



# ASTARA II. POPULATION, 1956-2011

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### ii. Population, 1956-2011

This article deals with the following population characteristics of Astara 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.* Astara has experienced a rather moderate rate of population growth except during the [Iran-Iraq War](#), increasing nearly sixfold from a population of 8,425 in 1956 to 48,470 in 2011. During the period 1956-76, the average annual growth rate was 2.63 percent, from 8,425 to 14,150 people. From 1976 to 1986, the annual population growth rate of Astara reached the value of 5.55 percent, to 24,289 people. Since Astara was one of the safer cities in the 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 annual population growth rate for Astara dropped to 2.28 between 1986 and 1991 and to 2.43 percent between 1991 and 1996. The population of Astara reached 201,016 in 1991 and 217,804 in 1996. Since then, the annual population growth rate for Astara has continued to increase, reaching to 2.96 percent between



1996 and 2006 and to 3.37 percent between 2006 and 2011, from 30,666 in 1996 to 41,062 in 2006 and to 48,470 in 2011 (Table 1).

*Age structure.* The population of Astara can still be considered as young. In 2011 almost 72.8 percent of the 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. The age structure here is starting to get older than that of all urban areas as a whole. The age structure in 2006 was younger than that in 2011 but somewhat older than that of urban areas as a whole (Table 2).

*Average household size.* In 2006, the average household size in the city of Astara was 3.6 persons per household (National Census, 2006; SCI, 2010, p. 82), which was clearly lower than the average of 3.89 for urban areas as a whole (SCI, 2009b, p. 50). In 2011 the average size declined to 3.3 persons per household (SCI, 2014), still lower than the average size of 3.48 for the urban areas as a whole (SCI, 2014).

*Literacy rate.* In 2006, almost 85.9 percent of the populations of Astara six years of age and over were literate. The literacy ratio was significantly higher for males (89.7 percent) than for females (82.1 percent; SCI, 2010, Table 4, p. 145). 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 lower literacy rate in Astara.

*Economic activity status.* In 2006, almost 85.8 percent of the population of Astara, or 35,232 people, were in the activity ages (i.e., 10 years of age and over), of whom 37.3 percent were economically active and 61.6 percent inactive, while the status of the rest (1.1 percent) was unknown (SCI, 2010, p. 171). The activity ratio in Astara is lower than the national average ratio for cities (38.8 percent, SCI, 2009b, p. 35). Employment and unemployment ratio in Astara is estimated at 90.3 percent and 9.7 percent of the active population (i.e., of 37.3 percent of the population 10 years of age and over). These figures indicate the ratio of employment in Astara is clearly higher 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*):

*National Census*, Astara Sub-province, 1956, 1966, 1976, 1986, 1996, 2006, and 2011.

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*e jam'iyat-e šahrhā-ye kešvar dar saršomārihā-ye 1335-75 [years 1956-1996], wa taṭbiq-e tawzi'-e joḡrāfiā'i-e jam'iyat-e ostānhā 1382 [year 2003], Tehran, 2003.*

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Idem, "2011 Census Selected Results—UNFPA Iran," electronically published, 2014; available at [http://iran.unfpa.org/view\\_news.asp?id=248](http://iran.unfpa.org/view_news.asp?id=248) (accessed 15 June 2015).

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