



ARAK III. BASIC POPULATION DATA, 1956-2011

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This article deals with the following population characteristics of Arak city: population growth from 1956 to 2011, age structure, average household size, literacy rate, and economic activity status for 2006 and/or 2011 (different dates for the categories are determined by the availability of census data).

Population growth. Arak has experienced a rather moderate rate of population growth, except during the Iran-Iraq War, 1980-88 (on which, see [IRAQ vii](#)), increasing from a population of 58,998 in 1956 to 484,212 in 2011. During the period 1956-76, the average annual growth rate was 3.47 percent, and the population almost doubled, rising from 58,998 to 116,832 people. From 1976 to 1986, the population growth rate of Arak reached the value of 8.54 percent per year, as the population almost doubled to 265,249 people. Since Arak was one of the safer cities in the country during the Iran-Iraq War, this increase may be attributed to war-related population movements. As the war came to an end (i.e., after the cease-fire of 1988), the population growth rate for Arak dropped to 4.55 percent per year between 1986 and 1991 and to 2.82 percent per year between 1991 and 1996. Consequently the population of Arak reached 331,354 in 1991 and 380,755 in 1996. Since then, the annual population growth



rate for Arak has continued to decrease, falling to 1.61 percent between 1996 and 2006 and to 1.62 percent between 2006 and 2011, as the population grew only from 380,755 in 1996 to 446,760 in 2006 and to 484,212 in 2011.(Table 1).

Age structure. The population of Arak can be considered as young. In 2011 almost 74.4 percent of the population was in the activity ages of 15 to 64, another 19.7 percent were below 15 years of age, and only 5.9 percent were 65 and over. The age structure in 2006 was even younger than that in 2011 and also younger than that of urban areas as a whole in the same year (Table 2).

Average household size. In 2006, the average household size in the city of Arak was 3.7 persons per household (*National Census*, 2006, SCI, 2010, p. 83), which was lower than the average of 3.89 for urban areas as a whole (SCI, 2009b, p. 50). In 2011 the average size declined to 3.27 persons per household (SCI, 2014), not significantly lower than the average size of 3.48 for the urban areas as a whole (SCI, 2014).

Literacy rate. In 2006, almost 90.6 percent of the population of Arak six years of age and over were literate. The literacy ratio was significantly higher for males (94.2 percent) than for females (87.0 percent; SCI, 2010, Table 4, p. 142). A comparison to urban areas in general, either for both sexes (88.9 percent) or for each sex (92.2 percent for male and 85.6 percent for female; SCI, 2009b, pp. 223, 225, 227), clearly suggests higher literacy conditions in Arak.

Economic activity status. In 2006, almost 86.6 percent of the population of Arak or 386,814 people were in the activity ages (i.e., 10 years of age and over), of whom 36.8 percent were economically active and 62.1 percent inactive, while the status of the rest (1.1 percent) was unknown (SCI, 2010, p. 173). The activity ratio in Arak is slightly lower than the national average ratio for cities (38.8 percent, SCI, 2009b, p. 35). Employment and unemployment ratio of the active population in Arak is estimated at 87.5 percent and 12.5 percent (i.e., of 37.5 percent of the total population). These figures indicate that the ratio of employment in Arak is lower than that in urban areas in the country as a whole (with 88.2 percent employed and 11.8 percent unemployed; Table 3).

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