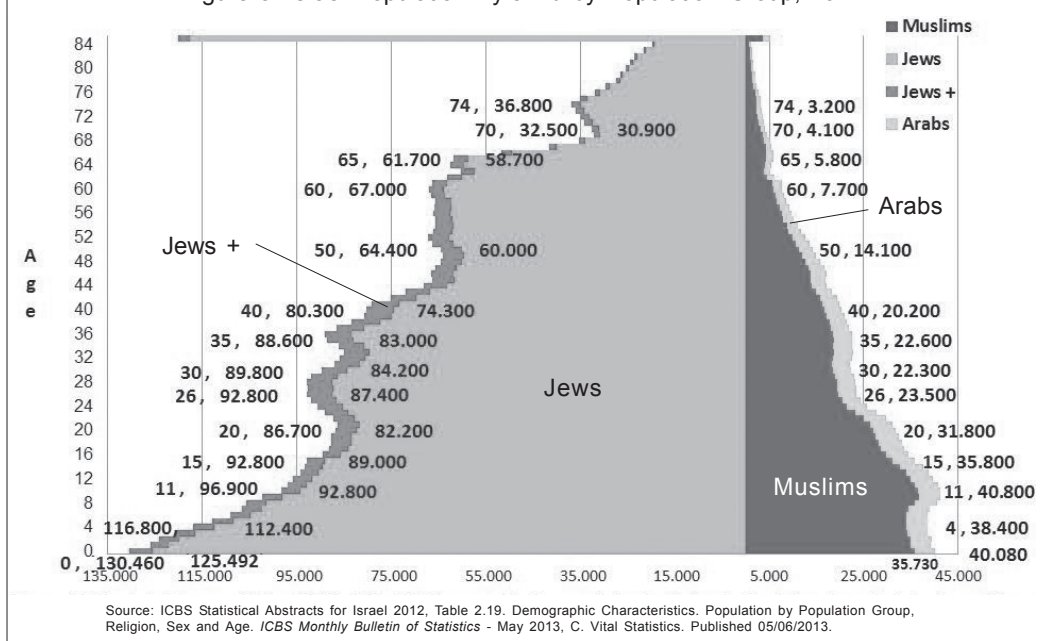
11 *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 2002* (ICBS, 2002), st3.02; *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 2001* (ICBS, 2001), st3.01.

12 *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 2012* (ICBS, 2012), st3.01; "C. Vital Statistics," *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics-February 2013* (ICBS, Mar. 7, 2013).

13 "Statistic Tables for Live and Death Rates by Population Group," *Yearbook of Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 1955-2010* (ICBS, 2010).

14 "World Development Indicators: Birth Rate, Crude," World Bank, Washington, D.C., accessed Mar. 7, 2013; "World Development Indicators: Death Rate, Crude," idem, accessed Mar. 7, 2013.

Figure 3: Israel Population Pyramid by Population Group, 2012



lims).<sup>15</sup> By 2012, the number of Israeli Arab newborns was 40,080 (35,730 Muslim).<sup>16</sup> The number of children born within the Jewish population rose from 90,900 in 2000 to 125,492 in 2012 and in the expanded Jewish population, which includes Jews, any population not classified by religion, and non-Arab Christians, from 94,327 to 130,460 in 2012. Thus the share of babies born to Jews increased from 67.9 percent in 2000 to 73.6 percent and of expanded Jewish population from 70.4 percent to 76.5 percent in 2012.

Taking a broader view, the number of Jewish children in the 0-4 age cohort rose by 26.7 percent while that of Arab children in this group rose by a mere 1.9 percent.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the share of Jewish toddlers within the general population increased from 68.2 to 72.8 percent and of the expanded Jewish population from 70.7 to 75.6 percent in 2012.

The shape of the age structure presented in Figure 3 clearly shows that the younger the age, the more the number of Jews increases while the

number of Arabs either decreases or remains stable.

While in 2012 there were 81,600 21-year-old Jews (86,300 expanded Jewish population), their number steadily and continuously grew for the younger ages: 125,492 Jewish babies (130,460 for expanded Jewish population) born in 2012. By contrast, there were 31,100 21-year-old Arabs and 40,080 newly born Arabs in 2012—a smaller relative increase than their Jewish counterparts.

There were 98,100 Jews (or 2.38 per every Arab) at the age of “9” when the Arab population reached its peak for all ages—41,300 people. When checking this proportion of each age group down to age “0”, this ratio continuously increases, up to 3.13 Jews for every Arab at the “age 0” group.

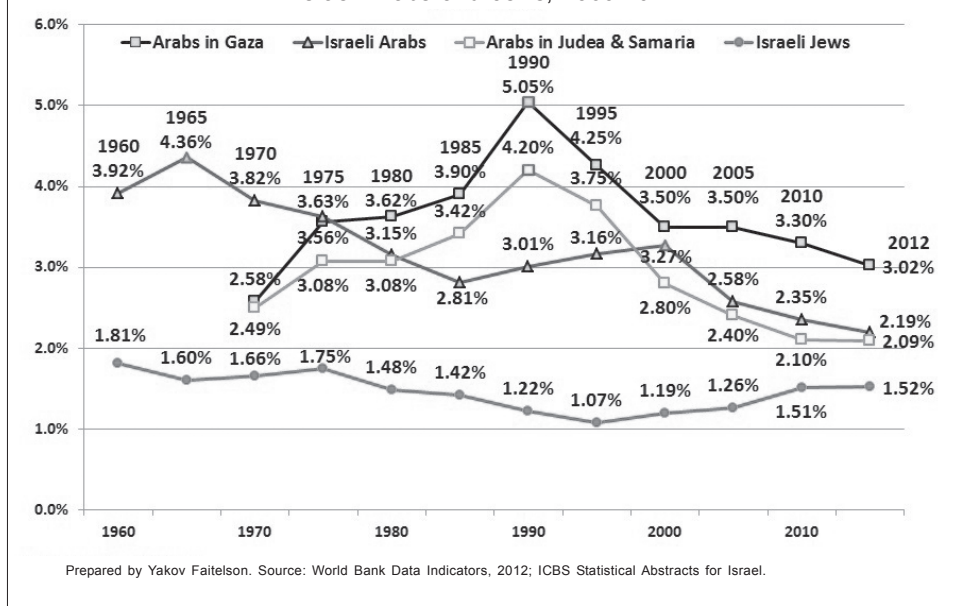
The share of Jews among the “0” age group reached 73.6 percent compared to the lowest share of 67.4 percent at the age of “11.” The expanded Jewish population among age group “0” reached 76.5 percent (compared to the 70.4 percent at the age of “11”), or 3.25 children for every Arab child. Such developments started influencing the Israeli education system because the share of Hebrew education pupils among all pupils in the first grade began increasing in the 2008-09 school year. Taking into account the numbers of babies born in 2012, there will be at least 76.5

15 *Statistical Abstracts of Israel*, 2001, st2.18.

16 “C. Vital Statistics,” *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics-February 2013*.

17 *Statistical Abstracts of Israel*, 2001, st02.20; *Statistical Abstracts of Israel*, 2011 (ICBS, 2011), st02.21.

Figure 4: Natural Increase Rate, Arabs in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, Israeli Arabs and Jews, 1960-2012



percent Hebrew-education first-grade pupils in the 2018-19 school year. The addition of the children of new immigrants (*olim*) will enhance this proportion still further.

Another way to look at the population dynamics of the two groups is to examine the other end of the aging spectrum. Israel's Jewish population share of the 65+ age group was 88.5 percent (91.8 percent for expanded Jewish population) in 2012 versus 8.2 percent for the Arabs. Taking into consideration that the 45-75 age group of 2012 will belong to the 65+ age group of 2032, the share of the Jews in this age group would diminish to 81.7 percent (86.5 percent for expanded Jewish population), while the share of Arabs would increase to 13.5 percent, 64.8 percent larger than it was in 2012. The share of the Israeli Muslims at the 65+ age group will increase even more drastically, by 75.5 percent, from 6 percent in 2012 to 10.5 percent in 2032. In other words, during the last ten years, the share of Israeli Jews versus Israeli Arabs within the overall young Israeli population has increased, indicating that the Jewish population has started to become younger while the Israeli Arab population is getting older. With existing life expectancies factored in, the natural aging of Israeli Arab "baby boomers" will significantly increase their mortality level over the next

two decades, causing an accelerating decline in the overall Arab natural increase rate.

Continuation of current trends will result in a convergence in 2025 of the natural increase rate for Jews and Arabs in Israel. For the first time in the modern history of the Land of Israel, the Arab natural increase rate may not be higher but rather equal to the natural increase rate of the Jews. Given the possibility of continued Jewish immigration, one can expect an intensification of the steadily rising Jewish share of the total population of the Land of Israel.

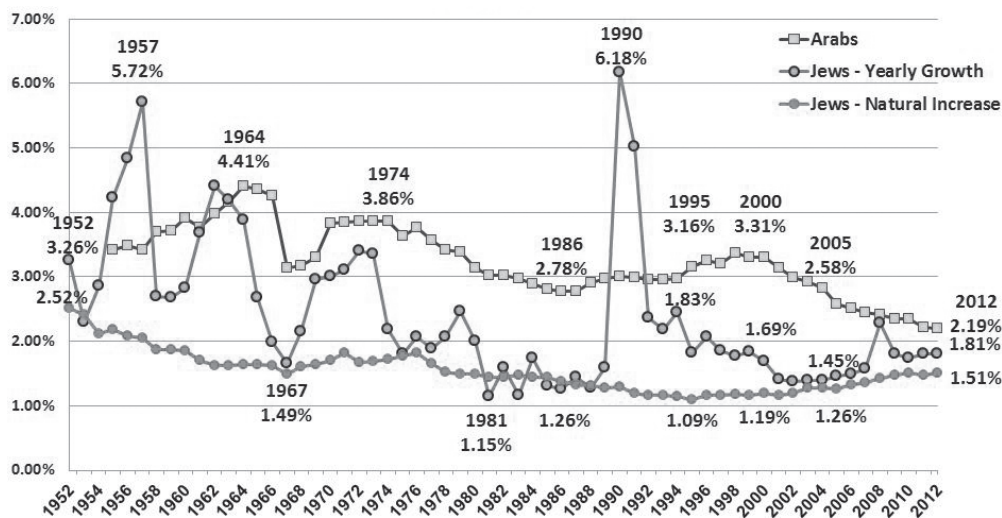
This trend becomes even more pronounced when studying the population of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, which until recently had been under Israeli administration and is now either part of the Palestinian Authority—dominated by the Palestine Liberation Organization—or a quasi-independent Hamas enclave.

Under the Israeli administration (1967-93), the natural increase rate of the Arabs of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza Strip rose markedly from 2.52 percent in 1965 to peak at 4.21 percent in 1989.<sup>18</sup> However,

18 "Demographic Characteristics of the Arab Population in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, 1968-1993, #1025," ICBS, July 1996, p. 15.



Figure 5: Annual and Natural Increase of Population of State of Israel by Population Group, 1952-2012



Source: ICBS Statistical Abstracts for Israel 2012 Table 3.1;  
ICBS Monthly Bulletin of Statistics - February 2013, C. Vital Statistics

over the next two decades, it declined noticeably to 2.88 percent in 2012. (See Figure 2.)<sup>19</sup> It appears that the decline in the Palestinian natural increase rate in Judea and Samaria is accelerating even faster than among Israeli Arabs. (See Figure 4, page 19.)

Combined with a massive emigration of Arab youth from these territories, especially from Judea and Samaria, the size of the younger age group will be reduced and coincidentally, the elderly age cohort of the population will increase, resulting in an increased mortality rate in the near future. Following these trends, the natural increase rate of Arabs in Judea and Samaria will be decreasing even faster.

## MIGRATION BALANCE AND POPULATION ANNUAL GROWTH

Any proper analysis of demographic developments in the Land of Israel must take into ac-

count the critical role of the migration balance. *Aliya*—Jewish repatriation—has been a significant factor in narrowing the difference between Jewish and Arab natural increase rates. For example, while in 1990, the natural increase rate for Jews was equal to only 1.29 percent, their annual growth, due to immigration, was 6.18 percent, more than twice as high as the Arab natural increase for that year. (See Figure 5, this page.)

From 2008 to 2011, Jewish immigration to Israel rose 30 percent.<sup>20</sup> An analysis of immigration patterns reveals some surprising data about the countries of origin of these émigrés and points to future developments with important consequences.

In 2010, Israel ranked 15 out of 169 on the Human Development Index (HDI)—a comparative measure used to rank countries by life expectancy, education levels, and standard of living.<sup>21</sup> While about a million and a quarter Jews

19 "World Development Indicators: Birth Rate, Crude," World Bank, Washington, D.C., accessed Mar. 7, 2013; "World Development Indicators: Death Rate, Crude," idem, accessed Mar. 7, 2013.

20 "Emigration and Tourism, Table E/2: Immigrants by Type of Permit," *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, ICBS, no. 11/2011, p. 143.

21 "Table 1: Human Development Index and Its Components," *Human Development Report 2010*, U.N. Development Programme, New York, p. 143.

live in twenty countries with an HDI lower than Israel, another eight countries with significant Jewish populations (about 6,500,000) have a higher HDI than Israel.<sup>22</sup>

In 2000-10, 284,907 new immigrants moved to Israel alongside 44,639 returning expatriates.<sup>23</sup> Not surprisingly, about 87 percent of the newcomers came from countries with an HDI lower than Israel's—59.4 percent of all repatriates came from the former Soviet Union, 10.2 percent from Ethiopia, and 4.1 percent from Argentina.<sup>24</sup> Only 13.5 percent came from countries with a higher HDI such as the United States or France. Yet in the first ten months of 2011, the largest growth of repatriation to Israel (compared to the previous decade) came from countries with a higher HDI: Their share of the total immigrant population more than doubled. Twenty-nine percent of these immigrants came from eight developed countries, 14.6 percent from the United States and 10.3 percent from France.

It may very well be that a combination of factors contributed to this change. The recent world economic crisis may be one. According to Reuters: "Employees of universities and researchers are among the biggest sufferers of economic slowdown in the United States ... As a result, universities are cutting their budgets and staff, and many researchers are going home."<sup>25</sup>

The other likely contributor is a rising wave of anti-Semitism, especially in Western Europe. According to Benjamin Jacobs, Holland's chief rabbi, "the future for Dutch Jewry is moving to Israel."<sup>26</sup> Relentless harassment in the south Swedish city of Malmö has driven most of its Jewish population out of the city, or even the country.<sup>27</sup> Recent years also have seen increas-

ing numbers of Jews moving to Israel from France and the United Kingdom. There have been reports of Muslims assaulting Jews in Norway and Denmark and stone-tossing Arabs driving Jewish dancers from a stage in Germany.<sup>28</sup> A recent poll found that 38 percent of Muslim youth in Austria agree that "Hitler had done a lot of good for the people."<sup>29</sup>

A spring 2008 survey by the Pew Research Center's Pew Global Attitudes Project finds

46% of the Spanish rating Jews unfavorably. More than a third of Russians (34%) and Poles (36%) echo this view. Somewhat fewer, but still significant numbers of the Germans (25%) and French (20%) interviewed also express negative opinions of Jews. These percentages are all higher than obtained in comparable Pew surveys taken in recent years. In a number of countries, the increase has been especially notable between 2006 and 2008.<sup>30</sup>

**A rising wave of anti-Semitism, especially in Western Europe, has brought increasing numbers of Jews to Israel.**

This situation has brought increasing numbers of Jews to Israel. According to data from 2012 published by the Israeli Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, the majority of *olim* continued to come from Europe (10,088, 49.4 percent of all immigrants), and the numbers rose by 30 percent in 2008-12.

The immigration from France with 1,923 individuals (9.4 percent of all immigrants) in 2012 remained steadily in third place from Europe after Russia (3,566, 17.5 percent of all immigrants) and Ukraine (2,100, 10.3 percent). Former USSR countries accounted for 35.9 percent of all immigrants to Israel in 2012. From 2008 through 2012, repa-

22 Sergio DellaPergola, *Jewish Demographic Policies: Population Trends and Options in Israel and in the Diaspora* (Jerusalem: The Jewish People Policy Institute, 2011), p. 61.

23 "Immigrants by Type of Visa," *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 2011*, st04.03.

24 "Immigrants, by Period of Immigration, Country of Birth and Last Country of Residence," *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 2011*, st04.04.

25 *Ynet News* (Tel Aviv), Jan. 22, 2012.

26 "Interview with Holland's Chief Rabbi: Dutch Anti-Semitism," *Arutz Sheva* (Beit El and Petah Tikva), July 4, 2010.

27 *YNet News*, May 21, 2013.

28 *Fox News*, June 24, 2010.

29 David J. Rusin, "The Slow-Motion Exodus of European Jews," *FrontPage Magazine* (Sherman Oaks, Calif.), Jan. 7, 2011.

30 "Unfavorable Views of Jews and Muslims on the Increase in Europe," PEW Research Center Project, Sept. 17, 2008.

triation from Russia rose by 32.4 percent and from Ukraine even more, by 58.9 percent.

A significant number of immigrants came from the United Kingdom (641, 3.1 percent). Repatriation from Scandinavian countries rose by 65.8 percent and from Italy by 161.9 percent; the increase from Holland was 22.2 percent and from Belgium, 24.6 percent. However, the most impres-

sive growth of immigration during these four years came from Spain, by 232.1 percent.<sup>31</sup>

If these conditions persist, Israel may experience a substantial aliya wave into the near future, including an influx of skilled professionals, a welcome addition to Israel's fast developing economy. The recent discoveries of huge gas deposits create an enormous momentum for the Israeli economy that is bound to change the geopolitical situation in the Middle East.

Many Israeli expatriates may also seriously consider returning to the Jewish state. During the years 2000-10, the number of returning Israelis was 21.3 percent higher than the previous decade. These developments would lead to a further increase in the annual growth of the Jewish population.

Of equal importance are emigration trends of the Arab population that began long before the 1967 Six-Day War. Demographer Justin McCarthy has estimated that about 200,000 Arabs emigrated from Judea and Samaria between 1949 and 1967. "After 1948, Palestinian high fertility and the limited economic potential of the land led to out-migration. The West Bank, in particular, had sizable out-migration from 1948 to 1967... emigration was now large-scale and directed mainly to the Arab world." Migration rates from Gaza were much lower because until the 1960s, the Egyptian

government, which controlled the territory, restricted emigration.<sup>32</sup>

According to Mustafa Khawaja, director of the Jerusalem Statistical Department of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS): "The net balance of arrivals and departures for the West Bank in the period 1967 to the present has been consistently negative, with an average of about 10,000 leaving annually ... The main reason for migration by Palestinians relates to the economic factors resulting from the political instability and the infighting between the Palestinian parties."<sup>33</sup> This view is supported by journalist Khaled Abu Toameh who wrote in August 2002:

Approximately 80,000 Palestinians have left the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the year (a rise of 50 percent compared to last year), a senior Palestinian Authority official said Monday. The official ... told *The Jerusalem Post* another 50,000 Palestinians are now trying to leave through the Jordan River bridges and the Rafah border crossing [between Gaza and Egypt].<sup>34</sup>

Two years later, Egyptian journalist Bissan Edwan stated that "according to Jordan[ian] statistics, at least 150,000 Palestinians left the West Bank during the *intifada* years from 2000 to 2002 and did not return," concluding that the economic situation in the Palestinian Authority territories could lead to new waves of emigration. She also dismissed the myth of a demographic time-bomb by noting that net Jewish migration offset the higher Palestinian natural increase and that better access to birth control lowered Palestinian fertility rates.<sup>35</sup> The impact of out-migration was further reinforced by a 2006 poll published by An-Najah University in Nablus, which found that

**Palestinian-supplied growth projections are seriously flawed with double-counting, inflated birth numbers, and deaths not counted.**

31 "Statistics," Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, Tel Aviv, accessed June 17, 2013.

32 Justin McCarthy, "Palestine's Population during the Ottoman and the British Mandate Periods: Migration," *PalestineRemembered.com*, Sept. 8, 2001.

33 Mustafa Khawaja, "Highly-skilled into, through and from the southern and eastern Mediterranean and sub Saharan Africa. The Case of Palestine," Robert Shuman Centre for Advanced Studies and the European University Institute, San Domenico di Fiesole, Italy, 2010, p. 8.

34 *The Jerusalem Post*, Aug. 26, 2002.

35 Bissan Edwan, "al-Qanbala ad-Dymoghrafiyah fi Israil wa-Khidaal-Nafs," Apr. 16, 2004.



“one in three Palestinians wanted to emigrate. The 1,350 people surveyed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip cited dire economic conditions as the first reason, followed by lawlessness, political deadlock, and fears of civil war.”<sup>36</sup>

Arab emigration from Judea and Samaria increased even more in 2007-09. During the first seven months of 2008, the Jordanian-Palestinian border crossing point located near the Karame bridge registered a negative migration balance of 63,386 people while in the first eight months of 2009, there was reported a negative migration balance of 44,000 people.<sup>37</sup>

World Bank figures also indicated a decrease in the size of the Palestinian population, by 0.45 percent in 2009 and by 0.37 percent in 2010.<sup>38</sup> Thus, in 2009-10, the negative migration balance was higher than the natural increase of the Arab population in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE LAND OF ISRAEL

It is a well-documented fact that Palestinian population figures as well as Palestinian-supplied growth projections are seriously flawed, rife with double-counting, presumed (and unsubstantiated) mass immigration, inflated birth numbers, and deaths not counted.<sup>39</sup> Considering those issues alongside the emigration trends should lead



*These Ethiopian Jews now call Israel home. Doomsday predictions about the demographics of Israeli Jews disregard the hard facts: Jewish population rates are rising due to a number of factors including immigration from the former Soviet Union and from Ethiopia. Beginning in 1996, the natural increase rate of Israeli Jews has trended upwards, increasing by 25 percent in one decade.*

policymakers in Israel and abroad to a more nuanced view of demographic projections and decisions based upon them.

Consider the PCBS' 2001 annual *Statistical Abstract of Palestine*.<sup>40</sup> According to its projection, the Arab population in the Palestinian-administered territories would amount to 4,077,981 people in 2005, then increase to 5,027,580 in 2010, to 5,354,988 in 2012, and finally to 6,632,439 in 2020. In fact, at the end of 2005, the actual PCBS population estimate was lower by 315,976 persons than the PCBS projection published just four years earlier.<sup>41</sup>

In December 2006, the PCBS proclaimed that the “Palestinian population and the Jewish population [east of the Jordan river] will be equal in 2010

36 Reuters, Nov. 22, 2006.

37 Khawaja, “The Case of Palestine,” p. 3.

38 “Population Growth (annual %): West Bank and Gaza,” World Bank, Washington, D.C., accessed June 7, 2013.

39 Bennet Zimmerman, Roberta Seid, and Michael L. Wise, “The Million Person Gap. The Arab Population in the West Bank and Gaza,” *Mideast Security and Policy Studies*, no. 65, The Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Feb. 2006.

40 “Palestinians in the Palestinian Territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip): 3.2 Population,” *Statistical Abstract of Palestine*, No. 2, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (hereafter, PCBS), Ramallah; “Table 3.2.1: Projected Population in the Palestinian Territory in the End Year by Region, 1997-2024,” PCBS, Nov. 2001, p. 470.

41 *Annual Report for 2005, Population and Demography, Health Status in Palestine 2005* (Ramallah: Ministry of Health-Palestinian Health Information Center, Oct. 2006), p. 1.



*Oday Aboushi (center) is the first Palestinian-American player in the National Football League. Palestinian Arabs have flocked to the United States. A 2006 poll published by Nablus' an-Najah University found that "one in three Palestinians wanted to emigrate," and massive emigration of Arab youth from Judea and Samaria has accelerated the decline in the natural increase rate of Arabs within the Land of Israel.*

... the Palestinian population will increase to 5.7 million in mid-2010."<sup>42</sup> The reality was different: At the end of 2010, the PCBS issued a press release claiming that there were actually 4,108,631 Arabs in Palestinian-administered territories,<sup>43</sup> 918,949 less than it had projected in 2001. Similarly, a PCBS press release on December 31, 2012, estimated the Arab population at 4.4 million,<sup>44</sup> a number smaller by 955,000 than it had previously predicted.

The recent PCBS projection made at the end of 2012 stated that "the number of Palestinians in historical Palestine will total 7.2 million compared to 6.9 million Jews by the end of 2020."<sup>45</sup> Accord-

ing to the recent Israel Central Bureau of Statistics projection, there will be about 1.9 million Israeli Arabs in 2020. Reducing this figure from the PCBS projection for all Arab population in historical Palestine in 2020 gives 5.3 million Arabs in Palestinian-administered territories. This estimate is 1,362,439 less than projected by PCBS in 2001.

But projections from Palestinian sources are not the only forecasts that need to be adjusted. In October 2007, this author prepared a demographic projection of the Israeli population based on observable trends since the founding of the Jewish state.<sup>46</sup> The resulting numbers, 12,805,000 persons in 2050, fell somewhere between

two U.N. population projections—11,942,000 using the high forecast variant and 13,064,000 using the constant fertility rate variant.<sup>47</sup>

The author's projection was based on certain assumptions: That just as in each of the last

46 Yakov Faitelson, "The Demographic Forecasts for the Population of the Land of Israel and the Reality (1898-2005)," *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual International Conference on Jewish Studies, Part 1: State of Israel, 60 Years of History* (Moscow: Moscow Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization "Sefer," Institute for Slavic Studies, 2008), p. 68; idem, "Demographic Trends in the Land of Israel (1800-2007)," accessed Mar. 7, 2013, p. 47-70; idem, Table 1: Comparison of Forecasts for Citizens of the State of Israel up until 2050, "Demographic Forecast Scenarios until 2050," The Institute for Zionist Strategies, Jerusalem, 2008.

47 High-fertility assumption: Under the high variant, fertility is projected to remain .5 children above the fertility in the medium variant over most of the projection period. That is, countries reaching a total fertility of 1.85 children per woman in the medium variant have a total fertility of 2.35 children per woman in the high variant at the end of the projection period. Constant-fertility assumption: fertility remains constant at the level estimated for 2000-05.

42 "Palestinians at the End of Year 2006," PCBS, Dec. 2006, p. 11.

43 "Palestinians at the End of 2010: Table 2: Estimated Number of Palestinians in the Palestinian Territory by Status and Region," PCBS, Dec. 30, 2010, p. 34.

44 "Palestinians at the End of 2012," PCBS, Dec. 2012, p. 1.

45 Ibid., p. 3.

120 years, the annual growth of the Jewish population would consist of natural increase as well as immigration. Some of the predictions, however, proved to be far more conservative than what actually transpired. For example, in 2003-10, average annual growth was 14.7 percent higher than originally estimated.<sup>48</sup> The 2007 report had also predicted that the natural increase rate of the Arab citizens of Israel would continue diminishing in the future. In fact, the natural increase rate of Israeli Arabs was 2.2 percent in 2012, 21.1 percent lower than assumed in 2007. In sum, based on the new data, the share of the Jewish population in Israel is expected to decrease to its lowest point of 79.2 percent in 2015, but starting in 2024 may begin to rise up to 81.8 percent of the total population in 2050 and to 83.2 percent by 2059.

Further, it is reasonable to conclude that an existing trend of growing natural increase in the Jewish non-ultra-Orthodox population will continue. This will likely be augmented by a positive migration balance since the majority of Jews living in the Diaspora are not ultra-Orthodox (Haredim).<sup>49</sup>

There were apparently no Haredim among the immigrants from the former Soviet Union and just 4.5 percent of these declared themselves as religious. There were only 7.2 percent of Haredim and 14.8 percent of religious people among immigrants from Europe and the United States. Just 3.1 percent of immigrants from Asia and Africa declared themselves as Haredi and 26.4 percent declared themselves as religious. All in all, the Haredi share of 2012 immigrants could be esti-



*From 1995 to 2010, Israel's Arab population's natural increase rate decreased by 26 percent. Its live birth rate has simultaneously fallen, despite a concurrent drop in the mortality rate. What this means is that the Jewish population has started to become younger while the Israeli Arab population will become older.*

mated at 3.6 percent and of religious people at 10.4 percent.

This would be accompanied by an accelerating decline in the natural increase among the Haredi population. According to ICBS, the total fertility rate (TFR) of the Haredim has declined by 14.3 percent in just six years from 7.62 children per woman in 2003 to 6.53 children per woman in 2009, back to the level that existed twenty-five years before in the middle of the 1980s.<sup>50</sup> At the same time, the TFR of secular women rose by 8.9 percent from 1.90 children per woman in 2003 to 2.07 in 2009.

Likewise, from the beginning of the twenty-first century the TFR of Israeli Muslims decreased considerably, from 4.7 in 2000 to 3.5 children per woman in 2011.<sup>51</sup> The TFR of all Arabs decreased still further to 3.3 children per woman,

48 Faitelson, "Demographic Trends in the Land of Israel (1800-2007)," accessed Mar. 7, 2013, p. 50-3.

49 According to a comprehensive survey conducted by the ICBS in 2009, 8 percent of Israeli Jews defined themselves as Haredi, 12 percent as religious, 13 percent as traditional religious, 25 percent as less traditional religious, 27 percent as not so religious, and 18 percent as nonreligious. See *Seker hevratu 2009. Pirsum mispar 1433. B. mintsaim ikarium. a. datiyut umeafienim demografiim uhevratim kalkaliim beisrael (bnei 20 umala)*, ICBS Social Survey 2009, no. 1433, Jerusalem, Apr. 2011, p. 13.

50 Ahmad Hleihel, "Fertility among Jewish and Muslim Women in Israel by Level of Religiosity, 1979-2009," ICBS, Working Paper Series, no. 60, June 2011, pp. 32-4.

51 Ibid., p. 15; "Fertility rates, Average Age of Mother and Sex Ratio at Birth, by selected characteristics of the mother. Muslims. 2011," *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 2011*, Table 3.14.

Figure 6: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics and Faitelson Projections for 2059

Population Group	ICBS 2011 Projection for State of Israel				Yakov Faitelson 2011 Projection	
	2nd Scenario		3rd Scenario*			
	People	% of Total	People	% of Total	People	% of Total
Jews, expanded	14,283,000	83.63	15,964,800	85.10	13,913,723	83.19
Jews, expanded, excluding Haredim	9,953,600	58.28	9,953,600	53.06	9,647,993	57.69
Haredim	4,329,400	25.35	6,011,200	32.04	4,265,730	25.50
Arabs	2,796,000	16.37	2,796,000	14.90	2,811,754	16.81
TOTAL:	17,079,000	100	18,760,800	100	16,725,477	100

\* The third ICBS scenario is based on the high estimate for non-Haredi and Haredi populations and low estimate for the Arabs.

very close to the 3.09 for Jews born in Israel.<sup>52</sup> In November 2011, a new comprehensive ICBS projection was published in which the government office admitted that in the past it had over-estimated Israeli Arab fertility and underestimated Jewish fertility.<sup>53</sup>

An updated version of the author's 2007 projections for the population of the State of Israel (extended from 2050 to 2059) appears in Figure 6. (See this page). The numbers are presented side by side with the ICBS's second and third scenario projections.

According to the author's forecast prepared in 2007, the Arab population in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza Strip would reach 2,496,000 in 2050. Extending the forecast for nine more years, this population could reach 2,761,500 people. Combined with the estimated population of the State of Israel, the total population of the Land of Israel would comprise some 19,487,000 people in 2059.

Based on these estimates, the expanded Jewish population share would be 83.19 percent of the population of the State of Israel and 71.4 percent of the total population of the Land of Israel in 2059.

52 "Fertility rates, Average Age of Mother and Sex Ratio at Birth, by selected characteristics of the mother. Israeli born. 2011," *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 2011*, Table 3.14.

53 Ari Paltiel, Michell Spulker, Irene Kornilenko, and Martin Maldonado, "Tahaziot Haukhlusiyyah le-Yisrael Letvah Arokh: 2009-2059," Demography and Census Dept., Jerusalem, Nov. 30, 2011.

## CONCLUSIONS

Population growth for the Land of Israel at the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century will be influenced by the Arab and Jewish natural increase rates reaching a convergence point based on similar live birth and mortality rates. It will also likely be influenced by continued Jewish immigration, including a new, possibly strong wave in the near future following the prolonged world economic crisis and manifestations of rising anti-Semitism around the globe. Repatriation will also be encouraged if the Israeli economy continues to be strong in the near future, an increased likelihood based in part on the huge gas and shale oil fields recently discovered in Israel. The share of Jews in the total population of the Land of Israel may also increase as a result of continued Arab emigration that may include Israeli Arabs as well. According to the results of the first-ever survey on political-social attitudes of Arab youth in Israel, conducted by the Baladna Association for Arab Youth and the Mada al-Carmel Arab Center for Applied Social Research, both in Haifa, 25 percent of the Arab youth in Israel want to emigrate.<sup>54</sup>

Every country has a natural and objective carrying capacity limit for the population living on its territory and, in this respect, Israel is no different than any other. With that in mind,

54 *Ynet News*, Apr. 22, 2004.



demographic projections can and should be used as a tool for planning by the state as well as by municipalities to avoid mistakes that can damage vital infrastructure and public services, such as health, education, and welfare systems. Ignoring the impressive demographic changes of the last twenty years in Israel has produced heavy burdens on Israel's health system due to a lack of hospital beds and a scarcity of medical personnel.<sup>55</sup> Overpopulated classrooms and a lack of qualified teachers is another such consequence.<sup>56</sup>

55 "The Physician Shortage in Israel," Israeli Medical Association, Tel Aviv, May 2011.

56 Karen L. Berman, "Israel Must Overhaul Education System," Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Mar. 29, 2012.

Similarly, lower than necessary construction starts in the residential sector is causing pain for young couples.<sup>57</sup>

Developing proper demographic policies can be important tools for planning national security needs to assure internal order and the security of the state's borders. Jerusalem must bear in mind that without developing such a professional, comprehensive, and long-term demographic policy, it will be very difficult to reach the vital goals of assuring a stable and secure future for generations to come.



57 Ron Diller, "What happened to affordable housing in Israel?" *The Jerusalem Post*, May 8, 2010.

## No Mixed-sex Shopping for Saudis

Authorities in Saudi Arabia have ordered shops that employ both men and women to build separation walls to enforce segregation, local media reported on Monday.

The order was issued by Labor Minister Adel Faqih and was verified by Abdullatif al-Sheikh, the head of the Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, commonly known as "Mutawa" or religious police.

The new rule states that a separation barrier, no shorter than 1.6 meters, should be erected to divide men and women in the workplace.

Authorities have been focused on promoting the kingdom's conservative rules in the country's shopping malls.

On June 2011, Saudi Arabia required lingerie shops to replace their salesmen, mostly of Asian origin, with Saudi saleswomen. This directive was later extended to cosmetic outlets. Women complained that they feel uncomfortable buying personal items from males, predicating the initiative.

The labor ministry said the decision to employ women in lingerie shops should create some 44,000 jobs for Saudi women. The unemployment rate among women stands at 30 percent according to official figures.

In December, the head of the religious police accused the labor ministry of failing to promote a safe work environment for women in the country as many have complained of harassment.