

The Socio-Economic Status of the Bedouin Population in the Negev

Selected Indicators

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This study was part of a multifaceted research program for the Government of Israel's five-year plan to promote the well-being of the Bedouin in the Negev, carried out in cooperation with the Department for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bedouin Society in the Negev



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About the research program of the five-year plan for the Bedouin in the Negev

The research program was jointly funded by the Department for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bedouin Society in the Negev and the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute. It spanned 3.5 years and includes an array of topical studies, including education, children with disabilities, employment, and local government, as well as cross-cutting studies evaluating the five-year plan work programs; the values, strengths, and challenges of the Bedouin population and their leaders; key indicators of the health, economic, and social well-being of the Bedouin population; and an integrative assessment of the five-year plan.

The research program was carried out as a cooperative effort between the Department for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bedouin Society in the Negev and the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute (MJB). The Department led the choice of issues to be studied and provided feedback on the research. MJB coordinated the research program and was responsible for the quality of the studies.

Abstract

The five-year plan for the socio-economic development of the Bedouin population in the Negev for the years 2017 to 2021 aims to help narrow the gaps between the Bedouin population in the Negev and the general population in Israel. The budget for the plan is NIS 3.2 billion, most of which is devoted to, employment, education at all levels (up to and including higher education), transportation infrastructure, the public transportation system, and the strengthening of local authorities. The Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute is conducting a study of the five-year plan for the Department for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bedouin Society in the Negev at the Ministry of Economy and Industry, which is in charge of implementing the plan.

The study deals, inter alia, with the formulation of a set of quality-of-life indicators for the Bedouin population in the Negev. The indicators are designed to enable an informed examination of the trends in key spheres of life of the Negev Bedouin and to serve as a standard for monitoring their socio-economic situation over time. The study team will update and publicize the indicators annually.

Given the annual frequency of the update and the time lag between actual trend changes and the availability of data for research, the indicators cannot be relied upon for up-to-date monitoring of situations characterized by significant changes occurring in a short period of time. For example, it is reasonable to assume that significant socio-economic changes have occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, these changes are not reflected in the present report, and will only be addressed in the updated report of next year.

Moreover, due to the limitations in the databases available to the study team, the data presented here are largely not representative of unregulated residences¹. In those cases where the unregulated residences were included in the database, the related data could not be distinguished from the data related to the 18 localities for the purpose of comparison and presentation of the differences.

¹ The following terms are used in this report to indicate the various forms of settlement of the Bedouin population in the Negev: the 18 localities – 18 localities in the local authorities (town, local councils, and regional councils): the town of Rahat, the local councils of Hura, Kuseife, Lakiya, Ar'ara BaNegev, Segev Shalom, and Tel Sheva; the localities of the al-Kasom Regional Council: Umm Batin, al-Sayyid, Drijat, Kukhle, Mulada, Makhul, and Tirabin al-Sana; and the localities of the Neve Midbar Regional Council: Abu Qrenat, Qasr al-Sir, Bir Hadaj, and Abu Talul.

Unregulated residences – residences outside the 18 localities.

The list of indicators for the Bedouin population in the Negev is based on the quality-of-life, sustainability, and national resilience indicators published annually by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). The national set of indicators was formulated following a structured process of consultation with experts and public participation, with expert guidance from the OECD.

The formulation of quality-of-life indicators for the Bedouin population in the Negev consisted of seven stages:





- a. **Literature review.** A review of the national set of indicators as well as other indicators relevant to the Bedouin population in the Negev.
- b. **Consultation with stakeholders.** Consultation with stakeholders on the relevance of the proposed indicators to specific spheres of life of the Negev Bedouin.
- c. **Establishing a list of indicators.** Establishing a list of indicators relevant to the Bedouin population in the Negev.
- d. **Location of data sources regarding the values of the indicators.** A variety of data sources, including the CBS, the National Insurance Institute, the National Institute for Testing & Evaluation, and the Ministry of Health, were used to extract data on the current and recent values of the indicators.
- e. **Analysis and presentation of data on the indicators.** Analysis of the indicator data according to selected variables (e.g., years and gender); comparison with other population groups in Israel (the Jewish population in the South, the other Jewish populations, the other Arab populations, the general population).
- f. **Calculation of trends in the Bedouin population for each indicator.** Calculation of the ratio between the indicator value in the last year and the indicator value in the first year for which data were available.
- g. **Calculation of the gap between the Bedouin population and the comparison population, including gap variation over time.** Calculation of the ratio between indicator values for the Bedouin population and the comparison population, as established at the time of calculation.





This report presents 19 indicators, classified by eight spheres of life: education; employment; health; personal security; civic involvement and governance; housing and infrastructure; personal and social well-being; and information technologies.





Compared with the Jewish population in the South, a trend of improvement has been observed among the Negev Bedouin in the spheres of education, employment, health and information technologies. At the same time, mixed or unclear trends have been observed in the spheres of housing and infrastructure, civic involvement and governance, and personal and social well-being. The last two reflect the complex nature of the Bedouin




population's relationship with the general population in Israel and the extent of trust in the government institutions and the local authorities among the Negev Bedouin.




The following table summarizes the data for each indicator for the first and last year of measurement covered by this report, the trends in the Negev Bedouin population over time, and the variation in the gap between the Negev Bedouin and the Jewish population in the South (with the exception of cases where another comparison group is specified).

Sphere of Life	Indicator	Data for the First and Last Year of Measurement		Trend in the Negev Bedouin Population	Gap between Populations	
Education						
	Meitzav standardized assessment tests – average math scores in 8th grade	Bedouin	2010-2011 455	2017-2018 459	 No change	Gap unchanged
		Jews	528	550		
	Meitzav standardized assessment tests – average English scores in 8th grade	Bedouin	2010-2011 418	2017-2018 437	 No change	Gap narrowed
		Jews	534	533		
	Percentage of boys among 12th graders – per school year	Bedouin	2011 70.3	2019 79	 Positive trend	Gap unchanged
		Jews in the South	89.5	94.4		
	Percentage of girls among 12th graders – per school year	Bedouin	2011 73.2	2019 82.5	 Positive trend	Gap narrowed
		Jews in the South	95.5	97.1		

Sphere of Life	Indicator	Data for the First and Last Year of Measurement		Trend in the Negev Bedouin Population	Gap between Populations
	Percentage of eligibility for a matriculation certificate that meets minimum academic admission requirements per school year – Boys		2010 2019		
	Bedouin	12.7	16.2		Gap widened
	Jews	40.4	67.0	Positive trend	
	Percentage of eligibility for a matriculation certificate that meets minimum academic admission requirements per school year - Girls		2010 2019		
	Bedouin	28.2	38.6		Gap narrowed
	Jews	63.1	78.3	Positive trend	
	Average psychometric test score		2010 2019		
	Bedouin	393	457		Gap narrowed
	Jews in the South	536	558	Positive trend	
	Average YAEL score. (Hebrew Proficiency Test for examinees whose mother tongue is not Hebrew)		2010 2019		
	Bedouin	76	90		Gap closed
	Other Arab populations	92	91	Positive trend	
	Percentage of academic degree recipients in the 20-29 age group		2011 2019		
	Bedouin	0.9	1.1		Gap narrowed
	Jews in the South	9.1	8.2	Positive trend	
	Percentage of academic degree recipients – selected disciplines		2011 2019		
	Bedouin	4.0	6.7		Gap widened
	Jews in the South	21.7	25.3	Positive trend	

Sphere of Life	Indicator	Data for the First and Last Year of Measurement			Trend in the Negev Bedouin Population	Gap between Populations
Employment						
			2010	2019		
	Employment rate – men	Bedouin	58.2	62.3	 Positive trend	Gap unchanged
		Jews in the South	80.2	86.0		
			2010	2019		
	Employment rate – women	Bedouin	20.8	30.4	 Positive trend	Gap narrowed
		Jews in the South	75.0	85.2		
			2010	2018		
	Average employee wages – men (NIS), at 2010 prices	Bedouin	6,387	7,785	 Positive trend	Gap narrowed
		Jews in the South	9,895	11,212		
			2010	2018		
	Average employee wages – women (NIS), at 2010 prices	Bedouin	4,097	5,029	 Positive trend	Gap unchanged
		Jews in the South	5,957	7,082		
			2010	2018		
	Percentage of employees earning less than minimum wage	Bedouin	54.6	55.4	 No change	Gap widened
		Jews in the South	41.8	39.6		
Health						
			2010	2018		
	Infant mortality rate (per thousand live births)	Bedouin	12.6	8.3	 Positive trend	Gap narrowed
		Jews in the South	3.4	3.0		

Sphere of Life	Indicator	Data for the First and Last Year of Measurement			Trend in the Negev Bedouin Population	Gap between Populations
	Diabetes morbidity percentage - Men aged 65-74	Bedouin	2016 30.25		No trend can be specified based on data for 2016 alone	
		Jews in the South	32.26			
	Diabetes morbidity percentage - Women aged 65-74	Bedouin	2016 41.9		No trend can be specified based on data for 2016 alone	
		Jews in the South	28.4			
Civic engagement and governance						
	Percent of adult population reporting trust in government	Bedouin	2015-2016 52.9	2019 50.1	No trend can be specified due to large variance of the annual data	
		Jews in the South	47.4	46.7		
	Satisfaction with the local authority's performance, in percents	Bedouin	2015 47.9	2019 43.6	 Negative trend	Gap widened
		Jews in the South	72.1	71.3		
	Voter turnout in the Knesset elections	Bedouin	Elections to the 19th Knesset 45.8	Elections to the 23rd Knesset 56.0	 Positive trend	Gap narrowed
		Jews in the South	60.2	64.9		
Housing and infrastructure						
	Satisfaction with public transportation services, in percents	Bedouin	2014 54.3	2019 47.8	 Negative trend	Gap widened
		Jews in the South	67.7	69.0		

Sphere of Life	Indicator	Data for the First and Last Year of Measurement		Trend in the Negev Bedouin Population	Gap between Populations	
Personal and social well-being						
	Percentage of interviewees reporting feelings of discrimination	Bedouin	2015-2016 44.6	2019 32.9	 Positive trend	Gap narrowed
		Jews in the South	19.7	18.7		
	Satisfaction with life, in percents	Bedouin	2011-2010 78.1	2019 54.7	No trend can be specified due to large variance of the annual data	
		Jews in the South	87.7	89.7		
Information technologies						
	Percentage of Internet users	Bedouin	2010-2011 40.5	2019 64.4	 Positive trend	Gap narrowed
		Jews in the South	69.8	89.3		
	The number of Internet usage purposes	Bedouin	2010-2011 3.1	2019 3.0	 No change	Gap widened
		Jews in the South	3.7	4.7		

Notes to the table:

The term “positive trend” refers to a situation in which there was an annual increase of more than 0.5% in the indicator value for the Bedouin population. Similarly, the term “negative trend” refers to a situation in which there was an annual decrease of more than 0.5% in the indicator value for the Bedouin population.

The term “gap narrowed” refers to a situation in which there was an annual average decrease of 0.5% or more in the gap. Similarly, “gap widened” refers to a situation in which there was an annual average increase of 0.5% or more in the gap.

Where there have been considerable changes in the data from year to year, the trend and the gap were calculated based on a bi-annual average of the values at the beginning and end of the period.