



Israel's Civil Service Commission Issues Report: #Diversifying_Israeli_Civil_Service

Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues Translation

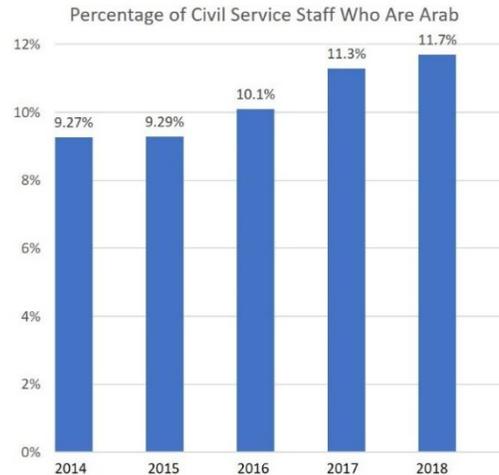
In mid-2019, the Diversity in Employment Department of Israel's Civil Service Commission issued a report, "#Diversifying_Israeli_Civil_Service," tracking diversity among government employees in 2018. The report focuses on the integration of four under-represented populations -- Arab citizens, Israelis of Ethiopian descent, people with disabilities, and new immigrants -- with a commitment to include ultra-Orthodox Jews in the next report. Over the years, the government has adopted resolutions committing to increase representation of all four population groups in the civil service, including for Arab citizens, with varying degrees of success ([full report Hebrew](#)).

The report found that Arab employees comprise 11.7% of all civil service employees, of which about two-thirds serve in the Ministry of Health and in related government services (e.g. hospitals) where they are 17% of employees. Only 22.3% of all government offices have 10% or more Arab employees and the percentage of Arab employees declines sharply with each level of seniority.

The Civil Service Commission recognizes diversity as key to effective government function and service to all citizens. According to Civil Service Commissioner Prof. Daniel Hershkowitz, "The Commission does not promote diversity as a gesture of good will or as social assistance for employees from these populations. We are doing this so that the civil service will be able to enjoy the advantages that each population brings and their ties with the wider public in the state of Israel, and thus enhance the quality of services to all citizens.

Following are some of the report's major findings regarding Arab citizens:

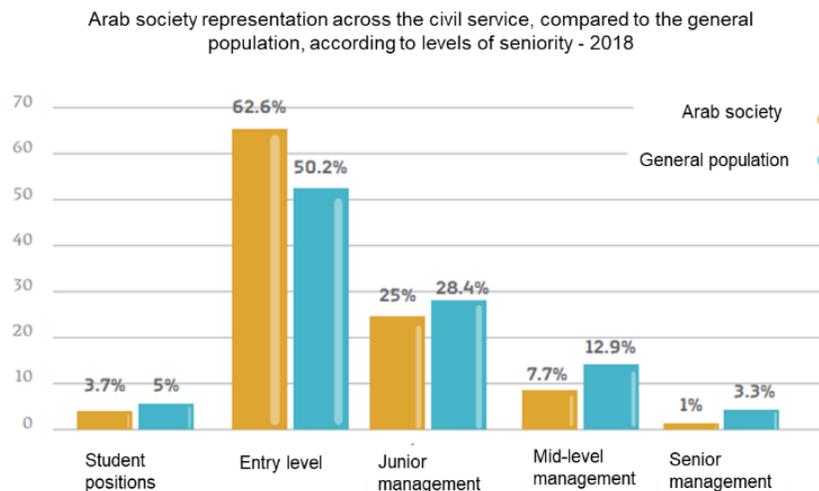
Government Targets: Government resolutions from 2007 and 2009 set a target that 10% of civil service employees should be Arab by 2012, a rate ultimately reached in 2016. The percentage of Arab staff in Israel's civil service has risen gradually, including a rise of 0.5 percentage points from 2017 to 2018. The report states that government targets "defined [for each population] apply to all government offices, branches and hospitals, in all levels of civil service hierarchy and in all hiring methods, including regarding student positions."



Number of Arab Employees: The Israeli civil service employs 78,594 personnel in 95 departments. Of these, 9,410 (11.7%) were Arab employees in 2018. However, the percentage varies widely across government ministries.

Arab citizens are 17% of employees in The Ministry of Health and its subsidiaries, close to their ratio in the general population, meeting governmental targets of 10% in the students and junior level positions, coming close to them in mid-level positions but still having a “long way to go” in the senior level positions. These employees are almost 65% of all Arab staff in the civil service. The report states that Arab employees in all the other government offices “do not meet the government target of Arab society representation in any of the levels of seniority,” meaning that they comprise less than 10% of senior-level employees.

Entry-Level Positions: The report states that Arab employees are over-represented in entry-level positions compared with the general population. While 50.2% of civil service employees are in entry-level positions, 62.6% of Arab employees are in these positions, with their number and relative representation dropping sharply as seniority rises so that only 1% of Arab civil servants are in the highest managerial level, compared with 3.2% of the general population.



Seniority: The representation of Arab employees in the civil service varies with levels of seniority.

- Student positions: 8.6%
- Entry-level: 14.6%

- Junior management: 10.3%
- Mid-level management: 7%
- Senior management: 3.5%

Gender: 57% of Arab civil service employees are men and 43% are women, in contrast to the gender ratio among civil service employees in general, which is 62% women and 38% men.

Targeted Positions: Of all positions advertised in 2018, 4.4% (354 positions) were “targeted positions” specifically reserved for Arab candidates. Of those, 86% were filled (the same rate as positions advertised in the general population). In 2018, 18% of Arab civil service staff are employed in such targeted positions and 82% hold positions open to the entire population. The report further states that 77% of the ‘targeted positions’ throughout the civil service are in entry-level and junior management positions and only 1.2% of these ‘targeted positions’ are in senior management. As a result of this finding, the Diversity Department has instructed all HR departments and relevant personnel in all government departments to define a greater number of senior management positions to be filled by Arab employees.

Special Assistance for Arab Employees: As most Arab citizens live in towns and cities far from government offices largely located in Jerusalem, the state provides rent assistance and reimbursement for occasional night stays in Jerusalem to Arab government employees. According to the report, only 5.8% of Arab civil servants made use of the former form of assistance and only about 1% used the latter. The Diversity Department suggests raising awareness of these programs to increase the number of Arab employees who take advantage of them and suggests examining additional possible incentives such as allowing employees to work from home for part of their week.

Hiring Practices: According to the report, the Exams and Tenders Department within the Commissioner’s office, which is responsible for overseeing hiring of all civil service employees, has expanded its activity to create more diverse, inclusive and accessible government hiring practices. These include working more closely with Human Resources departments in all government offices to increase diversity; enhancing marketing and publicity of positions by different methods such as collaborating with civil society organizations and employment centers and conducting numerous employment fairs; modifying selection and hiring criteria on issues such as language (candidates can be tested in five languages in addition to Hebrew) and relying on researchers’ recommendations for adapting hiring practices. These modifications and new initiatives led to a 50% increase in candidates from diverse backgrounds in 2018, with 30% more Arab candidates applying to targeted positions. Arab candidates pass entry requirements at the same rate as the general population, about 63%.

The Diversity Department has held training activities for “diversity officers,” employees tasked within various ministries and departments to increase hiring diversity. Educational activities have been conducted for human resources departments and senior managers about the importance of diversity to the future of the civil service. The Diversity Department has also produced a guide for hiring diverse populations and conducts training seminars for relevant government personnel. It also holds informational events for candidates from under-represented groups to enhance their knowledge of and comfort level with employment in the civil service.

Future Civil Service Leadership: The report examines select leadership programs that train future civil service leadership, including evaluating their diversity of participants, lecturers and study materials. The report states that diversifying these leadership programs will enable greater numbers of under-represented Israelis to ultimately work in more senior government positions and that familiarizing

participants with the diversity of Israeli society will enhance the overall cultural sensitivity of the future leaders of the civil service.

Below is some of the data relevant to Arab society:

- Civil Service Cadets Program: This six-year program established in 2010 includes two years of higher education studies in Public Administration and then a four-year placement period. To date, 10 of the 194 graduates of this program, 5%, are Arab. No data is provided about staff or content of this program.
- MA in Public Administration for Civil Service Managers: A program in collaboration with Hebrew University for 25 mid-level managers annually. From 2016 to 2018, 68 participants graduated of which only 3 (4.3%) are Arabs. The program includes various components about diversity in Israeli society, including field trips. None of the program's 24 lecturers is Arab.
- Advanced Training for Upcoming Mid-Level Managers: A program of the National College for Leadership, Governance and Management, which is a government body established in 2016. Between 2016-2017 the program graduated 188 civil servants, of which 16 (8.5%) are Arabs. No data is provided about staff or content of this program.
- Senior Management Associates Program: A program implemented by the National College for Leadership, Governance and Management. Between 2016-2018 the program graduated 142 civil servants, of which 10 (7%) are Arabs. No data is provided about staff or content of this program.

The report states that due to the low representation of all under-represented groups in the cadet programs, the Diversity in Employment Department will map the programs and work with them to increase the diversity of participants.