



ARDABIL V. POPULATION, 1956-2011

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This article deals with the following population characteristics of Ardabil 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. Ardabil has experienced a rather moderate rate of population growth except during the [Iran-Iraq War](#), increasing more than sevenfold from a population of 65,742 in 1956 to 482,632 in 2011. During the period 1956-66, the average annual growth rate was 2.43 percent, from 65,742 to 83,596 people. From 1966 to 1976, the annual growth rate of the population leaped to 5.87 percent, to 147,865 people. A high population growth rate in Ardabil continued from then until 1986, during which period the population increased 6.28 percent per year, to 271,973 people in 1986. Since Ardabil was one of the safer cities in country during the Iran-Iraq War, this increase may be attributed in part 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 Ardabil dropped to 2.72 percent per year between 1986 and 1991 and to 1.82 percent per year between 1991 and 1996. Consequently, the



population of Ardabil reached 311,022 in 1991 and 340,386 in 1996. Since then, the annual population growth rate for Ardabil increased to 2.08 percent per year in 1996-2006 and 2.90 percent in the years 2006-2011, and the population grew to 418,262 and 482,632 people, respectively (Table 1).

Age structure. The population of Ardabil can still be considered as young. In 2011 almost 72.8 percent of population was in the activity ages of 15 to 64; another 21.2 percent were below 15 years of age, and only 6.0 percent were 65 and over. This age structure is not younger than that of urban areas of the country as a whole (22.3 percent, 72.3 percent, and 5.4 percent). The age structure in 2006 was slightly younger than that of 2011 and almost the same as that of national urban areas as a whole (Table 2).

Average household size. In 2006, the average household size in the city of Ardabil was 4.1 persons per household (*National Census, 2006*; SCI, 2010, p. 83), which was higher than that of the average of 3.89 for urban areas as a whole (SCI, 2009b, p. 50). In 2011 the average size declined to 3.6 persons per household (SCI, 2014), higher than the average size of 3.48 for the national urban areas as a whole (SCI, 2014).

Literacy rate. In 2006, almost 85.9 percent of the populations of Ardabil six years of age and over were literate. The literacy ratio was significantly higher for males (91.2 percent) than for females (80.5 percent; SCI, 2010, Table 4, p. 142). Comparison to urban areas in general, either for both sexes (88.9 percent) or for each sex (92.2 percent for males and 85.6 percent for females; SCI, 2009b, pp. 223, 225, 227), clearly suggests a lower literacy rate in Ardabil.

Economic activity status. In 2006, almost 85.0 percent of the population of Ardabil, or 355,647 people, were in the activity ages (i.e., 10 years of age and over), of whom 38.1 percent were economically active and 61.5 percent inactive, while the status of the rest (0.4 percent) was unknown (SCI, 2010, p. 173). The activity ratio in Ardabil is almost the same as the national average ratio for cities (38.8 percent, SCI, 2009b, p. 35). Employment and unemployment ratio in Ardabil is estimated at 87.1 percent and 12.9 percent of the active population (i.e., of 36.9 percent of the population 10 years of age and over). These figures indicate the ratio of employment in Ardabil is slightly lower than that in urban areas in the country as a whole (Table 3).



Bibliography (for cited works not given in detail, see the *EIr Short Titles*):

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