



# **JDC-BROOKDALE INSTITUTE**

## **OF GERONTOLOGY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

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### **Absorption of Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union into the Labor Force**

Irwin Lithwick • Jack Habib

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## **R e s e a r c h   R e p o r t**

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# **Absorption of Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union into the Labor Force**

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Jerusalem

January 1996

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## Abstract

This report examines the broad employment trends for immigrants aged 15-64 from the former Soviet Union (FSU) who arrived in Israel between October 1989 and December 1994, as measured by labor force participation rates, employment and unemployment rates, and by type of occupation. In particular, differences between older and younger immigrants, and between men and women, are noted. A special emphasis is on the analysis of how employment has changed over time by number of years in the country and on a comparison with the overall Israeli population. The analysis is based on special tabulations of data from the Central Bureau of Statistics' Labor Force Surveys that were carried out at the request of the Brookdale Institute.

The immigrants have a very strong desire to work as reflected in high labor force participation rates which, after several years in the country, exceed those of other Israelis. Their actual success in finding employment is similar to that of the overall population and younger male immigrants have an even higher employment rate than their non-immigrant counterparts. However, unemployment rates remain higher for all age and gender groups, particularly women.

The employment picture improves dramatically with length of stay in the country. As a result, the employment rates of more veteran immigrants surpass their Israeli counterparts. The improvement in employment occurred for both genders and for both younger and older immigrants. However, older immigrants take longer to integrate into the labor force. The one group that remains rather behind after 3-4 years in the country is older immigrant women who have high unemployment rates. Preliminary data from 1995 indicate continued improvement in the immigrants' labor force status relative to other Israelis.

The data on type of occupation also reveal a continuous rate of improvement over time for all age and gender groups. Yet the percentage working in academic, scientific and professional occupations, even among those who arrived in 1990, remains well below the percentage working in such professions in the FSU.

The study's findings highlight several major challenges facing policymakers: (a) assisting older immigrants to integrate more quickly into the labor force, (b) continuing efforts to improve opportunities for women, and (c) enhancing the professional status of immigrants of all ages in order to better utilize the education and work experience they arrive with.

## **Acknowledgments**

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## Introduction

Between October 1989 and December 1994, a total of 544,000 persons immigrated to Israel from the former Soviet Union (FSU). Of these, approximately 350,000 were of working age as defined by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) in its Labor Force Surveys, i.e. between the ages of 15 and 64. Several studies have already published findings on these immigrants' absorption into the labor market<sup>1</sup>. These studies found that the longer the immigrants are in the country, the greater the likelihood of their finding work. However, the rate of improvement varies by age, gender and previous occupation.

This paper presents the broad employment trends<sup>2</sup> for immigrants aged 15-64 who arrived from the FSU between October 1989 and December 1994. It is based on an analysis of special tabulations of the Labor Force Surveys of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) carried out at the request of the JDC-Brookdale Institute.

Section One of this report presents an overview of the number and proportion of FSU immigrants<sup>3</sup> in the labor force. Section Two examines the labor force status of these immigrants in 1994, and compares it with the status of other Israelis. In Section Three a longitudinal perspective is used to focus on how the labor force status of 1990 immigrants has changed over time. Section Four integrates the longitudinal and cross-sectional data to see if, after two years in Israel, earlier immigrants are more likely to be working than more recent immigrants. Finally, Section Five presents some new statistics from the 1994 Labor Force Surveys on the occupational distribution of the immigrants, noting how this distribution has changed with length of residence in the country.

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1 See for example I. Lithwick, and G. Naveh. 1995, *The Role of Age In Successful Immigrant Absorption*, RR-211-95, JDC-Brookdale Institute, Jerusalem.

2 CBS has already issued results on employment by length of time in Israel, but not by age and gender. See for example the Press Release 27/95 issued 23/02/1995.

3 In this study, the term FSU immigrants will refer to immigrants from the former Soviet Union aged 15-64 who arrived in Israel between October 1989 and December 1994.



## 1. Overview

In 1994, there were 3,789,000 persons aged 15 and over living in Israel<sup>4</sup>. Of this population, 54% were in the civilian labor force,<sup>5</sup> and 92% of the labor force were employed.

As can be seen in Table 1, immigrants from the FSU constituted 10% of the population as well as 10% of both the labor force and of employed persons in 1994. Between October, 1989, when the immigrant influx began, and the end of 1994, the total population aged 15 and over increased by 707,000, as a result of immigration and natural aging, while the labor force increased by 426,000. This represents an increase in the labor force of over 20% over five years. One half of this increase is due to the immigration from the FSU, a further 5% is due to other immigrants, and 15% is a result of an increase in the non-Jewish population. The natural increase in the Jewish, non-immigrant population accounts for a quarter of the increase in the population and a third of the increase in the labor force (see Table 2).

Table 1: Distribution of Population and Labor Force, for Persons Aged 15+, by Population Group, 1994 (percentages)

	Population	Labor Force	Employed	Labor Force Participation Rate	Labor Force Employed
FSU Immigrants	10	10	10	57	87
Other Jews	74	74	78	56	93
Non-Jews	16	13	12	42	91

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data and CBS News Release 27/95.

4 In general, unless otherwise noted, data on population and employment are based on annual averages.

5 The following definition are used in this report:

$$\text{LaborForce} = \text{ThoseWorking} + \text{ThoseLookingforWork}$$

$$\text{ParticipationRate} = \frac{\text{LaborForce}}{\text{Population}}$$

$$\text{UnemploymentRate} = \frac{\text{ThoseLookingforWork}}{\text{LaborForce}}$$

$$\text{EmploymentRate} = \frac{\text{ThoseWorking}}{\text{Population}}$$

Table 2: Components of Growth in Population, Labor Force and Employed Persons Aged 15+, 1989-94 (percentages)

	Population	Labor Force	Employed
Immigrants:			
FSU	52	49	44
Other	7	5	4
Other Jews	24	32	37
Non-Jews	18	15	15

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data and CBS News Release 27/95.  
Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

FSU immigrants account for between 7-14% of the total population by age and gender cohort, with the lowest proportions being for those aged 15-24, and the highest for older females (see Table 3). However, while immigrant females aged 65+ account for 14% of the total population of females 65+, they account for only 4% of the females aged 65+ who are working.

Table 3: FSU Immigrants as a Percentage of Population and Employed Persons, by Age and Gender, 1994

	Population		Employed	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
15+	9	10	9	10
15-24	7	7	8	8
25-34	9	10	9	11
35-44	9	10	10	11
45-54	10	11	10	10
55-64	11	14	10	9
65+	12	14	4	4

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data.

edw  
The contribution of the immigrants to the labor force is especially significant when one looks at the education and skills of the immigrants. Annual data from CBS provide a profile of the educational background and occupational skills of the immigrants upon arrival (see Table 4). From 1990 to 1994, 213,800 of the FSU immigrants arrived with at least 13 years of education. In 1989, just over a half million Israelis had 13 or more years of schooling. In other words, the immigrants increased the size of the population with post-secondary education by over 40%.

In terms of occupations, 59,400 of the immigrants were engineers in the FSU, and 12,600 were physicians or dentists (see Table 4), compared to 27,000 engineers and 14,100 doctors/dentists in Israel in 1989. Thus the immigration tripled the number of engineers and doubled the number of doctors in the country. With regard to other occupations in the academic, scientific and professional rubric, FSU immigrants increased the pool of primary and kindergarten teachers by over 25,000, the number of artists by 12,500 and the number of technicians and programmers by 31,000. Overall, FSU immigrants increased the number of persons in the professional occupations by over 35%. Section 5 will examine in greater detail the occupations of the immigrants since coming to Israel.

## **2. Labor Force Status of the Immigrants**

As noted, in 1994, 54% of the population aged 15 and over were in the civilian labor force; of these, 8% were unemployed and looking for work. How do immigrants compare to other groups in the population in terms of labor force activity? Even without adjusting for the length of stay in Israel, the employment record for the immigrants from the Former Soviet Union is very impressive.

As can be seen in Table 5, the participation rate was highest for FSU immigrants and lowest for non-Jews. The unemployment rate was highest for immigrants, particularly non-FSU immigrants, a significant proportion of whom came from Ethiopia. The employment rate is highest for veteran Israeli Jews and lowest for non-Jews and non-FSU immigrants. The employment rate of FSU immigrants almost matches that of the general population.



Table 4: Number of FSU Immigrants Aged 15+, in Selected Educational and Occupational Groups, 1990-1994, Compared to Other Israelis in 1989

	FSU Immigrants 1990-94	Other Israelis 1989
Employed <sup>1</sup>	271,000	1,460,800
Education <sup>2</sup>		
13-15 years	170,100	272,600
16+ years	43,700	234,900
Occupation		
Academic, Scientific	94,400	124,400
of whom:		
Engineers	59,400	27,000
Physicians, dentists	12,600	14,100
Professional, Technical <sup>3</sup>	94,400	231,300
of these:		
Primary and kindergarten teachers	25,600	79,200
Authors, artists	12,500	22,500
Technicians, programmers	31,000	57,400
Skilled workers in industry	44,700	332,300

1. For FSU immigrants, employed occupation refer to status prior to immigration; for Israelis, it refers to status at the time of the 1989 Labor Force Survey.
2. Data for 1990 and 1994 have only 13+ years of education. The distribution between the two sub-categories for these years is assumed to be the same as the distribution for 1991-1993.
3. For 1994, sub-categories are not available; percentage distribution is assumed to be the same as in 1993.

Source: CBS Labor Force Surveys, 1989, and CBS, Immigration to Israel, 1990-1993.

Table 5: Labor Force Participation Rate and Unemployment Rate For Persons Aged 15+, by Population Group, 1994

	Labor Force	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Employment Rate
			(percentages)	
Total population	2,029,000	54	8	49
Immigrants who arrived between 1990-94:				
FSU immigrants	207,000	57	13	49
Other immigrants	17,000	45	15	38
Other Israeli Jews	1,566,000	56	7	52
Non-Jews	255,000	42	7	38

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data and CBS News Release 27/95.

We now consider labor force status by age and gender<sup>6</sup> (see Table 6). For immigrants aged 25-44, employment rates and participation rates for males exceed those of other Israelis and the unemployment rate is only slightly higher. Among females in this age group, the employment rates are about the same and the participation rates for immigrants are higher. However there remains a very significant difference in unemployment: the unemployment rate is 17% among FSU immigrants compared to only 8% among other female Israeli Jews of the same age.

Among older immigrants (aged 45-64), the comparison with other Israelis is somewhat less favorable. Participation rates for males are about the same but employment rates are somewhat lower, although the gap is not large. The unemployment rate, however, is significantly higher: 10% compared to 3%. Among older females, these differences are much more pronounced. The participation rate is only somewhat lower for older immigrant women; however the employment rate is very different (39% compared to 53%), and the unemployment gap is the largest for any group (21% compared to 4%).

6 As we do not have separate employment status data for non-FSU immigrants by age and gender, they are included in the 'Other Jews' category.

Table 6: Labor Force Status by Age, Gender and Population Group, 1994 (percentages)

		Total	Former Soviet Union		
			All	1990 Arrivals	Other Jews
<b>15+</b>					
Total	Employment Rate	49	49	54	52
	Unemployment Rate	8	13	10	7
	Participation Rate	54	57	60	56
Male	Employment Rate	59	60	64	58
	Unemployment Rate	6	9	6	5
	Participation Rate	63	66	68	61
Female	Employment Rate	40	40	46	46
	Unemployment Rate	10	18	13	9
	Participation Rate	45	49	53	50
<b>25-64</b>					
Total	Employment Rate	66	66	75	71
	Unemployment Rate	6	12	9	5
	Participation Rate	71	72	82	75
Male	Employment Rate	79	80	87	80
	Unemployment Rate	5	7	5	4
	Participation Rate	83	87	92	83
Female	Employment Rate	54	54	64	62
	Unemployment Rate	8	18	13	7
	Participation Rate	59	66	73	66
<b>25-44</b>					
Total	Employment Rate	69	74	82	74
	Unemployment Rate	7	11	7	6
	Participation Rate	74	84	89	78
Male	Employment Rate	81	85	91	80
	Unemployment Rate	5	6	4	4
	Participation Rate	85	90	95	84
Female	Employment Rate	58	65	75	67
	Unemployment Rate	9	17	10	8
	Participation Rate	64	78	83	73
<b>45-64</b>					
Total	Employment Rate	61	54	64	66
	Unemployment Rate	5	14	11	4
	Participation Rate	65	64	72	69
Male	Employment Rate	77	74	82	80
	Unemployment Rate	4	10	7	3
	Participation Rate	81	82	88	83
Female	Employment Rate	47	39	49	53
	Unemployment Rate	6	21	17	4
	Participation Rate	50	49	59	56



Figure 1: Employment Rates in 1994, Ages 25-64

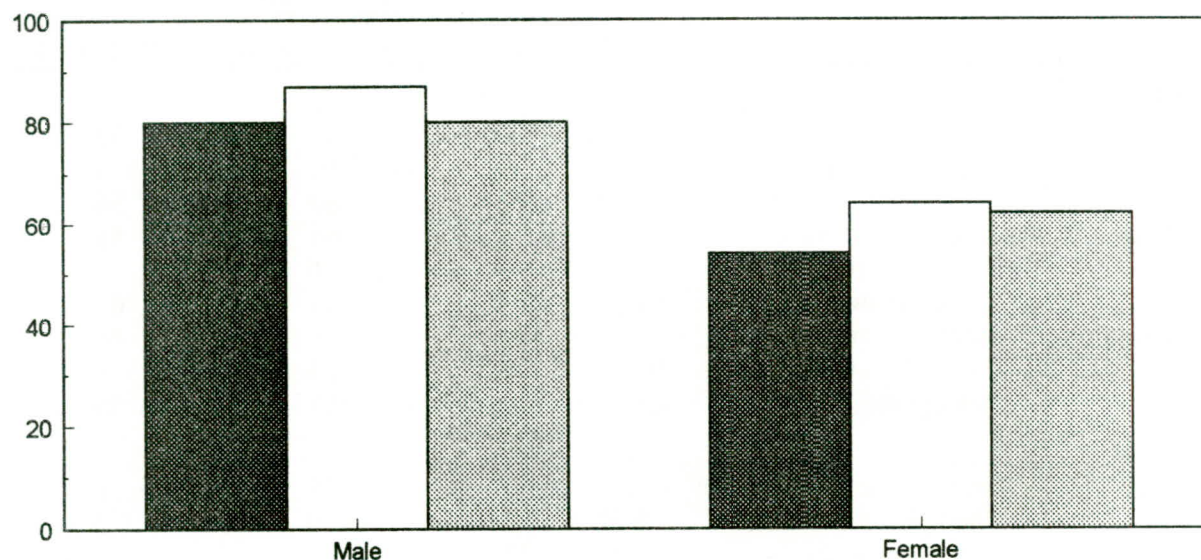


Figure 2: Employment Rates in 1994, Ages 45-64

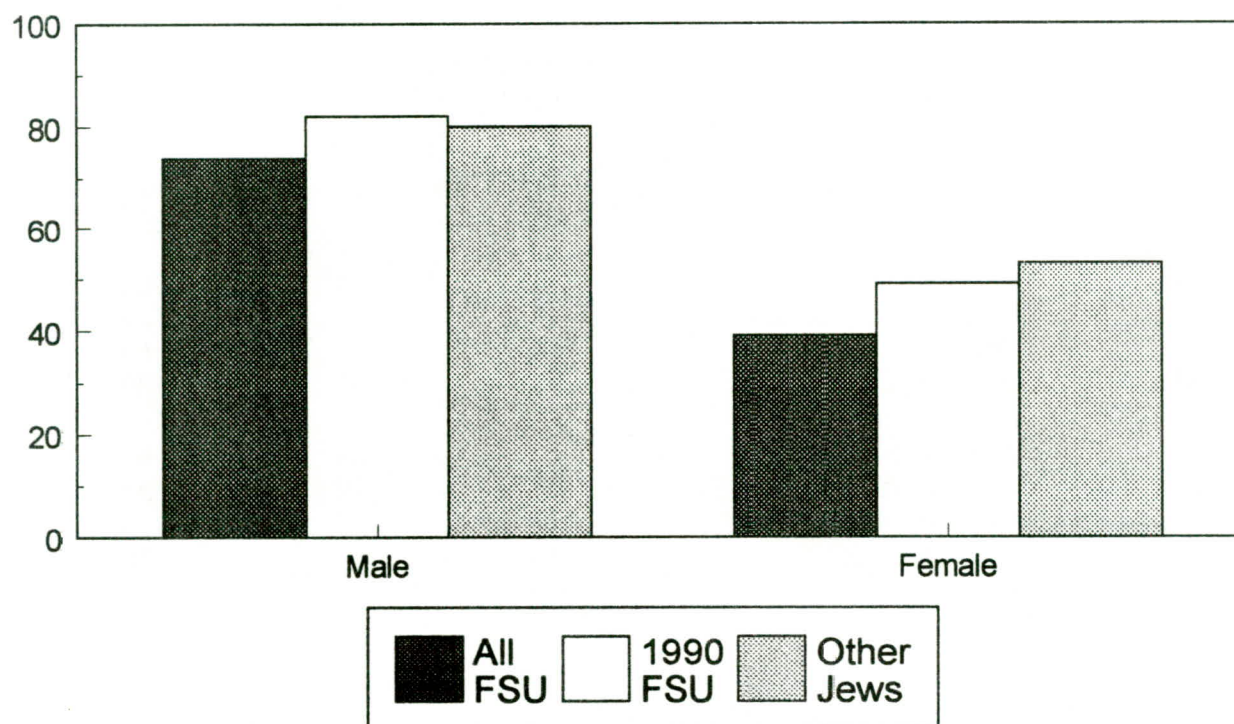


Figure 3: Unemployment Rates in 1994, Ages 25-64

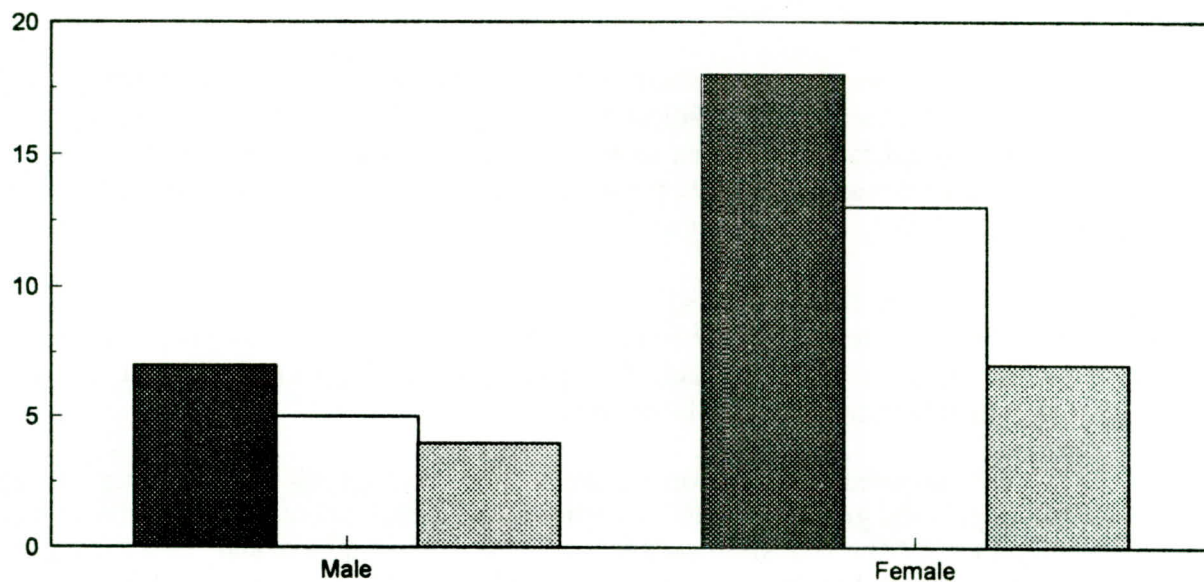
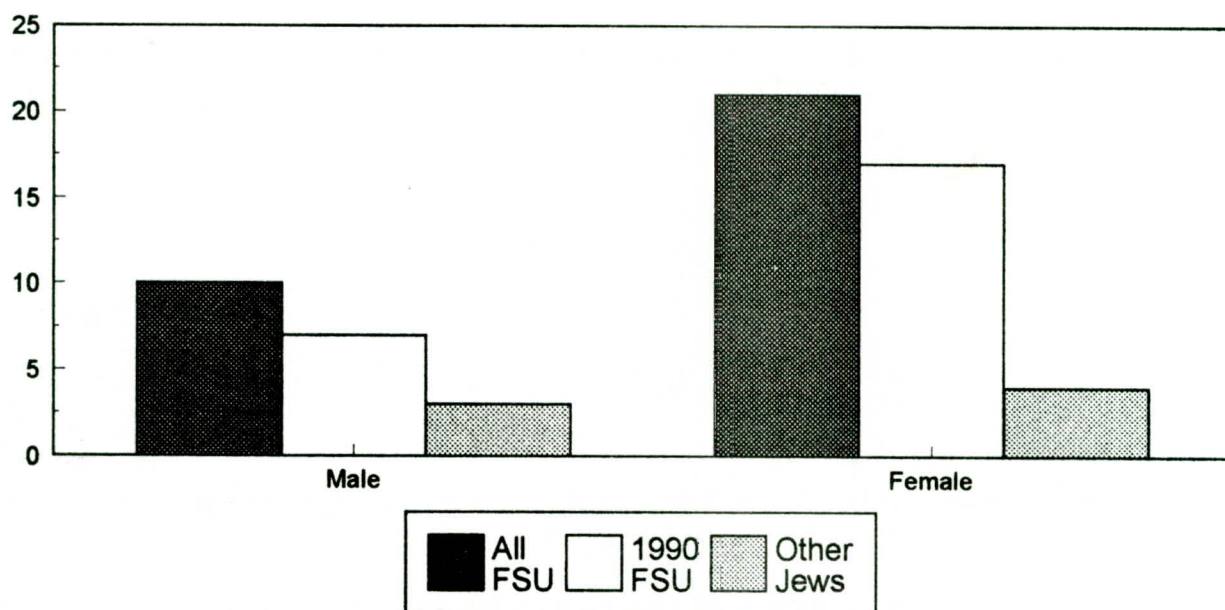


Figure 4: Unemployment Rates in 1994, Ages 45-64





In summary, the labor force status of younger immigrants is very similar to that of other Israelis, while older immigrants lag behind. Immigrant women have been less successful than men in integrating into the labor force and unemployment rates among women are particularly high in all age groups.

It is worth noting, however, that participation rates, even among older immigrants, are not very different from other Israelis, indicating a strong interest in working. Moreover, in an earlier survey, we indicated the extent to which older immigrants not in the labor force still have a very high interest in being employed and that most of them were out of the labor force either temporarily or because they were discouraged from finding employment<sup>7</sup>.

#### *Labor Force Status by Year of Arrival*

We examined the difference in labor force activity of the immigrants by year of arrival<sup>8</sup> or, in other words, length of stay in Israel. This gives a better indication of the true extent and success of their integration into the labor force.

In Table 6, we compared the labor force status for FSU immigrants to other Israelis by age, gender and population group. We saw that labor force participation rate of the most veteran FSU immigrants (1990 arrivals) exceeds that of other Jews in all age and gender categories. Even more impressive, the employment rate for 1990 arrivals also exceeds that of other Jews for all groups except females aged 45-64.

In Table 7 we compare employment rates for individual years of arrival. The data clearly support the correlation between length of residence in Israel and employment: the longer the immigrant is in Israel, the more likely he/she is to be working. This is true for the major age groups and for both genders. For younger males, it takes only a year or two for the employment rate to approach and even exceed the employment rate of veteran Israeli Jews, whereas for older males, it takes two to three years to exceed that of other Jews. The employment rate of younger females surpasses that of veterans in two to three years. For females aged 45-64 who arrived in 1990, the rate of unemployment is still very high, 17% compared to 4% for other Israelis, while the rate of employment is 49%, almost the same as for other Israel Jews (53%).

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7 See I. Lithwick, and G. Naveh. 1995, *The Role of Age In Successful Immigrant Absorption*, RR-211-95, JDC-Brookdale Institute, Jerusalem.

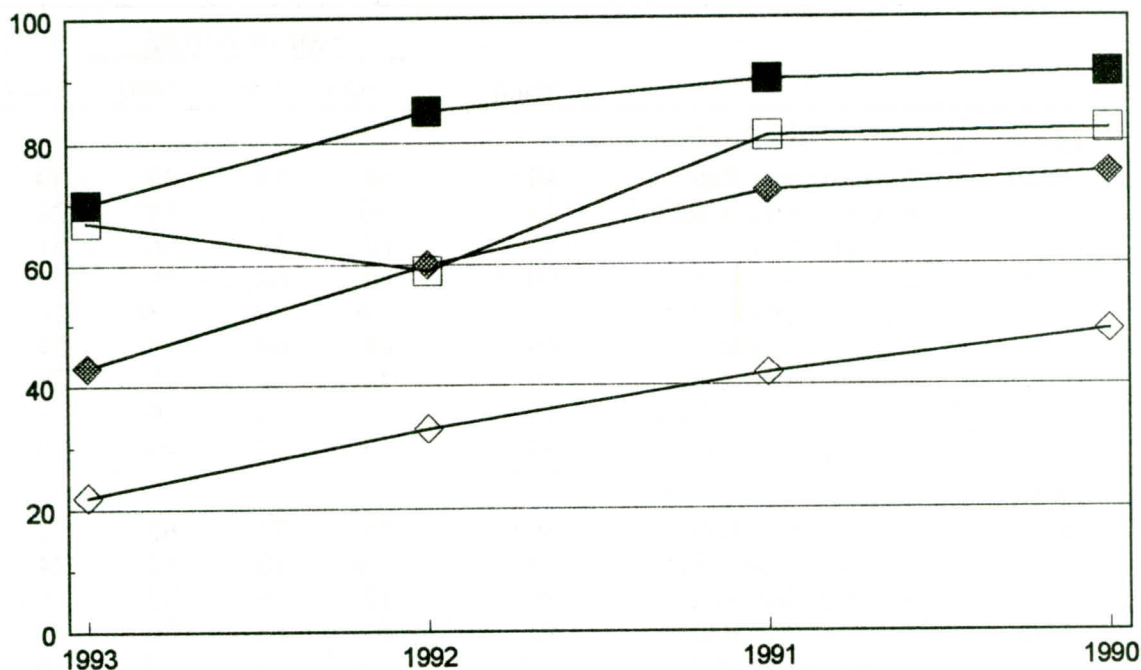
8 The CBS Labor Force Surveys ask respondents where they were born. Those not born in Israel who arrived after 1989 are asked their year of arrival.



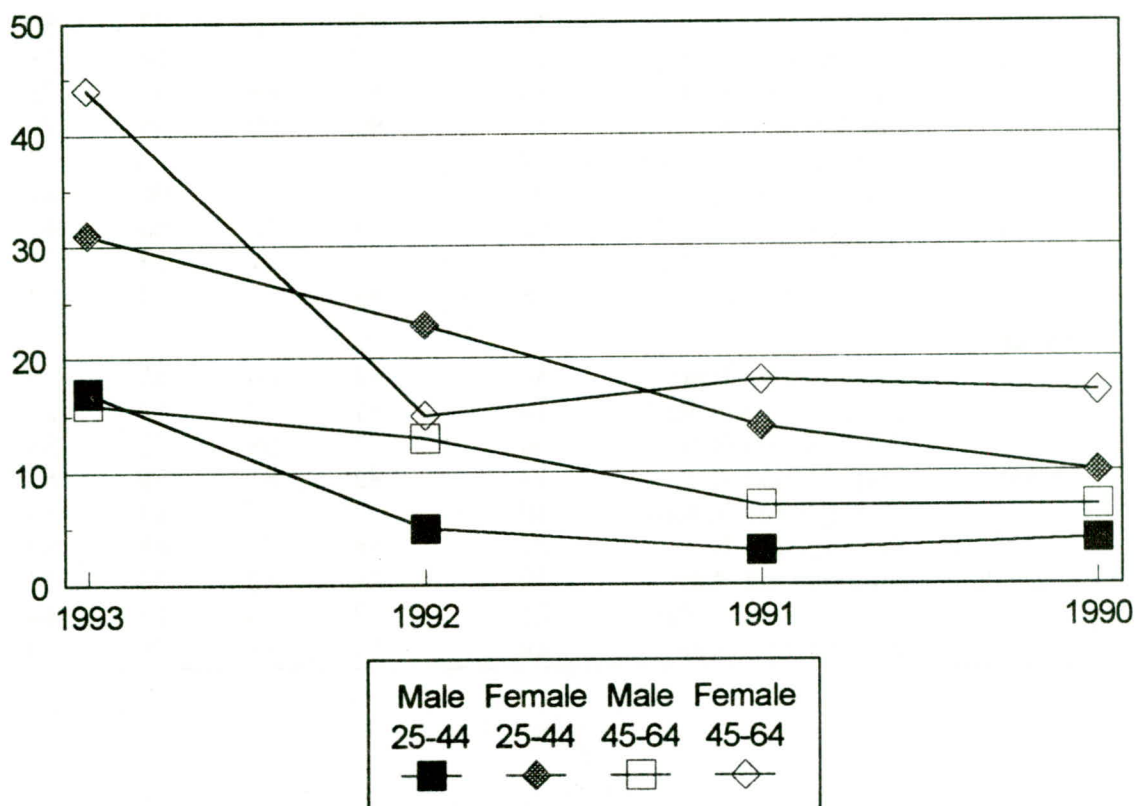
Table 7: Labor Force Status in 1994 of FSU Immigrants, by Year of Arrival (percentages)

			Year of Arrival			
		Total	1990	1991	1992	1993
<b>15+</b>						
Total	Employment Rate	49	54	53	49	39
	Unemployment Rate	13	10	11	14	24
	Participation Rate	57	60	59	56	51
Male	Employment Rate	60	64	64	59	54
	Unemployment Rate	9	6	6	9	16
	Participation Rate	66	68	68	65	64
Female	Employment Rate	40	46	44	40	26
	Unemployment Rate	18	13	16	19	33
	Participation Rate	49	53	52	49	40
<b>25-64</b>						
Total	Employment Rate	66	75	72	62	50
	Unemployment Rate	12	9	10	14	24
	Participation Rate	75	82	79	72	66
Male	Employment Rate	80	87	86	76	69
	Unemployment Rate	7	5	5	7	16
	Participation Rate	87	92	90	82	82
Female	Employment Rate	54	64	59	50	34
	Unemployment Rate	18	13	16	21	35
	Participation Rate	66	73	70	63	52
<b>25-44</b>						
Total	Employment Rate	74	82	80	72	56
	Unemployment Rate	11	7	9	14	23
	Participation Rate	84	89	88	83	73
Male	Employment Rate	85	91	90	85	70
	Unemployment Rate	6	4	3	5	17
	Participation Rate	90	95	93	90	84
Female	Employment Rate	65	75	72	60	43
	Unemployment Rate	17	10	14	23	31
	Participation Rate	78	83	84	77	62
<b>45-64</b>						
Total	Employment Rate	54	64	60	45	40
	Unemployment Rate	14	11	12	14	27
	Participation Rate	64	72	68	52	56
Male	Employment Rate	74	82	81	59	67
	Unemployment Rate	10	7	7	13	16
	Participation Rate	82	88	87	68	80
Female	Employment Rate	39	49	42	33	22
	Unemployment Rate	21	17	18	15	44
	Participation Rate	49	59	51	39	39

**Figure 5: Employment Rates of FSU Immigrants in 1994, by Year of Arrival**



**Figure 6: Unemployment Rates of FSU Immigrants in 1994, by Year of Arrival**





### **3. Changes in Labor Force Status of 1990 Immigrants**

In the previous section, we looked at the labor force status of immigrants in general and at a single point in time, i.e. in 1994, in relation to their year of arrival. In this section, we obtain another perspective on the change over time by examining the extent to which the labor force status of FSU immigrants who arrived in 1990 has improved, as reflected in successive Labor Force Surveys (see Table 8). These special tabulations were not performed for regular half-year periods, but as specified in the columns.

In the first half of 1992, 43% of the FSU immigrants who arrived in 1990, aged 15 and over at the time of the survey, were working, with the rate jumping to 55% by the second half of 1994. Over the same period, the unemployment rate fell from 27% to 9%, while the labor force participation rate remained at 60%. This improvement in employment occurred for both genders and for both younger and older immigrants. For example, for males aged 25-44, the employment rate jumped from 74% to 93%, and the unemployment rate dropped from 17% to 3%, while for females in the same age group, employment increased from 55% to 74%, and unemployment dropped from 31% to 10%. The participation rate of those aged 25-44 remained over 80% throughout the period.

Of particular importance with regard to older immigrants (aged 45-64) is the significant increase in employment rates and decline in unemployment rates, between 1993 and 1994. Whereas for the younger workers, the rates had levelled off by 1993, for the older workers, the unemployment rate continued to decline and the employment rate continued to increase into 1994. This result is consistent with the cross-sectional analysis of the 1994 Labor Force Surveys, which found that older workers took longer to be integrated into the labor market.

For males aged 45-64, the unemployment rate declined from 25% to 7% and the employment rate rose from 60% to 85%. This compares favorably with the 93% employment rate of younger workers, and is even better than the employment rates of the overall Israeli population (see Table 6). Moreover the participation rate of 91% by the end of 1994 is very close to that of younger workers.

The employment rate for women aged 45-64 lags well behind that of men. Yet, the improvement is even more dramatic over time. Employment rates increased from 29% to 50% and unemployment rates declined from 43% to 14%. Labor force participation rates rose steadily to almost 60% in 1994.

It emerges that in order to improve the process of immigrant integration into the labor force, it is necessary to focus on assisting older workers to obtain employment more quickly and on continuing efforts to improve opportunities for women, particularly older women.



Table 8: Labor Force Status of 1990 FSU Immigrants, by Date of Survey (percentages)

		1992 Jan- Jun	1992 Aug- Sep	1993 Jan- Dec	1994 Jan- Jun	1994 Jul- Dec
<b>15+</b>						
Total	Employment Rate	43	44	50	54	55
	Unemployment Rate	27	24	15	10	9
	Participation Rate	59	58	59	60	60
Male	Employment Rate	53	57	61	63	64
	Unemployment Rate	19	15	10	6	6
	Participation Rate	66	67	68	67	68
Female	Employment Rate	35	34	41	46	47
	Unemployment Rate	36	34	20	15	12
	Participation Rate	54	51	52	54	53
<b>25-64</b>						
Total	Employment Rate	58	60	68	73	76
	Unemployment Rate	26	24	14	10	8
	Participation Rate	78	79	79	81	82
Male	Employment Rate	70	76	82	85	90
	Unemployment Rate	19	15	9	6	5
	Participation Rate	87	89	89	90	94
Female	Employment Rate	47	46	57	63	64
	Unemployment Rate	34	34	20	14	11
	Participation Rate	71	70	71	74	72
<b>25-44</b>						
Total	Employment Rate	64	66	77	82	83
	Unemployment Rate	24	22	13	8	6
	Participation Rate	85	85	89	89	88
Male	Employment Rate	74	80	88	89	93
	Unemployment Rate	17	12	7	4	3
	Participation Rate	89	91	94	94	96
Female	Employment Rate	55	54	68	76	74
	Unemployment Rate	31	31	19	11	10
	Participation Rate	81	79	84	85	82
<b>45-64</b>						
Total	Employment Rate	43	46	51	62	66
	Unemployment Rate	33	30	17	13	10
	Participation Rate	64	66	62	71	73
Male	Employment Rate	60	67	70	79	85
	Unemployment Rate	25	20	13	7	7
	Participation Rate	81	85	80	85	91
Female	Employment Rate	29	29	37	48	50
	Unemployment Rate	43	43	23	19	14
	Participation Rate	51	51	48	62	58

#### 4. Labor Force Status by Year of Arrival and Survey Date

In this section, we combine both the cross-sectional and the longitudinal data (see Tables 9 and 10) in order to address the question of whether the improvement after two years is better for earlier immigrants than for later immigrants. This might be the case if earlier immigrants filled the available jobs, so that later immigrants were less fortunate in finding work. Although the Labor Force Surveys that we have are not for parallel periods, we can make a rough comparison between three groups:

<u>Group - Arrived in</u>	<u>Point of Comparison</u>
1990	Aug-Sept 1992
1991	Jan-Dec 1993
1992	Jan-Dec 1994

We assume that the Aug-Sept data for 1992 more or less reflect the yearly average. The points of comparison are underlined in the Tables.

On the basis of this comparison, we find that for men aged 45-64 who arrived in 1992, the employment rates after two years are lower (59%) than the rates after two years for those who arrived in 1990 (67%); this could possibly be explained by the sharp decline in labor force participation rates.

In contrast, for females aged 45-64, later immigrants have a slightly higher employment rate after two years than do earlier immigrants. Thus, immigrants arriving in 1990 had an employment rate of 29% in Aug-Sept 1992, while immigrants arriving in 1992 had an employment rate of 33% in 1994. Moreover, later immigrants also had a lower unemployment rate: 15% for 1992 immigrants compared to 43% for 1990 immigrants, after two years in Israel. However, this can be explained by the sharp dip in labor force participation rates for the 1992 cohort (39% compared to 51% for the 1990 cohort) which parallels the decline for men. The declines in labor force participation rates can reflect a lesser interest in employment among later cohorts, or more discouraged workers. For younger cohorts, there is an improvement for later cohorts for both men and women.

Table 9: Labor Force Status of Immigrants Aged 25-44, by Year of Arrival, Date of Survey, and Gender (percentages)

	1990	1991	1992	1993
<b>Males</b>				
<i>Jan-Jun 1992</i>				
Employment Rate	74	68		
Unemployment Rate	17	20		
Participation Rate	89	85		
<i>Aug-Sept 1992</i>				
Employment Rate	<u>80</u>	68		
Unemployment Rate	<u>12</u>	19		
Participation Rate	<u>91</u>	84		
<i>Jan-Dec 1993</i>				
Employment Rate	88	<u>74</u>	73	
Unemployment Rate	7	<u>14</u>	15	
Participation Rate	94	<u>86</u>	86	
<i>Jan-Dec 1994</i>				
Employment Rate	91	90	<u>85</u>	70
Unemployment Rate	4	3	<u>5</u>	17
Participation Rate	95	93	<u>90</u>	84
<b>Females</b>				
<i>Jan-Jun 1992</i>				
Employment Rate	55	36		
Unemployment Rate	31	45		
Participation Rate	81	65		
<i>Aug-Sept 1992</i>				
Employment Rate	<u>54</u>	43		
Unemployment Rate	<u>31</u>	41		
Participation Rate	<u>79</u>	73		
<i>Jan-Dec 1993</i>				
Employment Rate	68	<u>53</u>	43	
Unemployment Rate	19	<u>20</u>	32	
Participation Rate	84	<u>66</u>	62	
<i>Jan-Dec 1994</i>				
Employment Rate	75	72	<u>60</u>	43
Unemployment Rate	10	14	<u>23</u>	31
Participation Rate	83	84	<u>77</u>	62

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data.



Table 10: Labor Force Status of Immigrants Aged 45-64, by Year of Arrival, Date of Survey, and Gender (percentages)

	1990	1991	1992	1993
<b>Males</b>				
<i><b>Jan-Jun 1992</b></i>				
Employment Rate	60	52		
Unemployment Rate	25	32		
Participation Rate	81	76		
<i><b>Aug-Sept 1992</b></i>				
Employment Rate	<u>67</u>	57		
Unemployment Rate	<u>20</u>	29		
Participation Rate	<u>85</u>	80		
<i><b>Jan-Dec 1993</b></i>				
Employment Rate	70	<u>63</u>	45	
Unemployment Rate	13	<u>23</u>	35	
Participation Rate	80	<u>82</u>	69	
<i><b>Jan-Dec 1994</b></i>				
Employment Rate	82	81	<u>59</u>	67
Unemployment Rate	7	7	<u>13</u>	16
Participation Rate	88	87	<u>68</u>	80
<b>Females</b>				
<i><b>Jan-Jun 1992</b></i>				
Employment Rate	29	13		
Unemployment Rate	43	69		
Participation Rate	51	44		
<i><b>Aug-Sept 1992</b></i>				
Employment Rate	<u>29</u>	18		
Unemployment Rate	<u>43</u>	61		
Participation Rate	<u>51</u>	45		
<i><b>Jan-Dec 1993</b></i>				
Employment Rate	37	<u>32</u>	22	
Unemployment Rate	23	<u>31</u>	44	
Participation Rate	48	<u>46</u>	40	
<i><b>Jan-Dec 1994</b></i>				
Employment Rate	49	42	<u>33</u>	22
Unemployment Rate	17	18	<u>15</u>	44
Participation Rate	59	51	<u>39</u>	39

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data.

## 5. Occupation of Immigrants, 1994

We now turn to an examination of the occupations in which FSU immigrants are employed, and how this has changed over time. We find that the longer the immigrants are in the country, the higher the proportion employed in professional categories, and the lower the proportion in industrial worker categories.

Tables 11, 12 and 13 present results from special tabulations of the 1994 Labor Force Surveys. Looking at all immigrants aged 25 and over in 1994, we find that 25% were working in the academic, scientific and professional occupations (ASP), 32% in service, clerical and sales occupations (SCS), and 43% as industrial workers (IW)<sup>9</sup>. However, there is a major change in the distribution between the ASP and IW categories with year of immigration. Among more recent immigrants i.e., those who arrived in 1993, 7% were employed in ASP occupations and 60% in IW occupations, while among those who arrived in 1990, 33% were in ASP occupations and only 37% were in IW occupations. The shift is equally great for women as well as for men; however, the shift for women is more out of SCS occupations and for men, more out of IW categories. This change occurs for both the 25-44 age groups and the 45 and older age groups, though the proportion of professionals is higher in the younger age groups. For those 45 and over, the percentage in ASP occupations rises from 2% for those who arrived in 1993 to 29% for those who arrived in 1990. For men, the increase is from 1% to 27%, and for women, from 2% to 32%.

Even for 1990 immigrants, however, the percentage working in ASP occupations in Israel is much lower than the percentage of immigrants who had worked in these occupations prior to their immigration. Thus, as can be seen in Table 14, 74% of the 1990 immigrants were employed in ASP occupations in the FSU, compared to 32% who were working in Israel in 1994. However, this is close to the percentage of all Israelis working in ASP occupations (33%) in 1992.

The occupational pattern of the 1990 immigrants resembles that of all Israelis, of whom 31% are in ASP professions. However, there is a slightly higher concentration of immigrants working in IW rather than SCS professions. It is also worth noting the decline in the percentage of immigrants who worked in ASP professions in the FSU among the later cohorts (from 74% to 61%) and the rise in the percentage of those in the IW category (from 16% to 27%).

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9 ASP occupations are categories '0', '1', and '2' in the 1-digit CBS occupational code, and include engineers, teachers, computer programmers, nurses, managers, etc. SCS occupations are categories '3', '4', and '5', while IW are categories '6' through '9'. In the special tabulation prepared by CBS for the Brookdale Institute, the '55-64' age group was combined with the '65 and over' age group. As a result, it is not possible to identify the occupations of those in the 45-64 age group.

Figure 7: Percent of FSU Immigrants Aged 25+ in Academic,Scientific and Professional Occupations in 1994,by Year of Arrival

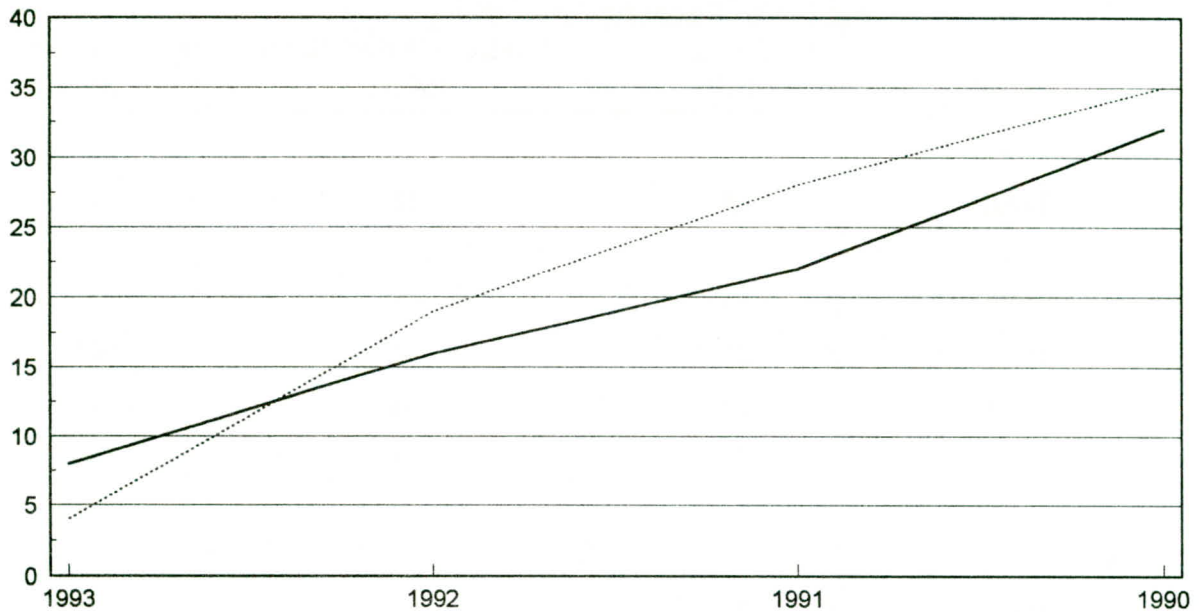


Figure 8: Percent of FSU Immigrants Aged 45+ in Academic,Scientific and Professional Occupations in 1994,by Year of Arrival

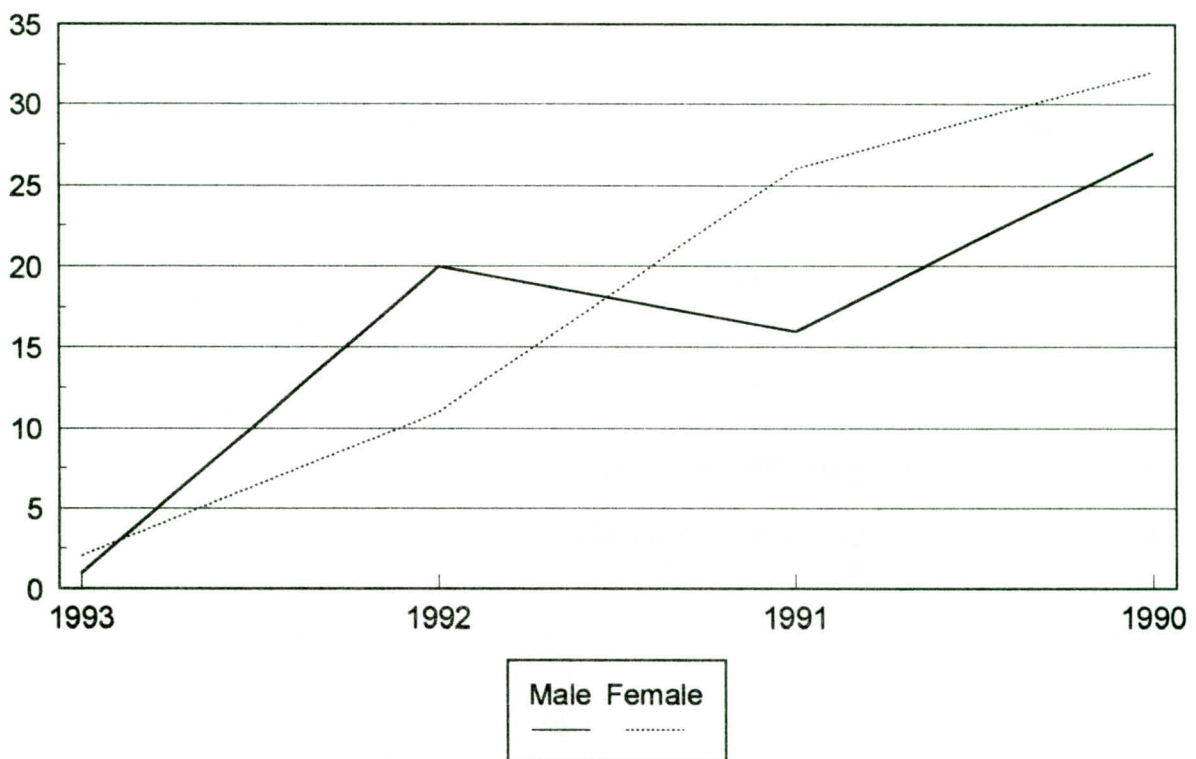




Table 11: Occupation of FSU Immigrants Aged 25+ in 1994, by Year of Immigration  
(percentages)

Year of Arrival	Academic, Scientific Professional (ASP)	Service, Clerical Sales (SCS)	Industrial Workers (IW)
<b>Both Genders</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>43</b>
1990	33	29	37
1991	25	32	44
1992	17	36	47
1993	7	33	60
<b>Male</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>58</b>
1990	32	16	52
1991	22	20	57
1992	16	19	66
1993	8	19	73
<b>Female</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>24</b>
1990	35	45	19
1991	28	46	26
1992	19	59	23
1993	4	58	38

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Table 12: Occupation of FSU Immigrants Aged 25-44 in 1994, by Year of Immigration (percentages)

Year of Arrival	Total	Academic, Scientific Professional (ASP)	Service, Clerical Sales (SCS)	Industrial Workers (IW)
<b>Both Genders</b>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>42</b>
1990	100	36	29	34
1991	100	27	30	43
1992	100	17	33	50
1993	100	9	33	59
<b>Male</b>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>57</b>
1990	100	35	16	49
1991	100	26	18	56
1992	100	14	17	69
1993	100	11	16	73
<b>Female</b>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>25</b>
1990	100	37	43	20
1991	100	28	43	28
1992	100	21	53	26
1993	100	5	59	35

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Table 13: Occupation of FSU Immigrants Aged 45+ in 1994, by Year of Immigration (percentages)

Year of Arrival	Total	Academic, Scientific Professional (ASP)	Service, Clerical Sales (SCS)	Industrial Workers (IW)
<b>Both Genders</b>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>44</b>
1990	100	29	30	42
1991	100	20	36	44
1992	100	17	43	40
1993	100	2	35	64
<b>Male</b>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>59</b>
1990	100	27	16	57
1991	100	16	25	59
1992	100	20	22	58
1993	100	1	25	73
<b>Female</b>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>21</b>
1990	100	32	49	19
1991	100	26	53	21
1992	100	11	75	14
1993	100	2	54	43

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.



Table 14: FSU Immigrants, By Occupation before Immigration and Year of Arrival (%)

	Total	Academic, Scientific Professional (ASP)	Service, Clerical Sales (SCS)	Industrial Workers (IW)
Occupation of FSU Immigrants Prior to Immigration				
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>
Year of Arrival				
1990	100	74	10	16
1991	100	70	10	20
1992	100	60	11	28
1993	100	61	13	27
Occupation of FSU Immigrants in Israel, 1994:				
All	100	24	33	43
1990 Arrivals	100	32	31	37
Occupation of Israelis in 1992:				
All Israelis	100	31	38	31
Israeli Jews	100	33	40	27

Source: Special tabulation of CBS Labor Force Surveys data and CBS Labor Force Surveys, 1992.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

## 6. Summary

In this report we examine the employment status of immigrants as measured by employment and unemployment rates, and by type of occupation. In particular, differences between older and younger immigrants, and between men and women, are noted. A special emphasis is on the analysis of how employment has changed over time by number of years in the country and on a comparison with the overall Israeli population.

The immigrants have a strong desire to work as reflected in high labor force participation rates which, after several years in the country, exceed those of other Israelis. Their actual success in finding employment is similar to that of the overall population and younger male immigrants have an even higher employment rate than their non-immigrant counterparts. However, unemployment rates remain higher for all age and gender groups, particularly women.

The employment picture improves dramatically with length of stay in the country; the employment rates of more veteran immigrants even surpass their Israeli counterparts. The one group that remains behind after 3-4 years in the country is older immigrant women who have high unemployment rates. However, older immigrants take longer to integrate into the labor force. Preliminary data from 1995 indicate continued improvement in the immigrants' labor force status relative to other Israelis.

The data on type of occupation also reveal a continuous rate of improvement over time for all age and gender groups. Yet the percentage working in academic, scientific and professional occupations, even among those who arrived in 1990, remains well below the percentage working in such professions in the FSU.

The study's findings highlight several major challenges facing policymakers: (a) assisting older immigrants to integrate more quickly into the labor force, (b) continuing efforts to improve opportunities for women, and (c) enhancing the professional status of immigrants of all ages in order to better utilize the education and work experience they arrive with.

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# ג'וינט-מכון ברוקדייל

## לגרונטולוגיה והתפתחות אדם וחברה

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קליטת עולי ברית-המועצות  
לשעבר בכוח העבודה

אירוין ליטוויק • ג'ק חביב

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## ג'וינט - מכון ברוקדייל מהו?

מרכז ארצי למחקר בתחומי הזיקנה, התפתחות האדם ורווחה חברתית בישראל, שהוקם ב-1974.

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קבוצת חשיבה המחויבת לפרסום ממצאיה כדי לסייע לקובעי מדיניות ולספקי שירותים לתכנן וליישם תכניות רווחה.

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## תקציר

דוח זה בוחן את המגמות הרחבות של התעסוקה בקרב עולים גילאי 15-64 מברית-המועצות לשעבר שעלו לישראל בין אוקטובר 1989 לדצמבר 1994, כפי שהן נמדדו באמצעות שיעורי ההשתתפות בכוח העבודה, שיעורי תעסוקה ואבטלה, ועל פי משלח-יד. שימת לב מיוחדת מופנית להבדלים בין עולים מבוגרים יותר לצעירים יותר, ובין גברים לנשים. דגש מיוחד ניתן לניתוח השתנותה של התעסוקה על פני זמן לפי מספר שנות השהות בארץ, ובהשוואה לאוכלוסייה הכללית בישראל. הניתוח מתבסס על ליווחים מיוחדים של נתונים שהתקבלו מסקרי תעסוקה שנערכו על-ידי הלשכה המרכזית לסטטיסטיקה על פי בקשתו של מכון ברוקדייל.

שאיפתם של העולים לעבוד היא חזקה ביותר, כפי שעולה משיעורי ההשתתפות הגבוהים שלהם בכוח העבודה, שלאחר מספר שנים בארץ גבוהים יותר מאלה של ישראלים אחרים. הצלחתם הממשית במציאת תעסוקה דומה לזו של האוכלוסייה הכללית, ושיעור התעסוקה של העולים הגברים הצעירים יותר אף גבוה יותר מהשיעור המקביל בקרב בני גילם שאינם עולים. עם זאת, שיעורי האבטלה נשארים גבוהים יותר בכל קבוצות הגיל והמין, ובמיוחד בקרב הנשים.

תמונת התעסוקה משתפרת באורח דרמטי עם התארכות השהייה בארץ. כתוצאה מכך, שיעורי התעסוקה של עולים ותיקים יותר גבוהים יותר משיעורי התעסוקה של מקביליהם הישראלים. השיפור בתעסוקה התרחש בקרב שני המינים ובקרב עולים צעירים ומבוגרים כאחד. עם זאת, השתלבותם של העולים המבוגרים יותר בכוח העבודה ארכה זמן רב יותר, כאשר הקבוצה היחידה הנוטה להישאר מאחור לאחר 3-4 שנים בארץ היא קבוצת העולות המבוגרות יותר, ששיעורי האבטלה בקרבן גבוהים. נתונים ראשוניים מ-1995 מצביעים על שיפור מתמשך במצב התעסוקה של העולים בהשוואה לישראלים אחרים.

גם הנתונים על משלח-היד מצביעים על שיפור מתמשך לאורך זמן, בכל קבוצות הגיל והמין. יחד עם זאת, שיעוריהם של העולים העובדים במקצועות אקדמיים, מדעיים ומקצועיים, אפילו בקרב אלה שעלו ב-1990, עדיין נשארים נמוכים בהרבה מהשיעורים שעבדו במקצועות אלה בברית המועצות לשעבר.

ממצאי המחקר זורקים אור על כמה מהאתגרים העומדים בפני קובעי המדיניות: (1) לסייע לעולים מבוגרים יותר להשתלב במהירות רבה יותר בכוח העבודה; (2) להמשיך במאמצים לשפר את ההזדמנויות לנשים; (3) לחזק את מעמדם המקצועי של העולים בכל הגילים כדי שיוכלו לנצל טוב יותר את ההשכלה ואת ניסיון העבודה שהביאו עמם לארץ.

## תודות

ברצוננו להודות לכל אותם אנשים בג'וינט-מכון ברוקדייל אשר סייעו במהלך העבודה בעצות ובהערות. במיוחד אנו אסירי תודה לגילה נועם, מנהלת תכנית המחקר לקליטת עלייה; גדליה נור שקרא טיוטות קודמות של דוח זה; וגליה אפרת שסייעה לנו במחקר.

הדוח נערך על-ידי טרי בנינגה והודפס על-ידי אילנה שיזגל.

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5	לוח 4: מספר העולים מברית-המועצות לשעבר גילאי 15+, בקבוצות השכלה ותעסוקה נבחרות, 1994-1990, בהשוואה לישראלים אחרים ב-1989
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