



Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues

Israel Public Employment Service¹ Report:
New Registrants in the Employment Service over the Corona Crisis
A comparison between the Arab and Jewish population

May 14, 2020

IATF² translation. Original Hebrew report [available here](#).

Executive summary

This report conducts a preliminary comparison between the rate of Arab and Jewish newly unemployed as registered with the Employment Service, as well as between the Bedouin population in the Negev and East Jerusalem Arabs. The purpose of the report is to show whether, over the course of the Corona crisis, there were changes in the unemployment characteristics in Arab society.

The data presented in the report is intended to help formulate policy recommendations and to adapt the programs that the Employment Service runs to meet the needs of this population. The Arab population in this report is defined as Muslims, Christians, and Druze, whose country of birth is not one of the former Soviet Union countries.

The initial findings of the report show that there is only a small difference in the reason for registration in the Employment Service between the Arab and Jewish population, given that about 88-89% of all unemployed were employees who were forced to take unpaid leave by their employer.

That said, when looking at the data in-depth, gaps emerge between groups, such as the high rate of men and young people in the Arab population. In particular, it is possible to see that the Corona crisis has had more damaging impact on young [Arab] people up to the age of 34. The report also indicates that the Arab population living in communities in Central, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem districts were more affected than those living in other districts.

Gaps also exist among subgroups. For example, among the Bedouin population in the Negev, there is a higher proportion of new jobseekers who have been laid off, as well as a higher

¹ The **Israeli Employment Service (IES)** is a government corporation with that (1) collects and analyses labor market data and trends to inform government policy and regulation; and (2) supports placement and training of registered unemployed via nation-wide public employment service bureaus as well as in cooperation with other employment agencies. IES also helps unemployed access financial benefits and assistance, in cooperation with the National Insurance Institute (NII).

² The **Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues (IATF)** is a non-partisan educational organization dedicated to providing resources and learning opportunities about Arab citizens and Jewish-Arab relations in Israel to the American Jewish community. Read more at iataskforce.org

proportion of income support claimants, compared to the general Arab population. In the demographic aspect, among Arabs of East Jerusalem there is a higher proportion of men and young people up to the age of 34 who were affected by the crisis, compared to their proportion among jobseekers from East Jerusalem before the crisis broke out.

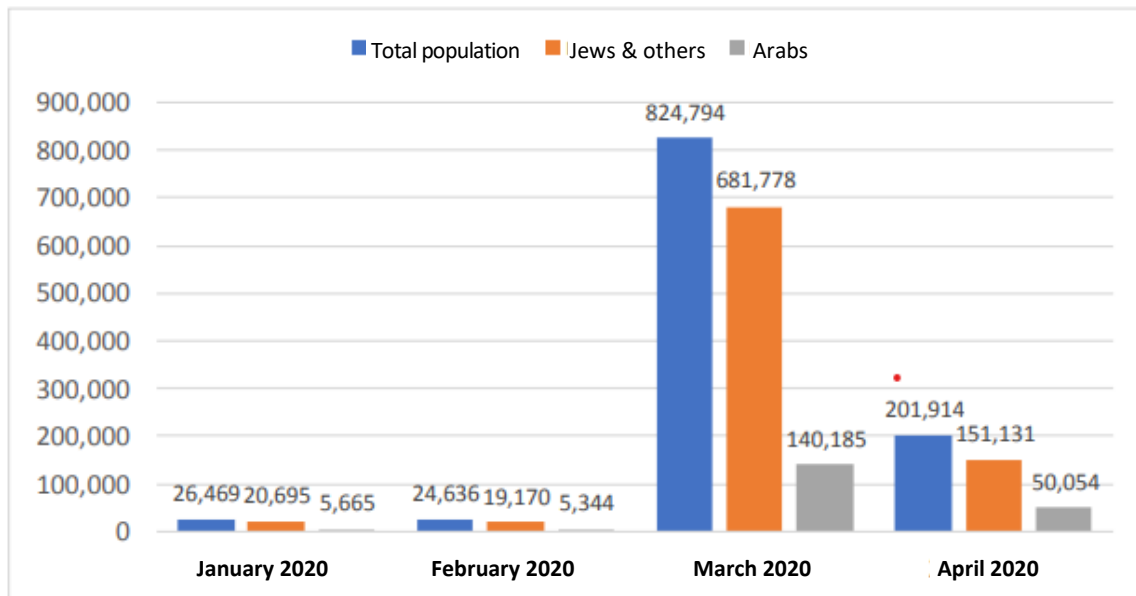
A. New registrant characteristics

1) Number of new registrants

In March-April 2020, there were 1,027,000 newly registered jobseekers among the general population, of whom 190,000 were Arabs. This group constitutes 18.6% of the new registrants during this period, while their percentage in the working age (25-64) population is 19.6%. The rate of Arab registrants during these months is smaller compared to registrants in January-February 2020 – 21.5%.

In addition, there is a significant gap in the Arab population between March and April. If in April the new registration rate from this sector was 24.9%, during March, the first month of the crisis, the rate stood at 17.3%. This could indicate a sectoral affiliation, but also asymmetrical damage of the crisis to different population groups at different stages of the crisis.

Figure 1: Number of new registrants in the Employment Service, 2020

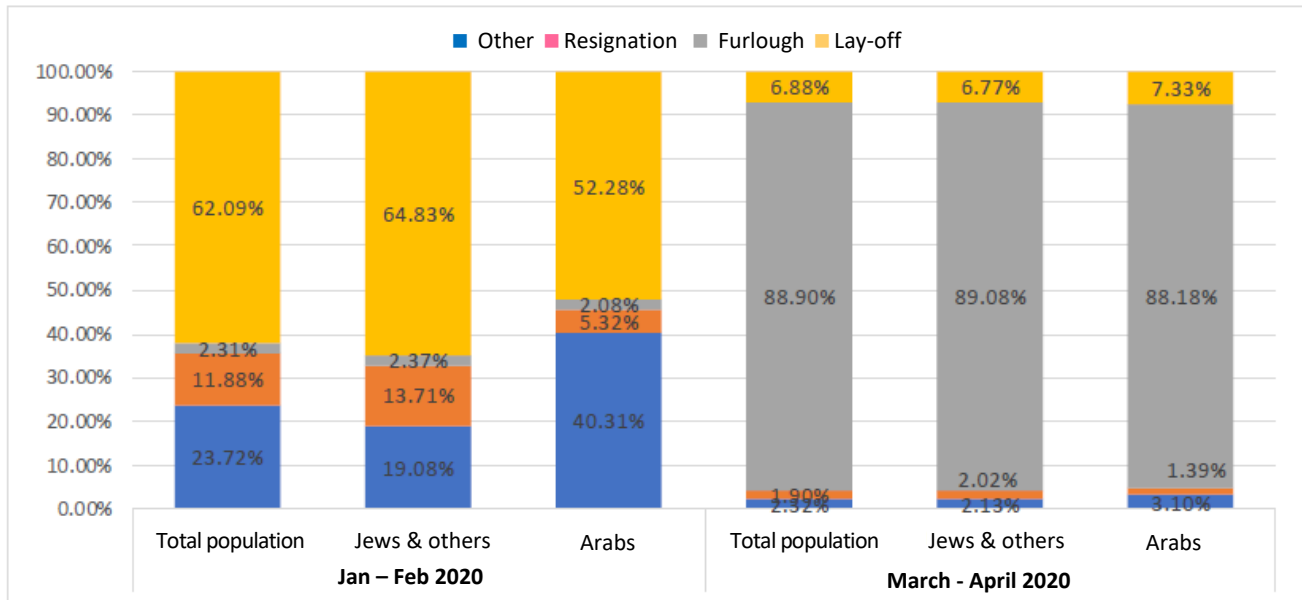


2) Reason for registration

The reasons for registration among the Arab population in March-April 2020 were not significantly different from the Jewish population (Figure 2). 7.3% of the new Arab registrants in March-April 2020 registered with the Employment Service due to dismissal (compared with 6.8% of the Jewish population). 88.2% of the Arab population registered due to unpaid leave (compared with 89.1% of the Jewish population). In addition, 1.4% of the new Arab registrants resigned and 3.1% registered due to other causes. Compared to the corresponding period in January-February 2020, the proportion of resignations in the Arab and Jewish population

remained relatively similar.³ It is also important to note that the rate of Arabs who went on unpaid leave is only slightly lower than the Jewish population (88.2% versus 89.1%, respectively). This figure is particularly salient given the low employment rates of the Arab population (about 60% for the ages 15-69, according to a 2018 Survey by the Central Bureau of Statistics).

Figure 2: Reason for registration among new registrants, 2020



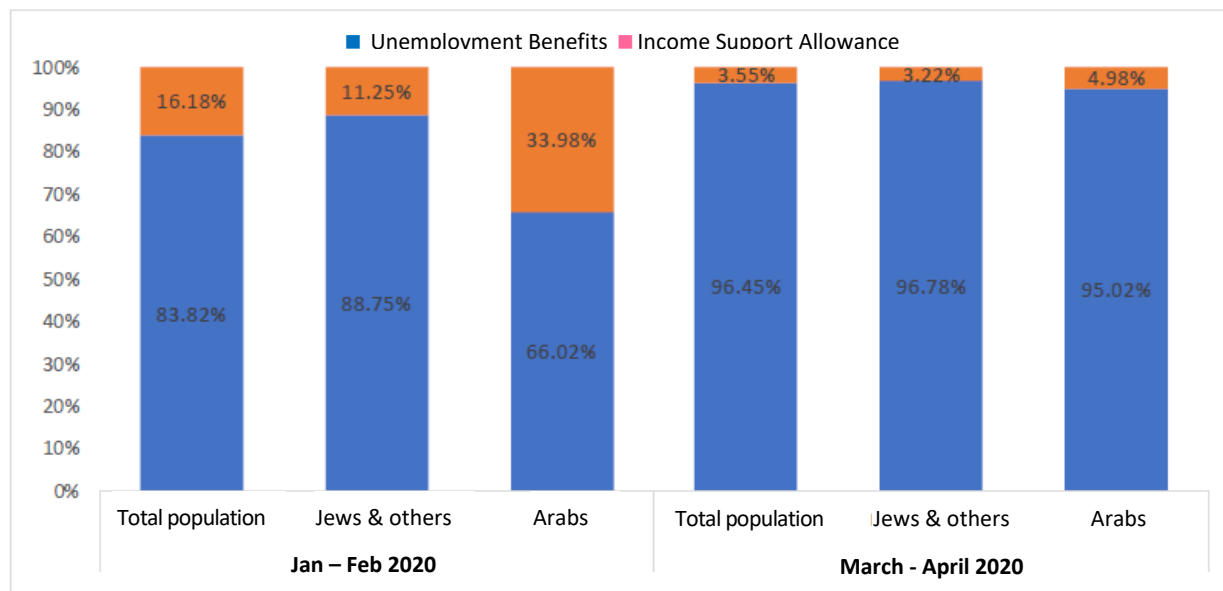
3) Claim Type

The increase in the number of people who registered with the Employment Service in March, especially among those who went on unpaid leave, led to an increase in rate of registrants claiming unemployment benefits. This increase was reflected both in the general population (96.5% in March-April 2020 compared with 83.3% in January-February 2020) and in the Jewish and Arab populations.

With that, the rate of income support claimants in March-April 2020 among Arab registrants is higher than the rate of Jewish registrants (5% versus 3.2%, respectively). Despite the relatively low rate of income support claimants, there has been a significant increase in the number of income support claimants in both Arab and Jewish society (approximately 9,500 registrants in the Arab population and approximately 26,800 in the Jewish population). These findings reinforce the fear that job seekers from this population will find it more difficult to reintegrate into the labor market. Hence, achievements that were secured during the last 15 years could be damaged if this trend persists.

³ In January-February 2020, the number of resignations in the Jewish population was 2.5 times that in the Arab population.

Figure 3: Rate of allowance claimants, 2020



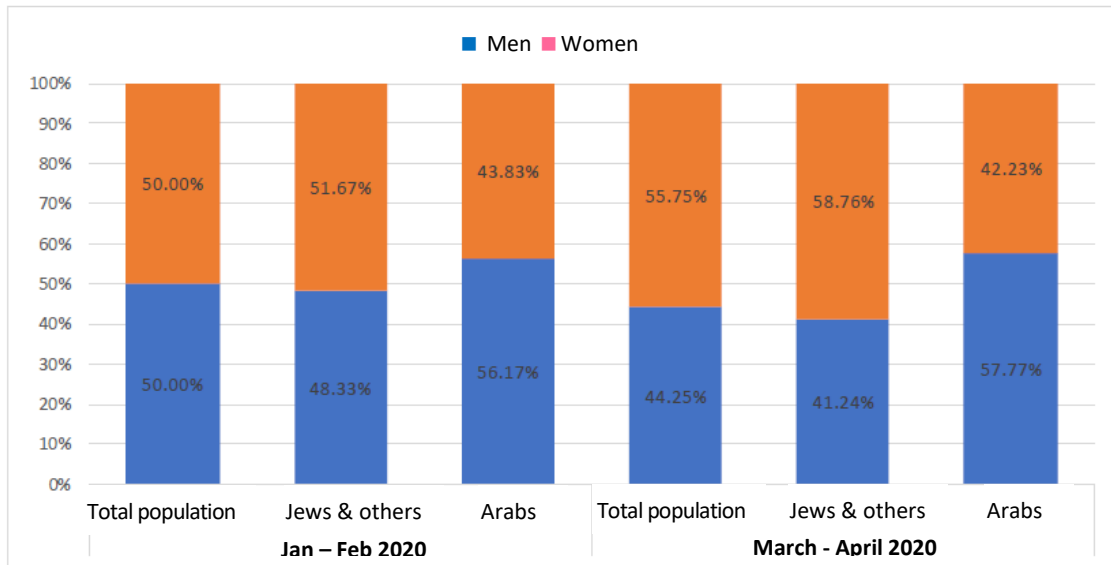
4) Gender

Most of the registrants (56.2%) among the Arab population in January-February 2020 were men (Figure 4) compared with only 43.8% among Arab women. This figure stands out compared to the portion of male registrants among Jews (48.3%) and the general population (50%). In March -April, the proportion of male registrants increased in general, and in the Arab population to 57.8%. In contrast, the gap between genders among the Jewish and other populations deepened during that period, and the proportion of new registrants among men in the Jewish and other population declined from 48.3% before the crisis to 41.2%.

One of the reasons for the differences between populations and, in particular between women and men in the Arab sector, is due to the low rate of women's participation in the labor market. According to National Insurance data, the employment rate for Arab women was 47.7%⁴ before the crisis, while for men it was 78.9%. In addition, the proportion of women in both the Jewish and Arab populations is expected to change (at least to a certain point) with the return of the teaching staff. However, the rate of teaching staff in Arab society is lower than in Jewish society, so this effect will be more limited for the former.

⁴ IATF footnote: This rate is significantly higher than the rate used by the Ministry of Labor of 38.2% in 2019.

Figure 4: Rate of new registrants by gender, 2020

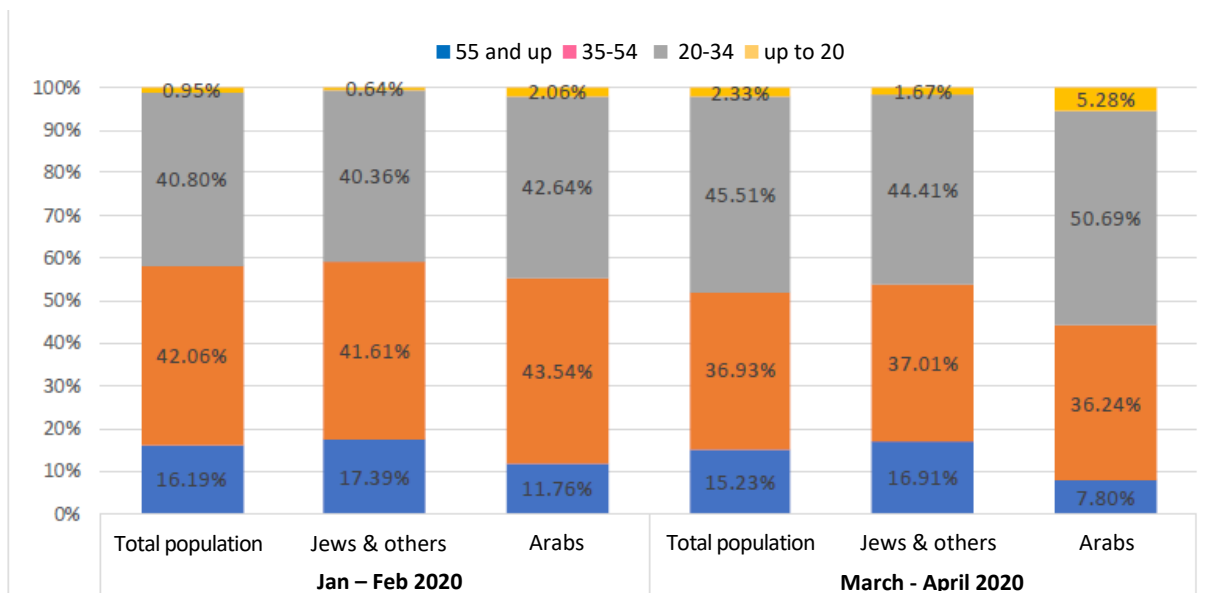


5) Age groups

About half of new Arab registrants are young people in the 20-34 age group (50.7%). The gap is particularly noticeable both in comparison with January and February 2020 numbers, when the rate of new young registrants was 42.6%, and compared with Jewish registrants, where there is only a small increase (44.4% in March-April versus 40.4% in January-February).

The increase of young unemployed from the Arab population is also evident in the youngest working age. The rate of new registrants in the under 20 Arab population reached 5.3% in March-April 2020, compared with 2.1% in January-February. This high rate may be a result of the early entry of this population to the job market. At the same time, the proportion of young workers also stems from the high proportion of Arab adults (55+) who leave the labor market at an earlier age and do not even register as unemployment benefits claimants.

Figure 5: Rate of new registrants by age groups, 2020

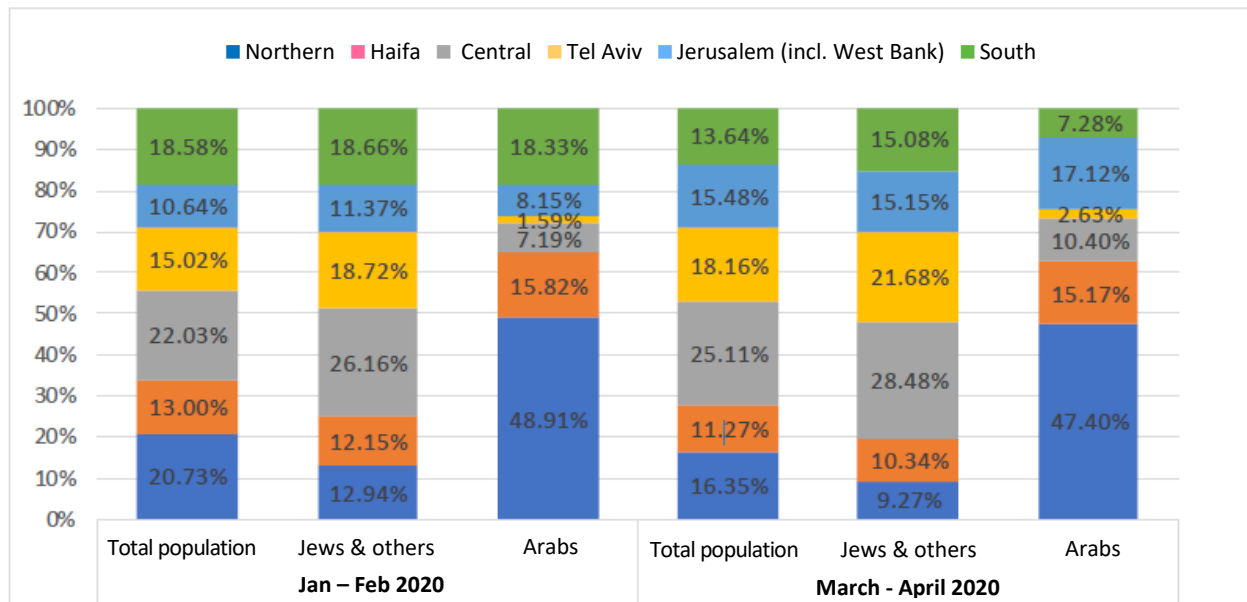


6) Geographic layout

The number of new Arab registrants is particularly high in the Northern District. This figure stands out compared to the general population (47.4% and 16.4% in March 2020 respectively). The disparity in the districts is influenced by the differences in the geographical distribution of the Jewish and Arab population among the districts.

The variance between the new registrants during the Corona crisis and those in the earlier periods is even more noticeable. Among the Arab population, an increase in the proportion of new registrants in the districts can be seen in Jerusalem (17.1% in March-April vs 8.2% in January-February), Tel-Aviv (2.6% vs. 1.6%), and the Central district (7.2% in January- February compared to 10.4% March-April).

Figure 6: Distribution of new registrants in districts, 2020



7) Professions

There are also gaps in the professions between March-April and January-February. Among the Jewish population in March-April 2020, there was an increase in the new registration rate in education and training professions (15.5%), sales (9.8%) and food and restaurant sectors (6.5%), however, among the Arab population there was an increase in the transport and vehicles sectors (10.4%), sales (7.7%), and education and training (8.5%)

Figure 7: The 10 professions most impacted by the crisis among Jews and others, 2020

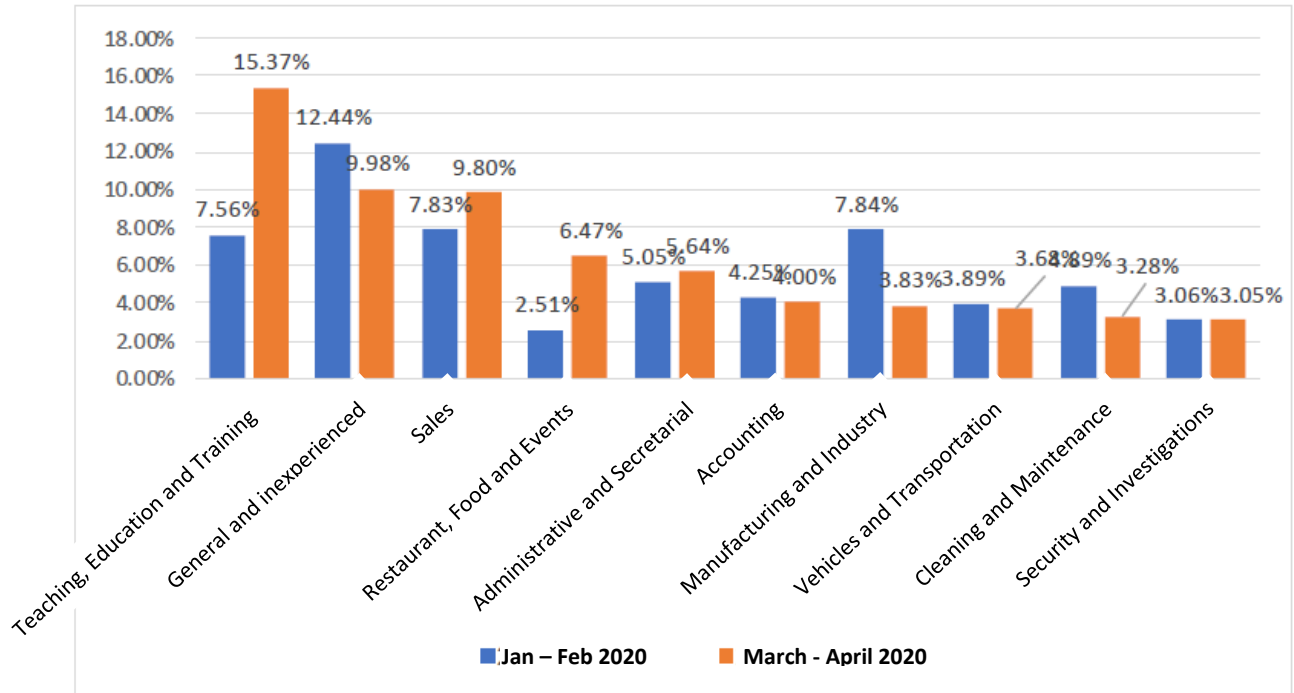
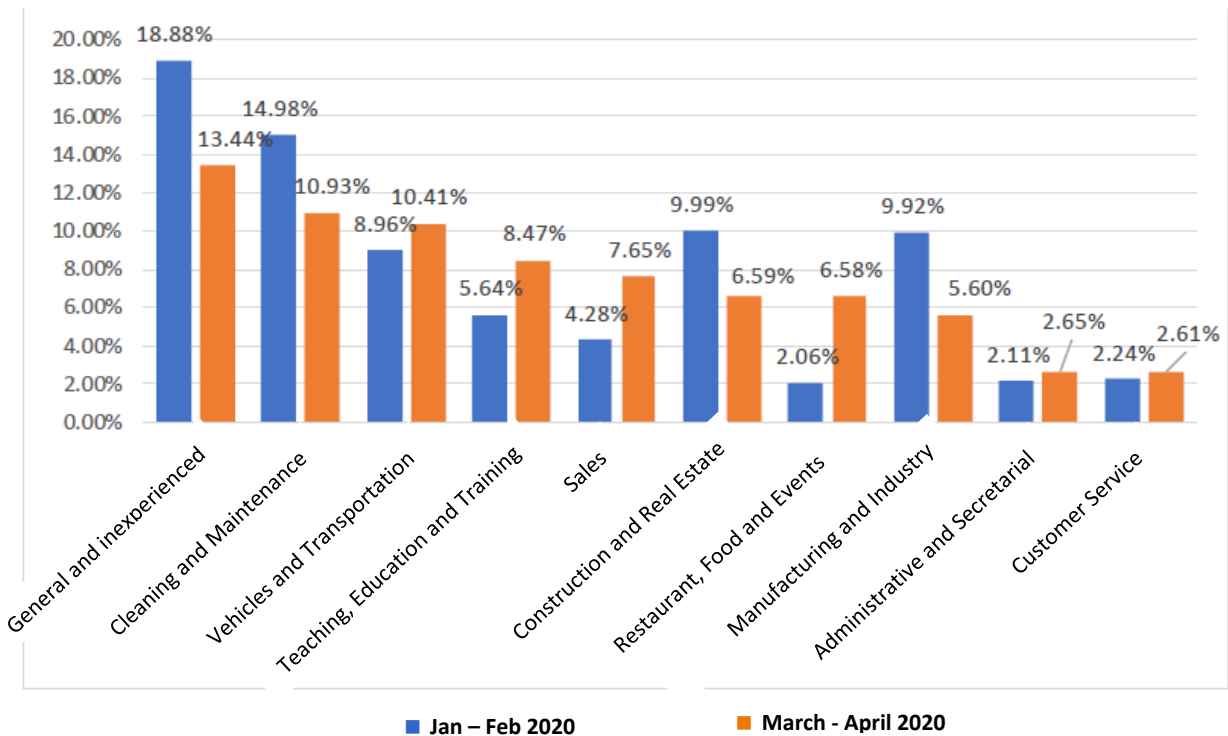


Figure 8: The 10 professions most impacted by the crisis in the Arab population, 2020



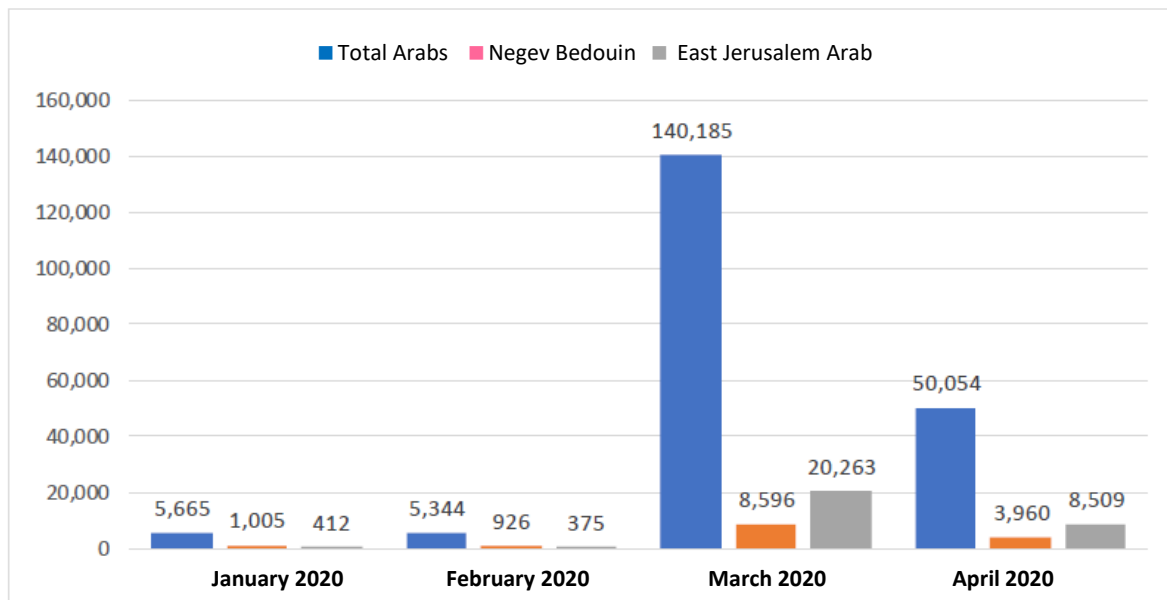
B. The effects of the Corona crisis among the Bedouin in the Negev and among Jerusalem Arabs

1) Number of registrants

In March 2020, around 8,600 new job seekers from the Bedouin sector in the Negev registered with the Employment Service. These job seekers make up 6.1% of all new Arab registrants in Israel. In April, the number of registrants from this group dropped to 4,000, but that constitutes 7.9% of the new registrants that month.

Among the Arab population of Jerusalem, about 20,200 new job seekers registered in March, which is 14.5% of the total new registrants among the Arab population. The rate of this group increased in April to about 17% of the new registrants among the Arab population during April (approximately 8,500 new registrants).

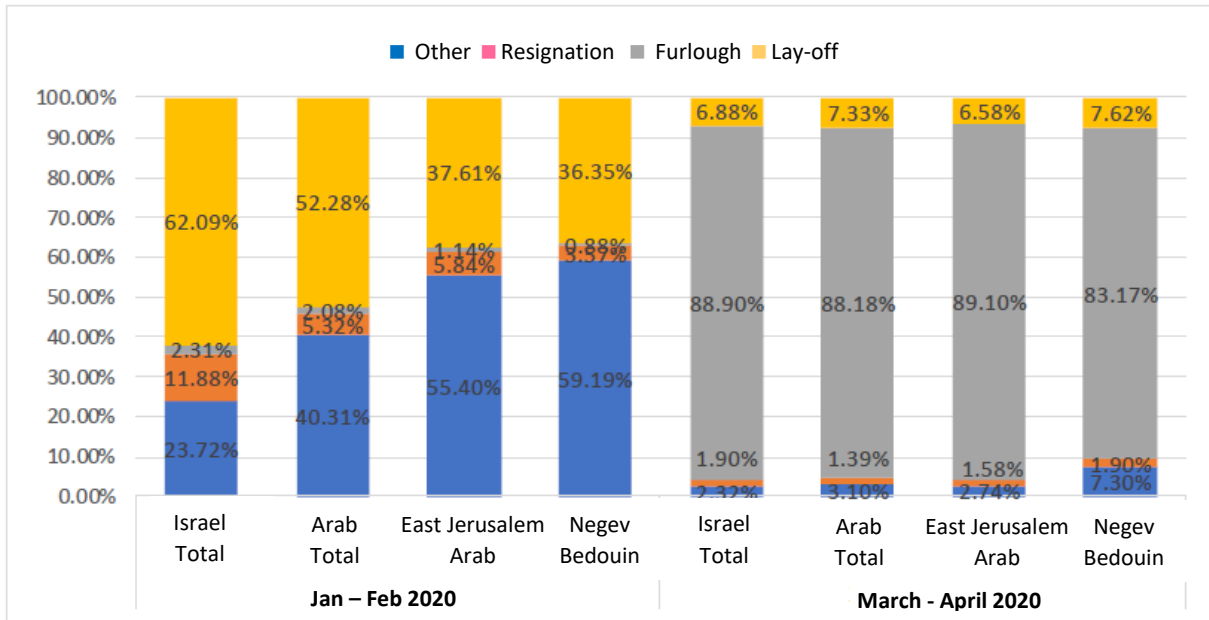
Figure 9: Number of new registrants, East Jerusalem and Bedouin in the Negev, 2020



2) Reason for registration

The gap in the reasons for registration between East Jerusalem residents and the general Arab population does not appear to be significant. In contrast, we can point to a noticeable gap between Bedouin in the Negev and the Arab and Jewish populations. 83.2% of new Bedouin registrants went on unpaid leave, compared to 88.2% of those from the general Arab population. Another difference is the relatively high number of "other" reasons (mostly those who are not looking for a job or work for low wages) – 7.3% of the Bedouin population noted it as their reason for registration, compared with 3.1% of the Arab population and 2.3% of the general population.

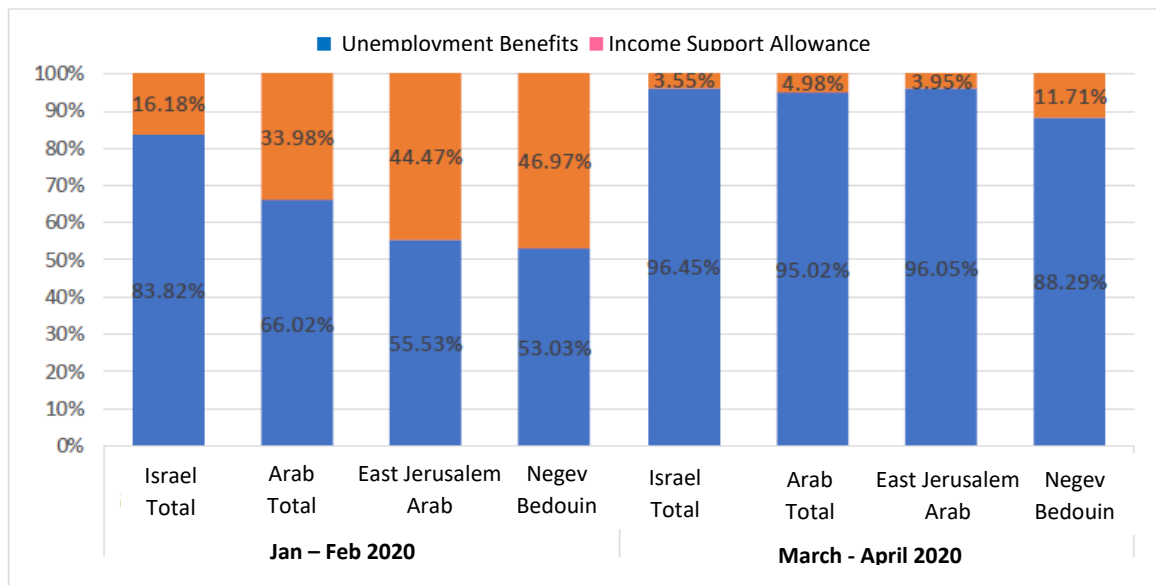
Figure 10: Number of new registrants, East Jerusalem and Bedouin in the Negev, 2020



3) Claim

The rate of new registrants among income support claimants in the months prior to the crisis was particularly high compared with the general Arab population (34%), both among Jerusalem Arabs (44.5%) and among the Bedouin in the Negev (47%). With the outbreak of the crisis, the rate of unemployment benefit claimants rose in both groups in relation to income support claimants. The rate of income support claimants among East Jerusalem Arabs dropped to 4%, lower than the corresponding rate among the general Arab population (5%). In contrast, the rate of income support claimants among Bedouin in the Negev is higher than the general Arab population and stood at 11.7% during these months.

Figure 11: Reason for registration among the Bedouin population in the Negev and East Jerusalem residents, 2020

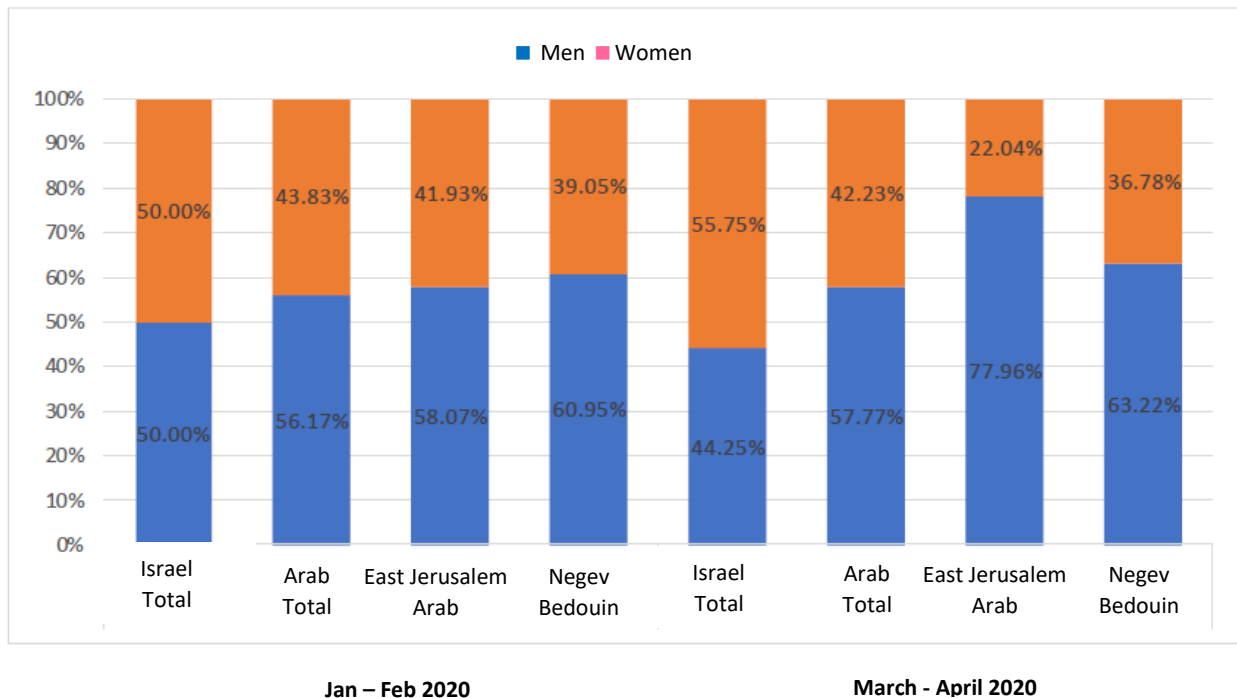


4) Gender

As mentioned above, the new registration rate among men in the general Arab population increased from 56.2% in January-February to 57.8% in March-April. But the Corona crisis had a more adverse effect on men among the Jerusalem Arabs residents and Bedouin in the Negev. The rate of male registrants among Jerusalem Arabs was 78% in March-April compared with 58.1% in January-February. Among the Bedouin in the Negev, the men's rate was 63.2% in March-April compared to 61% in January-February.

Here as well, the gaps in registration rates are likely due to the low employment rates of Arab women. According to National Insurance data, the employment rate for Arab women in East Jerusalem at the primary working age (25-54) before the crisis was only 26.2%, compared with 80.7% among men. The low rate of East Jerusalem Arabs women in the labor force affects the entire Arab population. There is less disparity among Arab women in the Negev Bedouin (primary working age, 54-25) whose employment rate was 37.7%⁵ compared with 71.5% among men.

Figure 12: Percentage of registrants among Bedouin in the Negev and East Jerusalem Arabs, by gender, 2020



5) Age groups

The differences in age groups for the new registrants among East Jerusalem Arabs and the general Arab population are insignificant. However, among the younger age groups (up to 34) for Jerusalem Arabs, there was an increase from 35.7% in January-February to 56.5% in the first two months of the crisis. That said, this gap is not high relative to young registrants in the Arab population as whole, which is 56%. Among the Bedouin population in the Negev, the rate of young registrants, up to age 34, is particularly high - 66.8% in March-April.

⁵ IATF Footnote: The rate of Bedouin women employment according to the Central Bureau of Statistics was 22% in 2015. The Knesset and Research Data Center has it even lower in 2016, at 19.2%.

Figure 13: Percentage of registrants among Bedouin in the Negev and East Jerusalem Arabs, by age, 2020

