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FOR SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES IN ISRAEL

# Migration Patterns in Mixed Cities in Israel: Socioeconomic Perspectives

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## Introduction

Migration is defined as a change in the residence of an individual or group. The literature on international migration differentiates between inter-country migration, which is referred to as external migration, and internal migration, which is primarily a change of residence within a country. In this paper, we focus on migration within Israel, while differentiating between migration *between* districts and cities and that *within* a district or city.

The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) publishes annual data on internal migration between districts.[1] In recent years, the annual rate of internal migration among Jews and others[2] between districts in Israel has been about 30 per 1,000 population (about 240,000 persons per year), while among non-Jews it is about 15 per 1,000 population (about 30,000 persons per year).[3] Figure 1 presents the net number of internal migrants to the various districts in Israel in recent years.[4] Among Jews, there is a particularly large increase

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1 The CBS data do not relate to the initial residence of a newly arrived immigrant but only a change in residence.

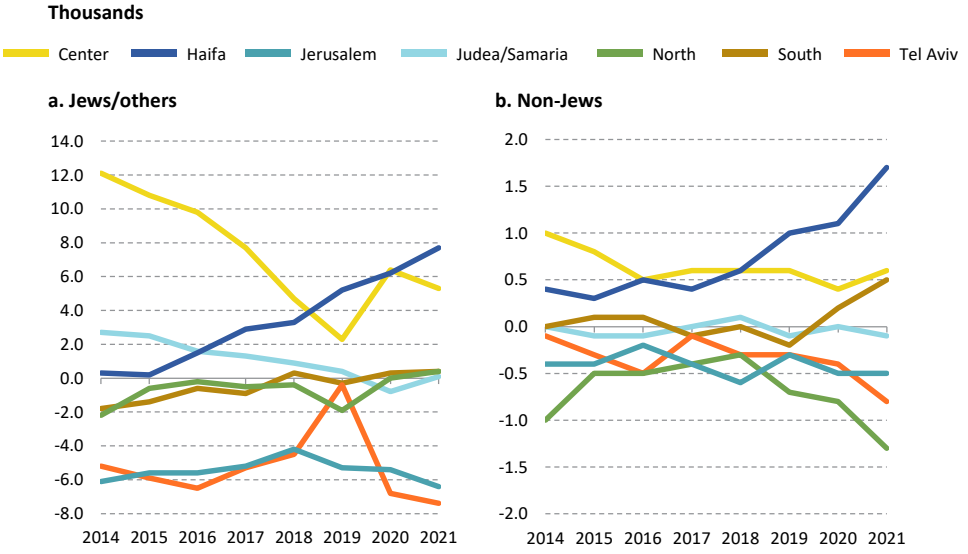
2 The CBS differentiates between "Jews and others" (where "others" are non-Arab Christians, members of other religions, and those without a religious classification) and Arabs. For convenience, we will refer to "Jews/others" as "Jews" throughout the article.

3 The calculations are based on Table 2.26 in the CBS Statistical Abstract of Israel 2022. "Others" which Account for about 5% of the population in Israel are consolidated with Arabs in that table. In the current study, they are included with Jews, as noted above.

4 "Net" migration is the number of migrants arriving in a particular location less the number who left it.

in positive migration to the Haifa district, a drop in positive migration to the Center, and negative migration in the Jerusalem and Tel Aviv districts. Among non-Jews, there is a particularly notable positive migration to the Haifa district and to the Center district and recently also to the South while the North, Jerusalem, and Tel Aviv have been losing population.

**Figure 1. Net migration between cities, by district, annual average for 2014–2021**




Note: In this and subsequent graphs, the scale of the vertical axis is not necessarily uniform. We preferred a better data representation to uniformity.
Source: Benjamin Bental and Labib Shami, Taub Center | Data: CBS, Statistical Abstract of Israel (various years)

Unlike previous studies which provided a birds-eye view of migration patterns between cities within Israel or which only looked at cities in the Center, this study looks at the eight cities that are defined as "mixed:" Jerusalem, Akko, Ramla, Lod, Haifa, Ma'alot-Tarshiha, Nof HaGalil (formerly Upper Nazareth), and Tel Aviv-Yafo.[5] These cities are differentiated from other cities in Israel, which are usually characterized by sectoral homogeneity.

5 According to the CBS definition, a mixed city is one with a large majority of Jewish residents and a significant minority of Arabs. See the CBS site, All Terms.

This study focuses on the group affiliation of migrants who move to a mixed city or who leave one and migration within those cities, while differentiating between statistical areas and the characterization of districts according to their socioeconomic cluster. This approach enables an examination of the movement of a population between socioeconomic clusters both within a city and between cities and provides insight into the migrants' economic characteristics. A look at migration patterns by migrants' sector group affiliation and socioeconomic cluster also makes it possible to examine the changing social fabric of the cities.

## Literature review

### Previous studies in Israel

#### The Jewish population

The characterization of internal migration between cities in Israel (and not just between districts) has not been well-documented, particularly in recent years. Braude and Navon (2007) relied on population census data from 1983 and 1995 and looked at both the characteristics of Jewish families who moved to another city in Israel as well as the characteristics of the city of origin and destination. According to their findings, about 17% of families moved at least once during the sample period. It was also found that the tendency to migrate increases with level of education and income, which is similar to most findings reported in the literature on migration. Moreover, they point to negative migration of educated more well-off families from the metropolises and development towns to more homogenous suburbs and rural communities. The findings with respect to the negative migration from development towns, particularly in the case of educated young couples, is particularly interesting given the government policy during those years to develop those towns.

Azary-Viesel and Hananel (2019) used CBS internal migration data according to district to examine the internal migration patterns of middle-class Jewish households in cities within the Tel Aviv and Center districts in Israel between 2000 and 2015. They find that middle- and upper-middle class households move to new urban neighborhoods in small cities in the Center of Israel relatively close to Tel Aviv. They note that these families did not move to wealthy suburbs but rather to cities that are less well off than the one they left.

The study found a high correlation (0.67) between a city's migration balance and the rise in the average real wage of the local residents. In other words, the new population raised the socioeconomic level of the destination cities. It is important to mention that the study did not include internal migration to or within Arab, Haredi, and mixed cities (apart from Tel Aviv-Yafo).

Research by Mann and Hananel (2022) examined the effect of Israel's housing and planning policy on the decision by middle-class families to migrate from the heart of the Tel Aviv metropolis to smaller cities on its margins and on the implications of this move on the families' employment status, particularly for women. The data was gathered using questionnaires distributed to a sample of 800 men and women who moved from the Tel Aviv district to cities in the Center district. The findings show that the main reasons for moving were the high cost of housing and the desire to improve their housing situation. This trend was driven by Israel's national planning and housing policy and the resulting sharp rise in housing prices, which put areas of high demand out of reach of most young couples. The State policy encouraged massive residential building in cities on the edges of the Tel Aviv metropolis (Benchetrit, 2014; Gruber, 2014; Swirski & Hoffmann Dishon, 2017).

### The Arab population

With few exceptions (Cohen et al., 2015; Lipshitz, 1991), Israeli research on migration has largely ignored the internal migration of the Arab minority and has focused only on the Jewish majority. This lack of attention has weakened the empirical literature on migration in Israel and, thus, has adversely affected the quality of information reaching policy makers, as well as the completeness of the picture presented to them. The missing information can be summarized in three main points.

First, the distribution of the Arab population in Israel differs from that of the Jewish population. Since the establishment of the State, it has been characterized by a tendency to concentrate in the Galilee, the Triangle, and the Negev. This trend has, over the years, distanced Arab residents from the economic and employment opportunities available to those living in the Jewish urban centers. As a result, the level of services and standard of living they enjoy has also been limited, as well as access to transportation, education, cultural life, and more. Since 1966, Arab citizens in Israel have been free to settle in any location in Israel. Nonetheless, explicit hostility between the two ethnic/sector groups and discriminatory planning and settlement policies continues to limit the mobility of Arab citizens (Cohen et al., 2015).

Second, and despite the clear differences between the Arab minority in Israel and native groups with a sociopolitical history in other countries, the findings presented in Cohen et al. (2015) demonstrate the similarities between them. They examine both the tendency to migrate and the specific sociodemographic profile of Arab migrants in Israel based on the 1995 population census. As in the case of minority groups in other countries, internal migration of the Arab minority in Israel is characterized by low levels of mobility and ethnic segregation, a high level of variation across districts, and low migration from rural areas to the cities, alongside a continuous presence in small cities and towns in the rural periphery. According to the researchers, a supportive social network in the target location is a major attraction, while a weak social network in the target reduces the likelihood of it being chosen. As in the case of other native groups and in view of the segregating character of the Israeli settlement system, most Arabs have remained in their "comfort zones" in the Israeli periphery, whether in Arab cities, or in poor neighborhoods in mixed cities.

Third, there have, nonetheless, been significant changes in the characteristics of the Arab population in recent years. There has been a substantial rise in education levels, in the labor force participation rates of women, and in income levels, alongside a drop in birthrate. It is reasonable to assume that these factors will encourage the mobility of the Arab population, particularly among the young, many of whom will, in coming years, reach the peak years for mobility.

## Findings from the United States

A number of studies have documented the internal migration patterns of racial/ethnic groups in the US. These patterns are the result of a variety of factors, including differences in the economic resources available to a group, the preference for living among members of one's own group, local zoning laws in some communities that hinder economic integration, and a long history of discriminatory practices among credit providers, real estate agents, and insurers. These factors are reflected in the variation of migration patterns among the various minority groups. Latin Americans and Asian Americans tend to move to neighborhoods with higher average income, which tend to have more white residents (Crowder & Suth, 2005; South et al., 2008). In contrast, there is less likelihood of African Americans moving into white or higher-income neighborhoods (Pager & Shepherd, 2008; Rothwell & Massey, 2009). Moreover, it is more likely that whites will migrate away from areas

with high levels of African American residents and will avoid migrating to them (Crowder & South, 2008; Krysan et al., 2009).

Internal migration creates a variety of communal structures that have implications for relations among the various groups in the community. Tach et al. (2019) investigated the structural foundations of diversity and segregation within local communities in the US. They claim that the way in which ethnic diversity restructures social relations is dependent on, among other things, the way in which it affects the social and economic composition of the communities. They found strong support for the consolidated diversity hypothesis, according to which greater ethnic diversity creates a higher level of heterogeneity in language and ethnic origin. This result is not surprising given that language and origin are in many respects inseparable from racial/ethnic identity. In contrast, in the case of measures of sociodemographic and economic heterogeneity, support for this hypothesis was weaker. Specifically, the study found that when the average American town or city became more diverse ethnically or racially between 1980 and 2010, this did not significantly change the sociodemographic or economic heterogeneity of the residents. Greater racial/ethnic diversity was found to have only a weak correlation with household type and the heterogeneity in education and almost no correlation with income heterogeneity, profession, or age of the community members, which is in accord with the process of multiform diversification.

When various populations groups live in separate areas over time, the resulting homogeneity reduces the likelihood of contact with members of the other group and contact between the populations is liable to lead to conflict (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Putnam, 2007). On the other hand, weak groups in segregated areas must cope with inequality of opportunity, which reduces their chances of economic mobility and adversely affects their health and life expectancy (Chetty et al., 2014; Quillian, 2014). Studies show that ethnic diversity in metropolitan and micropolitan areas in the US reduces the sociodemographic and economic heterogeneity in the cities located within them.[6] This finding is a cause of concern with respect to its long-term implications. Thus, given that about one-half of education services are financed at the local level, the investment in education in poor areas is lower

6 The urban statistics for the US in general classify areas into two types: micropolitan areas, with between 10,000 and 50,000 residents, and metropolitan areas, with over 50,000 residents.

than in wealthy areas, perpetuating income disparities and strengthening the the connection between these gaps and ethnic origin.[7]

When various racial/ethnic groups settle in the same area or neighborhood, the social implications are dependent in part on the question of whether these groups remain distant from one another with respect to sociodemographic or economic status. The segregation of groups can increase social conflict and lead to more rigid social structures and the preservation of the status quo (Balu, 1977; 1994). Furthermore, communities that suffer from race-dependent inequality in income tend to have higher rates of crime and lower rates of intermarriage and their members report less social trust and less satisfaction with their residence relative to communities with less race-dependent income inequality (Abascal & Baldassarri, 2015; Hipp, 2007).

In contrast, similarity in demographic and economic characteristics between groups that live in the same area is likely to contribute to the blurring of group boundaries over time, since, in general, residents who are differentiated from one another on one level have other shared characteristics. This is particularly likely to be the case since many racial/ethnic groups are themselves rather heterogeneous (Habecker, 2012; Lee et al., 2017). Studies shows that in neighborhoods populated by mixed social groups there is a greater likelihood of interracial friendship and marriage and that residents of the different races tend to interact and to provide social support on the basis of other shared characteristics, such as occupation, parental status, religion, and membership in an organization (Maly, 2008; Smith et al., 2014).

Physical proximity alone is not sufficient to ensure contact or interaction and often the residents of diverse neighborhoods continue to live in separate spaces and to maintain separate institutional and cultural lives (Tach, 2014). Nonetheless, apart from physical proximity, studies show that in locations where the members share demographic and economic characteristics, there is a greater likelihood of overcoming these boundaries. And vice versa: when the members of the various racial/ethnic groups are differentiated from each other in their demographic and economic characteristics, there is likely to

7 Texas is an exception in this regard. It has adopted a program of equalization called the Robin Hood Laws, which primarily involves the transfer of up to two-thirds of local tax revenues from rich areas to poor areas. These funds are allocated to investment in education in the poor areas. There are those who credit this program with Texas' educational achievements, which exceed those of states with a similar proportion of migrants, such as California and New York.

be more interpersonal conflict and more behavior that is less tolerant and inclusive (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000 Tach et al., 2019).

The data presented here do not enable an analysis of these phenomena, neither with respect to the factors driving the migration nor with respect to the effect of migration on the absorbing community in the various cities. They are, however, certainly relevant to the discussion of the Arab population's degree of integration in the context of the mixed cities in Israel.

## The data

As mentioned, the CBS defines Jerusalem, Akko, Ramla, Lod, Haifa, Ma'alot-Tarshiha, and Nof HaGalil as "mixed cities." The average proportion of the Arab minority in each of these cities was more than 10% of the city's total population between 2017 and 2020. Tel Aviv-Yafo is also defined as a mixed city, although its Arab population constitutes less than 5% of the city's population.[8]

This study uses CBS data, and in particular the tables for Population and Population Growth Components in Cities and Statistical Areas, in order to examine external and internal migration in mixed cities. These tables present annual data on the changes in population on the level of statistical areas, while differentiating between Jewish and "other" populations on the one hand and the Arab population on the other. Each statistical area has between 3,000 and 5,000 residents. According to the CBS definition, a statistical area is homogenous to the greatest extent possible and its boundaries are determined according to various criteria, such as land use (residential, industrial, commerce, etc.), historical considerations (age of the buildings), engineering considerations (quality of the buildings), and demographic characteristics of the residents (religion, standard of living, etc.).[9] Another analysis categorizes the statistical areas according to socioeconomic clusters in 2017 (CBS, 2020). These data make it possible, using the appropriate aggregation, to identify the migration flows according to socioeconomic level, namely to which socioeconomic clusters population was added as a result of migration either from outside a city or from within it and which of them lost population as a result of these processes. The tables present the changes in the size of the population in the various statistical areas originating from several sources: moving within the

8 Other cities with large Arab populations, such as Carmiel, Be'er Sheva, Harish, and Afula are not currently defined by the CBS as mixed cities.

9 For further details, see the CBS site, All Terms.

boundaries of a city; arrival from other cities in Israel; population movement from outside the boundaries of Israel; and birth and death. In this paper, we focus on the net changes in a statistical area's population originating from migration that is not within the boundaries of the city and thus changes the city's population (*external migration*) and on net migration between the various statistical areas within a city, which does not change the city's population (*internal migration*).[10]

Table 1 summarizes the average CBS data between 2017 and 2020 for the eight mixed cities. As can be seen, the proportion of internal migrants in the two population groups — Jews/others and Arabs — is very similar, with relatively little differences between cities. In contrast, the data on external migration indicate a high level of variation, both between population groups and within them. Emphasizing the rates that exceed 1% of the respective populations illustrates these patterns. In Haifa, Jerusalem, Nof HaGalil, Akko, and Ramla, negative external migration is leading to a loss of Jewish population at a rate of between 1.1% and 2.3% annually. Jerusalem and Ramla are losing their Arab population at low rates but in other mixed cities migration is increasing the Arab population. This is particularly the case in Nof HaGalil, where Arabs migrating to the city are increasing the Arab population at an annual rate of 4.5%.[11]

10 The tables only report the number of those arriving in each statistical area and the number of those leaving. They do not make it possible to identify the source of those arriving or the destination of those leaving.

11 There are differences between the data for the mixed cities reported in Table 1 and that reported at the district level in Figure 1. In the city of Haifa, for example, the Jewish population has declined as a result of negative external migration while the Arab population has grown. In contrast, in the Haifa district, migration, which was primarily positive, has increased both the Jewish population and the Arab population. This district stretches from the Krayot in the North (not including Akko) to Hadera in the South. Jews constitute 55% of the district's population.

## Table 1. Summary statistics, annual average for 2017–2020

**Percent**

| City | | Haifa | Jerusalem | Lod | Ma'alot-Tarshiha | Nof HaGalil | Akko | Ramla | Tel Aviv-Yafo |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Socioeconomic cluster | | 7 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| Population (absolute numbers) | | 283,324 | 926,831 | 77,121 | 20,606 | 41,335 | 49,028 | 76,111 | 454,318 |
| Share of Arabs in the population (%) | | 11.6 | 38.2 | 30.3 | 22.1 | 28.0 | 32.1 | 23.8 | 4.5 |
| Net migration into the city as a percent of the relevant population | Total pop | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Jews/others | 0 | 0 | 0.9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Arabs | 0.7 | 0 | 0 | **1.0** | **4.5** | 0.2 | 0 | 0 |
| Net migration out of the city as a percent of the relevant population | Total pop | 0.9 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0.4 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.1 |
| | Jews/others | **1.1** | **1.2** | 0 | 0.1 | **2.3** | **1.5** | **1.3** | 0.1 |
| | Arabs | 0 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.2 | 0.3 |
| Internal migration as a percent of the relevant population | Total pop | 0.5 | 0.2 | ;0.3 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.3 |
| | Jews/others | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.3 |
| | Arabs | 0.8 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.5 |

Note: Highlighted values in the table indicate migration rates that exceed 1%.
Source: Benjamin Bental and Labib Shami, Taub Center | Data: CBS

## Findings

In this study, we examine the annual average rates of external and internal migration by socioeconomic cluster, ignoring natural increase. The graphs present the distribution of the population in mixed cities by socioeconomic clusters and categorize migrants according to the cluster to which they belong (the "migration clusters"). The graphs show dynamic trends of change in the composition of the population as a result of migration patterns. In particular, when the rate of migrants from a particular cluster is larger than the relative share of that cluster within the migration clusters, it is expected that the proportion of that cluster will increase as long as the trend continues and vice versa.

The distribution of the population groups among the socioeconomic clusters is not uniform across cities; however, there is similarity among some of them. As can be seen in Figure 2, in Nof HaGalil and Ma'alot-Tarshiha there is no representation of the population groups in either of the two lowest socioeconomic clusters or the two highest ones. In Ma'alot-Tarshiha, most of the Arab residents (about 83%) are concentrated in cluster 5, and, in Nof HaGalil, 92% are concentrated in clusters 3 to 6 (15%, 15%, 41%, and 21%, respectively), although they are also represented in cluster 7 (10% of the Arab population in Ma'alot-Tarshiha and 7% in Nof HaGalil). With respect to Jewish residents, in Nof HaGalil, 96% of the Jews are concentrated in clusters 3 to 6 (13%, 28%, 32%, and 23%, respectively), which is similar to the distribution of Arab residents in the city. However, in Ma'alot-Tarshiha, there is no similarity in distribution between the two population groups: the Jews are distributed in cluster 3 (29%), 5 (25%), 6 (29%), and 7 (17%) while most of the Arab residents are, as noted, concentrated in cluster 5.

The lack of representation in the higher clusters is characteristic not only of Nof HaGalil and Ma'alot-Tarshiha. This is also observed in the case of Ramla, Lod, and Akko. In Tel Aviv-Yafo, in contrast, the proportion of Jewish residents living in areas belonging to cluster 8 to 10 is about 68% and in Haifa it is about 42%. The Arab residents are also represented in the high clusters both in Tel Aviv-Yafo and in Haifa, but at much lower rates (about 11% of the Arab population in each of them). In Jerusalem, 6% of the residents live in areas belonging to cluster 8 and 4% in areas belonging to cluster 9; however, most of them belong to the Jewish population. There is no population group represented in cluster 10 in the capital city.

The distribution of residents across the clusters is, of course, reflected in the ranking of the city according to the socioeconomic index. In Jerusalem, which was located in the low cluster 3, most of the Arab residents (about 93%) live in areas belonging to cluster 1, and about 71% of the Jewish residents live in areas belonging to clusters 1 to 5.[12] In Lod, which is ranked in cluster 4, the picture is similar, with about 62% of the Arab residents living in areas belonging to cluster 1 and about 89% of the Jewish residents living in areas belonging to cluster 1 to 5.

As the data show, Arab residents live in the areas belonging to the lower clusters relative to the Jewish residents (except in Nof HaGalil); however, the gaps are particularly large in the two main cities of Tel Aviv-Yafo and Haifa. In the former, about 82% of the Arab residents live in areas belonging to clusters 3 to 5, while about 68% of the Jewish residents live in areas belonging to clusters 8 to 10.[13] In Haifa, about 73% of the Arab residents live in areas belonging to clusters 1 to 5, and about 42% of the Jewish residents live in areas belonging to clusters 8 to 10.

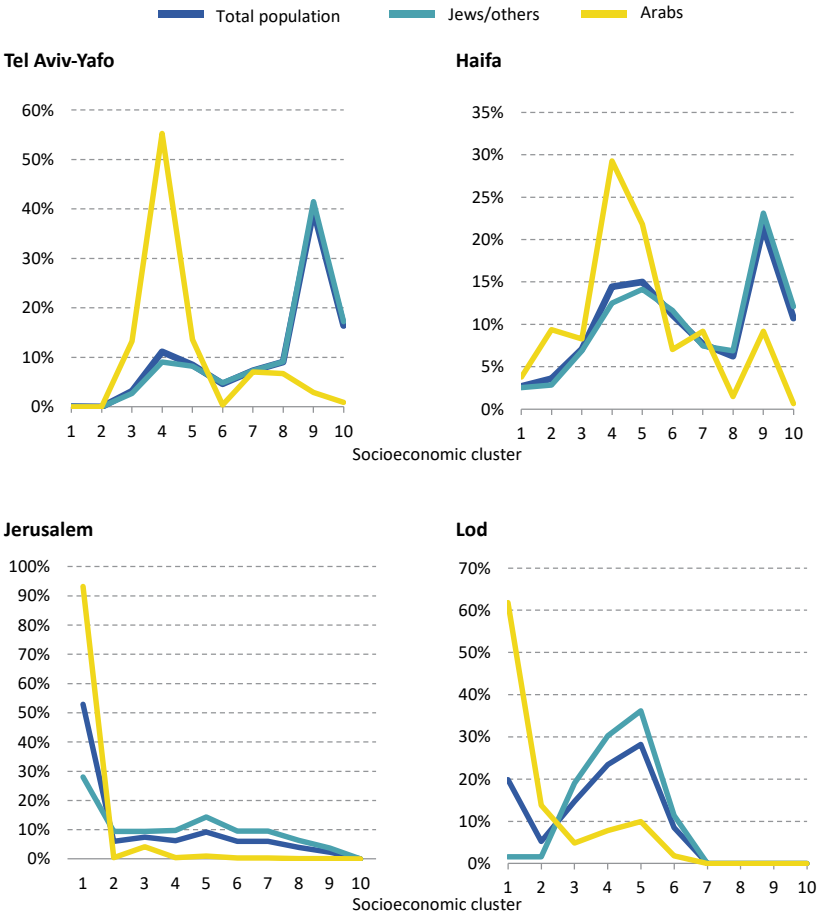
Figure 3 describes the population distribution within clusters in the mixed cities by population group and makes it possible to compare these distributions of the population across the various clusters to their average distribution in the city. As can be seen, the vast majority of residents in Lod, Ramla, Akko, and Jerusalem, who live in areas belonging to cluster 1, are Arabs. In Ramla and Lod, the Arab residents are the majority also in areas belonging to cluster 2. As a result, the proportion of Jews in the highest socioeconomic clusters in these cities is higher than their general proportion in the city. In Nof HaGalil, the share of Jewish residents in each of the clusters is close to their general share in the city.

12 Jerusalem has recently been demoted to cluster 2.

13 According to the CBS data, there is no population in cluster 2 in Tel Aviv-Yafo. The residents in cluster 1 are all Jewish, although they are small in number (about 300).

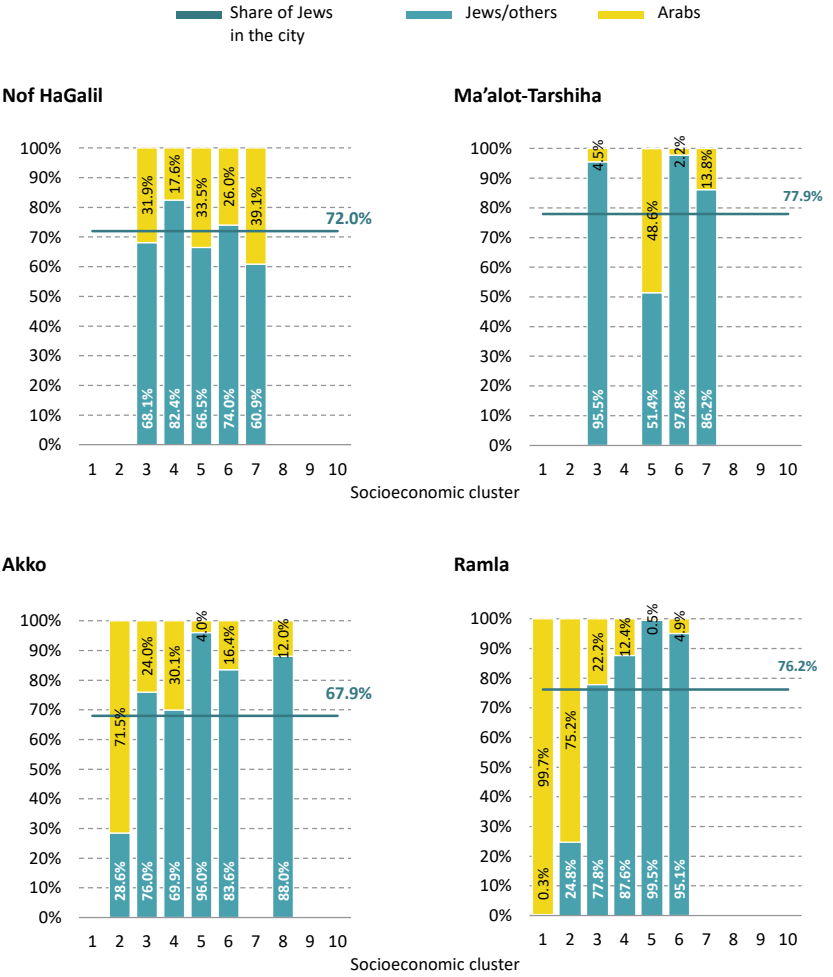
**Figure 2. The distribution of population groups across the socioeconomic clusters in the mixed cities, annual average, 2017–2020**

**Figure 2. (continued) The distribution of population groups across the socioeconomic clusters in the mixed cities, annual average, 2017–2020**

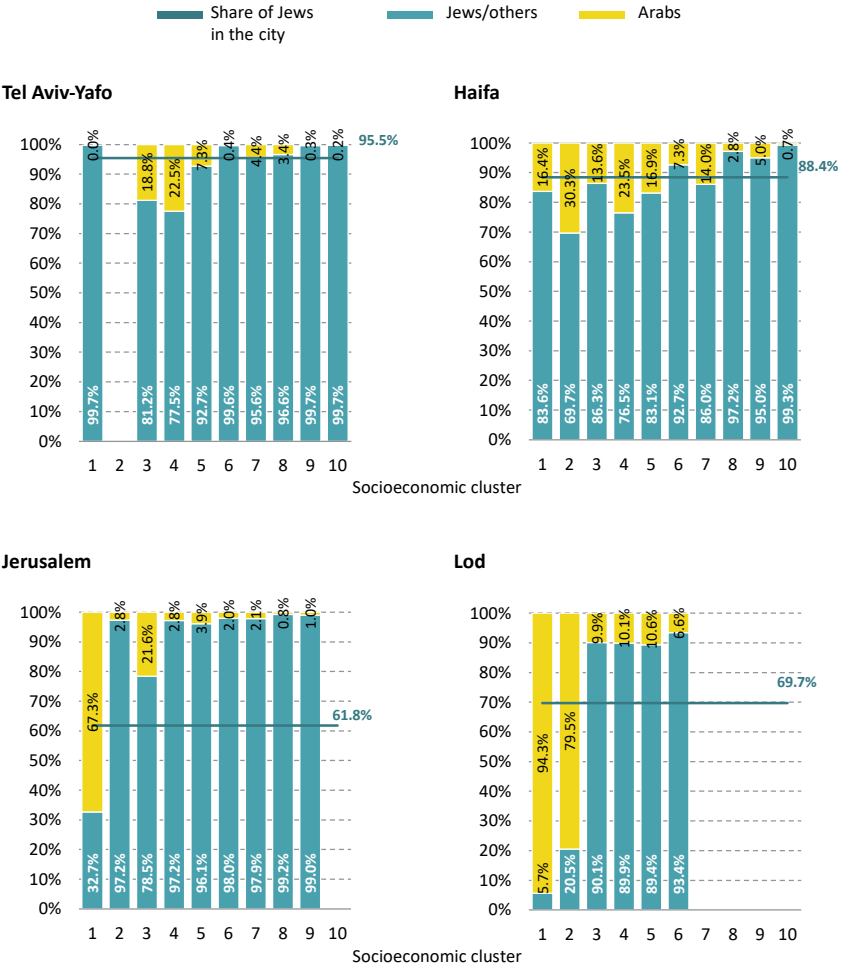



Source: Benjamin Bental and Labib Shami, Taub Center | Data: CBS

**Figure 3. Population structure within the socioeconomic clusters in the mixed cities, annual average, 2017–2020**



## Figure 3. (continued) Population structure within the socioeconomic clusters in the mixed cities, annual average, 2017–2020




Source: Benjamin Bental and Labib Shami, Taub Center | Data: CBS

## External migration patterns

Figure 4 presents the average annual rate of change in the clusters' population by city as a result of net external migration to them, according to population group.[14] This rate is calculated as the ratio of the number of migrants in any given cluster to the size of the population group in that cluster. As mentioned, the rate at which population changes within a cluster helps to understand the trend in the respective cluster's share in a city.

As can be seen in Figure 4, the migration patterns of the Jewish and Arab populations in Nof HaGalil, in Haifa (except for cluster 1), and in Akko (apart from clusters 2 and 4) are completely opposite. In other cities, there are mixed trends. Table 2 summarizes the trends shown in Figure 4.[15] The external migration of the Arab population in Jerusalem is very low. The opposing migration trends of the population groups in Haifa, Nof HaGalil, and Akko are contributing to the rise in the share of the Arab population in those cities. Nonetheless, due to the relatively large weight of the Jewish population in those cities, despite the migration of Arabs to them, the negative external migration balance of the Jews is reducing these cities' total population at average annual rates of 0.9%, 0.4%, and 1%, respectively. In Ma'alot-Tarshiha, the external migration trends among the two populations are the same as those of Haifa, Nof HaGalil, and Akko, but the positive external migration balance is contributing to an increase in the city's total population by an average annual rate of 0.1%. In Jerusalem, Ramla, and Tel Aviv-Yafo, the external migration balance is negative among both Jewish and Arab residents. These trends are reducing the populations of these cities by an annual average rate of 0.8%, 1%, and 0.1%, respectively. The composition of the city's external migration is contributing to an increase in the proportion of the Arab population in Jerusalem and Ramla and a small increase in the proportion of the Jewish population in Tel Aviv-Yafo. In Lod, unlike the other mixed cities, the external migration balance of the Jews is positive (average annual rate of 0.9%), while that of Arabs is negative (average annual rate of 0.4%). As a result, the population of Lod is growing as a result of migration processes at an average annual rate of 0.5%, and the share of its Jewish population is increasing.

14 All of the migration data herein relates to the migration balance, i.e., net data.

15 Notice again that the reported population balances relate only to external migration and do not relate at all to natural increase.

**Figure 4. The average annual rate of change of the population groups resulting from external migration, by socioeconomic cluster, 2017–2020**

**Percent**

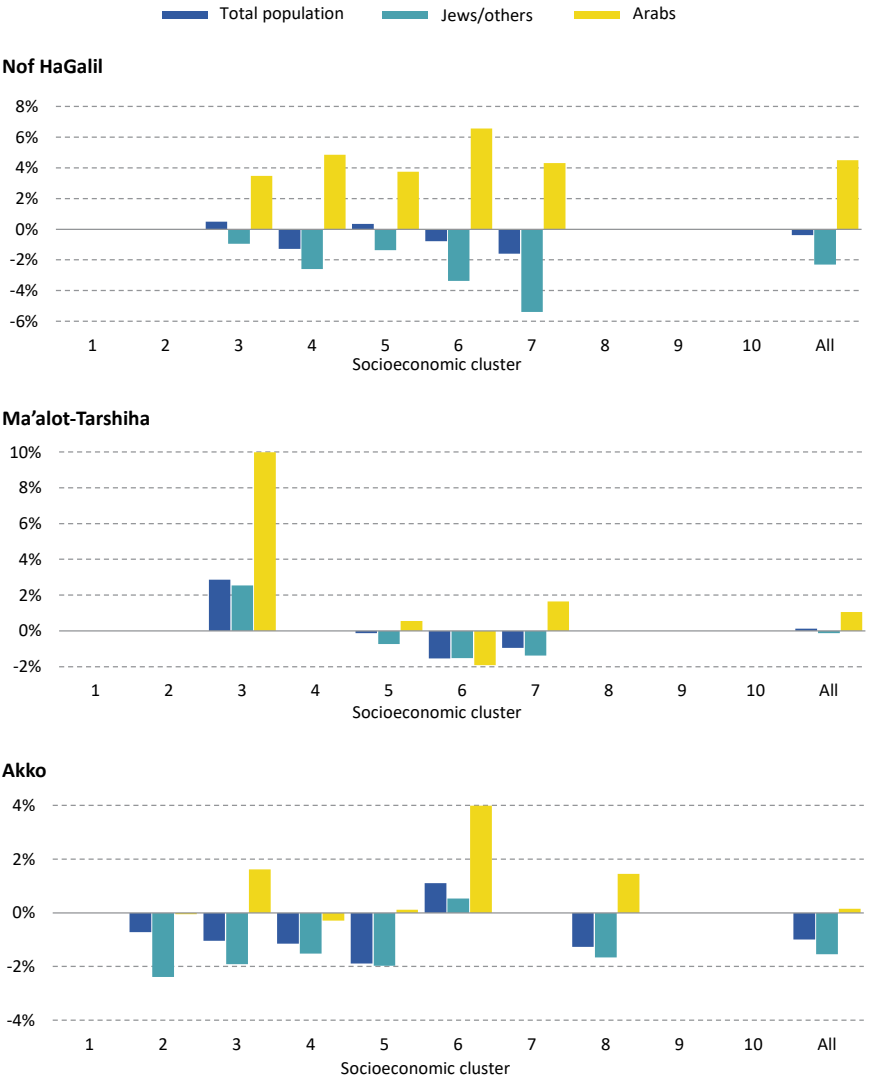
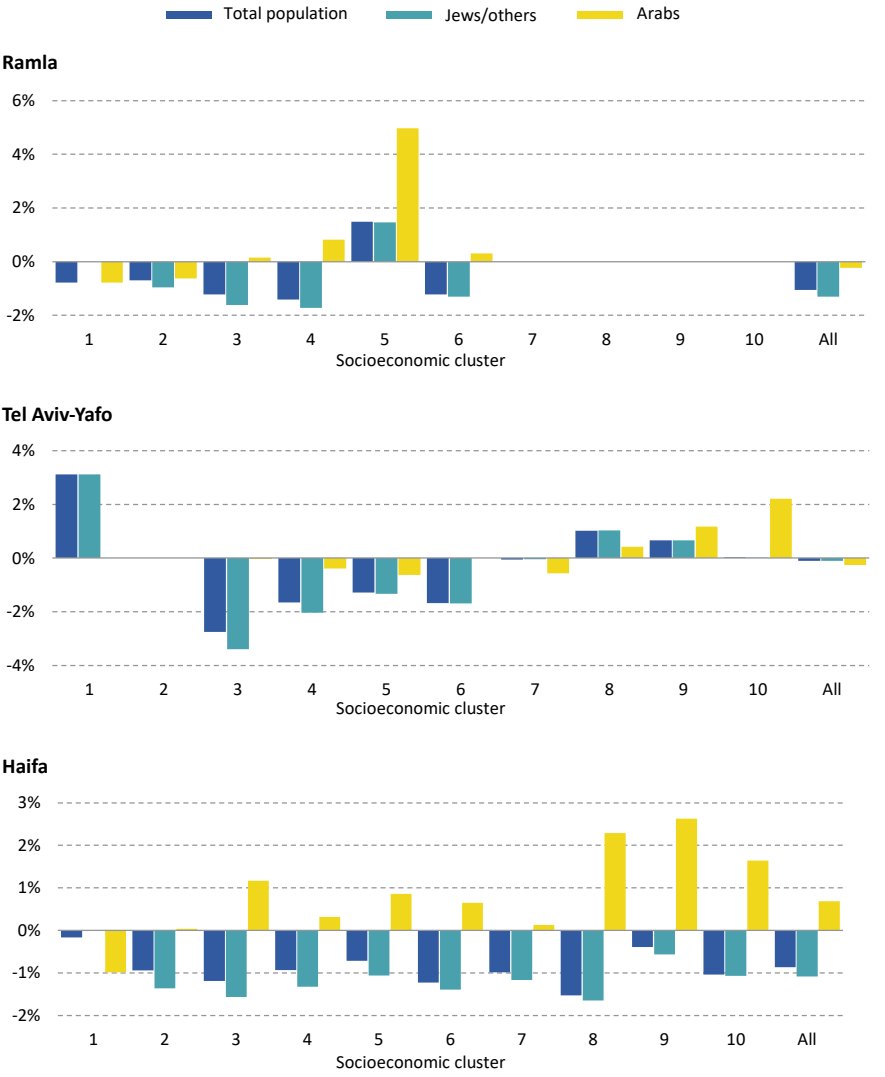


**Figure 4. (continued) The average annual rate of change of the population groups resulting from external migration, by socioeconomic cluster, 2017–2020**

**Percent**



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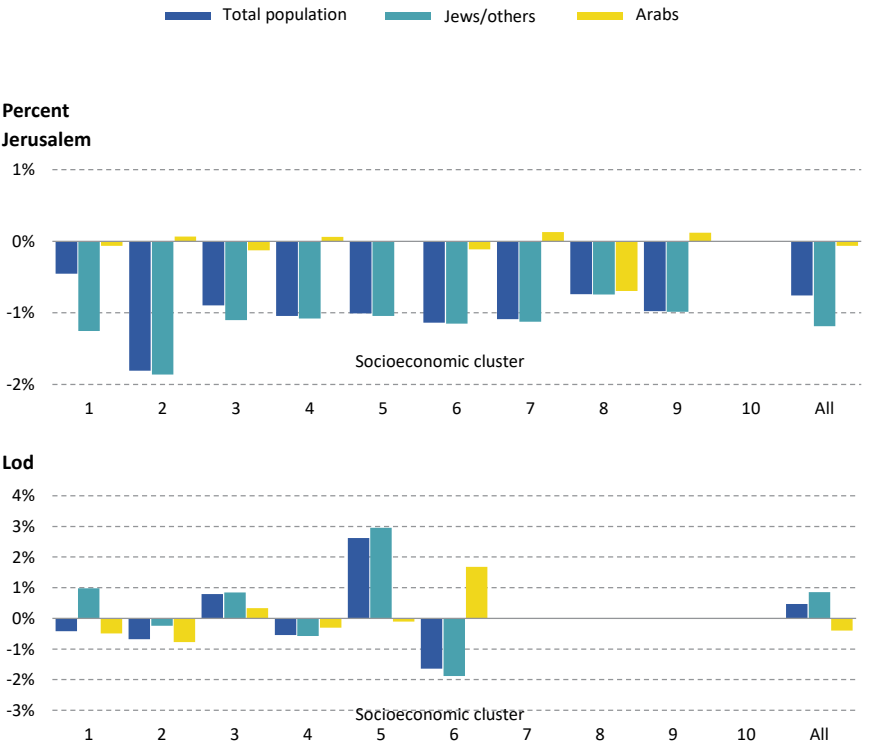



Source: Benjamin Bental and Labib Shami, Taub Center | Data: CBS

## Table 2. The average annual rate of change in population size in the mixed cities resulting from external migration, 2017–2020

| City / Population | Haifa | Jerusalem | Lod | Ma'alot-Tarshiha | Nof HaGalil | Akko | Ramla | Tel Aviv-Yafo |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jews/others | 1.1% | 1.2% | 0.9% | 0.1% | 2.3% | 1.5% | 1.3% | 0.1% |
| Arabs | 0.7% | 0.1% | 0.4% | 1.0% | 4.5% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.3% |
| Total | 0.9% | 0.8% | 0.5% | 0.1% | 0.4% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 0.1% |

Source: Benjamin Bental and Labib Shami, Taub Center | Data: CBS

## Internal migration patterns

The internal migration trends within the cities reflect changes in the economic situation of their residents and are an indicator of a possible change in their socioeconomic ranking if the changes persist.

In Nof HaGalil, the residents of both populations — Arabs and Jews — are moving from statistical areas that belong to low clusters to statistical areas that belong to higher clusters (Figure 5).[16] These patterns of internal migration point to a possible improvement in the city's socioeconomic ranking in the future. Similar trends can be observed in Haifa, Jerusalem, Lod, Akko, and Ramla.

In contrast, most of the Jewish residents who are changing their area of residence within Tel Aviv-Yafo move from statistical areas that belong to high clusters to those that belong to lower clusters (apart from a small number of residents who move to statistical areas that belong to cluster 10).[17] Among the city's Arab residents, the trend is mixed; however, overall the move is away from areas belonging to relatively high clusters to areas belonging to relatively low clusters. In Ma'alot-Tarshiha, the Arab residents who are changing their place of residence are moving from a statistical area belonging to cluster 5 to an area belonging to cluster 7 (thus, improving their housing situation) and in contrast, most of the Jewish residents are moving from statistical areas belonging to clusters 5 and 6 to areas belonging to cluster 3. Note the large differences on the vertical axis, particularly in Figure 5 resulting in the small number of residents in the cluster to which people are migrating. For example, as can be seen in Figure 2 and 3, there are basically no Arabs living in the statistical areas belonging to cluster 9 in any of the cities, and, therefore, a move of even a minimal number of Arab residents to this cluster translates into a high rate of change. Also in Ramla, the proportion of the Arab population in cluster 5 is negligible and therefore a small number of migrants to an area belonging to this cluster will result in a large relative increase. A similar phenomenon exists in Akko in the case of cluster 6.

16 By definition, net internal migration is zero. Figure 5 counts every internal migrant twice and calculates the relative changes in the relevant population in the cluster from which the person left as well as that which the person is entering.

17 We should mention that the ranking of statistical areas used in this study is for the year 2017 and things may have changed since then due to gentrification processes. Therefore, the internal migration trends reported here should be treated with caution, particularly in the case of Tel Aviv-Yafo.

## Figure 5. The average annual rate of change of the population groups resulting from internal migration, by socioeconomic cluster, 2017–2020

**Percent**

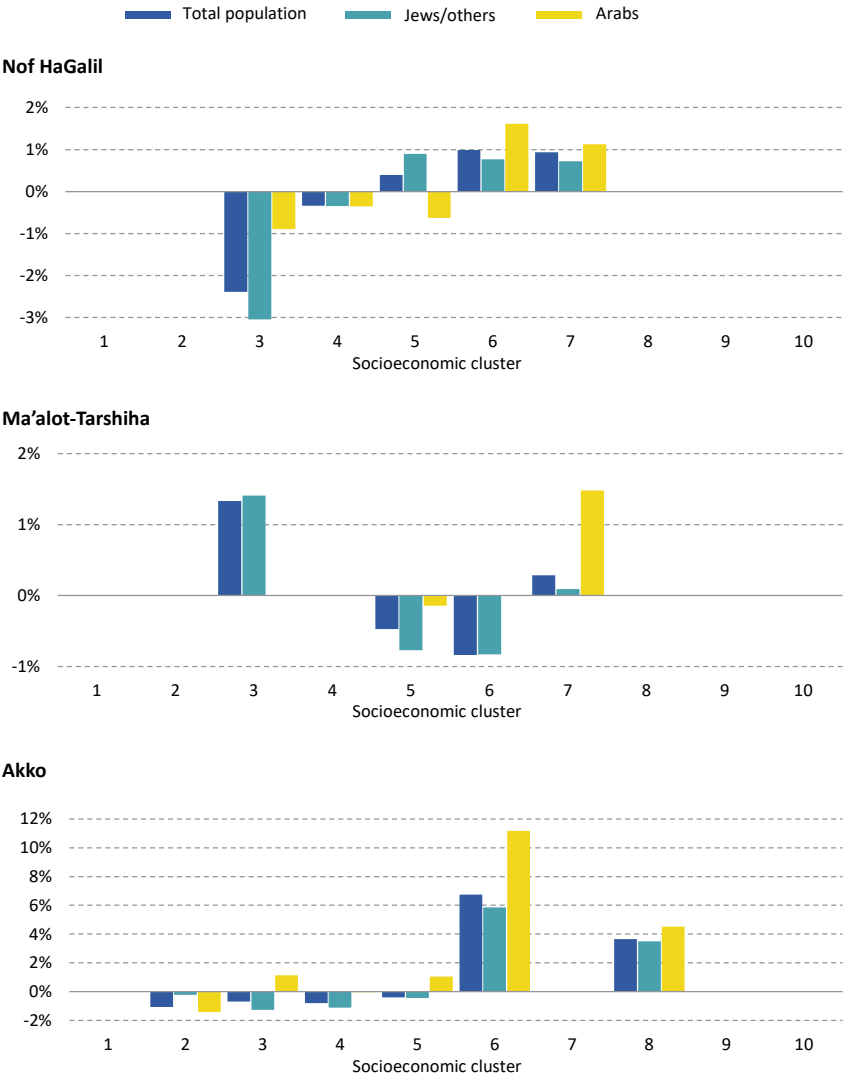


**Figure 5. (continued) The average annual rate of change of the population groups resulting from internal migration, by socioeconomic cluster, 2017–2020**

**Percent**

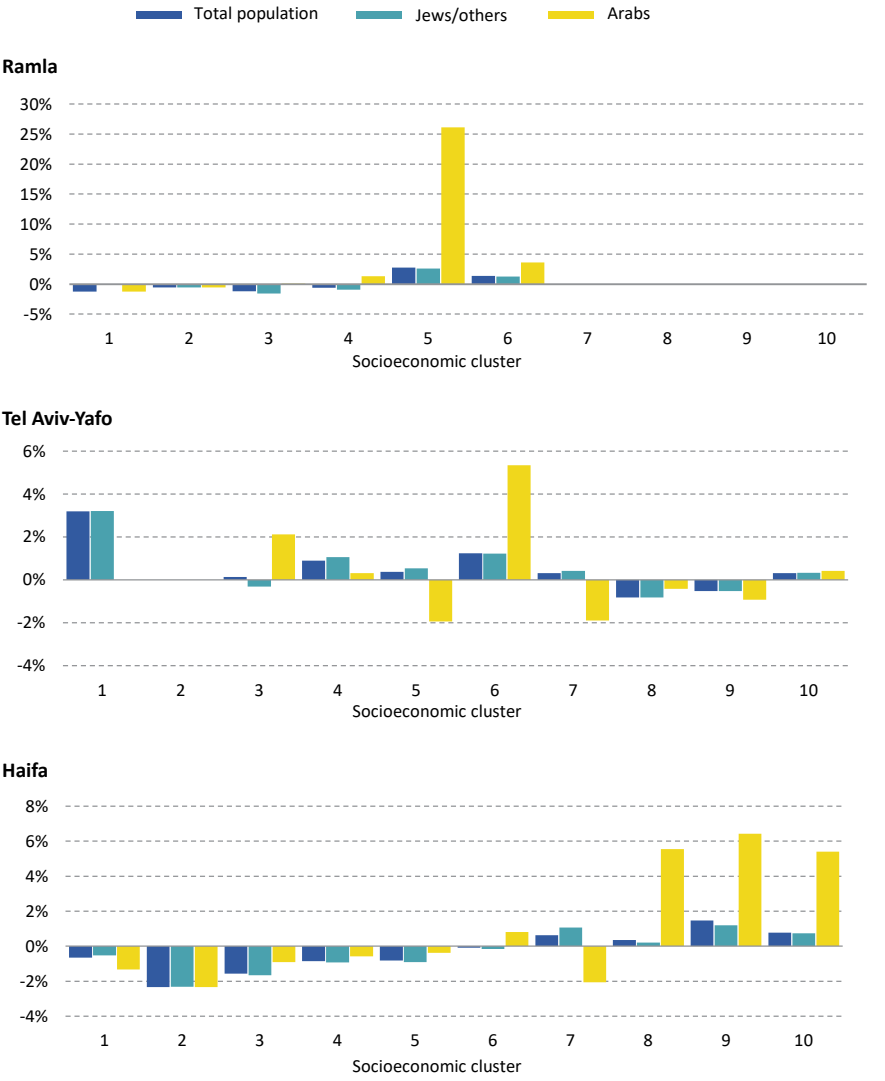
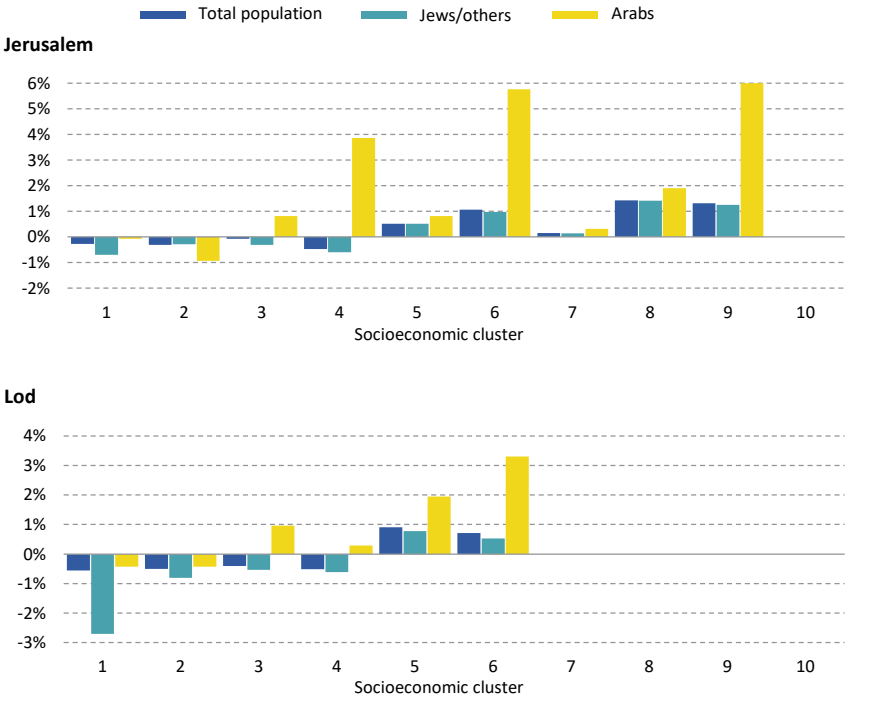


**Figure 5. (continued) The average annual rate of change of the population groups resulting from internal migration, by socioeconomic cluster, 2017–2020**




Source: Benjamin Bental and Labib Shami, Taub Center | Data: CBS

## Aggregate migration balance and its effect on a city's socioeconomic status

The external and internal migration processes may affect a city's socioeconomic status. In order to examine this possibility, we aggregated the populations of all the socioeconomic clusters that are lower than the city's socioeconomic ranking and the populations of all the clusters that are higher. For each of these aggregates, we calculated the rate of change in the Jewish population, in the Arab population, and in the city's total population as a result of external and internal migration (Figure 6). The results of the calculations make it possible to assess the direction of the effect of migration on a city's future socioeconomic ranking.

**Figure 6. The average annual aggregate balance of internal and external migration in the clusters that are lower and higher than the city's socioeconomic ranking, by population group, 2017–2020**

**Percent**

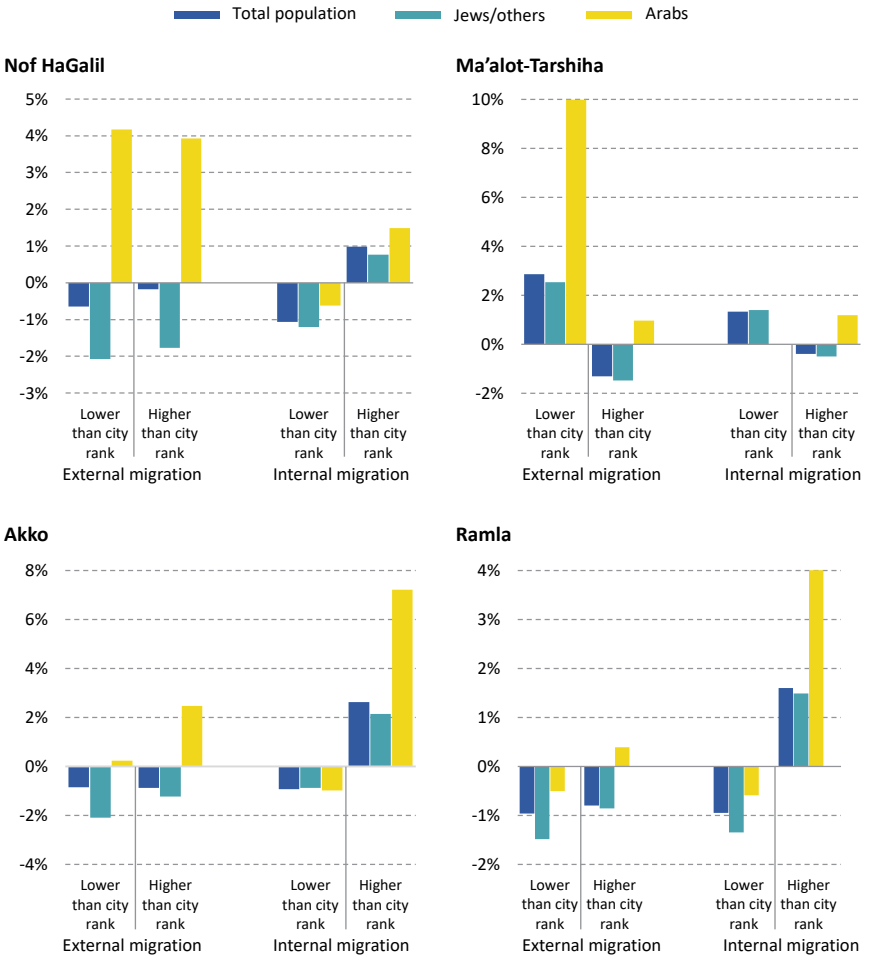


**Figure 6. (continued) The average annual aggregate balance of internal and external migration in the clusters that are lower and higher than the city's socioeconomic ranking, by population group, 2017–2020**

**Percent**


Source: Benjamin Bental and Labib Shami, Taub Center | Data: CBS

The graph shows that internal migration — of both Jews and Arabs — in Nof HaGalil, Akko, Haifa, Jerusalem, and Lod from statistical areas that are lower than the city's socioeconomic ranking is negative, and migration to higher areas is positive. These trends support the improvement in the future socioeconomic status of the city. In Jerusalem, Nof HaGalil, Akko, Ramla, and Haifa this result is reinforced by external migration trends. These cities are losing population both from areas that belong to clusters that are higher than the city's ranking and from areas belonging to lower clusters; however, the lower areas are losing population at a faster rate than the higher areas. In Lod, the process is amplified, since the general rate of external migration to the areas in the city that belong to clusters that are higher than the city's ranking is positive (1.6%), in contrast to negligible external migration in areas belonging to clusters that are lower than the city's ranking.

In Tel Aviv-Yafo, the internal migration trends are opposite to those of external migration. The local residents in the city are moving from areas that belong to clusters that are higher than the city's socioeconomic ranking (8) to areas that are lower. In contrast, migrants to Tel Aviv-Yafo settle in areas that belong to clusters that are higher than the city's ranking and migrants leaving the city are from statistical areas that belong to clusters that are lower than the city's ranking. Weighting the two trends shows that the status of the city is improving according to the existing migration data. Thus, although internal migration in the city is adding residents to the population of statistical areas that belong to clusters that are lower than the city's average socioeconomic cluster, their proportion is only 0.6% per year, in contrast to 1.3% for residents of areas belonging to clusters that are lower than the city's ranking who are leaving each year. Moreover, population is being added each year to the areas that belong to clusters higher than the city's ranking as a result of external migration at a rate of 0.5%, while the deficit in these areas as a result of internal migration to lower areas is only 0.3%.[18]

Ma'alot-Tarshiha is the only city whose socioeconomic ranking may be negatively influenced by external and internal migration. In areas belonging to clusters that are lower than the city's ranking (5), the rates are positive for both external and internal migration while in areas belonging to clusters that are higher than the city's ranking the rates are negative. Overall, this is likely to reduce the city's future socioeconomic ranking.

18 The trends are preserved also when broken down by population group.

## Conclusion

In this study, we examined trends in external and internal migration in the mixed cities in Israel and attempted to assess their possible effect on the cities' future socioeconomic status, while ignoring natural increase. The research produced three main findings. First, and perhaps foremost, is that in most of the mixed cities there is over-representation of the Arab population in statistical areas that belong to the lower socioeconomic clusters. An exception is Nof HaGalil where the two populations are similarly distributed across the socioeconomic clusters. The second finding relates to external migration patterns. Overall, Nof HaGalil, Haifa, and Akko exhibit opposing migration patterns: Jews are leaving the city while Arabs are coming to the city. These trends contribute to an increase in the proportion of the Arab population in these cities; however, since the net rate of migration is negative, their total populations are diminishing. The situation is the opposite in Lod: Arabs are leaving while Jews are arriving and there is significant growth both in the proportion of the Jewish population in the city and in Lod's total population. The migration patterns of the two groups are similar in the other cities.

The third finding is that in all of the mixed cities, apart from Tel Aviv-Yafo and Ma'alot-Tarshiha, the internal migration patterns of the population groups are characterized by a move from areas that belong to socioeconomic clusters which are lower than the city's ranking to areas belonging to clusters that are higher. These patterns apparently reflect an improvement in the economic situation of the residents in these cities and indicate a possible change in the respective city's socioeconomic ranking in the future. An exception is Tel Aviv-Yafo which is experiencing the opposite situation. Most of the Jewish residents are moving from areas that belong to a high cluster to areas belonging to a lower cluster while among Arabs — although they exhibit a mixed trend — most of the moves are also from areas that belong to a high cluster to areas that belong to a lower cluster which is lower than the city's ranking. In Ma'alot-Tarshiha, most of the Arab residents who migrate move from low socioeconomic areas to higher cluster areas while the Jewish residents move in the opposite direction, i.e., from areas with a high cluster to areas of a lower socioeconomic ranking (cluster 3).

The available data enabled only a descriptive analysis. We were unable, for example, to examine basic questions related to the process of migration like the characteristics of migrants versus residents who remain, the motivations for migration (improved employment opportunities, improved educational

frameworks for children, and more), and other questions. In addition, the external migration trends that we observed are partial only. The data enable identification of the statistical areas where migrants migrated to but not the area that they migrated from, and also does not allow a look at whether external migrants left a better standard of living in exchange for improved city services in the new location or whether their move improved both aspects of their lives.

An outlying case which can be used to deduce the motives of migrants is that of Nazareth and Nof HaGalil. The external migration balance for Nazareth between 2017 and 2020 is negative: an annual average of 546 residents (Arabs) left the city. In contrast, an annual average of 522 new Arab residents arrived in Nof HaGalil, most of them apparently from Nazareth. Nazareth belongs to cluster 3 on the socioeconomic index while Nof HaGalil belongs to cluster 5. The vast majority of the Arabs migrating to Nof HaGalil settle in statistical areas that belong to cluster 4 or higher. Therefore, it can be concluded that — at least in this case — most of the migrants are looking for an improved standard of living, from both the individual perspective and the perspective of public services.

In order to further understand migration in Israel, more in-depth research is needed that will compare migrants to residents who remain, using modern research methods in order to characterize the migrants and identify their motivations. Such research should be based on administrative data at the household level, which will make it possible to track income level, education, employment sector, number of children and their ages, and to combine them with the data and information on their place of residence.

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