

## **The gap between ideal family size and actual fertility among immigrants to Israel from the Former Soviet Union**

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### **Abstract**

Despite the dramatic increase in women's labor force participation, especially that of mothers with young children, working women continue to assume the primary responsibility for their families. Thus, it is likely that women who intend to develop demanding careers postpone childbirth and intend to have fewer children. However, in the context of immigration, immigrant women, but also immigrant men who face economic uncertainty and hardships in the labor market of the destination country are expected to weigh the costs of having children against opportunities in the labor market, and, as a result, to limit their fertility level and aspirations. The study, based on the Israeli social survey Of 2009, compares immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (FSU), who came to Israel after 1989 with Native-born Israeli Jews. As expected, among immigrants I found no gender differences in the impact of employment and education on the gap between ideal family size and actual fertility. Among Native-born Israeli Jews, educated and employed women present lower fertility gap than their male counterparts. Thus, my main conclusion emphasizes the importance of the role of economic aspirations of FSU immigrants, and their unique characteristics in understanding gender differences in fertility behavior and ideas.