



Pluralism and Equal Opportunity in Higher Education Expanding Access for Arabs, Druze and Circassians in Israel

Report by the Planning and Budgeting Committee of
the Council for Higher Education

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In this report the terms "Arab population," "Arab sector" and "minorities" refer to Arab, Druze and Circassian citizens of Israel. These terms are for convenience only.

CHE – Council for Higher Education. PBC - Planning and Budgeting Committee of the Council for Higher Education. www.che.org.il.

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Arabs make up approximately 20% of Israel's population and 26% of the relevant age cohort for higher education. However, their participation in the higher education system is significantly lower – about 12%. With each additional level of education, the participation rate declines.

Beyond reducing inequality and promoting better relations between Arabs and Jews, raising the rate of Arab participation in higher education holds great importance on the social and economic planes. Academic studies are a primary means of social mobility and a key element in the development of each population group in Israel, as well as the development of the entire economy. Increased participation of Arab citizens in higher education will enhance their socio-economic status in Israeli society, and will contribute greatly to the State of Israel as a whole.

In the framework of the multi-year program for 2010-2016, the Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) committed itself to lead a process of fundamental change in this area, and for the first time set a goal of making higher education accessible to minorities and the ultra-Orthodox. With the agreement of the Ministry of Finance, the PBC allocated a budget of nearly 500 million NIS over six years for this purpose.

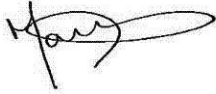
Subsequently, a joint team from the PBC's planning and budgeting departments, led by the Planning and Policy Vice President, was appointed in January 2010, and invested great effort in formulating operational recommendations. This report summarizes the knowledge gained by the professional staff, and presents the program adopted by the PBC after consultation with the Steering Committee headed by Professor Faisal Azaiza. The program is based on two basic principles:

- Addressing the entire continuum of the student's career, from secondary school through employment after graduation, or continued studies and a senior position in academia.
- Providing a comprehensive response to the barriers faced by Arab students, including language difficulties, learning skills, and cultural differences.

The higher education system has a great opportunity to change Israeli society by improving the socio-economic status of minorities in Israel, and I hope that this program will begin a shift towards a more pluralistic and egalitarian society.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank the professional staff for their dedication to this significant task, and for their efforts in delving deeper into the issues and searching for creative solutions. I encourage of all those involved and wish us all success!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manuel Trajtenberg', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Prof. Manuel Trajtenberg
Chairman, PBC

06 January 2013

The Arab population in Israel attributes great importance to higher education, which it perceives as the most important, and perhaps the only means of social mobility. Higher education is a valuable component of human capital, and its acquisition is one of the most important means of creating economic and social mobility. Increased Arab participation in higher education will reduce inequality between the sectors, and promote positive relations between Arabs and Jews.

For the first time, the PBC has committed to lead a process of fundamental change in this context, and has set an explicit target in the multi-year program to make higher education accessible to Arab, Druze and Circassian citizens. The program addresses all the barriers that inhibit integration in the higher education system, from high school guidance through preparation for academic studies and comprehensive support to students in the first year of studies (a stage normally characterized by high drop-out) -- all the way to advanced degrees for outstanding students. The program also includes continued operation of the Ma'of Fund that supports outstanding young Arab lecturers in higher education institutions. The Ma'of program has opened tenure track opportunities to nearly 100 Arab lecturers, who are a role model for younger students at the beginning of their own academic careers.

In the coming year, there are additional programs to be examined by the professional staff and new ideas that may be approved by the Steering Committee that I lead. Implementation should be carried out with caution, while learning and measuring the results of each component in the holistic program, at each stage.

I wish to thank Professor Manuel Trajtenberg, Chairman of the PBC, who placed this subject on the agenda of the Council for Higher Education and raised the issue for public debate. I also thank the professional staff headed by Merav Shaviv, which labored greatly to formulate the report and the intervention programs, as well as the members of the Steering Committee for their commitment, initiative and investment.

May all our efforts bear fruit and achieve the desired change of reducing inequality in Israeli society, for a more productive, creative and unified society.

Sincerely,



Prof. Faisal Azaiza

Member of the PBC and Chairman of the Steering Committee

Introduction

At the beginning of 2010, after signing the multi-year program with the Ministry of Finance, Professor Manuel Trajtenberg, Chair of the PBC, appointed a professional team to design a program to increase access to higher education for the Arab population. Our job was to examine higher education in the Arab population, map the barriers and difficulties en route to expanding and improving higher education, study in depth the available intervention programs and their effectiveness, coordinate and process all the data and facts, and formulate recommendations for the coming years.

During this period we collected information, read studies and articles, learned from past experience and held many meetings and conversations with professionals at colleges and universities: heads of institutions, Arab sector coordinators, preparatory course managers, staff at the Dean of Students and Student Aid Units, as well as Arab students and staff members. We consulted with government agencies, academics from the Arab sector, representatives of non-governmental organizations and representatives of philanthropic funds. In May 2011 we released a public appeal in the Jewish and Arab press inviting the general public, researchers and organizations to submit data, research and policy proposals. In July 2011 we published an interim report, which was followed by a limited pilot and evaluation study in the pre-academic preparatory courses (*mechinot*)¹, which helped illuminate problems and possible solutions. We also initiated a pilot program at the Open University, in the framework of the "soft landing" program, which is now underway.

This process was designed to gather information from the field and study the issue from the broadest and most diverse points of view, aiming at forming a complete picture of the barriers faced by the Arab population en route to higher education. Meeting with Arab students, professionals and individuals in the field, allowed us to analyze data in terms of implications, causes and reasons. Our goal was to include as many parties as possible, to avoid duplication and to receive feedback on the proposed policy directions.

The state of higher education in the Arab population is influenced by many and diverse factors, as detailed in the following report. From the full picture provided, it was necessary to select both the most significant barriers and those barriers on which the PBC can have the most impact. For this reason, there are significant issues that should be addressed outside the PBC, including problems in primary and secondary education, public transportation to Arab population centers, labor market integration, and changes to the PET (psychometric examination required for university entrance). Our program includes partial reference to these issues, with the understanding that it is not possible to

¹ Generally each *mechina* is affiliated with a HE institute, although a few independent programs do exist.

wait for all the systems to be improved, and that action should be taken in all fields (according to budget constraints) in order to improve access to higher education.

Our program emphasizes expansion of access along with improved educational outcomes. In order to expand access to thousands of minority students and help them to succeed in their studies, we must first invest in appropriate preparation and support for those who are eligible, in order to produce graduates whose achievements are equal to those of the Jewish population. Therefore, the plan allocates significant resources to addressing the major barriers that Arab students face before entering the academy and during their years of study, and does not propose numeric targets for massive absorption of Arab students.

Our program invests in improving integration in the existing academic system and in regular degree granting programs. We believe that integration in existing institutions is preferable to creating separate frameworks, in order to prepare students for integration into the broader society and suitable employment. Nevertheless, in order to bring about significant change within the next few years, and to reduce the incidence of study abroad (especially in Jordan), the proposed solutions may not be sufficient. We are open to initiatives arising from the field and to examining other alternatives, such as the establishment of unique frameworks in Arab, Druze and Circassian communities. This is a complex issue and we shall address it only after careful consideration.

A necessary condition for success is the cooperation, sincerity and commitment of the academic institutions funded by the PBC. Due to the range of aspects that must be handled, each institution that applies to the PBC for support must appoint an individual at the highest level of management to be in charge of formulating objectives, monitoring implementation and reporting on results. We will provide incentives for initiatives to prevent drop-out in the first year and to encourage students to select fields that are in demand in the private sector. Unlike previous years, however, our budgetary models will give flexibility to institutions in creating "outside the box" programs and using tools that are suitable for each institution, discipline of study and specific population. There is no single recipe that we wish to dictate. Rather, we wish to enable flexibility and creativity while setting clear goals for the institutions, giving special attention to the barriers that must be addressed and formulation of appropriate action plans.

We are close to the end of our planning, but only at the beginning of change. An integral part of the PBC's activity is a continuous process of assessment and drawing conclusions from the implementation. We will update the program and its completion in the framework of the PBC's permanent Steering Committee For Promoting Higher Education Among the Minority Population headed by Professor Faisal Azaiza. In this context, we

also wish to expand and deepen our understanding of how other developed countries deal with similar problems.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all those who offered their time, energy, knowledge and insights, including the heads of the academic institutions, relevant officials in the institutions, Arab sector coordinators, students, faculty, researchers, representatives of non-governmental organizations, representatives of the public, and others. Special thanks to the professional employees of the relevant ministries, who assisted in thinking and outlining the program, and in particular, the Economic Development Authority of the Arab, Druze and Circassian Sector in the Prime Minister's office – Ayman Saif and Roi Assaf. We thank the representatives of the Ministry of Finance - Micah Perlman and Danny Gluschenkov -- and employees of the Central Bureau of Statistics - Yosi Gidanian and Aviel Krentzler. Thanks to the Brookdale Institute researchers - Dalia Ben Rabi, Sofka Segal-Barreau and Ayala Hendin -- and to Khaled Abu Asbah from the Massar Institute, who helped us in understanding the array of preparatory courses for Arab students. Thanks to Avivit Hai from the Inter-Agency Task Force for bringing the issue to the awareness of North American Jewry. Thanks to the staff of the Planning and Budgeting Department at the PBC, who assisted in collecting the information and its analysis: Hava Klein, Yael Siman Tov-Cohen, Efrat Tiram and Yelena Krol. A special thanks to the Steering Committee of the Arab Sector led by PBC member Professor Faisal Azaiza, for its commitment to the subject and helpful comments. And finally, we thank Professor Manuel Trajtenberg for the high professional standards, fruitful discussions and support along the way.

Implementation of this program intersects with other Government plans, especially in aspects of primary and secondary education, as well as employment of Arabs, Druze and Circassians. A holistic approach is critical to enabling thousands of additional Arab students to further realize their potential and complete an academic degree, integrate in proper employment, and -- for the outstanding ones -- to continue as faculty members in institutions of higher education. According to the program "Israel 2028: Socio-economic Vision and Strategy in the Global World", it is urgent to thoroughly address the needs of the Arab sector in Israel, and in order to do that, the Government must adopt a comprehensive policy to realize the potential of the Arab sector.

We believe that professional, systematic and consistent implementation of our program, along with improvements in interfacing systems (primary/secondary education and employment, in particular) will bring a long-term breakthrough in integrating Arabs into the higher education system and, later on -- to full integration into Israeli society.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected loops and curves.

Merav Shaviv

Deputy director-general, Planning and Policy, PBC

I would like to commend the work of the professional staff members: Mrs. Noa Binstein, Mr. Ari Stone and Mr. Ornan Fudem, who devoted many efforts in studying the subject and formulating the plan. Without them, the program would not have been developed.

Executive Summary

This report presents the work of the professional staff appointed by the Chairman of the PBC on facilitating Arab access to higher education, and the program that was eventually adopted by the PBC.

The program, designed for the higher education institutions budgeted by the PBC, was formulated after consultation with the Steering Committee of the PBC on the subject headed by Prof. Faisal Azaiza, member of the PBC, and with the participation of: Prof. Roza Azhari, ORT Braude College; Dr. Rabia Basis, Gordon College of Education; Prof. Daud Bashuti, The Technion; Prof. Ezri Tarazi, Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem; Dr. Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; Dr. Tali Regev, Tel-Aviv University; Mr. Rasul Saada – Head, Department to promote Arab students, The Student Association; Mr. Roi Assaf, Authority of Socio-Economic Development for the Arab, Druze and Circassian Sector; The Prime Minister's Office - permanent observer.

The report includes four chapters:

The first chapter summarizes background data, primarily socioeconomic, on the Arab population. It focuses on the principal findings in the context of higher education: numbers of students and trends over the years, fields of study, distribution by types of institution, dropout and failure to complete within the standard time, gender analysis and the phenomenon of study abroad.

The data show that the Arab population in Israel is characterized by low socio-economic status relative to the Jewish population. Most Arab communities are rated in the lowest socio-economic clusters according to the Central Bureau of Statistics. There are significant gaps in income from gross labor per capita compared to the majority population, while the rate and duration of poverty are much higher. The employment rate is lower than in the Jewish population, and gender segmentation shows that there is a significant gap in employment rates between Arab and Jewish women. The majority of those employed do not have an academic degree. As the level of earnings rises, the gaps grow. The majority of women are employed in education, and most of the men are employed in jobs that do not require an academic degree. There is a persistent gap, in recent years, in the average number of years of schooling between Arabs and Jews in favor of the latter. Overcrowding in classrooms in elementary schools in the Arab sector is much greater than in the Jewish sector. The results of standardized tests, especially in English and Science, are lower among Arab students. Dropout rate of Arab students in grades seven – twelve is higher and is particularly evident in ninth grade (between middle

school and high school). The percentage of students who take the matriculation exams is lower, and the percentage of Arabs who possess a matriculation certificate that meets university admission requirements is much lower than that of Jews. Despite these poor outcomes, the percentage of Arab students who take pre-academic preparatory courses (*mechinot*) is extremely low. Therefore, it is not surprising that representation of the Arab population in higher education is low relative to its share in the general population, notwithstanding the upward trend over the years (which is led by women). The percentage of university graduates among Arabs is less than half that among Jews. Comparing the percentage of undergraduate students in the general population in the relevant age group for higher education shows that there is a decline in the participation rate of Arab students in undergraduate studies compared to growth among Jews. The Arab students tend to choose professional fields of study that promise immediate employment, particularly in the public sector, such as medicine, pharmacy and nursing, as well as education and teaching. They are almost entirely absent from natural sciences and engineering. The dropout rates between first and second year of studies are higher, as well as the time taken to complete a degree. The gap in dropout rates is especially evident in the academic colleges, and the phenomenon of failure to complete on time is especially evident in universities. With each level of higher education completed, Arab representation decreases, from undergraduate up to senior academic staff. There is a widespread and growing phenomenon of studying sought-after professions, such as medicine, abroad, particularly in Jordan. Bedouin population data are low in almost all parameters and outcomes..

The second chapter describes the major barriers to entry and integration in the higher education system. First and foremost we recognize barriers which are the result of the primary and secondary education system, which provides the "tool box" that opens the doors to higher education, and shapes the student's ability to cope in the different frameworks. There are also other barriers related to environmental, cultural, traditional and other issues.

The Hebrew language is a major obstacle. Although Hebrew is taught in Arab schools, there is almost no use of this language outside the classroom. Therefore, Arab students experience difficulty in academic speaking, understanding, reading and writing. There is also difficulty in the **English language**, required in higher education, being one of four (or even five) foreign languages for the Arab student. **Learning Skills** are another major barrier. Primary and secondary curricula emphasize memorization and understanding texts at a basic level, but do not encourage creative thinking, critical thinking, analysis, and independent reasoning. **The psychometric test** is a major barrier to entry in sought after academic areas of study and prestigious institutions. There is a gap of approximately 100 points in favor of examinees tested in Hebrew versus those tested in Arabic

(notwithstanding a higher average matriculation score for those tested in Arabic). There is also a **lack of appropriate guidance counseling for high school students**, such as **preliminary information, consultation and guidance** regarding admission requirements, types of programs and institutions, specific curriculum content, suitability for the profession, and employment prospects. For example, the over-representation of Arab students studying education could be moderated through vocational guidance and information about other employment options. There is also the **difficulty of physical access**. The higher education system and the labor market usually require Arab residents to venture outside of their residential area for academic studies and employment. Therefore, the severe shortage of available, accessible and affordable transportation is a significant barrier. There is a shortage of public transportation, in terms of bus frequency, hours and entry into the towns in rural Arab communities. The time spent on travel increases when there is need to use several bus lines or the train. In addition, there is difficulty with renting apartments near the campus. . **There is a cultural gap**, primarily in universities where, predominantly, the nature of study and geographic location require relocation and independent living. The Arab community, despite modernization trends, retains many traditional characteristics. In the framework of higher education, Arab students experience being a minority for the first time, without the protection of the Arab community in their residential location. For the first time they transition into a Jewish environment where the Hebrew language is predominant, as well as into an academic environment that they may perceive as unwelcoming. Also, the Arab students come to the academy at a relatively young age, as most of them do not serve in the Army and do not take a long trip abroad as the Jewish students do. This is the first time they venture out of their residential environment and have to manage independently. In some of the popular departments, institutions require that students be aged at least 20, claiming that younger students lack the maturity required for engaging in the profession studied. **Economic barriers** can prevent entry to academic studies, and cause dropout and failure to complete studies. . As shown by the data, the family of an average Arab student (which finances most of the expenses for the studies) comes from a lower socio-economic background than the family of the average Jewish student, and its sources for financing tuition and living expenses are much more meager. The lack of military service by most Arab students prevents them from receiving scholarships from various public and private bodies. For the students themselves, helping to support the family and saving for the construction of a house (mainly among men) are also motivating factors to go to work at a younger age, rather than choosing higher education.

The third chapter reviews the tools and programs that currently exist and implementation of previous recommendations, especially at the PBC and in the higher education system, and the various government offices. The PBC attributes great importance to this subject and in 2002, established a special steering committee for

increasing access to the Arab sector. However, the budget invested was very low and primarily supported administrative coordination in the institutions and employment of doctoral students and outstanding faculty. It is encouraging to see that various academic institutions initiated programs from their own resources and raised philanthropic funds for the effort, thus assisting integration of Arab students and gaining valuable knowledge and experience. Government programs have begun to address education, employment, and transportation, such as career guidance in high schools, improving Hebrew studies in schools, establishment of employment centers in Arab communities, and improving the transportation system in Arab communities. However, these efforts are in various stages of development, and their scope is still limited.. It is doubtful whether they are enough to bring about change in the short term.

The fourth chapter presents the PBC's policy for the coming years. The main points are as follows:

- **Information, consultation and guidance:** Information, consultation and guidance centers for the Arab sector will be established in Arab population centers around the country. These centers will provide reliable and objective information on higher education. They will provide educational and vocational guidance beginning in high school, all the way through a student's academic career, including assistance in employment integration. The program will be coordinated with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor.
- **Pre-academic preparatory courses (*mechinot*):** All the preparatory courses budgeted by the PBC, where minority students study (both together with Jews and separately) will receive wrap-around services that include: Hebrew/English language courses, tutoring, subsidized dormitories / transportation, coordinator / consultant and psychometric preparation courses (if necessary). In addition, the PBC will participate in marketing and branding the *mechinot*, aiming to bring them to the awareness of the Arab population and highlight their benefits. As a complementary move, the PBC will grant an excellence scholarship to the top 20% of the Arab *mechinot* graduates. . The scholarship will be awarded after admission to the first year of undergraduate studies and will be equal to the annual tuition.
- **Summer Preparation ("One Step Ahead"):** This short preparatory course is intended for Arab students who have already been admitted to college or university. This is an intensive course before the school year begins, which builds the student's knowledge base and basic skills to enable an optimal start. The summer programs take place one to two months before the start of school. Their curriculum focuses on

improving Hebrew and English language skills, study skills and orienting the students to academic life.

- **Effective absorption in the first year:** We view the first year as a critical stage for the success of the Arab student, both in terms of persistence and achievements. Most of our resources will go to programs of the individual higher education institutions, designed to achieve the following goals: reducing drop-out and switching departments; achieving timely graduation; raising achievement levels; increasing the numbers of Arab students in fields where they are under-represented, (both for professional mobility and for social considerations); promoting a welcoming campus environment; and expanding options to realize academic potential. The program components are: social mentoring (both personal and group), academic workshops and mentoring, workshops in study skills, psychological support, guidance in choosing courses, a paid academic advisor for Arab students, cultural adjustments in the academic context, and consideration of non-Jewish holidays, The primary effort will be concentrated in the first year of academic studies.
- **Career Guidance:** Prior to graduation, support will be provided for better integration into the labor market. We seek both to expand Arab employment and to ensure that the graduates are employed in fields that meet their skills.
- **Program for outstanding Arab graduate students:** The PBC has expanded its support for outstanding doctoral students, and continues to support Ma'of Scholarships for Arab faculty members. In addition, as of 2013/14, the PBC will support 25 outstanding students pursuing a research-oriented MA with thesis and 25 postdoctoral fellowships.
- **Absorption of Arab academic staff:** It is recommended to encourage outstanding students to pursue advanced degrees and to prefer integration of eligible Arab candidates as faculty members.
- **Institutional platform:** As this effort includes a wide range of subjects – economic, academic, social, cultural, physical accessibility, and employment, success depends on creating an institutional platform which is supported by the highest levels of management. A “Unit for Arab Students” should direct, manage and supervise the implementation of the project, both at the institutional level and at the individual student level. The unit should be headed by a senior staff member, preferably an Arab, who will report directly to the Rector/President. The person in charge will have a defined role anchored in the official documents of the institution. The person

in charge will present reports regarding activity and results to the management of the institution and to the PBC as required.

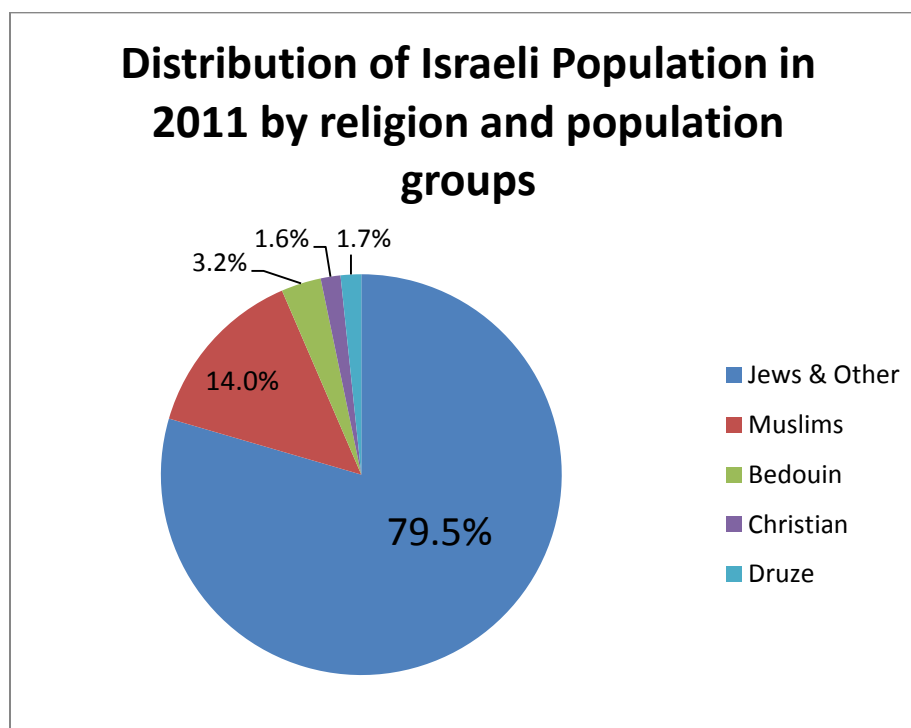
- **Translation of websites (relevant interfaces) into Arabic:** Translation of the relevant portions of the institutions' websites and the CHE website, to allow better orientation and academic information to Arab candidates.
- **Integration of Arabs in governing institutions and committees:** It is recommended that the higher education institutions adopt the principles of affirmative action when appointing members of committees, governing bodies and senior staff.
- **Increased integration of Arabs in the administrative staff of the institution:** We recommend that the institutions take steps to increase Arab representation in the administrative staff, by setting an annual target appropriate to the rate of internal rotation and the size of the administrative staff at the institution.
- **Open University** – On a one-time basis, the PBC is supporting a unique study course in four high demand fields. Students who successfully complete the program at the Open University will be able to transfer, in the framework of the "Soft Landing" program, to a university where they will complete their undergraduate degree. The students in the pilot project will receive support in the form of Arabic language assistance in all the courses, workshops to strengthen skills in Hebrew and English, and academic skills specific to their field. The students will also receive scholarships and monthly stipends.
- **Physical accessibility** – We are working in cooperation with the Ministries of Transport and Finance, the Student Association, and the institutions to map student needs. It is recommended that the Ministry of Transport allocate additional resources to implement the solutions. On the issue of housing, we recommend that priority be given to Arab students from low socio-economic background to live in dorms. In addition, due to the relative difficulty in obtaining rental housing, we propose that the institutions act directly to arrange housing near the campus for Arab students..
- **Scholarship and loan fund** – We are working jointly with philanthropic bodies to establish a Scholarship and Loan Fund for Arab students with low socio-economic backgrounds, studying in preferred fields such as engineering.
- **Arab academic institution** – The issue of establishing an Arab academic institution and transferring teacher training colleges in the Arab sector for budgeting by the

PBC, arises as a result of many initiatives that seek to increase access to the Arab sector and minimize the phenomenon of Arab students studying abroad. The issue is complex and requires thorough examination and further study. The team will continue to look into this matter during the year.

Chapter 1 – The Arab Population – Primary Data and the Status Quo in Higher Education

1. General Background

The Arab sector consists of approximately a million and a half people, but is actually comprised of a very heterogeneous population of Muslims (including Bedouins), Christians, Druze and Circassians². This population is very diverse and its needs within both the higher education system and other areas differ greatly from other populations. The Arab sector consists of an urban population living in Arab cities, mixed cities, and villages. Among the villages some are unrecognized. All of these populations consist of communities of diverse socio-economic level, different cultural norms, different religiousness and traditionalistic levels, and various levels of basic and higher education. In terms of geographical distribution, in 2011 approximately 58% of the Arab sector lives in the northern part of Israel, the Galilee and Haifa districts, about 19% live in the Jerusalem district, 11% in the central and Tel Aviv district, and approximately 13% in the South³.



² The Circassians are a minority within the Israeli Muslim population of approximately 4000 people. They are concentrated mainly in two villages in the Galilee. Due to their small number, and the lack of statistical data about this population, they are included in the data of the Muslim population in Israel.

³ Source: CBS data – Statistical Abstract of Israel 2012, Table 2.10.

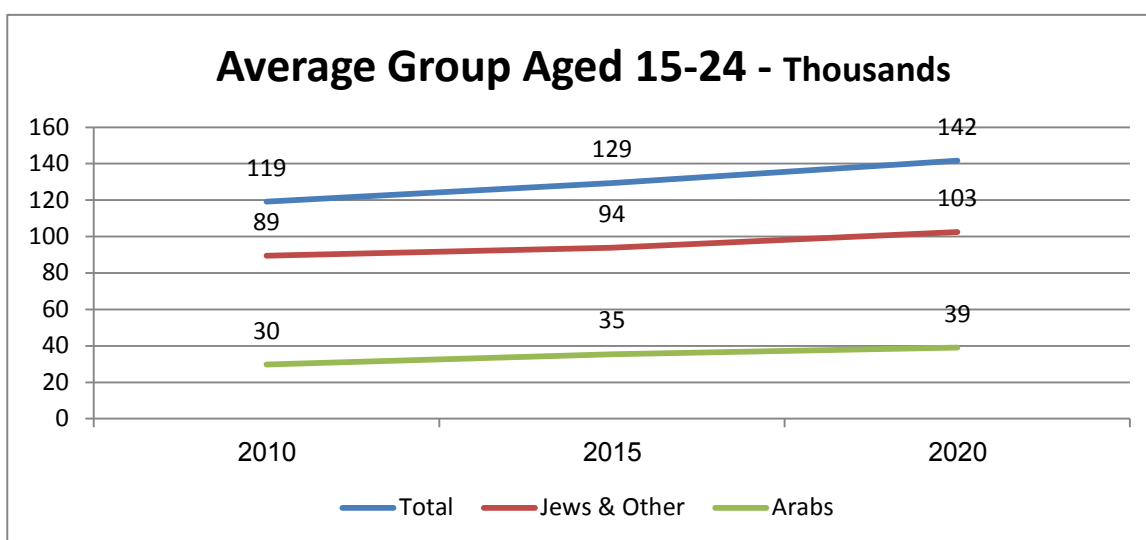
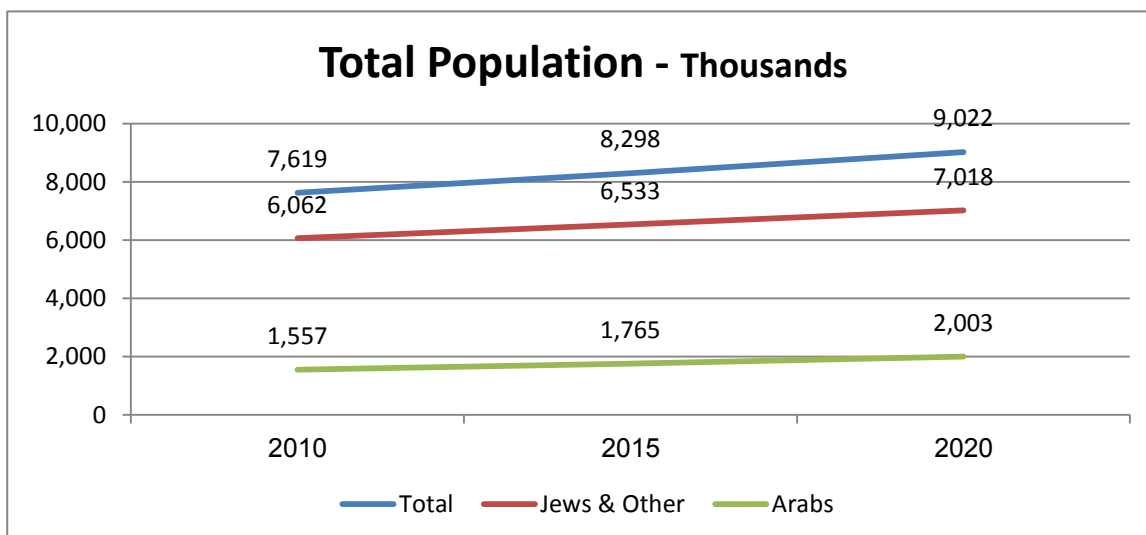
2. **Demography**

In 2011 Israel's population consisted of 7,765,800 people, of which approximately 1,592,300 were Arabs i.e. approximately 20.5% of the population of Israel (including the residents of East Jerusalem). The population growth rate in the Arab sector in 2011 was approximately 2.4%, compared with 1.7% in the rest of the population (Jews and others). The growth rate has slowed down in recent years. In 2002 it was approximately 3.1% in the Arab population, compared with approximately 1.8% in the rest of the population, but according to the Israeli Central Bureau for Statistics, in 2011 approximately 47% of the Arab population in Israel was under the age of 19 (compared to about 33% of the Jewish population). The relatively high growth rate of the Arab population is reflected in the total fertility rate⁴ which is relatively high in this community, and which in 2011 was approximately 3.3. Distribution by religion shows that the fertility rate of Muslim women is approximately 3.5, the rate of Druze women approximately 2.3, and that of Christian women approximately 2.2., compared with a fertility rate of almost 3.0 among Jewish women.

According to the Israeli Central Bureau for Statistics' projections, the population of Israel is expected to be approximately 8.5 million people in 2015, out of which approximately 1.8 million will be Arabs, who will constitute approximately 21% of the population. Let it be noted that in the age group 15 – 24, which is the relevant group for higher education in the coming years, the Arab population comprises approximately 26% of the total population (compared with 20.5% as stated, in the general population), and in 2015 this population is expected to be approximately 28% of the general population⁵.

⁴ Total fertility rate – the average of total number of children a woman is expected to give birth to in her lifetime.

⁵ According to the high changes, based on the population at the end of 2010 (not including Lebanese).



3. Economic Situation

The subject of economic gaps between the Arab and Jewish populations has been discussed in many contexts. Higher education is a factor that could have a very strong effect on the integration of Arabs into Israeli economy. This could affect integration in both the short and the long term, including in terms of high quality employment for academic graduates, and in future aspects via the correlation between household income level and the next generation's educational achievements, psychometric scores, and their participation in the higher level educational system.

As previously noted, the Arab population in Israel constitutes approximately 20% of Israel's population, but its contribution to the GDP is only about 8%. In terms of

loss of production this amounts to more than NIS 40 billion to the economy per year⁶. The revenues of this population from labor constitute only 11% of the labor income in Israel. The rate of poor households (according to the definition of poverty by Social Security) among Arabs is extremely high and is at approximately 49% as compared to 15% among the majority population⁷. In 2007, the average **gross** income per household in the Arab sector was NIS 8,100, compared with approximately NIS 13,700 in the Jewish sector. The Arab sector income is 40% lower compared to the average income among the Jewish majority population. The gap of approximately NIS 5,600 per month per household stems mainly from gaps in income from labor⁸. These disparities are explained by the gaps in education levels which lead to income gaps. This gulf is also due to the fact that only a quarter of Arab women aged 18 – 66 participate in the civilian work force. Arab households are relatively large and are comprised in average of 4.8 members (among the Bedouin more than 6 members) compared to 3.1 family members among the majority population. The combination of low income with larger households means that income from labor per person among the Arab sector is only NIS 1,860 gross per capita, compared with NIS 5,145 gross per capita among the majority population (a gap of approximately 64%)⁹.

As for Arab students, the vast majority come from communities that are within the lower 1-4 socio-economic levels as rated by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, whereas the average in universities and academic colleges financed by the Planning and Budgeting Committee are at 3.3. The exceptions on both the lower and higher ends are Sapir Academic College (level 1.5) and Achva Academic College (level 1.6) on the low end, and Tel Aviv-Yaffo Academic College (level 6.5) on the high end.

4. **Employment**¹⁰

The employment rate of Arab men is very similar to the employment rate of Jewish men; 66% compared to 67% among Jews¹¹. The employment rate of Arab

⁶ "The Arab Population and the State of Israel: A Strategy of Economic Integration" - Ayman Saif, Prime Minister's Office, 2008.

⁷ Majority population is defined as the total population not including the ultra-orthodox and not including Arabs.

⁸ "Integrating the Arab Sector into the Economy of Israel – Characteristics and Barriers" – Israeli Institute for Economic Planning, 2010.

⁹ Keep in mind that this income is from labor only and does not include the income of the Arab families from transfer payments. Of course, after including the transfer payments, the differences in income are moderated.

¹⁰ Source: "The Arabs in Israel, Portrait of the Population, Employment Characteristics, Standard of Living, Incomes and Expenses 1980 – 2008" – Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, Research and Economics Administration, 2010.

women is 22%, which is significantly lower than the employment rate of Jewish women, which is 67%. This rate is also lower than the rate of employment of Arab women in Arab countries, which is the result of a significant increase in the last decade (in the 90's the employment rate was approximately 10%).

About 18% of employed Arabs have an academic degree, compared with 33% of employed Jews. Among the employed, the average number of years of education for Arab men is almost 12 years, and for Arab women almost 14 years. The average number of years of education for both Jewish men and women is 14.5 years. Most employed Arab men (34%) are junior high graduates, while most of the employed women (35%) have an academic degree. Comparing this data to the percentage of academic degree holders in the Arab population, which stands at approximately 10%, demonstrates that in the Arab sector education promotes employment, with a strongly statistically significant correlation between education and employment among Arab women.

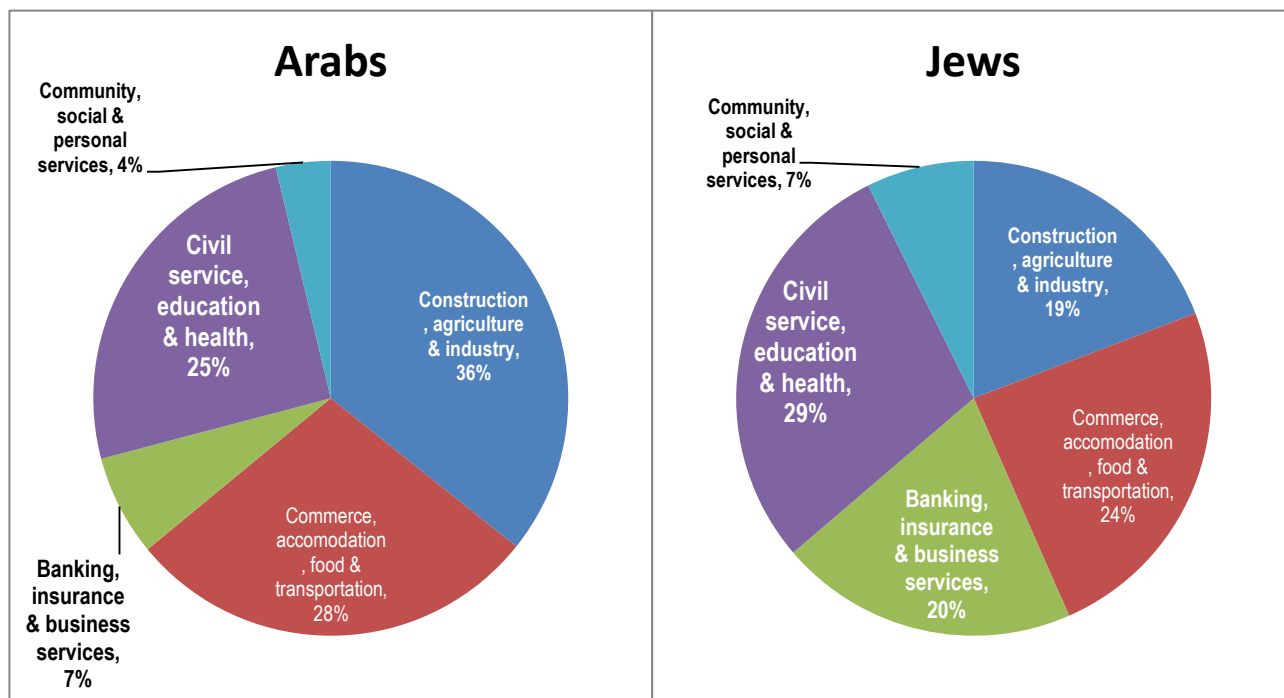
Comparing this data with the income situation in the Arab population completes the picture: among Arab men, the average income from labor for those who completed elementary and junior high school gradually decreases as education increases up until the end of a high school education. Those who have academic degrees earn an average NIS 2,300 per month more than elementary and secondary school graduates, but approximately NIS 3,500 less than Jews with academic degrees. Moreover, examination of the average monthly income of those who completed eight years of elementary education (completed eighth grade) as compared to graduates of 15 years of education in the Arab sector shows that there is nearly no difference in wages between these two groups, with the difference being only NIS 5,000.

This data also explains the massive dropout of Arab men from the educational system upon reaching high school and post-secondary school. Income comparison between the Jewish and Arab sectors shows that in addition to a negative correlation between low education levels in the Arab sector and income level, the higher the level of education, the bigger the wage gap between Jews and Arabs.

The common occupations in the Arab population are in line with the income and education levels, and reflect the current educational trends: approximately 44% of Arab women are employed in education, and approximately 53% of the men are professional workers. Only 7% are civil servants, with most of them working in the

¹¹ Ages 18-66, based on a unique statistical analysis for human resources surveys by the Research and Economics Administration, and the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Labor.

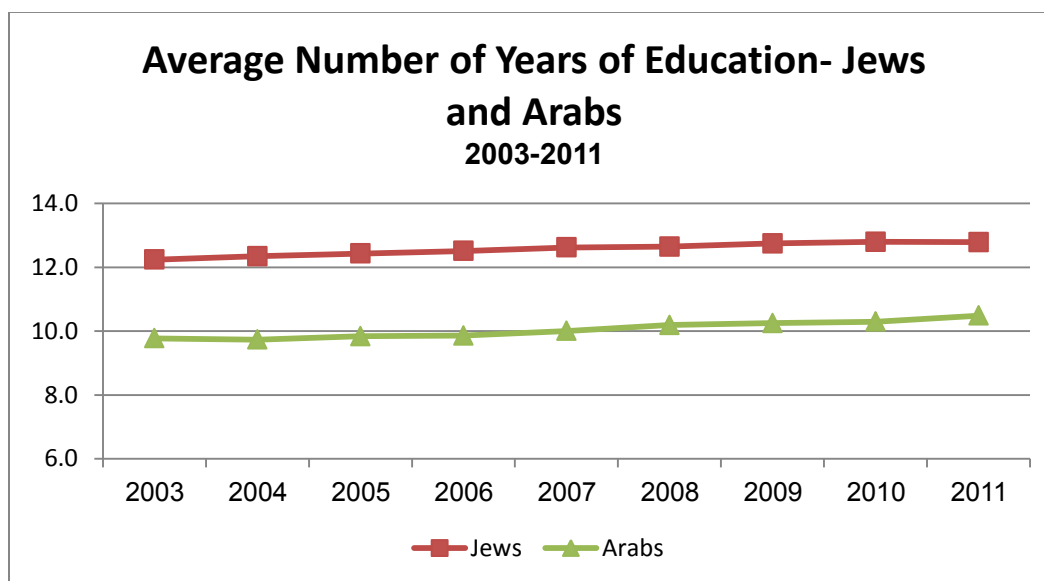
health services. Most security-oriented jobs are inaccessible to this population. A survey conducted by the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Labor in 2010 on the employment of academics shows that among Arab academics 17.5% studied engineering, life sciences and exact sciences, and 10% studied financial professions. Among the "Hi-Tech" degree graduates, only 1% work in a field relevant to their studies, and 50% work in teaching. Among those with degrees in the areas of business and finance, 50% work in administration, clerical jobs, sales and services, and as vocational workers.



5. The Arab Educational System

The Arab society views education as one of the main challenges in shaping, developing, advancing and maintaining its character and heritage, and is therefore becoming increasingly involved in educational matters. Since the establishment of the State of Israel there has been a considerable rise in the level of education of the Arab population in Israel. In 1961 nearly half of the population had no formal education. In the 70's this rate went down to approximately one quarter of the population, and in the 90's to a tenth of the population (in 2011 5% of the Arab population did not have a formal education). The percentage of those having only primary school education (1-8 years of schooling) in the general Arab population increased and reached a peak in 1975 at 50% of the population. Since then it has decreased and in recent years has been stable at roughly one-fifth of the population. Despite the steep rise in the education level of the Arab population, it is still low

compared to the average level of education in the Jewish population, and the gap has remained more or less constant¹².



The average number of years of education in the Arab population in Israel is approximately 11 years, compared to nearly 13 years in the Jewish population. Below is a comparison of the distribution of the number of years of education by percentage in the Arab and Jewish populations:

Number of Years of Education	Arab Population	Jewish Population
0	5.0%	1.6%
1-8	18.1%	5.9%
9-12	53.1%	43.7%
+13	23.8%	48.8%

Since the establishment of the State of Israel the number of schools in the Arab educational system has increased almost 3 times more than the number of schools in the Hebrew educational system. In addition, a greater increase has occurred in the number of classes in the Arab educational system as opposed to the Jewish system as well.

Despite the notable increase in the number of schools and the number of classes in the Arab educational system, the number of students per class in the Arab educational system has remained higher than the number of students per class in the

¹² Source: Arab Society in Israel – Information Booklet – Abraham Foundation Initiative, 2009.

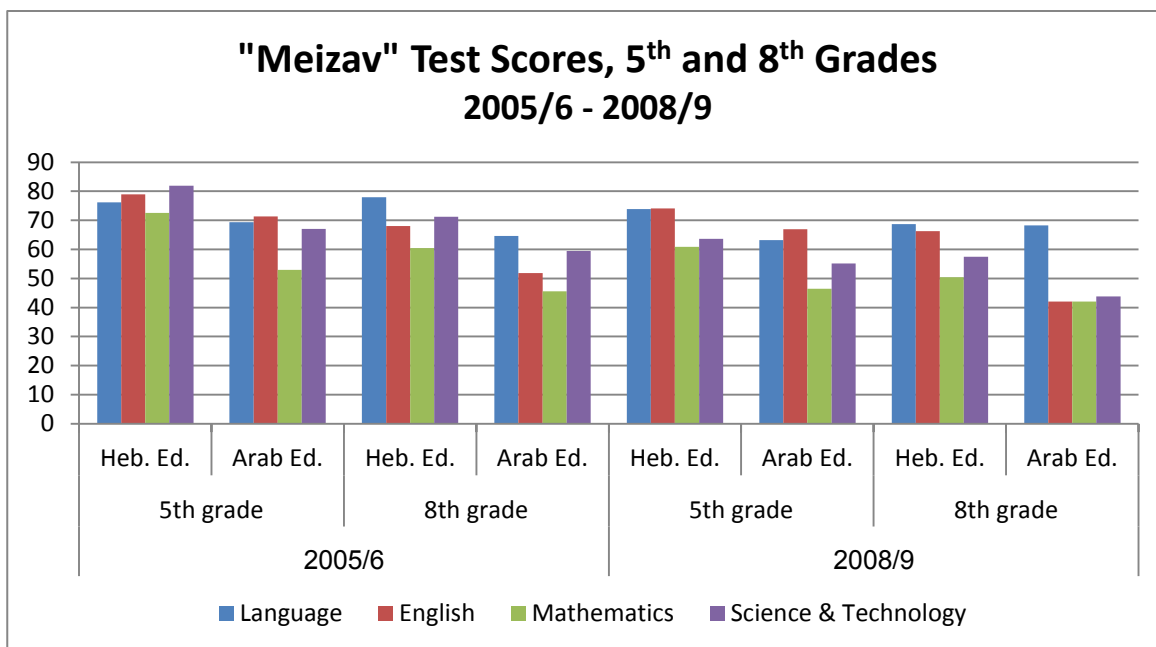
Jewish educational system over the years. The number of students per classroom in the Arab educational system is four times larger than the number of students per classroom in the Jewish educational system. The gap is large mainly in elementary schools and is smaller in high schools. One of the reasons for a much higher number of students per class in the Arab educational system compared to the Jewish educational system is that the number of students in the Jewish educational system (not including kindergartens) has increased since the establishment of the State of Israel at a rate only slightly higher than the rate of increase in the number of classes, whereas the number of students in the Arab educational system (not including kindergartens) has increased at twice the rate of the increase in the number of classes.

This significant growth may be seen in the fact that despite being only 20% of the general population of Israel, the Arab sector is 28% of the general population between the ages of 6 and 18¹³.

Comparison of data from the Meizav (an index of efficiency and scholastic growth) from tests given in the fifth and eighth grades indicates increasing gaps between Arab and Jewish students' performances as they advance in the educational system. This is particularly evident in mathematics, English, the sciences, and technology. For example, in the 2008/9 academic year the average scores for language, English, mathematics, science, and technology in the Meizav for fifth grade students in the Arab educational system was 58, as compared to 68 in the Jewish educational system; a gap of 10 points. In the same year the average score in these subjects on the Meizav for eighth graders in the Arab educational system was 49, compared with an average score of 61 in the Jewish educational system: a gap of 12 points. It can be clearly seen that since the 2005/6 academic year there has been a general decline in Meizav scores, both in the Arab and in the Jewish populations. In the Jewish population the scores have declined from an average of 77 and 69 in the fifth and eighth grades respectively in 2005/6, to 68 and 61 in those classes in 2008/9. In the Arab population the scores have declined from an average of 65 and 55 in the fifth and eighth grades respectively in 2005/6, to 58 and 49 in these classes in 2008/9¹⁴.

¹³ Source: CBS Annual 2012 – Table 2.19.

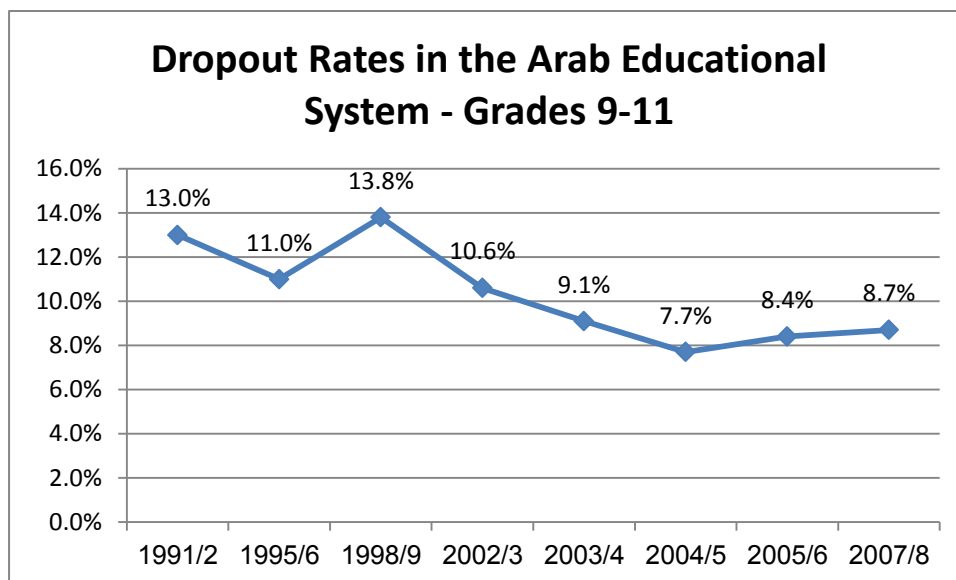
¹⁴ Source: CBS Annual 2012 – Tables 8.13 and 8.23.



The dropout rate of Arab students from the educational system is much higher than that of Jewish students. According to the Israeli Central Bureau for Statistics' data between school years 2008/9 to 2009/10 the dropout rate among seventh – twelfth graders in the Arab educational system was 6.2%, compared to 4.2% in the Jewish educational system. In the ninth grade, the grade with the highest dropout rate, the gap was even larger. This grade had a 15.7% dropout rate in the Arab educational system compared with a 5.3% dropout rate in the Jewish educational system. The dropout rate for Arab girls in all grades is low compared to Arab boys, and between the school year 2008/9 to 2009/10 was at 4.3% among girls in seventh to twelfth grades, compared with an 8.1% dropout rate among boys in these grades¹⁵. Nevertheless, in recent years the dropout rate in the Arab educational system has been lessening, from 13% in 1991/2 to 8.7% in 2007/8 among ninth to eleventh grade students¹⁶.

¹⁵ Source: CBS Annual 2010 – Table 8.31.

¹⁶ Source: "The Arab Society in Israel – Information Booklet" – Abraham Foundation Initiative, May 2009.



6. Higher Education

6.1 Twelfth Grade Students and those Eligible for a Matriculation Certificate

In 2009/10 there were 20,700 twelfth grade students in the Arab sector, as compared to 82,800 students in the rest of the population (Jews and others). In the Arab sector 92% of the twelfth grade students of that year took the matriculation exams; a high rate compared to the Jewish sector (approximately 82%). Out of those who took the exams 48% were eligible for a matriculation certificate and 36% met the minimum requirements for universities (compared to 58% and 49% respectively among the rest of the population)¹⁷. Nevertheless, comparing this data with population size sorted according to age shows that only 64% of the Arab population aged 17-18 is actually attending twelfth grade education¹⁸ as opposed to 95% of the rest of the population. When this variable's effect is calculated into the data of matriculation examinees and those eligible for a matriculation certificate, a different picture emerges: the percentage of 17-18 year olds in the Arab sector who took the matriculation exam in 2009/10 is actually 60% (compared to approximately 78% in the rest of the population). The rate of those eligible for a matriculation certificate is 31% (compared to 55% in the rest of the population), and the rate of those meeting the universities'

¹⁷ Source: CBS Annual 2012 – Table 8.24.

¹⁸ Not including the students studying in the vocational schools under the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor supervision. Approx. 83.5% inclusively (Annual 2012 Table 8.21).

minimum requirements¹⁹ is only 23% (compared to approximately 47% of the rest of the population).

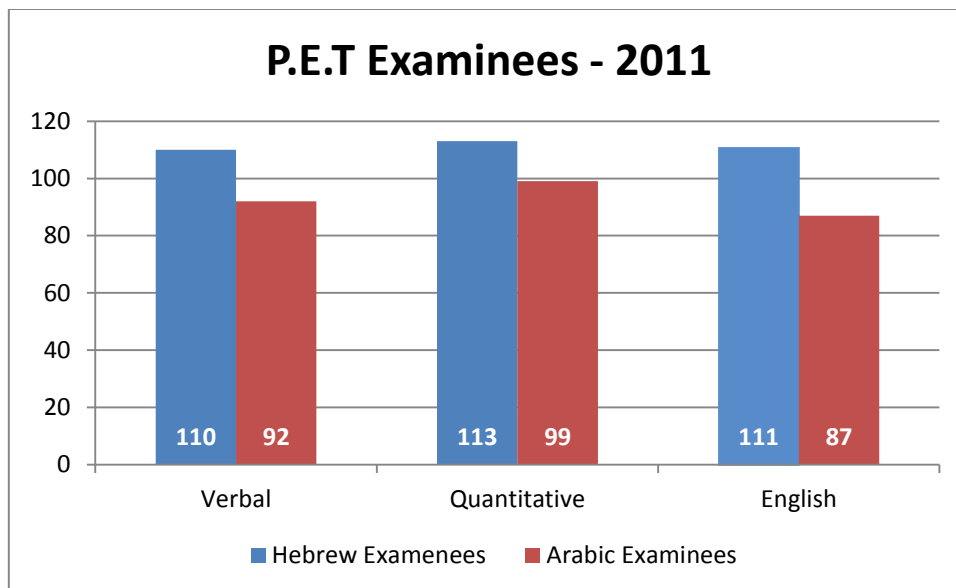
The low rate of those meeting the universities' minimum requirements in the Arab sector naturally affects the number of applicants and number of accepted students to academic studies, as shown below.

	Arab sector		Jews and Others	
	Percent	Total	Percent	Total
Met Minimum Requirements	23.0%	7,394	46.6%	40,857
Eligible for Matriculation Certificate	31.2%	10,000	54.6%	47,826
Matriculation Examinees	59.4%	19,063	77.5%	67,859
Twelfth Grade Students (out of all 17-18 year olds in 2009/10)	64.5%	20,697	94.6%	82,831

6.2 The Psychometric Test

Data from 2011 provided by the Israeli National Institution for Testing and Evaluation (NITE), which is responsible for the psychometric test, shows that there is a gap of about 100 points in favor of examinees in Hebrew compared to examinees in Arabic (even though they might have a higher average matriculation grade). The gap is maintained in gender comparison, with the men getting an average 25 points more than women (unlike the better matriculation scores for women). Examination of the inner distribution of the test by subject indicates that the largest gaps were in English, then verbal reasoning and finally quantitative reasoning. These results reinforce claims that the disadvantage of Arab examinees stems among other things from the fact that English is a fourth language for them (spoken Arabic, literary Arabic, and Hebrew), while the literary Arabic language in which the test is conducted is their second language.

¹⁹ Minimum of 4 study units in English and 3 study units in Mathematics and an additional intensified subject.



Additionally, it shows that approximately 70% of the examinees in Hebrew are satisfied with one test whose average score is 555, compared to 46% of the examinees in Arabic who achieve an average score of 432 in their first test. An additional variable is that 8% of the Hebrew speakers are tested more than three times and improve their score to an average of up to 646, compared to approximately 28% of the Arabic speakers who are examined more than three times and improve to a score of up to 546. This datum is not rigid but it is indicative of the nature of PET preparatory courses, and of the effort which is required of the Arab applicant to gain admission into a prestigious academic department (taking three tests on three different dates means dedicating an additional year to preparation for the psychometric test alone). It is interesting to note that among those who dropped out of high school, both Jews and Arabs, and who took external matriculation exams, the gaps are the highest – approximately 130 points. This may be indicative of the quality of the preparatory courses in Hebrew compared with the corresponding courses in Arabic, and the quality of the external educational system in the different sectors. The average psychometric score in the south of Israel (among Bedouin candidates) is 384, which is significantly lower even compared to the rest of the Arab population.

It should be noted that there is a correlation between the parents' education level and the psychometric test scores of their children. In a reality where many of the Arab students are first generation higher education students it is expected that the scores will be relatively lower. This data affects, among

other things, the choice of Arab students to study outside of Israel, as will be shown later.

6.3 Candidates

13.2% of the applicants for first degree programs in universities and academic colleges in 2010/11 were Arabs (18.5% to universities, 8.9% to academic colleges) while 10.7% of all applicants admitted and studying were Arabs. Yet a closer examination of the rate of those rejected, out of all the applicants for academic studies, shows that approximately 30% of the Arab applicants were rejected from admission to academic studies, whereas the rejection rate for Jewish applicants was only 17%. This trend also occurs in application to second degree studies (40.6% rejected among the Arab applicants to universities compared to 20.9% among the Jewish applicants)²⁰.

	Arab sector		Jews and others	
	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Total
Enrolled for First Degree*	100.0%	9,184	100.0%	63,294
Not Admitted to First Degree	31.9%	2,929	18.8%	11,873
Admitted but Not Studying	16.5%	1,518	13.3%	8,400
Admitted and Studied in Academic Institutions in Israel	51.6%	4,738	68.0%	43,020

* Universities and academic colleges, data from 2009/10

6.4 Pre-Academic Preparatory Program

Despite the disadvantageous initial condition of Arab students in the higher education system, few of the applicants for academic studies among this population apply to pre-academic preparatory programs. The preparatory programs are designed to prepare the students for academic studies. This is accomplished via courses (usually over a year) during which the applicants' achievements and academic skills are improved to increase their chances of admission to academic institutions, as well as to enable them to cope successfully with academic studies. According to the Israeli Central Bureau for Statistics, in 2010/11 a total of 12,250 students studied in the pre-academic preparatory programs, but only 6.4% were Arabs. This data matches previous years' results. Of this group, 51.6% proceeded to study in

²⁰ Source: CBS Annual 2012 data, Table s 8.50 – 8.52.

higher education institutions (compared to 55.6% of the Jewish students) within three years of the end of the preparatory program. Looking further into the institutional choices in each of the groups who began studying indicates that the majority of Arabs (57%) choose to study at a university (compared to 38% in a general college and 5% in a college for education). On the other hand, most Jews (58%) choose to study at a general academic college (compared with 36% at a university and 6% in a college for educational studies). The rate of Arab students who study in preparatory courses of the total first degree students indicates that the rate of Arab students is twice as low as the rest (i.e. 6.4% of all students in preparatory programs as opposed to 12.1% of all bachelor's degree students). The reasons that Arab students rarely take preparatory courses will be described in Chapter 2.

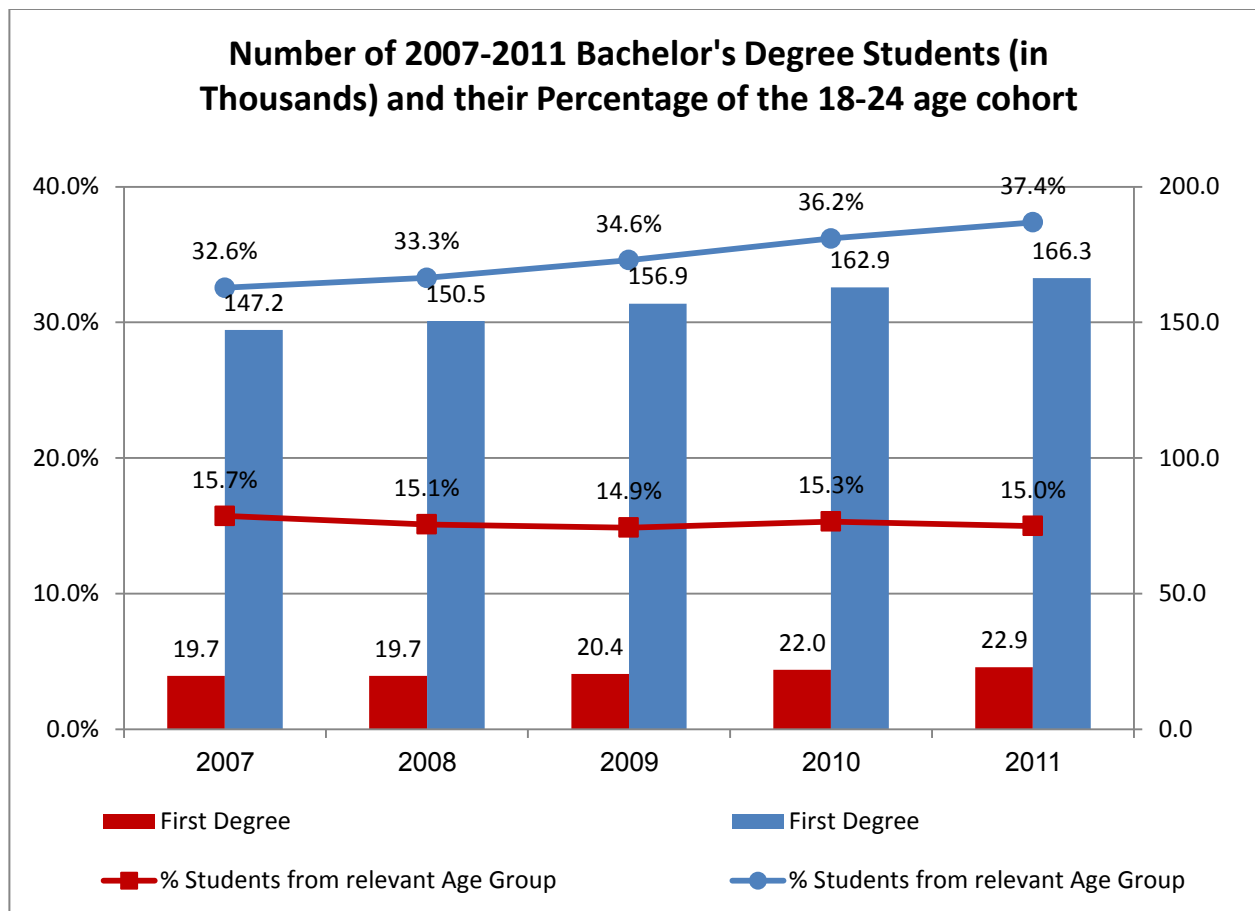
6.5 Students

According to the Israeli Central Bureau for Statistics, Arab students constituted 12.1% of the first degree student body in research universities in the 2011/12 academic year²¹, 8.4% of the student body at the Open University (2010/11 data), 8.7% of student body who studied at general academic colleges (including programs under university auspices, 6.6% not under a university) and 24.7% of the student body at teacher certifying colleges budgeted by the Ministry of Education.

Analysis of the data from recent years shows an increase in the rate of participation of the Arab population in the higher educational system, from approximately 7.6% in 2006/7 to 9.5% in 2010/11²². However, further examination of the proportion of undergraduate Arab students **out of the total Arab population aged 18-22**, compared to the proportion of Jewish undergraduates out of the entire population aged 20-24 actually reveals a decline in the percentage of undergraduate Arab students in Israeli higher education institutions in the relevant age group from 15.7% in 2006/7 to 15% in 2010/11 (compared to an increase from 32.6% to 37.4% between the 2006/7 to 2010/11 academic years among the Jewish population aged 20-24). This is in spite of the significant increase in the overall number of Arab students participating in the higher education system, from 19,700 students in 2006/7 to 22,900 students in 2010/11.

²¹ This data does not include students who studied in colleges under academic sponsorship of Bar-Ilan University and Ben-Gurion University (14.4% including them).

²² Source: CBS Annual 2008 - 2012, first, second and third degree students (universities and colleges –not including the Open University).



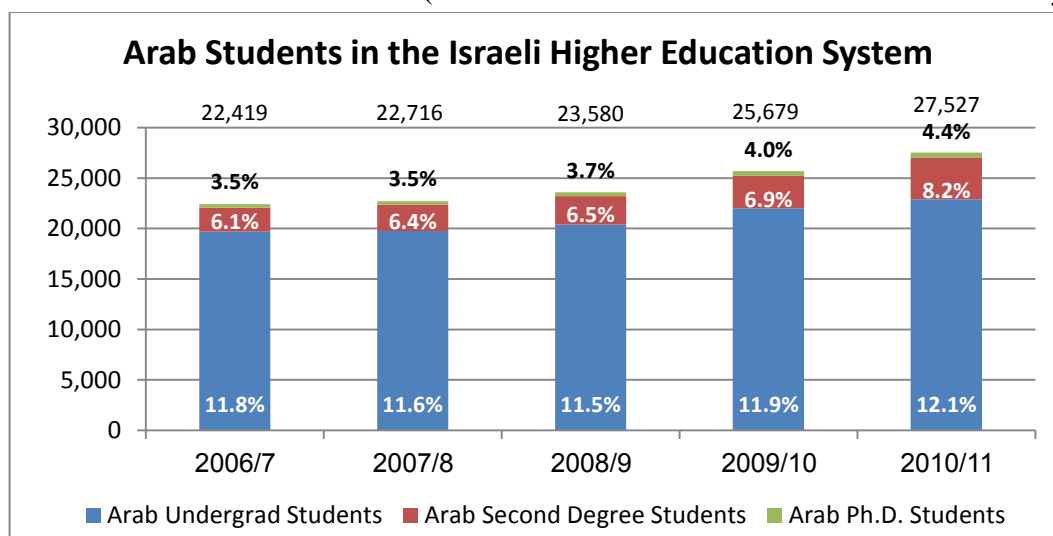
Notes: First degree students in research universities (not including the Open University), in academic colleges and teaching colleges. The percentage of Jewish students is from age group 20-24, the percentage of Arab students is from age group 18-22.

Comparing the residence distribution of the Arab population as aforementioned with the participation rate of Arab students in the institutions shows great variance among institutions. In general the percentage of Arab students in peripheral general colleges, with an emphasis on the northern colleges – the College of Safad, Western Galilee and Kineret, and the universities (except for Bar-Ilan University) matches their residential distribution. It must be noted though that there are unique and different barriers in every region and in every institution: engineering and art colleges face complex obstacles in integrating Arabs, including difficulties in employment, guidance and cultural barriers. In addition, the southern institutions face a different challenge with the Bedouin population which, as we shall see, has significantly more difficult living conditions compared to other populations in Israel.

Percentage of Bachelor's Degree Students from the Arab Sector in Universities and Academic Colleges Budgeted by the PBC by Institution Location:

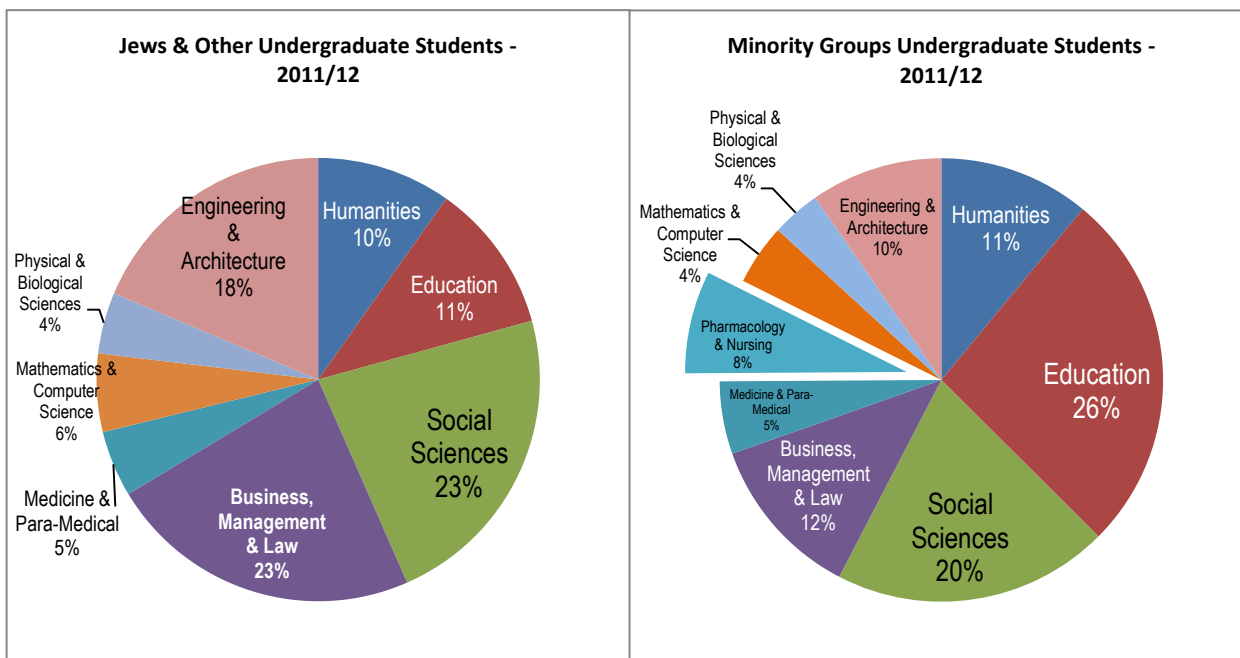


In 2010/11 the percentage of Arab students out of the whole first degree student body in higher education institutions (not including the Open University) for all degrees was 12.1%, 8.2% in second degree studies and 4.4% for Doctoral studies (in total 9.5% of the whole academic student body).

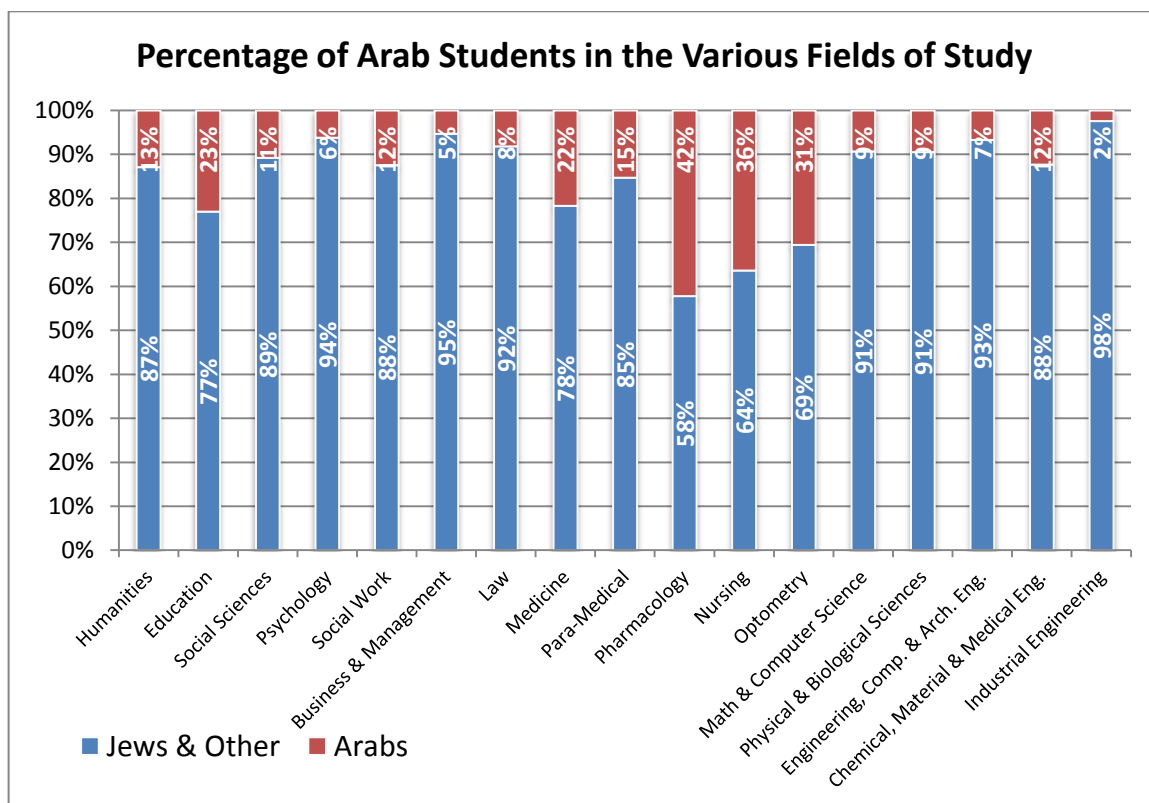


6.6 Primary Fields of Study

Arab students choose fields of study that will enable them to gain a profession and integrate into the job market. The most sought after fields by Arab students are medicine, paramedical professions (mainly pharmacology, nursing and optometry), as well as education and teaching. A considerable proportion of Arab students in academic colleges study a multi-disciplinary degree (with a focus in the humanities or social sciences). On the other hand, in some fields, especially those related to the business sector and hi-tech, Arab students are almost entirely absent. These include the natural sciences, engineering and architecture (except for civil, chemical and medical engineering), business administration, psychology and social work. Below is a comparison of the distribution of undergraduate students in the academic year 2011/12 in the Arab sector compared to the rest of the population (Jews and other):



In some degrees it is evident that the representation of Arab students significantly exceeds the proportion of Arabs in the general population. For example, in pharmacology 42% of the students are Arab, in nursing 36% and in optometry 31%. Additionally, it is important to note that in medicine the rate of Arab students is approximately 22% which is similar to their proportion in the general population. The following table shows the rate of Arab students in a first degree in 2011/12 in the various fields, out of the total number of students in the field (the data covers universities and budgeted and non-budgeted academic colleges):



Note that the high admission requirements to medicine and pharmacology, along with the age limit and high demand for these fields among students from the Arab sector, does not allow for everyone who is interested in these degrees- to get accepted to them. As a result many students turn to study abroad, particularly in Jordan. We will expand on this topic later.

6.7 First Year Undergrad Students

Although there is an impressive increase in the percentage of Arab students in higher education institutions, and in undergraduate degrees in particular, it seems that the rate of Arab students out of all of the students beginning their studies in academia and studying their first year of an undergrad degree is lower, and is about 11% (or 9.8% excluding education and teaching colleges)²³. This percentage indicates a wider phenomenon of prolonging studies among students from the Arab sector compared with Jewish students, as we will see.

²³ Source: special adaptation by the CBS on dropout rates in the first year of study from universities and academic colleges – data from 2009/10.

6.8 Bachelor's Degree Graduates

Data concerning Arab graduates in 2010/11²⁴ indicates that during academic studies the gaps between the populations grow. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics for 2012 concerning the academic year 2010/11, the percentage of Arab graduates is low compared to the rate of their participation as students as described above, in the same institutions: in 2010/11 9.6% of all university undergrad studies graduates (including academic college programs under university auspices, and not including the Open University²⁵) were Arab, 4.2% of all graduates in the academic colleges (including the unbudgeted ones) and 29.7% of all graduates from colleges of education. Accordingly, the rate of Jewish graduates rises compared to their rate as students. In total in 2010/11 the rate of bachelor's degree graduates from the Arab sector was 9.8% of the total number of graduates for that year. Comparing this data with the relative share of Arabs in the population, which is 20%, or an alternative comparison between the rate of Jewish academics, which is 24%, and the rate of the Arab academics, standing at 10%²⁶, shows the need to promote and further expand higher education in the Arab population.

The Percentage of First Degree Graduates Arab Sector				
Year	Total	Universities (not including Open U)	General Colleges	Education Colleges
2007/8	10.7%	8.7%	4.7%	31.7%
2008/9	9.5%	8.7%	4.9%	28.3%
2009/10	9.1%	8.7%	4.2%	25.6%
2010/11	9.8%	9.6%	4.2%	29.7%

6.9 Dropping Out and Prolonging Studies among Undergraduate Students

In recent years, higher education awareness as well as the number of Arab students in the higher education system has risen, but the number of undergrad studies graduates has not risen accordingly. From many meetings with institutions' representatives in universities and colleges, reports submitted to the Planning and Budgeting Committee, and the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics' data, it can be seen that the dropping out phenomenon,

²⁴ Source: CBS Annual 2012.

²⁵ The rate of graduates from the Arab sector at the Open University in 2010/11 is approx. 4.1%

²⁶ Source: CBS data – Human Resources Surveys 2010.

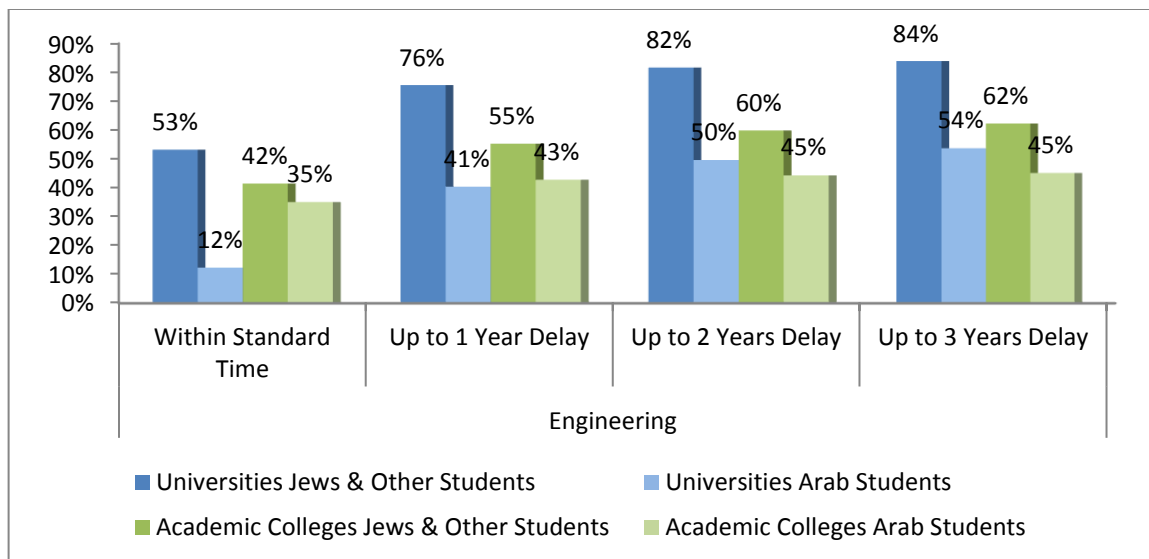
in all its forms (transfer between departments or institutions, and termination of study) is much more common among Arab students than Jewish students, and is mainly among students in the first year of undergrad studies. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics²⁷, the percentage of students from the Arab sector who began their studies in the 2009/10 academic year and did not continue to the second year in 2010/11 was 15.5% (universities and general colleges – not including colleges of education and teaching). This is compared to 11% of the Jewish students, a difference of 4.5%. Let it be noted that among the university students the gap between the percentage of Arab and Jewish students who began their studies in the 2009/10 academic year and did not continue to the second year in 2010/11, is smaller, and is about 3%. In the general colleges this gap is more than 6%, i.e. more than double than in universities. Additionally, the level of academic achievement in the colleges is lower and the scores of the Arab students are lower (significantly so, especially in their first year). This gap between Jewish and Arab academic students is also expressed in the low number of Arab students who proceed to advanced research degrees with the percentage of students in secondary degrees from the Arab sector being 8.2%, and only 4.4% in doctorate studies in 2010/11²⁸.

Additionally, the percentage of Arab students who complete their degrees is lower than that of Jews, and among the graduates time until graduation is significantly longer for Arab students. It should be noted that the gap between Jewish and Arab students in the length of time until graduation is higher in universities compared to colleges. Yet the total the percentage of Arab students who complete their studies after a delay of up to three years is higher in the universities than in the academic colleges. The largest gaps were observed in engineering: in universities 53.4% of Jews graduate within the standard time compared to 12.3% of Arabs, and in academic colleges 41.6% compared to 35.2% respectively. Examining the state of the percentage who finish their studies three years later than the standard length of time, the following gaps were observed: at universities, 84% of Jews graduate up to 3 years after standard time compared to 53.9% of Arab students, and in the academic colleges, 62.4% compared to 45.3%, respectively²⁹.

²⁷ Source: CBS data 2011 – special adaptation.

²⁸ Source: CBS Annual 2012 – Table 8.56.

²⁹ According to special adaptation by the CBS of the rate of students finishing their studies within standard time, in delay of one, two and three years from the standard time among students who began their studies in 2001.



Different research models³⁰ address the drop out phenomenon, and the factors that lead to an individual's successful integration into higher education. Studies that research the internal variables of individuals found that academic skills, achievement motivation, personal interests, professional aspirations, learning enjoyment, self-confidence, university oriented values and identification with those with academic education support successful integration. On the other hand, the internal variables that negatively affect academic integration are procrastination, isolation, inability to express needs and problems, self-doubt, fear of failure, fear of success, fear of rejection, moral conflicts, lack of professional orientation, and boredom. Behavioral models that explain persistence and drop out relate to factors that affect student burn-out, including: intention of leaving, practical value, certainty of resolution, loyalty, grades, courses, educational objectives, academic focus and occupational certainty, transfer opportunities and family approval of the educational institution.

6.10 Faculty and Administrative Staff

There is no reliable information source on the number of Arab faculty members in higher education institutions, but a cautious and informal assessment indicates that only about 2% - 3% of the academic faculty members and about 1.5% of the administrative staff in institutions budgeted by the Planning and Budgeting Committee are Arabs. The "Ma'of" scholarship program for integrating exceptional faculty members from the Arab sector, which is jointly operated by the Planning and Budgeting

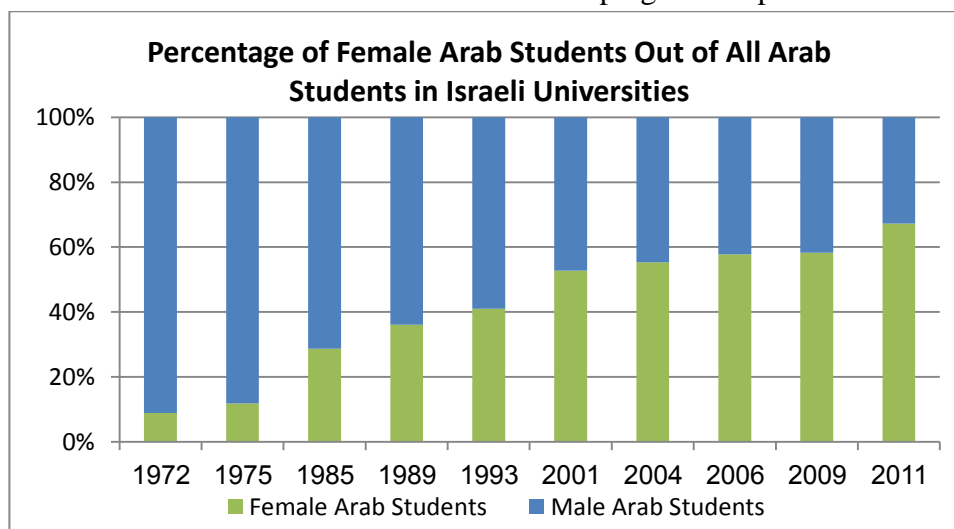
³⁰ Source: "Exceptions that Prove the Rule" – Dr. Anat Gofen, 2009.

Committee and the Kahanoff Fund³¹, has assisted with the integration of more than 60 senior faculty members in universities and academic colleges during its years of operation (approximately half of all Arab faculty members).

6.11 Arab Women in Higher Education in Israel

The gap in years of education between Arab and Jewish women of working age (18-64) is high, at an average of 11.3 and 14.1 years respectively. 12% of Arab women possess some type of academic certificate, compared to 33% of Jewish women. This gap is also expressed in participation in the work force, which in 2010 was only 27.5% among Arab women compared to 77.2% among Jewish women³².

In recent years, there has been a considerable rise in the percentage of female Arab students out of the total number of Arab students in the higher education system in Israel, with women crossing the 50% mark at the end of the 1990's. This is an increase from only 10% in the early 1970's up to approximately 67% of all undergraduate Arab students in 2010/11. This increase stems mainly from a rise in the rate of girls learning in the Arab educational system and an increase in eligibility for matriculation certificates, and comes as a result of the growing awareness of the importance of higher education in the Arab sector. Women's education is perceived as a means to improve economic welfare and as assistance to men in providing for the home, rather than a means for self-fulfillment and developing an independent career³³.

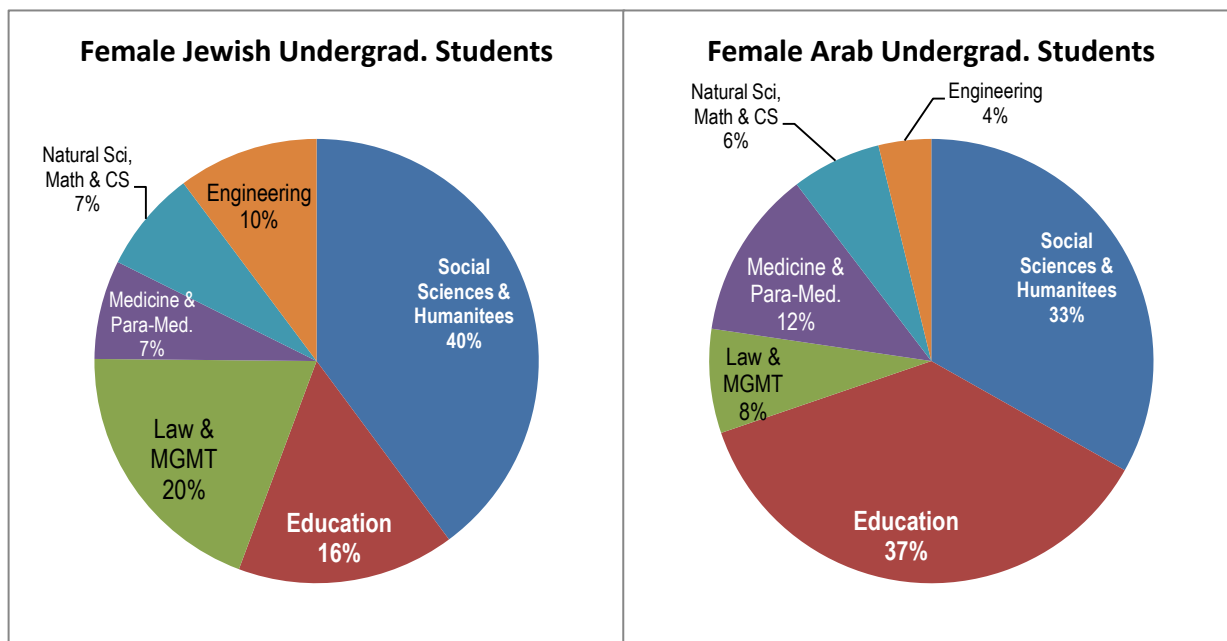


³¹ The PBC has participated in sponsoring the program since 1995. The Kahanoff Fund terminates its participation in the program in 2012/13.

³² From: "Portrait of the Working Arab Woman – for International Women Day 2011" – Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, Research and Economics, 2012.

³³ "Jordanification" of Higher Education among the Arabs in Israel (Chapters 1 – 3) – Arar and Haj Yehia, 2011.

Arab women's primary fields of study are: education and teaching (37%), social sciences (21%), humanities (12%) and paramedical professions (11%), while in medicine, engineering and the sciences their number is relatively small (11% of all Arab women students in total)³⁴.



In spite of the increase in participation of Arab women in higher education, their participation in the work market is still significantly lower than Jewish women, standing at 22.5% compared to 71.3% among Jewish women, while Arab-Christian women are employed much more than Muslim or Druze women. The main factors for the low participation rate are attributed to obstacles related to the women themselves (such as low education or lack of Hebrew language skills), cultural and social norms of the Arab society, according to which the woman's role is to raise children and run the household, as well as the opportunities for Arab minorities, and especially for women, in the work market, especially due to the lack of alternatives for taking care of their children, available transportation, employers' attitude regarding employment of Arab citizens, etc.³⁵

³⁴ Source: special adaptation by the CBS – 2010/11 data.

³⁵ "Employment of Arab Women in Israel" – King, Naon, Volda –Tsedek, Mayers – Joint – Brookdale Institute, a chapter from "Integration and Equality the Economic Benefit of Integration and Equality Between Arabs and Jews in Israel", Abraham Foundation Initiative, 2009.

6.12 The Bedouin Population in Higher Education

From gathered data and meetings held with students and faculty (especially in the South of Israel) it has become evident that there is a need to address the Bedouin population in particular. This population has distinct demographic and socio-economic characteristics that require separate consideration. According to estimates, in 2009 the Bedouin population in Israel consisted of approximately 260,000 people, with 67,000 in the northern and central parts of Israel, and 193,000 in the Negev. Approximately 2/3 of the Bedouin population in the Negev resides in one of seven permanent communities (approximately 40% live in Rahat) and the rest live in unrecognized villages. The natural growth rate of the Bedouin population in the Negev has always been significantly higher than all the Arab and Jewish communities in Israel (except the ultra-orthodox Haredi population). In 2009 the natural growth rate of the Bedouin population in the Negev was 3.8% (compared to 2.4% in the Arab population and 1.5% in the Jewish population). The average size of a Bedouin household is significantly higher than in any other sector in Israel; about 6 people in average compared to about 4.5 and 3 people on average in Arab and Jewish households, respectively. The Bedouin living conditions are very difficult and there are problems in many fields such as employment, transportation infrastructure, water and electricity, primary and higher education, etc.

The subject of the unrecognized villages presents a very difficult challenge for the government in trying to manage and improve the living conditions of this population. Poverty among the Bedouin population is deeper than in the Arab and Haredi societies (The Haredi population is the poorest sector in Jewish society). Bedouin villages are at the bottom of the socio-economic index of communities in Israel, with the Bedouin population having the lowest income from work in the Arab sector. In 2007 only 37% of the Bedouin population were part of the civilian work force (ages 15 and up) compared with approximately 43% of the Arab population. Women's participation rate in the work force was about 11% compared to 19% of the total Arab population and 53% of the Jewish population, and there was a particularly high unemployment rate among women; approximately 23% of the Bedouin population, compared to 13.5% of the total Arab population and 9% of the Jewish women population³⁶.

³⁶ Source: "Bedouin Society in the Negev – Social, Demographic and Economic Characteristics" – Abraham Foundation Initiative, 2011.

From examining the data regarding education and higher education in particular, it can be seen that the proportion of unschooled individuals in the Bedouin society (approximately 10%) is nearly twice as high as in the entire Arab population and nearly 5 times as high as in Jewish society. In 2007/8 only 41% were eligible for matriculation certificates in the Bedouin communities and the rate of those who met university entry requirements was only 25%. This is compared to 44% and 30% in the Arab educational system and 54% and 48% in the Jewish educational system, respectively. In the 2005/6 academic year the proportion of Bedouin students out of all Arab students studying in Israeli universities at all degree levels was only 4.7%. This rate is lower than the proportion of Bedouins in the total Arab population aged 20-29, which in 2005 was about 10%³⁷.

6.13 Arab Students Studying Abroad

In recent years a steadily increasing phenomenon has been observed of Arab students from Israel turning to academic studies abroad in general and in Jordan and the Palestinian Authority in particular. Research in this area is scarce, and it is difficult to estimate the exact number of Israeli-Arabs studying outside of Israel. However a survey conducted in 2004 by the "Mada al-Carmel" Center, an Israeli-Arab Centre for Social Applicative Research, estimated that about 15% of Israeli-Arab university graduates have acquired their degrees at foreign universities. Universities of former communist countries used to be a popular destination for Israeli-Arabs, but with the fall of the communist regimes the number of Arabs from Israel seeking higher education in these countries dropped, and they became more interested in universities in Western Europe, especially in Germany. Following the peace treaty with Jordan, Israeli citizens were allowed to attend institutions of higher education there, and it has become a favorite alternative³⁸.

The Palestinian Authority

Today, the only body with comprehensive data on the number of Israeli students studying in higher education institutions in the Palestinian Authority is the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education and Higher Education. However, according to a preliminary study conducted by the Knesset's Research and Information Center Committee, there has been a great increase in the number of Israeli students attending the higher education institutions in the PA in the past two years. The total number of students in these institutions

³⁷ CBS Annual 2006 – Table 2.10.

³⁸ Source: "Migration for Higher Education: Arabs In Israel Studying at Universities In Jordan" - Arar and HajYehia (Trends, 2012)

is estimated at 1,300 in the 2011/12 school year, most of which study in the Arab American University of Jenin (800, according to estimates) and at Hebron University (500, according to estimates), especially in the paramedical, education, and instruction professions. According to the data, which, again, is preliminary, and based on a single source, a very large section of the students who study in the PA are from the Bedouin sector in the Negev³⁹.

Jordan

Choosing to study in Jordan is perceived as a default alternative track to studying higher education in Israel, since acceptance there to the professions sought after by many Arab students is blocked to them. In 1998 the number of students studying in Jordan was estimated to be 80-100, most of them law students. The past decade has seen a drastic rise in the enrollment of Israeli Arabs at universities in Jordan. In 2004 the number of Arab students in Jordan from Israel reached 1,700, of which 30% were women, while in 2008 their number reached 5,400, of which 31% were women. Nearly half the students studied medicine, pharmacology, and paramedical professions⁴⁰.

The structural barriers into higher education institutions in Israel, especially the psychometric test, are what push Arab students to search for alternatives, which are provided by Jordan. Interviews with students who went to study in Jordan show that the admission requirements for higher education institutes are the first and greatest obstacle, and are a primary factor that attracts the students to continue their higher education in Jordan. Other obstacles are the difficulties of Arab students' adjustment to campus life in Israel, classes being taught in Hebrew, and the Israeli culture, all of which push the Arab students to study in Jordan. Also the relative geographical proximity is an added factor. Another reason for preferring to study in Jordan is that unlike some Israeli institutions, the institutions in Jordan do not have an age limit in the paramedical and medical studies⁴¹.

Additionally, admission requirements for advanced degrees are relatively easier in Jordan. More and more Israeli college graduates continue their higher education in universities in Jordan, especially in the humanities (some students are interested in studying subjects such as Islamic Sharia, which is

³⁹ Source: "Israeli Students Studying Education And Teaching In Higher Education Institutions in The Palestinian Authority" - Yuval and Bergen (January 2012)

⁴⁰ Source: "Jordanization" of Higher Education Among the Arabs in Israel (Chapters 1-3) - Arar and Haj-Yehia, 2011.

⁴¹ Arab students start studying at the age of 18, right after high school graduation.

considered prestigious when studied in a Muslim Arab country). The easy admission requirements in Jordanian universities may negatively affect those studying in Arab high schools, as they may give up on the idea of studying higher education in Israel before they even consider it in depth and invest little effort in preparing for the psychometric test and meeting the admission requirements for Israeli higher education institutions. Among Israeli-Arabs there is already the belief that higher education acquired in Jordan is inferior to that acquired in Israel, and this argument has a negative impact on the educational system and Arab society.

Studying in Jordan is very expensive compared to studying in Israel (and even compared to some European countries). The average annual tuition is about NIS20,000 and can even reach NIS37,000 for a medical degree). In addition, living expenses range between NIS30–35 thousand per year, totaling to NIS50–70 thousand per year. To meet the high costs the students who study in Jordan are assisted by their families, who commit and invest many resources for this purpose. This fact is particularly important in light of the relatively low economic status of the Arab students' families compared to that of the families of Jewish students.

Interviews with students who study in Jordan indicate that they would have preferred to study in Israel, were the chances of acceptance similar to those in Jordan. The more reasonable expenses, the higher academic level, employment opportunities and the possibility to continue their higher education at universities in Israel make studying in Israel preferable to studying in Jordan, and studies in Hebrew are perceived by the Arab students as neither an obstacle nor an advantage.

No data is available regarding the measure of their success in school, or the degree of their integration into employment in Israel, but crossing such data with the Ministry of Health's license tracking data indicates that in the last three years 300–400 students have returned from Jordan each year, and these numbers are on the rise (it is possible that the large masses of students who moved to study in Jordan have not yet completed their studies). Out of the 263 new licenses issued for pharmacists in 2006, half were issued to pharmacists trained in Jordan, 16% to pharmacists trained in Eastern Europe, and only 29% to graduates trained in Israel⁴².

⁴² "Situation Report on Higher Education of the Arab Population in the North" - Dr. Michal Sela, 2008.

Chapter 2 – Main Obstacles in Integrating the Arab population into the Higher Education System

Data mapping and analysis of the main obstacles for the Arab population's quality integration into the higher education system are essential for understanding the responses that need to be given to these issues as a part of forming an effective policy. Most of the learning on this topic stemmed from meetings in the field, especially with first, secondary, and academic students, Arab academic staff, as well as with academic officials who have experience in leading programs for improving the integration of students from the Arab population into academic institutions. These meetings highlighted the obstacles which are the product of the formal education system, such as knowledge of the Hebrew language, study skills, information and exposure to the academia, etc., and other obstacles which are the outcome of cultural and environmental differences such as studying in a mixed Western society, accessibility of public transportation, economic status, difficulty to manage in an institution as a minority, etc. The major obstacles are as follows:

1. Knowledge Gaps

The Israeli educational system consists of sectors divided according to nationality and religiosity. The Arab population is taught in an Arabic speaking educational system which includes both formal and informal schools supervised by the Ministry of Education. The Arab sector is divided by the Ministry of Education into four groups - Arab, Druze, Circassian and Bedouin, with each sector having its own unique program. One of the biggest changes taking place in the educational system is the growth in the Arab students group: in 2000 Arab students in the primary and secondary educational system constituted 21.5% of all students in Israel. In 2011 the group increased to 28% and in 2014 it is expected to reach approximately 29%⁴³. The increase is due to both the natural growth in the Arab population and an increase in the rate of learning. In light of the relatively low participation rate of Arabs in the higher education system, their difficulties and achievement therein, questions are rising concerning the Arab educational system.

School, including both formal and informal systems, provides a "box of tools" that opens the doors to higher education, and provides coping skills for various situations. Comparative studies between the sectors on the effects of the educational system on human capital development potential in the higher education system focuses on the following aspects: the teaching personnel, teaching methods and the learning skills acquired in schools, student achievements and public

⁴³ Source: CBS Annual – 2012.

investment per student, including hours of study and the number of students per classroom. Examination of each one of these parameters reveals that the system that supports students in the Arab sector is inferior to the one that supports the Jewish sector.

The National Institute for Testing and Evaluation compared the results of different comparative tests in various stages in the educational system and found that in all measures of achievement, except for matriculation scores, the average achievements of the Arab sector were lower than the average in the Jewish sector, and that the difference is consistent in all the subjects tested, at all levels of the class. The researchers found that the same gap is also reflected in the Universities Psychometric Entry Test and in the first year in universities.

Regarding public investment in student, the Taub Center's report on the education policy to promote weak populations by sector⁴⁴ shows that despite the existence of affirmative action policies for the lower socio-economic classes, students in the Arab sector receive less affirmative action budgets than the Jewish sector. This is reflected in the average number of hours per student, and in the number of students per classroom both in elementary and high school. As seen by the analysis of employment rates in the Arab population, dropping out of school is a warning sign regarding future income capabilities. It should be noted that the solution to the problem of increased dropout rates in these lower classes in the educational system is not included in this team's work but needs to be suitably addressed when choosing the right systemic solution. Analysis of the obstacles to entering higher education indicates that high school is a major obstacle, both due to the difficulty of meeting the minimum requirements for higher education, and due to lack of information, as well as negative signals from the work market and a low and uncertain return on investment (ROI) in education in the Arab sector. There is actually an "untapped pool" of about 10,000 Arab students with a motivation to study, who do take the matriculation exams, and who, under proper and early guidance, may integrate into the Israeli higher education system.

Beyond the fact that the formal educational system allows for less Arab students to utilize their skills and study in higher education, the ones that do get into higher education encounter difficulties that could have been minimized with appropriate preparation in their previous school years. The students' language skills are a major obstacle; their native tongue is spoken Arabic. Literary Arabic, Hebrew and English are additional languages that the Arab student must master at a high level in order to be proficient and advance in the academic world. Frequent use of a mixture of

⁴⁴ "State of the Nation Report - Society Economy and Policy 2009" - Taub Center, March 2010.

the languages at a basic level comes at the expense of in-depth command of one language, and the general linguistic skills acquired do not meet academic requirements. The Hebrew language is a major obstacle. Even though Hebrew is taught in Arab schools, there is almost no use of the language outside the classroom, and therefore there is a great difficulty in speaking, comprehension, and academic reading and writing. In addition, the level of teaching at the schools is apparently not high enough. The choice to teach Hebrew is not a high priority, and is mostly taught by Arab students who did not get in to other fields of teaching⁴⁵. It must be noted that in conversations with Arab students, it was found that for some of them it was easier to be examined on matriculation tests in Hebrew than in Literary Arabic (Literary Arabic is taught by a teacher who speaks spoken Arabic, and therefore students have no strong command of this language as well), and the same applies to the psychometric exam.

Another aspect is the issue of study skills. Studying in the formal education system (K-12 system) is based on different teaching methods than those in academia. The educational system teaches using methods of basic memorization and comprehension of texts, but does not encourage creative thinking, critical thinking, analysis, independent reasoning, etc. In addition, the studies in Arab schools as well as the Arab teachers themselves are also influenced by the traditional cultural environment, patterns of accepting authority, technological-digital gaps, etc. As a result, the prospective academic students are not exposed at all to learning experiences that encourage questioning and critical reasoning, are not required to independently process information (whether in books or via the internet), to independently formulate an argument or conclusion, and so on. These are the basic skills required for academic studies. A survey conducted by Haifa University in 2001 indicates that one of the main problems for students is getting used to the new teaching methods (42.5% among Arabs and 27.2% among Jews). This makes it difficult for the Arab student to adapt to a learning method that places an emphasis more on independent work, analytical discussion and independent use of various sources⁴⁶.

2. **The Psychometric Test**

A high psychometric score can lead to admission to higher education, especially to universities and to departments that offer prestigious degrees. This requirement is an additional obstacle for Arab students who possess a good quality matriculation certificate. Over the years there has been an ongoing public debate about the

⁴⁵ "State of the Nation Report - Society Economy and Policy 2009" - Taub Center, March 2010

⁴⁶ "Higher education among the Arabs in Israel: Status, Issues and Trends" - Majid Al-Haj, Center for Multiculturalism and Educational Research, University of Haifa, 2001.

psychometric test's validity, and the significance of its use as a selection tool for higher education. Some of the arguments against the test are that it discriminates against women due to a difference in time perception, ethnically discriminates against Arab applicants (as well as Ethiopians, and Mizrahi/Sephardic Jews) partially due to the nature of the texts chosen for the test, and also discriminates against Arab applicants on a linguistic basis since it is written in Literary Arabic which they do not know as well as Jews know Hebrew, and since English is considered to be a third foreign language for the Arab student. It should be noted that the psychometric test emerged as a major obstacle in all staff meetings with Arab students at a variety of academic degrees as well as with Arab academic faculty members and support system personnel. It turns out that many students don't even attempt to take the psychometric test, and instead search for alternatives, such as studying in institutions that do not require a psychometric test score, including studies outside Israel.

Another aspect that affects student achievements in the psychometric test is the preparation course. Due to the lesser demand and awareness, and the high cost of the courses, the number of preparation courses for Arabs is smaller and their quality is poorer than the courses intended for the Jewish population.

These aspects reflect the disadvantage of the Arab applicants compared to Jewish applicants, as well as other implications: academically, the psychometric test scores are currently the main obstacle preventing Arab students from being admitted for studies in the more prestigious institutions and faculties. Repeating the test also has financial ramifications; the cost of a preparation course in the Arab sector is on average NIS2,500. For a section of the population which is faced with financial difficulties already, this cost entails a significant expense.

In response to claims that the tests are biased and are to the detriment of the weaker ethnic groups in society, it is argued that the tests are equally valid and fair towards the different groups of examinees, and therefore the use of them leads to the selection of the students most suitable to academia in each group. The National Institute for Testing and Evaluation argues that the differences between the groups reflect the result, not the cause, and recommends that amendments be made at the level of adopting affirmative action policies by the institutions and not by eliminating the tool itself, which contributes to the prediction of academic success. Recently, a change in the structure of the psychometric test was introduced in which the candidates will be required to compose an essay. According to assessments, this requirement will make the situation of Arab applicants even more

difficult, considering the skills required for this purpose and the language difficulties previously raised.

3. **Lack of Pre-Academic Information, Consultation and Guidance**

During the team's meetings with students, faculty and members of the support system, one of the main barriers to Arab integration into the higher education system that was presented was an absence of information, consultation and guidance in the stages before to beginning academic studies. A large number of the applicants who are not admitted are rejected due to a lack of information about the admission requirements. Additionally, a significant amount of accepted students transfer between departments due to an absence of preliminary information regarding the specific curriculum design. Similarly, the "inflation" of Arab students studying education could have been moderated through professional guidance and presenting information regarding other professional options for employment, etc.

Choosing a major and a profession are perceived as one of the most important decisions one takes in life, and it contributes directly to successful integration in the work market. Many youth have a difficulty in making this decision, whether due to the variety of options existing today in terms of professions, majors, training programs and educational institutions, and whether due to the many considerations that need to be taken into account, and because of the uncertainty regarding the future of the work world. Also, in guidance and consultation in choosing studies, a profession and employment there is a gap between the services provided to the general population and the services tailored to the Arab sector and its needs. As a result, a large percentage of students from the Arab sector drop out of the higher education institutions or switch departments, and this has both social and economic ramifications. Accessible information and consultation may contribute to a more correct decision making process and will help avoid these issues⁴⁷.

Selecting a major and an academic institution are also influenced by social and cultural considerations. The family and social environment take an active part in determining the importance attributed to the various considerations, particularly in the Arab society which holds traditional views. Among Arab students, many of whom are the first generation in their families to study in higher education, as well as among minority groups, preference and prestige are attributed to professional vocations that will enable greater certainty to secure employment and high income,

⁴⁷ From: "Proposal To Develop a Designated Consultation and Assistance System in Choosing Studies and Professionals to the Arab Sector" - Prof. Itamar Gati and Future Directions Staff, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

and professions that are perceived to be prestigious and recognized by the environment. Nevertheless, with the absence of adequate information decisions are made based on general data and partial information, taking into less consideration personal abilities and desires.

A professional platform that will be responsible for presenting information objectively and professionally in a nationwide distribution could expand awareness about higher education, increase the orientation towards higher education among the educational staff in schools, the students and their families, and enable a more conscious decision as to the nature of the studies. In the long term such awareness may also influence the content taught in the formal educational system and the informal educational content that students will be exposed to during and after school. Integrating the work of higher education system representatives into the schools would create a more continuous interaction with the educational system and lead to a reduction in the number of students who possess a matriculation certificate that does not meet academic requirements, and of graduates of 12 years of school who have only a partial matriculation certificate.

4. Pre-Academic Preparation

Given the data on high school graduates with a matriculation certificate of academic standard out of all those eligible for matriculation, and of the data regarding those eligible for partial matriculation certificates, as reflected in the high school educational system, as well as the psychometric data and dropouts from academic studies, it seems that the pre-academic preparatory programs (mechina) could be a good solution for bridging the achievement gaps and integrating new Arab students into the higher education system, as well as a quality, comprehensive preparation for higher education. However, as described, only 784 Arab students studied in pre-academic preparatory programs in 2011, which is 6.4% of the total 12,252 students of the preparatory programs in that year, and a significant number did not continue to academic studies after the preparatory program.

In order to better surmise the barriers to being accepted into the preparatory courses and their successful completion, and to examine possible solutions, the Planning and Budgeting Committee ran a limited pilot in 2011/12 in five preparatory programs, three of which were integrated (where both Jewish and Arab students were studying) and two unique preparatory programs for Arab students, with a pedagogical program tailored to this population, and an enhanced instructional and social support system. Additionally, a scholarship and living stipend was provided in the unique preparatory courses. A total of 97 students were included in the pilot.

The pilot was accompanied by the "Brookdale" Institute⁴⁸. The following are the main preliminary findings, collected at the end of the 2011/12 school year:

- **Specific versus Integrated Preparatory Programs:** Overall the preparatory program students in the pilot expressed high satisfaction with the different components and their contribution in the various academic, personal, and social aspects. Nevertheless, in most areas the satisfaction rates were higher in the unique programs compared to the integrated programs. It should be noted that there is great variance in the various preparatory programs as well as between the students and the curriculum, which can explain some of the differences in students' satisfaction. Yet a central differentiating variable in these aspects was the ability to tailor the program to the unique needs and characteristics of the students (such as adding an Arabic speaking teacher to the academic courses, concentrated and supervised activities in small groups, minimizing the fear of speaking in class in front of a natively Hebrew speaking population, etc.). Additionally, higher rates of completing the preparatory programs and acceptance into higher education studies were found in the unique preparatory programs.

- **Marketing and Labeling the Preparatory Programs:** only a small portion of the students reported that they heard about the preparatory program from their high school faculty or through advertising. Most of them heard about the preparatory program from the academic institution itself. There seems to be room to increase the marketing of the preparatory courses and their benefits among high school faculties so that they can refer students to this track. Additionally, orientation days can be held for students in the high schools.

- **Circumstances for Turning to a Preparatory Program:** approximately half of the students expressed their desire to continue to higher academic studies in the same institution that offered the preparatory program as a consideration in choosing that specific program. The financial support during the program was the second consideration mentioned, and the preparatory course's special program (mentioned especially in the unique preparatory programs) third. Some of the students in the focus group reported a stigma involved in registering for a preparatory program, since there is a feeling that the studies in a preparatory program are not considered as actual academic studies and are a waste of time and money. One of the programs in the pilot, which was defined as part of a four year program (in which the students can get credit in the preparatory program year that will count towards their degree)

⁴⁸ "Preparing Arab Students for Successful Integration in Higher Education: Selected Findings of an Evaluation Study Evaluating a Pilot To Upgrade The Pre – Academic Preparatory Courses," "- Ben Rabbi Dalia, Segal - Barrow Sofka, Hendin Ayala, in partnership Khaled Abu Asba (Massar Institute), Myers – Joint Brookdale Institute.

is an example of a successful strategy with coping with the stigma. This program also has additional benefits as it allows continuous support for the students throughout their academic studies.

- **Academic Aid Tools:** Most of the students reported that they used the academic aid tools that were offered to them. The vast majority of students used the reinforcement classes in Hebrew, and the majority of students used the reinforcement classes in English and the classes and workshops on study skills. Also, the majority of the students reported that they received assistance in professional courses either through tutoring or mentoring (individual or group), and the majority of the mentoring recipients reported being satisfied or very satisfied with it. Nevertheless, nearly one half of the students reported that they needed additional help in the professional courses. In addition, the satisfaction with the academic aid tools was high, except for the English lessons and the psychometric preparatory course (given as a part of the program in two tracks only).
- **Social Aid Tools:** The majority of the students reported participating in empowerment workshops and social activities, and that they were satisfied with them. Most of the students agreed that the preparatory program contributed to their social integration and their introduction to Israeli society.
- **Personal Contribution:** The majority of the students reported that the preparatory program contributed to their sense of personal satisfaction, their general self-confidence, their desire to turn to studies with a higher minimum acceptance requirement, their self-confidence in their ability to succeed in school, their ability to independently manage their own life and to formulate educational–employment plans. Students in the focus groups reported an improvement in self-confidence while addressing an audience, improvement in the ability to cope with stressful situations and the contribution of studying in the preparatory program to their personal life, even beyond the value for continuation of study (for example, acquiring economic and social knowledge).
- **Guidance:** Many students approached the guidance counselor three times or more. The main reasons were related to academic issues in the preparatory program and/or a future profession. Personal and social issues were less frequent. The students usually reported that the guidance counselor helped, and students in the focus groups underlined the importance of the guidance counselor as well. However, a significant portion of the students reported that in the case of a personal problem, they usually had no one to turn to. It seems that for most of the students

guidance is perceived as aimed at assisting in the academic aspect more than the personal aspect.

- **Balancing the Components of the Program:** The dual purpose of the preparatory programs; enhancing the chances for acceptance to academic studies, and the ability to cope with them, imposes a significant burden on the students. Naturally, when the academic burden is high, there is less time for studies and activities in other areas. It is important to address the balance of these two aspects in the preparatory program, or to extend the school year in order to reduce the load.
- **Financial Support:** students in the unique preparatory programs were eligible for a scholarship, living stipend and funding for transportation if needed. Most of the students in the integrated preparatory programs also reported that they received a scholarship, as well as nearly half of the students in the preparatory program which was not included in the pilot, but was included in the research. Yet, approximately a third of the students in the pilot preparatory programs reported that their incomes were insufficient for some or most of their needs.

The findings above and the meetings we had with the students and faculty of the preparatory programs indicate that the main obstacles leading to not taking advantage of or unsuccessfully taking advantage of the preparatory programs were:

- ✓ Lack of awareness of the option of pre-academic preparatory programs.
- ✓ Negative reputation: preparatory programs are intended for "bad", weak students, who are later tagged in their home communities as less successful than the rest of the students who graduated on time.
- ✓ The teaching method in the preparatory programs: similarly to undergraduate students, the Arab students in the integrated preparatory programs encounter many difficulties arising from the experience of studying with a different population and from studying in Hebrew, but in contrast to first degree studies, there is no supporting educational and social system in most preparatory programs, which ultimately leads to high dropout rates. It seems that it is possible to provide better aid to the unique characteristics and needs of this population in unique preparatory programs, although a good preparation in the integrated preparatory programs can also provide the required aid. Regardless, the critical academic components for the success of students in the preparatory programs are: linguistic enhancement, cultural and social content and strengthening academic skills. The critical social components for success in the preparatory programs are: educational and personal

guidance, and apparently transportation/dormitories and financial aid as well. The burden imposed on the students should be noted and some extension of the preparatory programs should be considered.

- ✓ Alternative cost: although most Arab students are eligible for financial assistance and are eligible to funding for preparatory programs, the studies have alternative costs of a full year's work, as well as other costs involved with the investment of an additional significant amount of time which is an integral part of studies, and sometimes, in the absence of proper guidance its' significance is not understood. Additionally there is uncertainty regarding the chances of acceptance to an academic institution following the completion of the preparatory program.

5. **Lack of Physical Accessibility to Higher Education Institutions**

Investment in public transportation is a tool for economic and social development, and is all the more important in the Arab communities as they are located in Israel's social and geographic periphery. There is a difference of almost twice the number of private vehicles per thousand people between the Arab and Jewish populations. The gap is much larger in the Bedouin communities in the south. Also, there is a big shortage of available public transportation. In the vast majority of Arab communities, there are up to five daily available public transportation trips per thousand people (Nazareth is the exception with approximately 20 daily trips) compared with dozens of trips in Jewish communities with similar characteristics⁴⁹. When the frequency of buses and their entry into communities (towns and cities) was examined, it was found that in approximately a third of the communities the hours of available bus transportation is reduced significantly when considering how many of the buses to the area actually enter the community itself (as opposed to only stopping at the entrance to the community). There are communities where most of the buses entering them operate only in the morning, or stop operation in the afternoon, leaving the residents with no public transportation in the evening. Another problem is travel duration, since multiple bus lines or the train must be used. Therefore, in many communities there has developed a culture of walking for long distances, private and unofficial forms of public transport (at times with high prices and low availability and frequency), as well as dependency on a private vehicle at a high cost has developed. It should be noted that information about public transportation is also less accessible. The Ministry of Transport website, which contains information regarding lines and schedules for all bus companies and

⁴⁹ "The Arab Population and the State of Israel: Major Socio-economic data" - Saif Ayman, Economic Development of the Arab, Druze and Circassian Sector Authority, Prime Minister's Office, 2009.

the railways, is presented in Hebrew and does not reflect the actual situation of transportation.⁵⁰

The structure of the higher education system and work market usually requires the Arab population to leave their residential area in order to study and work. Therefore, in order to integrate them into the higher education system and society in general, physical accessibility to higher education institutions, employment centers, and cities is essential. Public transportation is especially essential for Arab women who will not live in the student dormitories and whose accessibility to a private vehicle is lower. This makes their integration into academic institutions dependent upon quick and easily available transportation. This is a fundamental problem that limits accessibility to higher education for Bedouin students in the recognized villages, and even more so in the unrecognized villages, since they have a very long travel time each day including switching between several bus lines, or have no real option to reach the academic institution by public transportation. It should be noted that within the last five years the Ministry of Transport has worked to expand the service to Arab communities and the improvement there is faster than in other communities.

6. Cultural and Social Adjustment

Education and higher education are presently a top priority among the Arab population. University graduates are perceived as leaders in Arab society; they are seen as agents of a social change and part of the attempt to improve the social, political and economic status of the Arab population⁵¹. For the individual, higher education is one of the principal parameters determining the measure of the person's personal and social prestige, as well as the prestige of their family. Nevertheless, the change for Arab students from their community to higher education institutions is a great cultural leap (mainly in universities where the character of studies and their geographical location require a move and independent life). This is a central obstacle and presents difficulty for Arab students, both men and women. The Arab communities, in spite of modernization trends, maintain many traditional features, and this gap makes student adaptation in the higher education system very hard, especially for women.

In the higher education system Arab students experience being a minority for the first time without the protection of the Arab community. This is the first time that

⁵⁰ "Public transportation in Arab communities" - Totry Fakhuri and Liron Farchi, the Abraham Foundation Initiative, 2012.

⁵¹ Source: "Higher Education among Arabs in Israel" – Al-Haj, 2003.

they experience Western culture, a Jewish environment where Hebrew is the dominant language in lectures, projects, research, signs, websites, secretarial services, student registration, etc. This is also the first time for them in an academic environment which, which they perceive as alienating.

The disparity in age between Arab and Jewish students is another significant factor beyond mere cultural and social gaps. The gaps in age and life experience are significant. Higher education institutions stereotype the average student as Jewish, mature, and experienced in conducting an independent life (outside the parental home), with experience in dealing with alienating systems (army), and critical reasoning. In contrast, the average Arab student is a "young" high school graduate who is experiencing life outside the parental home and community, and conducting his own household and schedule by himself for the first time. The young Arab student must undergo a rapid maturation process on several fronts that include, in addition to academic studies, other adult life skills such as responsibility, time management, withstanding pressures, etc. In this context it should be noted that some departments have a minimum age limit for admission that constitutes an effective barrier for the Arab population who does not serve in the army.

7. Economic Aspects

There is no doubt that there is an economic obstacle to entering academic studies, dropping out, and to prolonging a degree. As shown by the data, the family of an average Arab student (which finances most of the costs of the degree) comes from a lower socio-economic background than the average Jewish student's family, and its financial resources for tuition and living expenses during studies are much more limited (see details in Chapter 3). The Arab family's much lower income compared to the Jewish family, as well as the larger on average number of children per Arab family makes it difficult to finance these expenses for all family members. Additionally, for the Arab student himself, helping to support their family's income and saving towards building a house (especially among men) are motivations to go to work at an early age rather than to get a higher education.

The high tuition fees and cost of living may place effective limitations on the decision for academic studies, the selection of the academic institution, and affect the quality of the studies, chances for dropout and prolonging the degree. This reality requires an examination of the socio-economic support system for Arab students. Presently the supply of scholarships for Jewish students is well developed and includes government, public, and private sources. For example, the Ministry of Defense, through the Discharged Soldiers Fund, places a deposit and grant of tens

of thousands of shekels for each discharged soldier in favor of academic studies and preparation for the psychometric test, which can be used within five years of being discharged. Additionally, since 2011/12, the Ministry provides support for discharged soldiers from the periphery who are enrolled in periphery institutions and grants them full funding of tuition for their first year of study. Also, the Additional Assistance Fund assists during the first five years after completing military service in funding tuition and living expenses in the pre-academic preparatory programs and in vocational training.

Many public and private funds support academic studies but most of them require military or civil service. For the Arab population, military service is not possible, and the civil service (although it has been gaining some momentum among girls in recent years) is also ideologically problematic and not always available.

We have no doubt that in addition to the support fund of the Planning and Budgeting Committee and the Ministry of Education, private funds for the Jewish and Arab populations should be encouraged to be opened, or special funds for this purpose should be developed.

Chapter 3 - Existing Tools and Programs

In this chapter we review the main programs of the Planning and Budgeting Committee/Council for Higher Education, the Government and public and philanthropic bodies which can affect the state of Arab students in higher education.

1. The Planning and Budgeting Committee /Council for Higher Education

The Council for Higher Education has supported the promotion of the Arab sector since 2002. Following a report issued by the sub-committee for the promotion of higher education among the Arab population led by Prof. Majid Al Haj (2001), a permanent steering committee was created to increase accessibility to the Arab sector and an annual designated budget was allocated. This budget was given to the institutions to create a support system in academic and social services for Arab students. These moves have raised awareness for support and care of Arab students in the institutions. In addition, in recent years the Technion model of support for first year studies was studied in depth, on the basis of which the institutions' programs were formed. The budget for promoting and expanding access to higher education for the Arab population amounted to only NIS4-5 million, and was designated according to recommendations in the report of the sub-committee and the steering committee for the following objectives:

- Supporting institutions' services to Arab students, consisted mainly in providing an academic guidance counselor for Arab students and social and academic mentoring classes.
- Scholarships for exceptional Arab doctoral students.
- Support for Arab students in preparatory programs (additional overall funding for students in preparatory programs).
- By 2007/8 regional information centers in Rahat and Shfaram were budgeted for amounts up to approximately NIS1 million. However, due to the difficulties in evaluation and control, it was decided to suspend their activities and examine their optimal working methods and set measurable goals.

In spite of the relatively modest amounts invested by the Planning and Budgeting Committee for this issue until 2010/11, most of the institutions developed a support and assistance system for minority students including mentoring, academic tutoring, and designated guidance counselors for the Arab sector. It is important to note that in many institutions activity is developing far beyond the Planning and

Budgeting Committee's budgeting. In addition, many institutions are investing additional funds beyond those of the Council, and are raising contributions and creating cooperation with philanthropic funds for special programs to promote the Arab sector such as unique preparatory programs, accelerated preparation courses, orientation days, employment guidance, academic guidance for advanced studies and other programs. The amounts invested were successful in raising awareness in the institutions to the sensitivity of the Arab student population and their distress. Yet there is great variation between the institutions and it is clear that there is a need for much greater support in order to provide significant incentives for a pattern change, both among the population and among the higher education institutions.

The Shochat Committee, which examined and published its report on the Israeli higher education system (2007), considered the importance of integrating the Arab sector into the higher education system: "Efforts to attract high school graduates from the Arab and ultra-orthodox (Haredi) sectors and other populations with poor access to higher education must be further strengthened. These efforts must be made in collaboration with community leaders, the high school educational system and the higher education system. The integration of these populations in the higher education system is a prerequisite for their continued growth in the next five years. But more than that, this integration is important for the system, and is vital for Israeli society and economy in aspiring for modernization, economic growth and equality. The higher education system as it is presently allows the absorption of this demand. Drawing these populations to its gates... (is one of) the two main challenges with which the system will need to deal in the coming decade⁵²". Consequently, and in accordance with the policy laid down by the new chairman of the Planning and Budgeting Committee, as part of the multiyear agreement for 2010/11–2015/16, the Planning and Budgeting Committee defined expanding the accessibility of the higher education system to the Arab sector as one of their main goals for those years.

In addition to the ongoing support via the aforementioned budget, the Planning and Budgeting Committee has additional programs that support the Arab sector, or general programs that also relate to the Arab population:

- **"Ma'of" Scholarship:** the Ma'of scholarship is intended for outstanding scientists who are members of minority groups and citizens of the state of Israel whom higher education institutions budgeted by the Planning and Budgeting

⁵² Source: Report of the Committee to Review the Higher Education System in Israel, headed by Avraham (Baiga) Shochat (page 30), 2007.

Committee are interested in recruiting to their senior academic staff at the end of their scholarship period. The scholarship is similar to the Alon scholarship operated by the Planning and Budgeting Committee, but focuses on the absorption of senior faculty members from minority groups. Selection of the beneficiaries is conducted based on personal excellence, without setting a quota per fields of research or per institution. The program is shared between the Planning and Budgeting Committee of the Council for Higher Education and the Kahanoff Fund (which is ending its support in 2012/13). Each year approximately 6-7 scholarships are awarded, and in total so far it has been awarded to **91** researchers⁵³. The Planning and Budgeting Committee budget for Ma'of scholarships was approximately NIS3 million in 2010/11.

- **"Perach" scholarships:** In the Perach mentoring program undergraduate students volunteer to serve as mentors for school-age children in return for a scholarship amounting to approximately half their tuition. Perach is active in all high education institutions that received recognition by the Council for Higher Education, including colleges that are not budgeted by the State. Perach data indicates that the rate of Arab students who provide mentoring in the program is 23%, and the rate of projects and Arab schools in the program is 16%. The Perach budget in 2010-/11 was approximately NIS150 million, of which the Planning and Budgeting Committee support is approximately NIS112 million.
- **Student Aid Fund** – the Planning and Budgeting Committee and the Ministry of Education support a fund that assists students in need. The fund grants scholarships and loans based on socio-economic status, with the principal criteria being place of residence, number of family members, health state, being cared for by the welfare office, etc. The total original assistance fund for 2012/13 was about NIS100 million. The fund supports all students regardless of origin or religion. However there are a number of parameters that affect eligibility which make it incompatible for the Arab population: significant priority is provided to former military/national civil service veterans as well as to people who serve in reserve duty. Additionally, there are criteria which are not compatible with the norms in the Arab culture and therefore often do not accurately reflect economic difficulty, such as home ownership.

Examination of the scholarship recipients in 2011/12 shows that approximately 22% of the students who submit applications to the fund are Arabs but only 21% of those awarded scholarships are Arab students. It is difficult to estimate the measure of effectiveness and focus of the fund among Arabs; on the one hand

⁵³ Ma'of scholarships - Background and Primary Data - PBC, June 2011.

the rate of scholarship recipients is double the rate of Arab students in the higher education system, on the other hand the socio-economic status of Arab students is lower than that of Jewish students. There is also nearly no support in funding studies among the Arab population through private philanthropic funds (see reference below). Therefore this issue requires further examination. It should be noted that the fund also facilitates a student loan plan, which is rarely utilized. Within this plan 40% were Arab students, out of which approximately 80% exercised their right to receive a loan. It is possible that extending the use of loans for the purpose of studies would constitute a solution in making the studies more accessible for part of the Arab population.

2. Government Offices⁵⁴

In recent years the government has made decisions to invest significant budgets and to develop dedicated programs for improving the state of the Arab citizens of Israel and to narrow the gaps between them and the Jewish population. Following the establishment of the Authority for Economic Development of the Arab, Druze and Circassian population in the Prime Minister's Office in 2007, many efforts are being made to integrate all the budgets into an overall unified program that will influence the largest possible population while coordinating between the various Ministries. It should be noted that the Authority is a body whose purpose is to tap into and utilize the economic potential of the Arab sector by encouraging the production, business and economic activity within the Arab, Druze and Circassian communities as well as integrating them into the national economy. In addition, the Authority serves as a body for coordinating integration and thought, and monitoring government activities for the economic promotion of this population. Here are the details of the main decisions from an economic development viewpoint.

In 2006/7 the government reached decisions according to which by the end of 2012 the rate of minorities within the total state employees will increase to at least 10%. A minimum of 30% of new jobs each year would be allocated to the Arab population. It should be noted that according to the findings of the parliamentary inquiry committee on hiring Arabs in the civil service, the number of Arab, Druze and Circassian civil servants at the end of 2011 was 4982 (7.78%) of all civil servant workers, with the highest rate employed in the Ministries of Welfare and Health. The rate of Arab superior staff is approximately 1% of all superior staff.

⁵⁴ Thanks to Roi Assaf from the Prime Minister's Office, to Ela Eyal Bar David from the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor and to Sharon Malki from the Ministry of Transport for their instrumental notes on this survey.

Other decisions in this period related to the establishment of R&D centers within the northern program, in which at least 20% of academics from the minorities sector would be employed, and all minority communities would be included in national priority "A" areas for receiving benefits under the Encouragement of Capital Investments Law.

During 2010-2012 a series of multi-year government decisions were made for the benefit of all Arab, Druze and Circassian society, in a total sum of NIS3.7 billion:

- **Government Decision No. 1539 dated 21.03.10** - Decision on a five-year plan for economic development of thirteen selected communities in the minorities sector - Mghar, Shfaram, Sakhnin, Nazareth, Araba, Tamra, Dalyat el Carmel, Isfiya, Tira, Kfar Qassem, Um al Fachem, Qalanswah and Rahat for 2010–2014 which is managed by the Economic Development Authority and whose budget is NIS778 million (400 million is a new incremental budget from the Ministry of Finance). The program will focus on four main areas: (1) economic employment development (2) housing and real estate (3) transportation accessibility (4) personal safety and law enforcement. The Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, addressed this issue, saying: "It is important for us, that alongside the full civil equality before the law, which exists, of course, for all citizens of Israel, there will also be in the non-Jewish sector economic equal opportunities in employment, infrastructure, education, standard of living. Our goal will be to expand the initial program to many other communities. I think this is a very important step in our vision of the State of Israel as a regional power, global technological power, that all its citizens, Jewish and not Jewish, will be able to enjoy the fruits of prosperity and progress within her."
- **Government Decision No. 1994 dated 15.07.10** – Adopting the recommendations of the Eckstein Committee Report that was appointed by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor on raising the low employment rate of men and women from the minorities sector: for men aged 25-64 to an employment rate of 78% in 2020, and men aged 20-24 to an employment rate of 65% in 2020. For women from the minorities sector, the ages 25-64 will have an employment rate of 41% in 2020, and for the ages 20-24 an employment rate of 42% in 2020. This means the entry of approximately 300 thousand minorities into the work market within a decade, where it is estimated that approximately 176 thousand are above the natural growth rate.

- **Decision No. 2861 dated 13.2.11** – Activating a four-year program (2011 – 2014) for promoting the Druze and Circassian populations' economic development and growth. This program consists of three objectives in the employment, education, infrastructure, and transportation fields. The Ministries taking part in the program are: Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, Ministry of Building and Housing, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Transport. Overall budget is approximately NIS680 million.
- **Government Decision No. 3211 dated 15.05.11** – Refers to the operation of a five-year program (2011-2015) for promoting the economic growth and development of the Bedouin population in the north and the integration of the Bedouin citizens into Israeli economy and society. This program is composed of two objectives in the fields of education, transportation, and infrastructure. The Ministries taking part in this program are: Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, Ministry of Building and Housing, Ministry of Education, Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Transport. Overall program budget is approximately NIS353 million.
- **Government Decision No. 3708 dated 11.09.11** – A five year program for 2012–2016 to promote economic development and growth of the Bedouin population in the Negev and to promote the integration of the Bedouin citizens of the Negev into Israeli economy and society. Its goals are to advance the economic situation of the Bedouin population in the Negev, to strengthen the social life, community and the Bedouin local authorities in the local Bedouin communities in the Negev. There are 13 Ministry Offices partnered in this: Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, Ministry of Building and Housing, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior Security, Ministry of the Development of the Negev and Galilee, Ministry of Transport and Road Safety, Ministry of Culture and Sports, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Welfare and Social Services and the Water Authority. On behalf of this decision, headquarters for implementation were established which also operate (like the Economic Development Authority) within the Prime Minister's Office. Total budget is approximately NIS1.263 billion.
- **Government Decision No. 4193 dated 29.01.12** - Implementing the recommendations of the Committee for Social Economic Change ("Trachtenberg Committee"). This program is managed by the Economic Development Authority and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor. This decision is for a five year program (2012–2016), aimed to improve the

growth potential of the entire economy and to reduce the level of inequality and social gaps by raising the employment rate among the Arab population and people with disabilities, increasing enforcement laws, and encouraging the employment of single parents. This program consists of three objectives in the fields of employment, education, infrastructures, and enforcement. The Ministries taking part in the program are: the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, Ministry of Welfare and Social Services, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education. Total budget is approximately NIS730 million.

- **Government Decision No. 4432 dated 18.03.12** – A decision regarding a development plan for the minorities sector in the field of housing, which was formulated and managed by the Economic Development Authority for the years 2012–2016. Total budget is approximately NIS250 million. The decision is an outcome of the Committee for Social Economic Change ("Trachtenberg Committee").
- **Government Decision No. 4774 dated 17.06.12** - Strengthening the power of the law and increasing personal safety alongside improvement of police services and improving the quality of life in the minorities sector. Budget: NIS34 million for 2012.

The following are the details of the major programs of the various Ministries which are derived from the aforementioned government decisions, as well as other programs that already operate or will operate in the various Ministries, which are relevant to the issue of higher education:

The Economic Development Authority of the Arab, Druze and Circassian Sector in the Prime Minister's Office serves as a body for coordination, integration, thinking, and monitoring of government activities to promote the socio-economic state of the Arab population. In addition, the Economic Development Authority initiates and manages large scale government programs with the executive government offices whose purpose is promoting socio - economic minority populations. The Economic Development Authority Director is the Chairman of the Joint Steering Committee of the Ministry for Industry, Trade and Labor and the Joint, which operates the Occupational Guidance Centers specifically for minority populations (see details below). Recently the Authority has begun to operate a pilot in which five hundred excelling students were aided. The program includes linguistic strengthening, psychometric preparation, and support during studies and employment guidance. The Authority also finances the Waqf scholarship for students. The Authority launched a campaign in

collaboration with the Civil Service Commission to encourage the Arab population to approach tenders for jobs in the government, some of which were slated for Arabs, Druze and Circassians only.

The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor is responsible for economic-employment development in the State of Israel and operates many tools to eradicate inequality and to address obstacles in the entry of all the sectors of the Arab population into the work market and their integration into suitable employment. Alongside improvement of the human capital and labor supply from among the Arab population, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor supports vocational training programs, operates entrepreneurship encouragement programs that will expand employment in the periphery, operates employment encouragement programs on the local level in cooperation and coordination with the Arab local authorities, supports the opening and expansion of day care centers and after-school programs to encourage employment of the sector's women, and a variety of other projects that require accompaniment along the way.

- Guidance and assistance in employment: one of the most unique projects in the integration of the Arab population into employment is the operation of approximately 21 employment centers designated for this minority population which are deployed nationwide. The centers are a "One Stop Shop" for the unemployed who are outside the work market for suitable integration and guidance for appropriate employment. The centers will supply the following services: providing employment guidance and counseling, training and guidance for completing education and higher education (in collaboration with the Planning and Budgeting Committee), preparation for the work world, appropriate job placement, and employment accompaniment over time. The job placements are performed by developing connections with employers and assistance with transportation of workers from Arab communities to places of employment. So far 8 employment guidance centers have been established and by 2014 21 centers are expected to be operational; 8 in the Bedouin sector in the south, 4 in the Bedouin sector in the north, 3 in the Druze and Circassian sectors and 13 in minority communities. The multi-year budget to operate the employment center program for Arab society is approximately NIS200 million in collaboration with the Israeli Joint (JDC) and Yad Hanadiv.
- Child care: as part of encouraging the employment of women in the Arab sector, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor supports child care programs. In the 2011/12 school year approximately 3000 infants used the

day care centers and pre-nursery play groups' services, which are partially funded by the Ministry with a budget of NIS30 million. Approximately 1,270 children and infants attended after-school programs, which the Ministry assisted in funding with about NIS3.2 million. Also, in 2011 approximately NIS31 million were allocated for the construction and renovation of day care centers in the minorities sector, and approximately NIS66 million in 2012 for the same purpose.

- Incentives for employers: in order to create incentives to employ minorities, the Ministry established an "employment track" in the Investments Center to improve and treat the issue of employment in the sector. This program subsidizes the wages of new employees in industry and services, giving preference to minorities. Assistance was approved only in 2011, totaling approximately NIS19 million. This means an addition of approximately 350 jobs. In 2012, a new and expanded program was created, in which the employers of Arab women would receive higher subsidies, peaking at approximately 37% of the employee's salary for a period of 30 months.
- Cultivating and encouraging business entrepreneurship: another important tool for increasing employment among the Arab population mainly among Arab women. As of February 2011, the Small and Medium Businesses Agency is operating a special loan fund to encourage Arab women entrepreneurship. The fund works in cooperation with the Economic Development Authority of the Prime Minister's Office, and the loans are given in the method of mutual trust. The loans help establish business activity and encourage female entrepreneurship. More than 1000 loans in the scope of millions of Shekels have been approved since the beginning of the program. In 2011 and the first half of 2012 two business centers were established in Shfaram and Nazareth. Moreover, the Small and Medium Businesses Agency, in cooperation with the Economic Development Authority and The Authority for Advancement of Women in the Prime Minister's Office intend to operate a program dedicated to encouraging women's entrepreneurship in Arab society with a budget of over half a million Shekels.
- Industrial development: The Ministry works to develop focused industry in the north of Israel, in the Triangle Area, and in the south where minority populations are concentrated. This activity is expressed in the development of industrial zones and work centers in the Arab, Bedouin, and Druze sectors. The development of these areas is prioritized in the Development Areas Administration activities and by dedicated budgets. A good example for this

is the Shaar Hanegev Industrial Zone in Lehavim Junction which is shared by Jews and Arabs (the three authorities who enjoy it are Rahat – Lehavim – Bnei Shimon). This industrial zone is expected to employ hundreds of male and female workers from the Bedouin unrecognized villages. Other examples are the Segev Shalom Industrial Zone that employs more than 1,000 male and female workers from the Bedouin unrecognized villages in the south. The Umm al Fahm Industrial Zone is expected to employ dozens of workers in the Triangle. Other areas are being developed in the north of Israel such as Kiswa–Samia, Mghar, Abu-Snan, Iksal, Nazareth, Sakhnin and more, which are expected to employ hundreds of workers. In light of the employment crisis in Arab society, the Ministry is developing creative solutions in cooperation with the Prime Minister's Office and other ministries, and is developing industrial zones on private land and not only on state lands as was the case thus far. Moreover, due to the importance of developing employment infrastructures in the Arab sector, the Ministry is examining the development of a regional industrial area, where tools, efforts, and resources for developing an industrial anchor and a variety of employment sources will be focused.

Beyond the programs derived from the Government Decisions mentioned above, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor promotes joint ventures with third sector bodies that cost approximately NIS5.5. A unique venture of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor with the "Tzofen" association to retrain academics into high-tech employees is operating in the Nazareth area. There is another venture operating with the "Be'atzmi" (Myself) association to integrate 300 Arab women into the labor market in six mixed urban communities across the country.

The Ministry of Education has undertaken executing programs over the coming years built to improve the achievements of Arab students. These programs address the faculty and teaching methodology which will encourage academic learning skills. Additionally, the Ministry operates in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office and the "Kav Mashve" association, in a program that educates towards a career life in 50 high schools in the Arab society that will include information and exposing students to the Israeli academic world by conducting guided tours in the Israeli academic institutions and meetings with leading academics in the Arab sector, as well as exposing the students to the modern work market and the changes it is undergoing. The Ministry is planning to establish 60 school psychometric centers, and to strengthen the students' mastery of Hebrew by integrating an oral presentation component into the Hebrew matriculation and by encouraging teachers from the Jewish sector to teach Hebrew in Arab schools. In terms of teacher

training, the Ministry operates three colleges for education in Arab communities plus a number of courses of study for Arabs in the general colleges for education. Each year approximately 2,400 Arab students graduate with educational degrees from these colleges. Furthermore, another 1,200 students complete the retraining teaching course, and other students graduate with a teaching certificate at the universities. On the other hand, only 1,200 teachers are required each year for the Arab educational system, which causes unemployment among the graduates, and of those who are employed, most occupy part-time positions only. Subsequently, the Ministry has suggested that the Planning and Budgeting Committee will absorb one of the colleges for education in the north into a general college that will not train additional teachers. The Ministry is also working to raise the teaching skill level of teachers through reorganization of the teacher training: in it only students with first degrees who are in the process of transferring to training for a second degree that is integrated with a teaching certificate (M. Teach) will be accepted to the high school track, and the training in the first degree (B.Ed.) will be limited to kindergarten, elementary school and special education courses only. Let it also be noted that the Ministry operates an initiative for granting scholarships to students from the Druze and Bedouin sectors who study in recognized higher education institutions.

The Ministry of Transport, National Infrastructures, and Road Safety has invested over the last decade in the development of public transportation in Arab communities. Transportation improvements are conducted both in an ongoing manner and within the framework of government decisions. Due to the poor state of infrastructures in many communities, which makes accessibility difficult, the course of improving public transportation accompanies a parallel improvement in transportation infrastructures in general and public transportation supporting infrastructures in particular (terminals, endpoints, stopping bays, waiting sheds, asphalt repairs, electronic signage, etc.).

- **Public transportation improvements:** the two major government decisions in which framework infrastructure improvements are presently made are:
 - a. The five year plan for economic development of minority communities, Government Decision No. 1539 as detailed above, in whose framework approximately NIS100 million will be invested in transportation. In this program budgets were allotted for improving public transportation service and infrastructures as a leverage for accessibility to employment and higher education institutions. Service improvements include increasing the frequency of buses in the bus line serving Kalanswah, Taybeh and Tira, adding an intercity bus line between Kafr Qassem and Petach Tiqva,

adding bus lines from Rahat to Achva College and Sapir College, adding bus lines from Umm al Fahm to the University of Haifa and to the Mifratz Central Station, adding intracity bus lines in Sakhnin, significantly strengthening the connection between Dalyat el Carmel and Isfiya to Haifa and to Yokneam, and more.

- b. A program promoting growth and economic development of the Bedouin population, Government Decision No. 3708 as detailed above. In this plan the Infrastructures Administration and the Land Administration in the Ministry of Transport enhance the accessibility of the residents of the Bedouin local settlements in the Negev to centers of education and employment by improving transportation infrastructures and expanding the deployment of regular public transportation in the settlement bus lines and intercity lines. A series of improvements took place several years ago, in which buses began operating between Tel Sheva, Kseife, Lakiya, Khura, Arara in the Negev and Segev Shalom to Be'er Sheva, and between regional lines which connect neighboring communities. These days additional lines are opening, such as between Kseife to Arad, and the activity of existing lines is increased. There is also investment in infrastructures and service to the Abu Basma Council settlements; the current quality of the transportation infrastructure in these communities is very poor, and sometimes nonexistent. As of February 2013 service will commence in Kasr a Sir and Abu Krinat, but due to infrastructure problems, the remaining settlements of the Council are still not being served. The total commitments of the Ministry of Transport together with the Prime Minister Office for this project is NIS276.53 million.
- **Development and upgrading of the road network:** in order to improve the Arab population's intra-city and intercity roads, reduce traffic accidents with casualties, and improve quality of life, the Ministry is investing more than NIS700 million for developing and upgrading the transportation infrastructures in Arab communities in the years 2011–2016. There was also a decision in February 2012 to implement a multi-year program to develop transportation infrastructures and roads in Eastern Jerusalem. Within this program new roads will be paved and the existing infrastructure will be renovated, with connection to the existing and planned urban transportation infrastructures. The program, which was created in cooperation with community administrations and representatives of the residents, is expected to significantly improve access to municipal services, public institutions and business centers in the city. To implement this program the Ministry of Transport and the Jerusalem Municipality allocated approximately NIS500

million in 2012–2016. It should be noted that in addition to the designated budget for developing transportation infrastructure in Arab communities, the Arab communities and population centers also enjoy general development programs of the national transportation infrastructures as well as the programs for transportation infrastructures in the periphery. These programs are estimated at hundreds of millions of Shekels each year. Thus, for example, the widening of Highway 79 in the north of Israel will improve accessibility and safe travel between Haifa and its suburbs (Krayot) to Nazareth Illit and to the Arab city of Nazareth. Upgrading this road will also benefit the communities along the travel route, where there are many Arab communities such as Shfaram and Bir al Maksur. Also, in February 2010 the government decided (Decision 1421) on the "Netivey Israel" transportation program for development of the Negev and Galilee. The objectives of this program are upgrading and establishing land-based intercity transportation infrastructures in the peripheral regions. This program includes the extension of the Trans-Israel Highway in the south and the north, the development of roads in the Galilee, and a detailed road plan in the periphery. A total of NIS27.5 billion was allocated for 2010–2020 for this program, of which about NIS9.5 billion are for the development of the road infrastructure. The rest of the budget was allocated to develop railways, as will be detailed below. This budget was provided in addition to the approved and budgeted plans in the fields of intercity and intra-city transportation of approximately NIS42 billion, which includes the development plan for a train, the development plan of the National Roads Company, and a budget for municipal bodies. This program is a first step in a broader plan to connect the periphery to the center via an infrastructure that will include length routes (north-south) of main railways, main roads and of a number of width (east-west) routes, according to the detailed planning of roads and railways.

- **Improving public transportation services:** along with the government's decisions, there is ongoing work by the Public Transportation Division in the Ministry on service improvements to minority settlements across Israel, from north to south. This is reflected in an increase in the number of trips and the number of communities who have been provided with service in recent years. These improvements consist of work in many cities and regional areas. The improvement process was initially performed in three areas: Wadi Ara, Sakhnin and the Bedouin communities in the south. This included several stages: study and analysis of the current situation, determining planning alternatives and selecting a preferred alternative, and the operation of the preferred alternative. As part of the service improvements, the Ministry of

Transport decided to increase the activities in 10 Druze communities in the Galilee: Rama, Sajur, Julis, Yarka, Abu Snan, Yanukh-Jat, Hurfeish, Pekiin, Kasra–Samia, and Beit Jan. Some 77,000 residents live in these communities and in 2009 the needs of public transportation services and infrastructures were mapped in these communities. In July 2010 a series of improvements were made in the public transportation service. In addition to these improvements, more service improvements were made in the past few months across the country with an annual investment of approximately NIS20 million. Over the coming years operation agreements in several clusters will begin and within them additional improvements of the existing service are planned. For example, in the Hadera–Netanya cluster an operation agreement will commence towards the end of 2013 in which service to the communities in Wadi Ara, such as in Kfar Karah and Bartaa, will be increased, alongside a new service to Jisr a Zarka, local lines within Umm al Fahm, improved service from the Triangle communities to Netanya, and more. In order to increase public awareness to the series of improvements, the Economic Development Authority in the Prime Minister's office and the Ministry of Transportation launched a campaign in Arabic in the 13 communities participating in the five year program.

In the coming years the investment in transportation infrastructures in general and in public transportation supporting infrastructures in particular will continue in order to increase the service provided within these communities. In addition, new bus lines to other destinations and increasing the frequency of existing bus lines are also planned.

The Ministry of Building and Housing is a partner with the Neighborhoods Renewal Division program "Hesegim" which works to increase access to higher education in the periphery. In this program the Ministry operates a counseling and guidance program about higher education in settlements in the Druze, Circassian and Bedouin sector, which includes mainly higher education counseling coordinators in the relevant communities.

The Ministry of Science and Technology operates in conjunction with the Economic Development Authority in the Prime Minister's Office an excellence scholarship program for Druze and Circassian scientists in advanced degrees, for doctorate students in the Natural Studies, and mentoring scholarships for teaching science.

3. **Public and Philanthropic Bodies**⁵⁵

There are a limited number of public and philanthropic organizations that work to fill the "gaps" for which no answer has been provided for in the Arab, Druze and Circassian populations in the fields of education, employment and higher education. Even if it is regarding funds which cannot change the condition of the entire system, their importance for maintaining an infrastructure in the academic institutions, for the development of projects, for starting processes in partnership with the Planning and Budgeting Committee and the government, and for implementing large programs is great and significant. As an example, the following key entities that operate in the field of higher education are detailed⁵⁶:

- **The "JDC Israel" organization** works in collaboration with the government and various organizations to strengthen the social services system in Israel. It operates a program to promote employment of Arabs by raising awareness of the subject, developing organizational and professional infrastructures, running programs for integration in employment, and supplementing education, etc. Additionally, the JDC is responsible on behalf of the Planning and Budgeting Committee for the operation of the "Hesegim" program for widening access to higher education in the periphery, which is planned to expand into Arab communities in the periphery.
- **The "Kav Mashve" Association** works to enable Arab academics to work in the field in which they received their academic degree. The association works on placement, preparation for work, accompaniment of employers, etc. Additionally, it operates in cooperation with institutions of higher education to conduct workshops for preparing for integration into the work market in the last year of studies, including resume writing, preparation for job interviews, guidance and assistance in finding jobs and more. The association also recently launched their "career guidance" program which is shared by the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Education and operates in 50 high schools in Arab society. The program is aimed at exposing potential young people and their parents to the higher education

⁵⁵ Information in this section is partly based on: " Higher Education for Arab Citizens of Israel Realities: Challenges and new opportunities", Inter Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues, Avivit Chai, December 2012.

⁵⁶ We apologize that the information in this survey is not complete and does not include all the bodies that are active in this issue. Additionally no entities operating in related fields of higher education, such as education or employment are specified. It should be noted that the details are not in order of importance or scope of operations.

system and assisting them in planning a future career. The programs operate in partnership with other philanthropic funds.

- **The Kahanoff Foundation** focuses on promoting human and citizen rights and strengthening Arab society. The foundation supported many organizations and was a partner of the Planning and Budgeting Committee until this year in funding Ma'of scholarships for excelling Arab faculty. The Foundation also supports the program to advance Bedouin students at Ben-Gurion University in the Negev, in which these students are given the option to enter sought-after programs on the basis of their grades in the first year of studies. This program includes a summer course that focuses on strengthening academic reading and writing in English and Hebrew, computer skills, leadership and inter-personal communication. The best students continue to first year academic studies during which they are provided with personal and academic counseling and support. The foundation also supports a program to prevent Arab students from dropping out in their first year of studies at Tel Aviv University, which includes academic, social, mental, and economic support.
- **The Rothschild Caesarea Foundation** promotes a vision of a just and prosperous Israeli society, which acts to reduce social gaps through higher education and the development of social responsibility. The foundation works to enable higher education among marginalized populations, and in this framework has developed a model to promote young leadership reserves of leading students, mainly from the social and geographic periphery. The goal is that students who succeed academically will advance to higher degrees and integrate into influential positions in Israeli society, while simultaneously working for social change through advancing education and equal opportunities in the periphery. The ambassadors are Israeli students aged 19–27, in a variety of programs and degrees in academia, who wish to become the future generation of social and business leadership in Israel. Of the ambassadors, 20% are from Arab society. The organization accompanies the ambassadors throughout their years of undergraduate studies, with the option to continue their participation in second and third degrees as well. The ambassadors receive a tuition scholarship and a living expenses stipend as well as participating in workshops about knowledge and awareness in Israeli society, training and experience in the required skills for leadership, and involvement in the establishment of projects in the community and leading them.

- **Yad Hanadiv Foundation** aims at creating resources for the promotion of Israel as a democratic, vibrant and healthy society committed to Jewish values and equal opportunities for all its citizens in order to continue and develop the philanthropic tradition of the Rothschild family. Today the foundation focuses on providing grants in the fields of education, the environment, academic excellence, civil society, and Arab community. The Arab community program at Yad Hanadiv aspires to promote equal opportunities for the Arab citizens of Israel. Today, the foundation's main efforts are focused on increasing the employment rate among Arabs through establishing employment centers (see details above). A preliminary project, and on a much smaller scale, known as "Atida", continues to focus on promoting the employment rate of educated women in the Nazareth region. Other significant initiatives include providing services and accessibility to Arab citizens with disabilities in collaboration with the Joint, and supporting the development of learning materials for Arab children with an emphasis on literacy.
- **"Atidim" association** is working to reduce social and economic gaps between the periphery and the center of Israel by educating for excellence and by teaching technology and science to junior high and high school aged youth. Understanding the needs of Israeli society, Atidim works with the Arab and ultra-orthodox communities, and integrates them into the socio-economic fabric of the State of Israel. The program's partners are Mr. Eitan Wertheimer, the Jewish Agency, Bank Leumi, government offices, the IDF, advanced industry, and educational organizations. In this program the association operates the "N.A.M. – program to promote outstanding Arab youth", which enables high school graduates from the Arab sector to study a first degree in the engineering and sciences departments at the Technion, while receiving benefits, assistance, and personal accompaniment during the studies and assistance with successful integration into quality employment in Israeli industry. The program includes academic and financial support, including full funding of tuition fees, living expenses and a psychometric preparation course.
- **"USA Israel (Fullbright) Foundation"** operates a students and lecturers exchange program and provides a number of excellence scholarships for advanced degrees to excelling Arab students who plan to study in an American university. The foundation also operates a preparatory course to improve English skills and prepare for admittance tests for Arab students in Israel.

- **The Gilbert Foundation operates** a program in cooperation with the Negev Galil office, community centers, local authorities, and other foundations for outstanding Bedouin high school students in the Negev. This program offers afternoon enrichment courses in the exact sciences, English, and Sciences, as well as providing preparation for the psychometric exam and workshops for critical thinking and leadership.
- **The Landa Foundation** supports a support program for the first year at the Technion. This program includes preparation in Hebrew, English and the exact sciences prior to the beginning of the school year as well as personal guidance and academic and social mentoring throughout the year.
- **The Abraham Foundation Initiative** works to promote equality and coexistence between Jewish and Arab citizens in Israel, and develops and operates extensive initiatives on the subject. Some of these include a project for training and integrating Arab women into the work market (Sharikat Haya - Life Partners), promoting government policies to reduce gaps between Jews and Arabs, teaching the Arab language in Hebrew schools in Israel, and more.
- **Mifal HaPayis Foundation** for Arab students – since 2008 Mifal HaPayis has offered first degree scholarships for students from the Arab population from low socio-economic background, aiming to encourage these youth to continue their education and help them finance their tuition. The scholarship of NIS30,000 (NIS10,000 a year for three consecutive years) is granted to students beginning in the first year of study, for three consecutive years of study. Receiving this scholarship requires volunteering in the community.
- **Arnaud Foundation** supports the development and training of Bedouin female students at Ben-Gurion University by providing financial assistance.
- **National Students Union** grants more than 100 annual scholarships to Arab students in projects of social involvement, and works to make the scholarships granted to students in Israel, including the Arab students, accessible via the computerized scholarships pool at nuis.tagonet-ltd.com/scholarships_book_index.php. The pool contains the details of approximately 50 funds that provide scholarships specifically for Arab students.

- **Wissam Khamis Scholarship Foundation for Jews and Arabs**– the foundation provides scholarships for Jews and Arabs alike, out of the fund's commitment to support academic education and excellence in Israel while promoting the values of equality and coexistence. The foundation provides scholarships on the basis of a socio-economic profile while supporting a wide and heterogeneous range of fields of study. The recipients of the scholarship commit to promoting Wissam's legacy by excelling in studies and carrying the message of equality and co-existence that the Foundation is based upon.
- A number of additional funds provide designated scholarships for Arab students on a socio-economic basis, but the number of overall scholarships is relatively low as well as the total amount of funds allocated to the subject and the amount of the scholarships. Of course, a much wider supply of scholarships is available for students who have done military or civilian service.

On this occasion we wish to express our appreciation and gratitude to the public and philanthropic bodies who invest money and energy in promoting higher education in the Arab sector. The investment is important both in order to facilitate programs and to accumulate knowledge and experience as a preliminary process to the actions the Planning and Budgeting Committee and/or the government will support, as well as supplementing and increasing to the support of the Planning and Budgeting Committee and the government.

Chapter 4 – The Planning and Budgeting Committee Policy

The Planning and Budgeting Committee policy was formulated on the basis of data mapping, and of mapping all of the obstacles that affect the accessibility of the Arab population to the higher education system and the quality of absorption into academia, as described above. Let it be noted, that in 2011/12, interim recommendations were formulated and a small pilot was operated in the preparatory programs and at the Open University (see Appendix "A"). The full and detailed program will be implemented in 2012/13 and will be updated as needed. The Planning and Budgeting Committee's decision is presented in full in Appendix "B" below. The program is based on a number of founding principles:

- The program relates to the integration of minorities in the **existing academic system** and in the regular programs with adaptations to the needs of the students, without creating separate frameworks and systems. We believe that this integration will eventually provide the best preparation for integration in employment or further academic study. Nevertheless, the calls arising from the field to establish budgeted academic programs in Arab communities in order to minimize the phenomenon of Arab students studying abroad cannot be ignored. This issue is complex and ambiguous, and involves significant additional costs. We are discussing it seriously and hope to be able to formulate recommendations for the Planning and Budgeting Committee on this issue during this year (in this context see also section 15, the issue of an academic institution in an Arab community).
- This program treats **all of the student's life situations**, before and after academic studies, beginning in high school, up to the absorption of senior excellent faculty in academia or adequate employment after graduation. This is due to the understanding that these ends have a profound impact on the situation of the minority students within the academic system.
- This program is **holistic** and treats the variety of obstacles to entering the higher education system. The team concluded that an effective support system that could bring about significant change must be as comprehensive and holistic as possible. The situation of the Arab population in the higher education system reflects its situation in the formal educational system, in Israeli society and in the employment market. Our goal is to create a significant reinforcement which will accompany the pupils and prospective students in a way that could affect the number of alternatives available to them and the array of considerations existing today at different intervention points.

- This program was formulated in an attempt to address, as much as possible, **external obstacles** which are not under the direct responsibility of the higher education system, such as Hebrew language training, transportation to preparatory programs, employment guidance, etc. Yet we cannot replace the ministries in charge of those issues; the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, etc., and the more they will incorporate the changes, the more academia will be able to integrate the Arab population.
- This program is designed first and foremost to improve the **quality of integration, support, and duration of studies** for minority students, and to assist in utilizing opportunities to integrate into the higher education system for those fitting. We believe that quality integration will be a means for significant growth of the number of minority students in the system. This means that unfortunately the program is not sufficient to bring about immediate significant growth in the rate of Arab students in the system. Further resources will be required for that purpose in the future.
- This program's implementation allows institutions **flexibility** and adaptation of the tools for the benefit of the specific population studying in each institution, along with a framework and basic principles which are essential conditions for success. Also, the program requires **clear responsibility and commitment** on the side of the institutions along with long term action plans, clear goals and objectives of absorbing minority students, diversifying their courses of study, the absorption of graduate students, and improving the quality of their studies. Participation in support of minority students will depend on the programs formulated by the institutions; unlike previous years, support by the Planning and Budgeting Committee will be provided after approval of the programs submitted to the Steering Committee according to output based models.

It is important to note that as aforementioned, many of the institutions already carry out such programs, and that many initiatives have emerged independently from the institutions. However, the lack of sufficient budgeting by the Planning and Budgeting Committee, budgeting according to inputs, approval of single year budgets only (without considering multi-year budgeting) etc., has prevented thorough grounding of the program. Here are the details of the program by type of intervention.

1. **Pre-Academic Information, Guidance and Consultation**

A significant part of the accessibility to higher education problem stems from limited exposure to the higher education system, lack of reliable information and

academic orientation, and the fact that many of the students studying now are the first generation to study higher education.

- Information, guidance and consultation centers will be created for the Arab sector to increase accessibility to higher education in the periphery. These centers will supply information at the local and national levels, and will be responsible for the distribution of reliable and objective information, educational and professional guidance, and employment counseling towards integration in employment (by use of professional diagnoses). This activity will be integrated and coordinated into communities where employment centers will be established by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor.
- Due to the professional knowledge and experience accumulated in the "Hesegim" program, the information centers will be operated according to their general program, with separate management and adjustments as required. Steering of the program will be done by a special sub-committee where representatives of the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor will be present, as well as Arab academics and public figures. So far, the "Hesegim" program has barely operated in Arab communities. Including Arab communities in the program required general work on defining basic requirements and socio-economic criteria for selecting communities eligible for participation in the program.

As an outcome of this, 19 new Arab communities will be included in the program. It was decided that the expansion will be carried out gradually.

- The coordinator working in the Arab communities will work in collaboration with the high schools. Their role will be to distribute reliable information about the higher education institutions; their characteristics, unique programs for each institution, the various admission requirements, preparatory programs, various support scholarships, etc. These representatives will maintain contact with the higher education institutions and thus will be able to accompany and mediate between the applicant student and the institutions. The purpose of their presence inside the schools is to increase awareness of the higher education option, and to contribute to the academic orientation in the schools. The activity in the schools will be coordinated with the Ministry of Education.
- The teaching staff in the schools is a significant resource, especially in a society where the students are first generation for higher studies. They can serve as role models, and an educated source for counsel and guidance, under

conditions where they can do this in an orderly manner for significant guidance and consultation. This is in a situation where they can do so in an organized manner for a large amount of students. The teaching staff must inform students about the minimum required matriculation units in order to be admitted into universities, and direct to relevant courses of study for various employment fields (especially in the Arab sector where higher education is a direct continuation to the formal educational system). From meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Education it arises that the teaching staffs needs to be trained for this purpose.

- Orientation days held in institutions of higher education specifically for Arab students will also include the students' families, in order to deepen the understanding of the academic system with which the Arab students have to deal with.
- It is recommended to explore the possibility of integrating academic preparatory programs into the civil service program, so that on the one hand encouragement will be given for civil service, and on the other hand an assistance budget for students offered to those serving will be granted, and the time of service will be used for orientation and preparation for academia.

2. **Pre-Academic Preparation**

As described above, the participation rates of minority students in the pre-academic preparatory programs are very low. This probably stems from lack of information, negative branding, incompatibility of the program for Arab students, the lack of a support system, the time involved in the studies along with uncertainty as to their outcome, and more. Yet the preparatory programs are the primary key to access into the higher education system, to reducing dropout rates, and improving achievements. Therefore, the team considered it important to address all the reasons preventing integration into the preparatory programs (unique for Arabs or integrated) in order for the program to be effective:

- Comprehensive support: Starting 2012/13 a supportive wrap-around service will be provided for all preparatory programs budgeted by the Planning and Budgeting Committee where minority students study (approximately 700 students currently). This wrap-around service will include: additional Hebrew language skills strengthening classes for students, funding for dormitories/transportation, funding a psychometric preparation course, and a coordinator/guidance counselor. Due to the considerable variance among

populations and fields of study, and the lack of a clear preference for one route or another, we recommend leaving the choice to the institutions regarding whether to hold specific or integrated programs for minorities.

- Branding and marketing of the preparatory courses: the Planning and Budgeting Committee will participate one time in marketing and branding the preparatory program in order to bring the pre-academic preparation to the awareness of the Arab population and to highlight its benefits. This benefits include providing basic knowledge for studies in academia, improving study skills, strengthening skills in Hebrew and English (and thereby having less courses in the first year of studies), financial savings in funding the psychometric course, improving self-confidence, the possibility of receiving an excellence scholarship for the first year of studies (see below), etc. During the professional staff's continued work the possibility that the preparatory program will be operated and marketed as part of a four year program for first degrees will be examined, while in addition to the components mentioned there will be included one or two academic courses out of the curriculum for the degree, (and thus provide an additional incentive by gaining credits in the first year).
- Incentives for outstanding students: Starting 2013/14 the Planning and Budgeting Committee will grant excellence scholarship to the 20% of the graduates of the minority preparatory courses with the highest achievements in the preparatory program. The scholarship will be awarded after admission to the first year of the degree and will amount to one year's tuition fee.

It should be noted that until now the pre-academic preparatory programs were operated by the Ministry of Education and other mediating bodies. Often students were not perceived as clients of the higher education institution. In addition, for many years the policy of the preparatory programs has not been examined in the academic, planning and budgetary aspects, and many programs operating at different standards were created, without their effectiveness for the Arab population being examined, and with the absence of mutual recognition between the institutions. In 2011/12 it was decided to transfer the preparatory programs to the overall responsibility of the Planning and Budgeting Committee, and a reform in their activity and manner of budgeting was formed. Therefore we assume that the more the preparatory programs system will be effective, the more the rate of Arab students studying in them will increase. In any event, budgeting for the additional wrap-around service for the Arab students during their studies in the preparatory program will be in addition to the regular support provided in the preparatory programs subsidization.

3. **Academy Preparatory Programs for First Degree ("One Step Ahead")**

Many minority students are admitted to the various departments but find it difficult to integrate into the academic system. For many of them beginning academic studies is their first encounter with Israeli society, first time leading an independent life, first time having to interact mainly in Hebrew, and first time with academic level studies. It should be kept in mind that these are young students who have just finished high school, and therefore supporting and accompanying them and their parents is important. The preparation for academia is intended for minority students who were already accepted to studies in the various faculties (requiring participation in this course is under the institutions' decision). It is essentially a crash course before regular classes begin which strengthens the knowledge base and builds preliminary skills that will enable an optimum beginning of studies from the very beginning of the first year of the first degree. This preparation allows for the reduction of gaps stemming from the different starting points of Jewish and Arab students which are created as early as during the initial contact with academia. The preparatory programs will take place for approximately one to two months prior the beginning of studies. The academic contents this plan will focus on are: language enhancement (Hebrew and English), study skills, and academic orientation. In addition, the following subjects may be added: time management, computer literacy, constructing schedules, scholarships workshop, library tutorial, test anxiety, interpersonal communication, orientation on campus, etc. We recommend that social activity be integrated into the course, as well as parental information meetings. Another recommendation is that the students be housed in dormitories in order for them to get better acquainted with their counterparts and experience the management of an independent life outside home.

4. **Programs for Quality Integration into Academia**

We consider the beginning of the first school year to be a critical stage for the success of the Arab student in studies for a degree both in terms of persistence and in terms of achievements. The difficulties in the first year cause a widespread drop out phenomenon, transferring between departments, and prolonging studies. Apparently there is social pressure on those who begin studies not to fail (which is amplified for those who receive financial support from their parents), and therefore a lack of success which leads to frustration and lack of fulfillment that could be avoided by proper guidance and preparation before and during the first year. Personal guidance is critical in order to address a myriad of problems that arise with the beginning of studies, such as: learning difficulties, a sense of alienation, emotional stress, financial problems, parental fears about cultural/religions

background, difficulty in physical access and more. Accordingly, most of our resources are for institution programs required to achieve the following targets: minimizing dropout, promoting timely graduation and minimizing transfer between departments, increasing academic achievement levels, encouraging studies in a variety of fields, minimizing the sense of alienation on campus, and extending the possibility to realize academic potential. We have no doubt that improving the integration, support and quality of studies for Arab students will constitute an incentive for significant increase in the number of minority students in the higher education system.

Within these objectives the budget will be directed to support programs that include the following elements: social mentoring (both personal and in a group), academic mentoring, academic workshops, learning skills and aptitudes workshops, mental support, academic guidance, wages for an academic advisor for Arab students, cultural adjustments in the academic context, consideration of non-Jewish holidays, etc. while the main effort should be centered on the first year of academic studies.

5. Employment Guidance

As part of the holistic solution we provide to minority students, we would like to support better and wider integration of academics into the job market. This means increasing both employment number and employment quality, with the job matching the individual's education. We learned that preparation and exposure to the work market prior to graduation is important. We are examining the optimal manner of carrying out this activity by out a pilot operating employment guidance in schools, in cooperation with an expert on the subject and in coordination with the Ministry of Industry Trade and Labor.

6. Programs for Outstanding Minority Students in Advanced Studies

To increase the number of minority researchers, the Planning and Budgeting Committee has expanded its support of outstanding doctoral students (a total of 14 new scholarships are funded per year), and continues to support the Ma'of scholarships for minority faculty members. In addition, as of 2013/14 the Planning and Budgeting Committee will support 25 second degree students with outstanding research and 25 scholarships will be granted to post-doctoral students. The posters advertising these programs will be distributed to the higher education institutions separately.

7. **Integration of Minorities into Academic Faculties**

As mentioned, the rate of minority academic faculty is extremely low (approximately 3%). Clearly a fundamental change in the faculty composition will come after increasing the number of excelling students in first degrees and advanced degrees. Therefore, we recommend increasing efforts to encourage outstanding students to pursue advanced degrees and to prefer integration of suitable candidates from the Arab sector as academic faculty members. We also recommend holding an annual discussion on the subject where the faculty member in charge of the Arab sector will present the institution's activity on the subject to the institution's president and hold a discussion on the subject. The faculty member in charge will submit an annual report to the Planning and Budgeting Committee on this subject.

8. **Institutional Platform**

Since we are dealing with a wide range of issues that should be addressed, including economic, academic, social, cultural, physical accesses, employment and more aspects, the success of this activity requires the creation of an institutional platform supported by the highest levels of management at the institution. At the platform's basis there should be a unit for promoting students from the Arab sector, which will direct, manage and supervise the implementation of the project at the institutional level on the one hand, and at the individual student level on the other hand. The unit will provide a comprehensive solution to the students, as well as systemic work, and create cooperation between academic and administrative bodies: the departments, registration and admission center, students accounting, assistance center, students' dean, and the pre-academic preparation program. Dynamic supervision and control will provide responses at various levels in order to support the students who have difficulties coping, from personal academic guidance to financial assistance, as needed. This unit will be headed by a person in charge, as specified below.

- All institutions must appoint a senior faculty member subject to the rector/president to coordinate dealing with minority students at the institution. The faculty member in charge will have a defined role which will be anchored in the institution's formal documents. The institution will grant the appointed faculty member a fixed budget and staff (minority students' coordinator, personal guidance counselor, etc.) that will enable the proper execution of the activity. The activity will include the preparation of programs to increase the rate of Arab students at the institution, programs to strengthen integration in

the first year, housing solutions, transportation, scholarships, programs to increase the integration of minorities into the academic faculty, etc. The appointed faculty member will provide reports regarding the activity and achievements to the management of the institution and to the Planning and Budgeting Committee, as required. It is recommended that, as much as is possible, the appointed faculty member will be from the Arab sector.

- To expand the accessibility of the higher education system to all Arab society applicants must be allowed better orientation in researching majors, and have more exposure among communities and students' parents to the process of choosing an institution and course of studies. Therefore, all higher education institutions must translate the relevant interfaces for orientation and academic information into Arabic. The translation of the Council for Higher Education's website will be completed in early 2013.

It should be noted that the appointment of a responsible faculty member and translation of the relevant webpages at the institutions' websites into Arabic as mentioned, are a condition for budgeting this program in the institution.

9. Integrating Minorities into the Managing Institutions and Committees

We recommend that the institutions adopt the principle of affirmative action for minorities among members of committees, managing institutions and functionaries. It is therefore recommended that the faculty member in charge of the Arab sector will serve as a permanent member in the coordinating committee of the institution (or equivalent body), in the senate, as well as in the top institutional appointments committee. On decisions regarding appointments made by the management of the institution (for example representatives in dean, rector and president search committees) the appointing body must give special weight to the value of proper representation of minorities in the committees. Inasmuch as is possible the institution will set clear objectives of appointing minorities to the managing institutions and committees. The faculty member in charge is required to report to the Planning and Budgeting Committee on this issue.

10. Increasing Integration of Minorities into the Institution's Administrative Staff

The rate of minority administration staff in higher education institutions is only about 2%, of which a negligible percentage have senior appointments. We recommend that the institutions act to minimize the gaps (as mentioned, the government set an objective of 10% for 2012) by setting an annual target for admitting minority employees, given the internal replacement rate and the scope of

administrative staff at the institution. The faculty member in charge will ensure that the appointing body will attribute special weight to the value of proper representation of minorities in the administrative staff, including administrative roles. The faculty member in charge will report on the institution's activity on this subject to the Planning and Budgeting Committee.

11. Open University Programs

The Open University has a number of significant advantages in making higher education accessible to the Arab population:

- The studies are not dependent upon minimum acceptance requirements of matriculation scores and the psychometric exam, i.e. admission is open to anyone, without prerequisites.
- Studies are held at national centers all over the country that enable higher education for students, and mainly female students, who cannot be distanced from their families.
- Flexible study rate and choice of ways of studying enables working students and/or students with a different learning style to acquire higher education. The studies are held across the country and studying is performed by distant learning methods that integrate e-learning environments with face to face meetings.

The Open University offers special support mechanisms for students from the Arab sector:

- **"Soft landing" into academic studies program:** Arab students are offered an academic wrap-around service provided in Arabic that includes tutorial meetings, assignments, exams, personal assistance and guidance, etc. The Arabic wrap-around service helps deal with the difficulty of studying in Hebrew and allows gradual adaptation to academic studies, towards the transition of studying exclusively in Hebrew. The choice is given to the students themselves as they can choose to study up to 6 courses with the Arabic wrap-around service out of the 18-24 courses which are usually required to complete a Bachelor's degree, in a variety of majors (equivalent to the first year of study in other higher education institutions).

- **The "Century Project"**: as part of the "soft landing" activities, a pilot was created that started operating in 2012/13 with special funding by the Planning and Budgeting Committee, in which Arab students who passed a selection process are offered an exclusive course of study in four defined and structured fields of study that have an employment horizon for the target population: social work, nursing, economics and computer science. Studying in the program will be equivalent to a first year of a degree, whether full or partial, at an ordinary university. Students who successfully complete the program at the Open University can transfer using the "transfer channels" program without any further selection and sorting process to a university where they will complete their first degree in the major they chose, according to the requirements at the receiving university. Within this pilot the students will receive support that includes the increased Arabic wrap-around service for all the courses in the project, workshops to strengthen their language skills in Hebrew in order to increase the chances of success in their studies, English courses aimed to aid the students in achieving as advanced a level as possible, exclusive workshops to strengthen academic study skills, and academic-cultural exposure, etc. A mentor is assigned to each group, who serves as a guidance counselor and support for the students and constitutes a contact between them and the Open University. The studies are conducted at four different study centers across the country: Nazareth, Wadi Ara, Haifa and Beer Sheva. The initial pilot was defined as a two year (two cycle) pilot and started in 2012/13. Each year 100 Arab students undergo screening, and study in four study groups. The students receive assistance with tuition scholarships and monthly living stipends.

12. Physical Accessibility to Higher Education Institutions

The subject of accessibility (transportation/housing) involves significant costs and is a significant obstacle for Arabs (mainly for Arab women) to participate in the higher education system. Beyond the programs of the Ministry of Transportation in minority communities (see chapter 3) we are working in cooperation with the Ministries of Transport and Treasury and in cooperation with the Students Association towards mapping the specific needs of students from the communities to the academic institutions. In any event we recommend that the Ministry of Transport allot additional budgets to implement the solutions. At this stage we allow funding for transportation/dormitories during the preparatory program stage only. As to the issue of housing, the staff recommends giving priority to Arab students from low socio-economic backgrounds to live in the dormitories. Also, due

to the relative difficulty to attain apartments, it is recommended that the institution acts directly to arrange housing for this population in the vicinity of the campus.

13. **Scholarships and Loans Foundation** – due to the scarcity of scholarships available for first and second degree Arab students and their relative low socio-economic status, we are working on establishing a scholarships and loans foundation in cooperation with the Prime Minister's Office and philanthropic entities. After raising the resources we will define the fund policy and examine the possibility of giving priority in scholarships to needed fields of study, to communal volunteer work, for excelling in studies, etc.

14. **Participation of the Planning and Budgeting Committee in Subsidizing the Activities**

In the multi-year program for 2010/2011–2015/16 the Planning and Budgeting Committee has allocated an accumulated amount of approximately NIS300 million for programs that increase accessibility of minority students to the higher education system at institutions budgeted by the Planning and Budgeting Committee. In the first year of the program budget was allocated to increase the quota of minority students (mainly to colleges). In 2011/12 a pilot was operated in the preparatory programs as well as in the Open University. Beginning in 2012/13 the institutions will be budgeted according to the new model, which includes the following elements:

- **Preparatory programs** – budget per student for a supportive wrap-around service in preparatory programs (this support is intended for financing the wages of a coordinator, preparation for the psychometric test, linguistic strengthening and dormitories or transportation), a one-time budget for marketing and branding institutes' preparatory programs, and excellence scholarships for preparatory program graduates. Later in the year the preparatory programs will be required to also formulate goals in the framework of the institution's overall program; to adopt goals regarding the number of minority students, the percentage of those who pass, etc. Later in the five year plan, there will be an examination of adding quality parameters into the preparatory programs' budget.
- **Pre-academic preparation for students admitted to first degree studies** – the Planning and Budgeting Committee will participate in these plans based on the number of students in the preparation program. We leave it to the institutions to decide the specific study curriculum relevant to the students'

majors, however the rationale specified above, which integrates academic contents, study skills, social content, and academic support etc., must be adhered to. In order to ensure that the preparation will be significant and will indeed facilitate minimizing gaps and quality studying, and in consideration of the scope of the material which is supposed to be taught in the program, the Planning and Budgeting Committee will not participate in programs that are shorter than three weeks. It should be noted that this preparation program is not intended for preparatory program track graduates.

- Programs for integration into academia** – the allocated sum for integration programs into academia for each institution is calculated to provide an average basket funding for each student in the first year of a first degree at the institution. Funding will also take into consideration the dropout rate of minority students between the first and second years, compared to the dropout rate of the Jewish population at all the institutions. This means that the lower the dropout rate than the average in the Jewish population, the larger the budget the institution will receive. This model will also take into consideration the socio-economic characteristics of the population and the various majors, which the Planning and Budgeting Committee will want to encourage and which require different treatment. Each year The Planning and Budgeting Committee's Minorities Steering Committee will determine the weights for the Israeli Central Bureau for Statistics' communities ranking, as well as the weights for the different majors, and report them to the Planning and Budgeting Committee. Thus institutions with students from a lower socio-economic background will receive a greater weight for that parameter, and institutions who teach Arab students professions of higher preference will receive priority in that parameter. Each institution will be provided flexibility in the mix of uses of the budget according to its needs. The budgeting formula is constructed as follows:

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \text{Total} \\
 \text{institution} \\
 \text{support} \\
 \text{budget}
 \end{array}
 = \left(\begin{array}{l}
 \text{Average} \\
 \text{support per} \\
 \text{student}
 \end{array} \times A \times B \times C \right) \times N$$

Where:

A = **socioeconomic component.**

B = **component of field encouragement.** The field encouragement parameter consists of three variables:

- ✓ Preferred fields of study: fields of study reflect a combination of employment encouraging, earning potential and other areas that the committee found necessary to develop (details below).
- ✓ Element of difficulty: reflects the difference in the time of graduation between Arab and Jewish populations.
- ✓ Field dispersal: meant to provide incentives for the institutions to balance and adjust the excess demand in saturated fields to fields of study where there is a relatively small number of minority students, and to further support the areas that have few minority students. The variable reflects the difference between the field distributions of Jewish students compared with the Arab students.

C = **Successful transition rate to second year** - compared to the general population at the institution

N = **number of Arab students at the institution in their first year**

The method of ongoing budgeting will be based on concentrated data that will be transferred from the Israeli Central Bureau for Statistics for the previous year. The institutions will be aware of the maximum amount to which they are eligible for each year, and they will accordingly submit programs to be examined and approved by the committee. At the end of the year the institutions will submit a performance report, according to which the participation budget for that year will be actually transferred to the institution.

15. **The issue of an Arab institution in an Arab community**

The academic institutions in Israel do not operate in Arab, Druze or Circassian communities, except for the following: three teacher training colleges budgeted by the Ministry of Education, all in the north: Sakhnin, Alkasami, and the Arab College of Education in Israel, the non-budgeted college in Nazareth (in initial stages of development), Open University study centers in Arab communities in the north and south (Beit Yatsiv, Beer Sheva Community College, Central Negev College, Beit Haviva and Nazareth). Some of the colleges that collaborate with the Open University also have professional training and preparation for academic studies.

In general, the policy of the Council for Higher Education/Planning and Budgeting Committee throughout the years has been for integration of the population groups into existing academic institutions, while striving for equal accessibility for all sectors without differentiation or ethnic discrimination by addressing unique obstacles and respecting the religious and cultural characteristics of each group. For example, in recent years a pilot was announced to integrate Arab psychologists into the master educational psychology program by integration into the existing programs instead of constructing a unique program at one of the universities. Similar principles are being formulated in the program to expand accessibility to higher education for the ultra-orthodox sector. However, it appears that there is a tradeoff of considerations for good and for bad in addressing them separately, which requires an in-depth discussion.

In the article by Yunis Abu Alhiga and Mahmoud Khalil on this issue⁵⁷ it was argued that pluralistic minority groups in the world were able to establish their own higher education institutions which contributed to the promotion of their social, economic and political status, as well as preserving their identity and cultural heritage. The authors give examples of the colleges established for the Native American population in the United States that contributed to providing higher education for that population and to preserving its culture, African American colleges and universities in the United States that were established as a result of racist policies but that also contributed to the promotion of their social and political status towards equality with white society, and more. It was additionally claimed that the Arab society in Israel seeks to promote its economic, social and political status through the educational institutions; therefore it has turned the acquisition of higher education into a central goal towards social and developmental mobility. The demand to establish an Arab university in Israel rose as a result of initiatives of various groups since the early '70s, but the demands were rejected by the political establishment or by the Council for Higher Education. The idea continued to appear in the platforms of Arab parties who demanded the realization of the right of Arab society to establish a university in which the native language will be Arabic and supervision and management will be in the hands of Arabs. The idea evoked a debate among community activists, academics and politicians from both Arab and Jewish sectors.

⁵⁷ "Establishment of the First Arab University in Israel, Indeed?" – Abu Alhiga Yunis and Khalil Mahmoud, Sakhnin College, 2009.

Those who support the idea of establishing an Arab institution in Israel (or in an Arab community) claim that it will increase access to higher education in Arab society, will enable poise to the Arab minority, in which the study, preservation and development of the Arab language and religion will be possible. Additionally, such an institution could be a focus of attraction for the Arab population, which presently avoids higher studies due to cultural and traditional limitations. Such an institution can also be more accessible and even be a good alternative for the departure of students to studies abroad and in Jordan in particular. Another argument to consider is that even if the existing system will make adjustments and receive additional resources to increase the percentage of Arab students in the higher education system, the growth will not be significant and will take a long time, due to policies that limit the percentage of minorities on campus.

Those who oppose this idea argue that since the language in the institute would be Arabic it would perpetuate the segregation of Arab society and diminish the possibilities of integration into Israeli society and the work market. Additionally, there is fear that it will take a long time until such an institution is established with a high academic level, which involves recruiting appropriate faculty and opening a variety of undergraduate and graduate degree majors, and therefore the reputation of this institution will be lower than that of existing leading institutions. There is another fear that geographic proximity to existing general colleges could debase the position of the colleges in that area, and the establishment of a new institution has considerable budgetary costs. Another issue addresses the sought after fields of study; there is no guarantee that the degrees being studied abroad, especially in Jordan, could be addressed by an additional institution.

During the team's work we were contacted by and held meetings with most of the institutions in the Arab communities that were mentioned above. The teacher training colleges want to be budgeted by the Planning and Budgeting Committee and to offer a general academic degree as well. The institution in Nazareth seeks to receive subsidizing by the Planning and Budgeting Committee in order to facilitate its continued development; the vision presented to the team describes an institution that will attract both Jews and Arabs from Israel as well as from the Middle East, and will serve to improve relations between Jews and Arabs. Some of the vocational training centers in the Negev seek institutionalization of their training as part of the studies towards a first degree. Additionally, there is a shared initiative between Ben-Gurion University, the Rahat Municipality and the Abraham Foundation, to

establish a multicultural academic college in the Negev under the academic sponsorship of Ben-Gurion University and with administrative independence. According to this vision, the college will serve the general public in the area, Jews and Arabs alike, and will aspire to strengthen ties and cooperation between the different communities, and fortify the educational and economic infrastructure in the Negev.

For the purpose of studying this issue, meetings of a preliminary level took place in recent months, but since the general issue is complex and requires a thorough examination and further study, it was not completed. Therefore the team will continue to expand on this issue throughout the year.

Appendices

Appendix "A"**Approved version****Decisions****From the Planning and Budgeting Committee's Irregular Meeting No. 19 (968)****Held in Tel Aviv on 10 Av 5771 – 10.8.11****The Text of the Decisions was approved in the Discussion Held on 17.8.11****(Voting Results: 5 in Favor – Unanimous)**

5. **The program to increase accessibility to higher education for the Arab population – document No. 3102 and document No. 3107 – continued discussion.**

2010-2011/95 – Decision:

1. The PBC (Planning and Budgeting Committee) recognizes the importance of expanding accessibility to higher education for the Arab population and of continued cultivation of quality academic studies.
2. The PBC adopts the principals of the interim report of the professional staff examining accessibility to higher education for the Arab population, and confirms their implementation in the scope of an additional budget of up to NIS12 million for the 2011/12 academic year.
3. The PBC authorizes the chairman of the PBC to resume the activity of the steering committee on this subject, and to appoint its members.
4. The steering committee will accompany the implementation of the plan for the Arab population, will draw conclusions from the implementation, and make recommendations to the PBC on policy issues related to the integration of the Arab population into academia in the coming years, while receiving assistance from the professional staff of the PBC.

Voting results: 5 in favor – unanimous

Recorded by: Esti Yaakov

Appendix "B"**Approved version****Decisions of the Planning and Budgeting Committee Meeting No. 14 (984)****Held in Jerusalem on 27 Av 5772 – 15.8.12****The Text of the Decisions was approved in the PBC meeting held on 12.9.12**

1. **The five year program to extend the minorities' accessibility to higher education – continued discussion – document No. 3235A**

2011-2012/88 – Decision:

1. The PBC attaches great importance to the issue of increasing access to higher education for minorities and in improving the quality of their studies as a means for their successful integration into employment and into Israeli society.
2. Therefore, the PBC adopts the recommendations of the professional staff on the issue of the five year program to increase accessibility to higher education for minorities as set forth in this document, and adopts the action plans brought to it by the professional staff, which are:
 - Expansion of information, counseling and guidance to academia with the "achievements" program.
 - Obligatory appointment of an official in charge of increasing the accessibility for minorities in all institutions, working under the president/rector (a condition to receive PBC budgeting).
 - Operating programs to increase the integration of undergraduate minority students in the institutions budgeted by the PBC, including through pre-academic preparatory programs and the Open University, by providing answers to the different obstacles to integration in academia while providing suitable incentives to the institutions.
 - Promoting programs for outstanding students in advanced degrees.

Approved version

- Continued implementation of the Ma'of program to integrate outstanding Arab staff into institutions.
 - Promoting the integration of minorities into the faculty and managing staff in the managing institutions and internal committees of the institutions.
 - Promoting housing solutions for minority students.
 - Promoting public transportation solutions for minority students (cooperation between the PBC and the institutions in dealing with the Ministry of Transportation).
3. The Steering Committee for Minorities, headed by Prof. Faisal Azaiza, will be responsible for the implementation of the staff recommendations within the multi-year budget dedicated to the subject.
 4. The Steering Committee via the professional staff will monitor the execution of the programs, the manner of their integration into the institutions, and their effectiveness, and will recommend adaptations, if needed.
 5. The professional staff will continue with the headquarter work and present to the Steering Committee for the Arab Sector and to the PBC recommendations on other programs in the topics addressed.
 6. After two years the PBC will consider the effectiveness of the program, including the actual increase in the number of minority students compared with the objectives, and perform changes in the programs as needed. The option to increase quotas in favor of minority students at the expense of a reduction the program budgets will be examined as well.
 7. The PBC will bring the gist of the policies and programs to the attention of the institutions and hear their opinion during a seminar dedicated to this subject.
 8. The PBC will act to increase the awareness of minority students to higher education and to the different programs, among other things by participating in the funding of the translation of relevant websites of the institutions into Arabic and a media campaign.

Voting results: 6 in favor – unanimous

Recorded by: Esti Yaakov

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