

# CARACTERISTICILE DEMOGRAFICE, ECONOMICE ȘI SOCIALE ALE MINORITĂȚILOR DIN ISRAEL

## DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ISRAEL MINORITIES

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### SUMMARY

*In this study, the author develops the idea that, in the last twenty years, in Israel, there is a significant gap in the infrastructure sector between the minority and the Jewish society. They affect the potential of Arab society for economic development, prompt local authorities to develop human and economic infrastructure that will integrate the Arab population into the Israeli economic fabric, including the contribution to the national product. The author aims to analyze the reasons and the main findings of these gaps. The author intends to help improve the situation.*

**Keywords:** *minorities, economic policy, labor force, wage gap.*

### REZUMAT

*În acest studiu, autorul dezvoltă ideea, conform căreia, în ultimii douăzeci de ani, în Israel există un decalaj important în sectorul de infrastructură între societatea arabă minoritară și cea evreiască. Acestea afectează potențialul societății arabe de a se dezvolta economic, determină autoritățile locale să dezvolte infrastructuri umane și economice care vor integra populația arabă în țesutul economic israelian, inclusiv contribuția la produsul național. Autorul își propune să analizeze motivele și principalele constatări ale acestor lacune. Autorul vine cu propuneri de îmbunătățire a situației.*

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *minorități, politica economică, forța de muncă, decalaj salarial.*

**Introduction.** In recent decades, there has been a relatively broad consensus in Israel on the need to invest in the economic development of minorities in order to improve their economic situation and minimi-

ze economic gaps. The need for economic development has found expression in various government programs. In the face of the great accumulation of problems in the minority society over the years and given the

extent of the suffering, the proposed policy solutions have been numerous, varied and have had a significant budgetary cost. It is noteworthy that the policy programs recommended by other government bodies have recognized that the scale and depth of minority society problems require a fundamental solution that will include a significant policy change in many sectors that require the allocation of financial resources. The proposed solutions included policy measures aimed at addressing society and shifting priorities in the budget of the minority community (Arabs and Druze) and measures to increase integration into Jewish society.

**Materials and methods.** Investigating the problems faced by national minorities requires a systemic, structural-functional approach. The most relevant methods are: dialectics and synergetics, which allow the researcher to accumulate information about the dynamics of social processes and their synergy, which explains the sustainable development of society or its crises. . The relatively low level of development of the minority society has, as has been said, economic and social implications. Studies examining the return on investment in economic development in a minority society have found that low investment in economic development in a minority society charges a considerable price in terms of GDP. Yashiv & Kaliner found that the return on investment to encourage the employment of women in minorities is conservatively estimated at 7% of GDP [14, 80 p.]. A document prepared for the Caesarea Conference [7] shows that the integration of minority men into the labor market on an equal footing with that of Jews will lead to an increase of about NIS 10 billion in the country's annual GDP. A failure to realize the full potential of Israeli minorities.

The economic life of minorities society harms the standard of living in the economy, reduces tax revenues, increases the

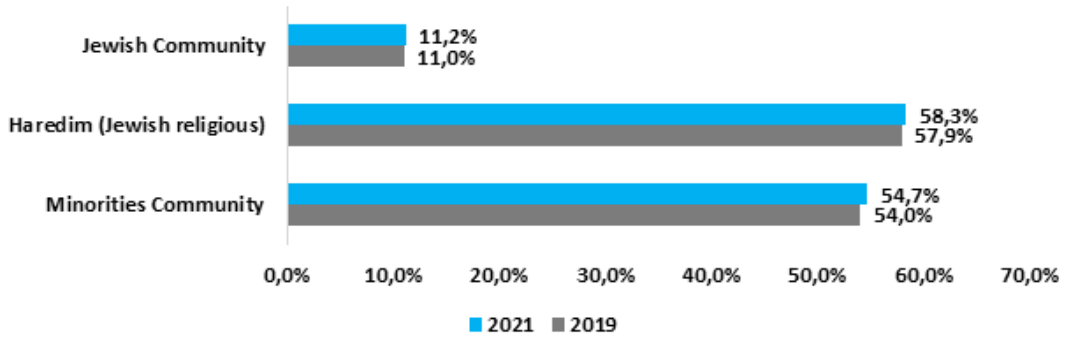
volume of welfare payments, and increases the national debt. In this way, lack of employment harms the economic stability of the country. In addition, a low level of development harms the economic situation of the minority's society. Social and ethnic relations between sectors [8, 39 p.].

**Analysis of the employment status of the minority's society.** The integration of Israeli minorities in the labor market is partial, and this is reflected in low employment rates, low wage levels and a relatively high rate of workers integrating into employment that does not match their skills. The limited integration of Israeli minorities in the labor market has an impact on their economic situation and the high poverty rate among them. The economic difficulties at home force children to enter the labor market at an early age and to give up further education, which perpetuates intergenerational poverty. Figure 1 will present the incidence of relative poverty (in percentage numbers) by population groups - years 2019-2021.

From the figure, the study editor concludes that (1) The poverty rate in the minorities community (which includes Druze, beduim & Arab society) is very high and reaches over 50% of families. This means that every second family is below the poverty line in these years, and the impact on the future of the family and economic capabilities is very high; (2) Another statistic is, the poverty that exists in the ultra-Orthodox society (close religious Jews). Also, in this case the percentage is very high. But unlike the minority's community, it receives grants and very large lucrative care.

**Employment rate in minorities society.** The employment rates of Israeli minorities and the Druze population are lower than those of the Jewish population in Israel. In particular, the gap in employment rates among women is about 26% percent among minority's women aged 15 and older, compared with about 63% among

**Figure 1. Incidence of poverty (in Percentages) out of the whole community - 2019-2021.**



**Source: Made by the author from [3].**

Jewish women. The relatively low employment rates of minority's women are the result of many factors, including a relatively low level of education (which has risen in recent years), but there is still a considerable gap in cultural attitudes regarding the role of women and women going to work in a limited geographical area. It is worth noting that there is great variability in the rate of integration in the work cycle. Women with a low level of education, without control over the basic skills required for the labor market and with traditional perceptions about the role of women, are excluded from the labor market. In contrast, women with higher education and with modern perceptions, tend to take part in the work cycle.

A prominent phenomenon in the labor market for minority's men is their retirement from the labor force at a relatively young age and despair of looking for work. Early retirement is unusual in comparison with the patterns of participation in the labor force of Jews in Israel, Palestinians, and men in Western economies, and even in comparison with patterns in Muslim and Arab countries. An important factor which explains the decline in the participation rates of minority's men at an early age is the high percentage among employed in occupations that require physical fitness. As physical ability decreases with age, employment

participation in these occupations decreases [4, 243 p.]. Moreover, the high proportion of foreign workers in the country allows the replacement of workers whose physical fitness has decreased with other workers. The ability to receive income from various government subsidies allows men to retire with the decline in physical abilities. The early retirement of minority's men from the labor force is also related to the cultural characteristics of the minority's society, where the phenomenon of children's support for their parents is widespread, from an early age. Figure 2 will show the percentage of employed persons from all communities, according to age range - as of 2021.

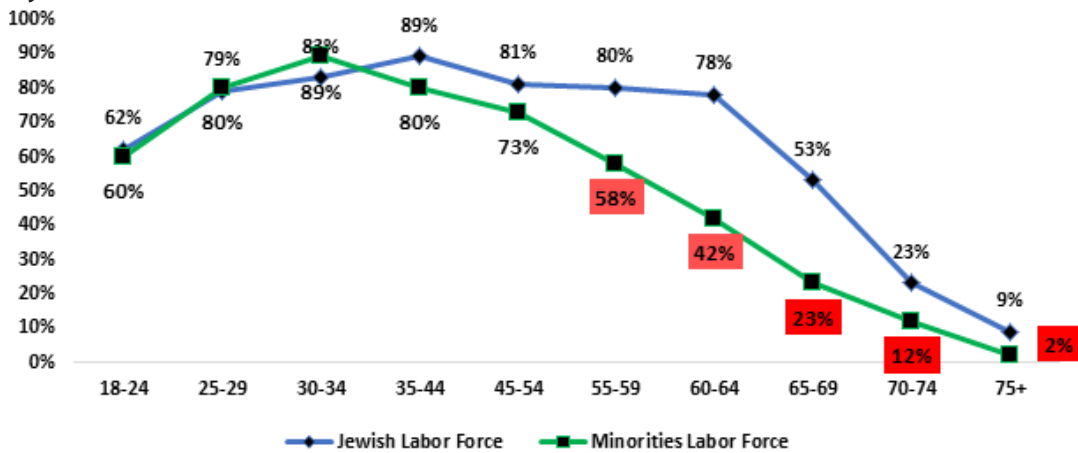
From the analysis of the figure, the study editor concludes that:

1. At young ages the labor force of Jewish and minority's society is equal (even with a slight advantage to minority's society aged 25-29).

2. From the next age group begins an employment gap in which Jewish society leads, and it grows over the years. Especially at ages 45-65.

The problem is exacerbated when it comes to the employment of women from the minority's sector (including Druze). minority's women are a unique population living in the culture of minority's society, and which defines their primary and main role

**Figure 2. % Of employed persons (men) from minorities society and Jewish society – 2021.**



**Source: made by the author from [3].**

as the traditional role of a wife and a mother who is responsible for raising children and satisfying family needs. It follows that in the past paid employment outside the home was at a lower priority in the woman's priorities [5]. The status of minority's women in Israel has been harmed in two respects: both as women in a traditional minority's society in which they are considered a minority within a minority and as part of a national minority that has suffered from neglect and discrimination for years.

#### **Status of the minority's employee.**

One prevailing perception in an earlier period was that women were employed as secondary earners, as opposed to men who are actual or potential household heads and main earners. From this conception it follows that society expects men to provide the family salary, but women are mothers first and foremost; As secondary earners, it is not necessary to pay them the full compensation for their work [11]. We are witnessing a severe phenomenon of a decrease in the prestige of an occupation or of a job when they are perceived by women (from both societies), and this is reflected in the reduction of the salary paid to the employee.

#### **Employment professions among wo-**

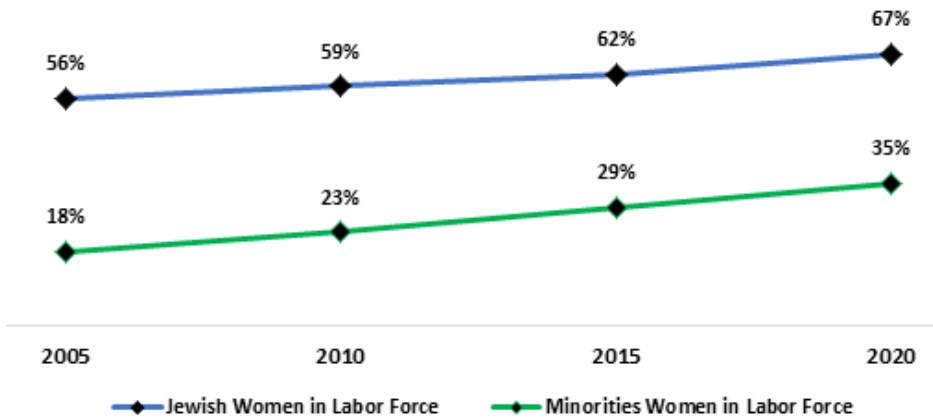
**men from minorities society.** It was found that minority's women work in professions defined as „feminine” in two areas: in the white-collar professions - education, nursing and health, and in the blue-collar professions - services, unprofessional jobs such as textile cleaning and packaging. Although the minority's women employed in Israel are found in almost all areas of employment - medicine, law, journalism, acting, art, literature and more, they are in fact very few, as an exclusive representative in every field.

#### **Minorities women - Numerical Data:**

1. General data: In 2020, there will be 431,913 minority's women living in Israel over the age of 15, i.e., at the age of belonging to the labor force; 78% are Muslims, 12.5% are Christians and 9.5% are from Druze society [3]. The main districts in which they live are the Northern District, the Southern District and the Central District.

2. Development trend of labor force participation rates: Although the participation rate of minority's women in the labor force has been on the rise in the last 15 years, it is still considerably lower than in other groups in the population. The gap between minority's women and Jewish women has been maintained over the years.

**Figure 3. The participation rate (%) in the labor force between the years 2005 – 2020.**



**Source: Made by the author from [3].**

3. Today, some women in minority's society actually prefer to integrate into positions and jobs within Jewish society.

4. Most minority's women in the labor force are employed (85%), but the proportion of minority's women employed in the total population of women of working age is only 35%. This means that 65% of minority's women of working age are not employed.

Figure 3 present the rate of participation of minorities and Jewish women in the labor force between 2005 and 2020 (before the corona period).

From figure 3, the study editor concludes:

1. There is a significant increase in the labor force of women in minority's society. An increase from 18% in 2005 to 35% in 2020. That is, the percentage of women has doubled itself by 100%

2. All this compared to a more moderate increase in Jewish society. An increase that is expressed from 56% to 67%. An increase of 12% in total.

The increase in the percentage of participation came after the beginning of a process of minority's society that opened up employment opportunities in a wider way to the female population. The author of the study in her article „Barriers to equality in the Arab education system" [2], notes and

describes the process that minority's society has gone through over the past 20 years. A process that led to community growth and empowerment of the female population in minority's society.

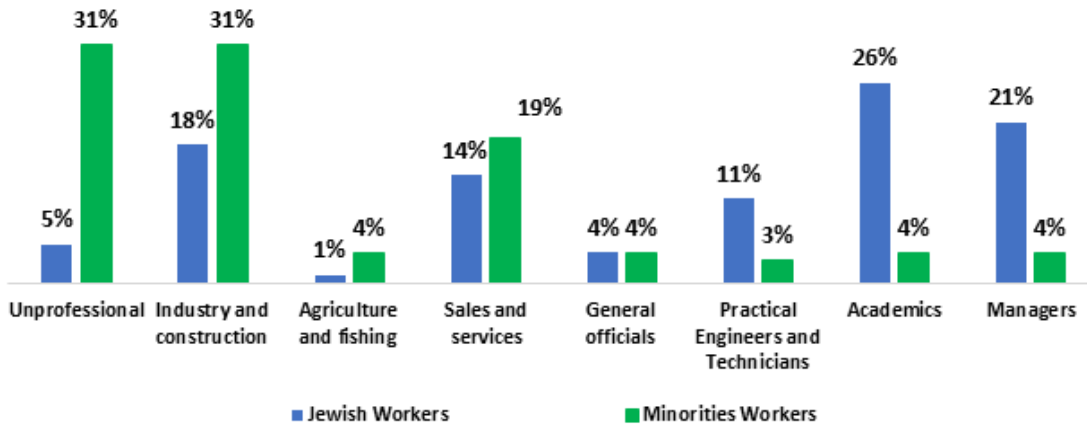
**Employment dispersal in industries, and in knowledge-intensive professions.**

Discrimination in employment and wages is an obstacle in the way of many minorities' integration into the labor force. In general, there is a stark correlation between workers earning low wages and belonging to a population group that is likely to suffer as a result of violations of labor laws. Among the groups, the population of Israeli minority's stands out, which also suffers from discrimination due to their belonging to a minority group [2]. In addition, an initial look at the distribution of employment in occupations and employment industries shows that there is a very clear division in employment according to the employee's occupation, and his level of education. The distribution of employment among minorities and Jews by occupation, by men and women, is shown below.

From the analysis of the findings (figure 3), the study author concludes that:

1. The chart above shows that most minority's men are employed in occupati-

**Figure 4. Rate of participation in the labor force according to occupational occupations of Jewish and minority's society – 2021.**



**Source: Made by the author from [139].**

**Table 1. Wages and working hours data for Jewish and Minority men 2019 - 2020.**

Financial criterion	Jewish Sector	Minority Sector
Average wage	2,966 Euro	1,712 Euro
Hours per week	42.5 HPW	40.5 HPW
Average hour payment	14.95 Euro	9.07 Euro

**Source: Made by the author from [3].**

ons characterized by low education, such as: artisans, builders, machine operators, drivers and unskilled workers.

2. Relative to Jewish men, minority's men are employed at low rates in occupations characterized by higher education such as principals, academics, practical engineers, technicians, etc. Beyond that, some higher educationist engages in occupations that do not match their education. Others avoid in the first place. From studies in fields where the chances of integration into employment are low, most people with higher education are employed in the public sector in community-oriented jobs, and only a minority of academics are employed in advanced industries such as high-tech.

**Wages of workers from minority's society.** In addition to the relatively low employment rates of minority's men compared to Jewish men, there are large gaps among

minority's employed persons in relation to the Jewish population in monthly and hourly wages, while the amount of weekly working hours is relatively similar. Table 1 will show the average wage differences that lead to the gap as a result of discrimination between the two companies (Minority / Jewish).

From the analysis of the findings of the table, the research author concludes that:

1. When examining the gaps between the wages of Jewish employees and those of the minority's population in Israel, a huge gap is revealed: comparing the income from wage labor between employees in the Jewish population and employees in the minority's population, relatively large gaps were found in both monthly and hourly income.

2. The average gross income per month from paid employment in the Jewish population is € 2,966 compared to € 1,712 among the minority's population - this in-

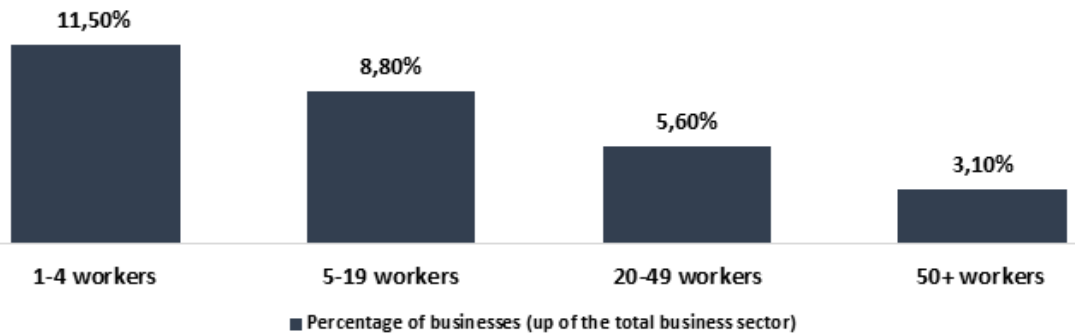
come constitutes 67.2% of the income of the Jewish population (in 2019 this income was 63.5%). An almost identical gap is also found in the comparison of gross hourly income among the Jewish population compared to the minority's population (€ 14.95 compared to € 9.07 per hour, respectively).

**Strengthening the economic-employment infrastructure** (development and upgrading of industrial areas, development of tourism infrastructure and employment). The unrealized employment potential of Minority's s (and especially of women) who want to integrate into the labor market, but experience various difficulties in integrating into employment, holds a great opportunity for employers [6]. During this chapter, the author of the study demonstrated the data regarding the existence of the minority's community one step behind the Jewish community. Opening businesses and branches of large companies in minority's localities may be a solution that has many benefits not only for minority's society, but also for employers. The location of businesses in areas of minority's localities will help solve the distress experienced by employers in recruiting suitable manpower, and will contribute to the economy and national product on the other. In the minority's localities, there is a large amount

of non-exhaustive manpower, so that employers can choose the best and most suitable candidates for them, and for the purpose of placement, they can even use the „Ryan” centers. Subsidizing the wages of minority's workers through the employment track of the Ministry of Economy further increases the attractiveness of this step [10]. In addition, the authorities encourage the bringing of branches of businesses to their locality, through the granting of good conditions such as exemption from property taxes, assistance in finding a building and adapting it [12]. Various businesses have understood the viability of the move, for example bezeq recently opened a telephone service center in Chura and IAI is about to open a branch in Dalit al-Carmel. All of these are a few examples that come to present a big problem that has been going on for quite a few years.

In 2020, only about 10 % of businesses in Israel are owned by minority's companies, most of them small businesses where there is no demand for many employees. This reality leads to few employment opportunities for minority's employers. figure 5 shows the percentage of businesses, out of all businesses in Israel, which are owned by self-employed people from minority's society, versus the number of employees employed in the same business.

**Figure 5. Percentage of Minority's -owned businesses by size of number of employees - 2020 \*.**



\*Before the Corona Crisis

Source: Made by the author from [3].

From the analysis of the figure, the study's editor concludes that the number of businesses operating and succeeding in the minority's society, as a source of employment, is relatively small. If we look at the percentage of businesses with the employment capacity of over 50 employees, it is found that 3.1% in total, i.e., over 95% of all businesses in Israel are owned by the Jewish company or international investors. The research editor in her article [1] „Arab minority and Jews majority in the Israeli education system" presents the problem of business leadership that exists in minority's society, and it is possible that this is the source of the change.

**3. Conclusions.** According to the revi-

ew and the findings, the participation rates of employees from the minority's society are still low. Those who participate in the labor force have difficulty finding work and unemployment rates are high among them. The author defines that the employed are concentrated in occupations and in specific industries and their wage level is relatively low.

As a result, the economic situation of Israeli minority's is difficult, and they suffer from particularly high poverty rates. The limited integration of the minority's sector into the labor market also affects the sense of alienation from the state and its institutions and harms GDP and the Israeli economy as a whole. Integrate into the job market.

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