



# Mainstreaming Ageing in Israel

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## Mainstreaming ageing in Israel

### Ensuring enjoyment of all human rights by older persons and adequate standards of living

Israel has been actively implementing policies and programs to improve the lives of older persons and guarantee their enjoyment of all human rights. Domestic efforts have been aligned with global agreements and in 2016 the Israeli Government conducted the third review and appraisal cycle of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Regional Implementation Strategy (MIPAA/RIS).<sup>1</sup>

The main objectives of the policies and programs engaging with Israel's elderly citizens are to promote participation, non-ageism and social inclusion; to encourage a longer working life whilst maintaining the capacity to work; and to safeguard the dignity, health and independence of elderly people.

The population in Israel is experiencing an accelerated process of ageing like in many other countries around the world. Since 1950, the number of adults aged 65+ has increased 18-fold. Nevertheless, due to the high fertility rate in Israel, this group constitutes only 11% of the population (978,000 out of a population of 8.6 million in 2016).

Israel's elderly population has some unique characteristics due to the fact that the country receives a steady stream of immigrants from 119 countries, including many who are Holocaust survivors, representing a wide range of ethnic, economic, health, educational and cultural differences.<sup>2</sup>

By 2035, Israel's total population is expected to reach 12.1 million and individuals aged 65+ are forecast to constitute 14% of the total population, or 1.9 million people. Decision-makers are increasingly aware that this demographic shift will create new demands and pressures on public services and Israeli society in general, requiring a multi-faceted thorough solution to prepare for this new reality. Accordingly, many government resolutions and new legislation, as well as new government and ministerial work plans, take into consideration Israel's ageing population.<sup>3</sup>

Ageing is tackled by several governmental offices to ensure older persons are included, such as the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services, Ministry of Health and the Ministry for Social Equality. In addition, other offices such as the Prime Minister's Office, the National Economic Council, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Economy also work in cooperation at the national level and are responsible for taking into consideration specific issues related to Israel's aging and elderly population in their overall policymaking, which affects all segments of Israeli society.

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<sup>1</sup>The Israel national report for the third review and appraisal cycle of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its Regional Implementation Strategy (MIPAA/RIS) can be found here: <https://brookdale.jdc.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Madrid-International-Plan-of-Action-on-Ageing-for-Ministry-of-Labour-and-Social-Affairs.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Israel Gerontology Society, <http://www.gerontology.org.il/>

<sup>3</sup> Brookdale Institute Israel, <https://brookdale.jdc.org.il/en/about/>.

At the Knesset (parliament) level, a joint committee for Labor, Welfare, Health and the Economic Affairs Committee was established in 2017 to formulate a national plan for mainstreaming ageing. The commission issued a report and recommendations in 2018 to create the National Masterplan on Ageing<sup>4</sup> and promote the integration of services and coordination between the agencies operating in the field.

Furthermore, the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and the National Insurance Institute of Israel as well as non-governmental organizations, such as the Brookdale Institute, also play a significant role in collecting and analyzing data for policy recommendations and for the development of evidence-based projects promoting the rights of older persons.

### **Population aged 65+: a historical explanation**

When the State of Israel was established in 1948, the 65+ age group represented only 4% of the total population. This population group has steadily increased throughout the decades. Since 1995 it increased 1% annually and it is expected to continue to accelerate given rising life expectancy.

Another determinant factor that contributed to the increase in the number of the elderly in Israel was the enormous immigration wave deriving from countries under the former Soviet Union in the 1990s decade. Since then, Israel received 1.5 million new immigrants, and people aged 65+ constituted roughly 20%<sup>5</sup>. To tackle this unprecedented increase in the proportion of the elderly population and its unique characteristics and challenges, the Israel Gerontology Society engages alongside the CBS in comprehensive research and it is committed to mobilizing science, research to promote adequate quality of life for the elderly population in policy making.

In 2018, 11.8% of Israel's population, or 1,056,300 people, were 65+ years old or older, of whom 586,000 were women (55.5%) and 470,000 men (44.5%). In the same year, 41% of senior citizens were 75 years of age. The rate of increase of the elderly population has been double that of the general population.

There is a high employment rate amongst older persons in Israel, with 22.4% of individuals aged 65 and older participating in the workforce – 31.2% of men and 15.2% of women. Among individuals aged 85+, 62.4% of individuals in this age group were women and 37.6% men in 2018.<sup>6</sup>

### **Independent, healthy and secure living**

Approximately 97% of people aged 65+ lived in private households in 2018, a percentage that has been constant in previous years. About 221,000 people aged 65+ lived on their own (roughly 23% of this group, and for comparative purposes, among the 18-64 years old only 6% lived alone).

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<sup>4</sup> Israel National Masterplan on Ageing: [https://fs.knesset.gov.il/globaldocs/MMM/059c03c5-1de2-e611-80cc-00155d0206a2/2\\_059c03c5-1de2-e611-80cc-00155d0206a2\\_11\\_6731.pdf](https://fs.knesset.gov.il/globaldocs/MMM/059c03c5-1de2-e611-80cc-00155d0206a2/2_059c03c5-1de2-e611-80cc-00155d0206a2_11_6731.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Brookdale Institute Report: Patterns of Integration into Israeli Society among Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union over the Past Two Decades [https://brookdale.jdc.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/674-15\\_Summary-eng.pdf](https://brookdale.jdc.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/674-15_Summary-eng.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> One interesting fact is that the proportion of women aged 65+ is higher than that of men in all population groups (even younger groups of men). Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services, 2018.

The percentage of women aged 65+ living independently was 2.7 times higher than the percentage of men (32% and 12%, respectively). On average, 83% of men aged 65+ lived with a spouse (about 368,000) compared to only 50% of women (about 268,000).

In 2018, only 3% the 65+ lived in a shared household with their children's family. This case is more frequent among widows and among women (5% of the population) than among men (only 1%).

Furthermore, in 2018 about 25,000 people aged 65+ lived in a household with one other person who is not their relative, twice as many as in previous years. One project contributing to this increase is the "Living here" joint initiative of the Ministry for Social Equality and the Student Union, whereby students live in senior citizens' homes.

The students who participate in this project don't pay rent and receive a scholarship of a total of NIS 8,000 at the end of the year (about half to two thirds of the annual tuition in public universities). To participate students are required to spend 160 hours of social activity with the elderly citizen they live with during the year. The project brings together younger and older generations, mutually addressing some challenges of each population – loneliness and high rents.

## Care

Israel's Ministry of Health has declared that addressing ageing is one of the goals of its most recent multi-year work plans. The Ministry has increased efforts for the preparation of the health system to address the challenges of an ageing population and included it as one of its strategic pillars of health policy.

In recent years, the health plans which are tasked with providing health services under the National Health Insurance Law have supported the development of advanced technologies. This decision contributes to information sharing among organizations in the health system and to the improvement of the quality of care inter alia. In doing so, it adapts the home to a treatment space, as well as remote medical systems, which contribute to guaranteeing the welfare of the ageing populations in communities.<sup>7</sup>

## Full Exercise of Rights in Hospitals

The "Units of Virtue" program operates in some hospitals nationwide and aims to aid older persons who are hospitalized and may be unaware of rights and benefits they may be entitled to upon their discharge from hospital.

To assist this population group and provide them with access to relevant information the Ministry for Social equality has established information centers in hospitals across the country. Volunteers from these centers approach hospitalized older persons in order to inform them and their families of their health entitlements, such as nursing benefits, rights and benefits for holocaust survivors, live-in foreign care workers, and other benefits to assist them while recovering.

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<sup>7</sup> Brookdale Institute, Report Active Ageing in Israel: Gaps between the Centre of the Country and the Periphery over the Past Decade

[https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active\\_Ageing\\_Index/Second\\_int\\_seminar\\_on\\_AAI/presentations/workshops/02\\_Ayelet\\_Berg-Warman\\_AAI\\_in\\_Israel.pdf](https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active_Ageing_Index/Second_int_seminar_on_AAI/presentations/workshops/02_Ayelet_Berg-Warman_AAI_in_Israel.pdf)

All hospitals in Israel are welcome to participate in the project and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services has played an active role in encouraging more hospitals to enroll.

## Structures

Israel has clearly defined laws that guarantee the realization of civil and human rights of its ageing population. For example, by law, the retirement ages are 67 for men and 62 for women.

There are guaranteed universal old-age allowances from the National Insurance Institute of Israel for all citizens upon reaching retirement age, as well as an income supplement for those without other sources of income such as occupational pensions.

In addition, there are mandatory deductions from nearly all Israelis in the workforce for their pensions, and employers who violate their mandatory contributions under this legislation may receive considerable fines.

## Laws, Policies, and Strategic Framework

The Senior Citizens Law, 5750-1989 (No. 15 of 1989) defines a senior citizen as an Israeli national who has reached 65 years of age in the case of a man and 60 in the case of a woman. A senior citizen's certificate is issued to each of these citizens.

This law established an advisor to the Prime Minister on senior citizens affairs as well as a public council on senior citizens affairs to initiate and formulate activities and recommendations to improve the quality of life of these citizens.

The Senior Citizens Law also requires public authorities to provide the Ministry for Social Equality with an annual summary of rights or benefits under law or regulations provided by that public authority to older persons, including the conditions for receipt of such rights or benefits, as of July 1st each year.

The authorities are also required to provide general information about rights and benefits, as well as details as to how the public may attain additional information. The Ministry for Social Equality collates this information into a booklet which is sent to every older person upon reaching retirement age. It is also provided to older persons who call the government Call Center at their request.

This nationwide program is known as “the Rights by Law Booklet” and it promotes the full exhaustion of the rights and benefits offered to older persons. The rights booklet is updated annually and reaches approximately 100,000 persons each year.

Besides the Senior Citizens Law, other regulations are also aimed at assisting citizens in realizing in full their rights, such as the National Insurance Law that specifically tackles long-term care insurance, as well as the National Insurance Regulations on Long-Term Care Insurance, the income test to determine eligibility and the regulation on the amount of long-term care benefit.<sup>8</sup>

Additionally, a long term care benefit is granted to all Israeli citizens who have reached retirement age, who live in their own home and who are in need of assistance from another person in performing daily activities. Benefits are also provided to people requiring supervision at home for the sake of their own

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<sup>8</sup> Bituach Leumi [https://www.kolzchut.org.il/en/Long-Term\\_Care\\_Benefit\\_Conditions\\_of\\_Eligibility](https://www.kolzchut.org.il/en/Long-Term_Care_Benefit_Conditions_of_Eligibility).

safety and the safety of those surrounding them. The payment is intended to help the elderly and their families in attainment of long term care. Within this framework, a monetary long-term care benefit is also available for assisting older persons with hiring caregivers.

## The Public Call Center

One central difficulty in the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons is guaranteeing that they utilize the rights or benefits to which they are entitled by law. This stems in part from a low awareness rate of members of the population group to their rights or benefits, uncertainty of which authority to approach, and difficulty in coping with the required bureaucracy.

In order to overcome these obstacles the Ministry for Social Equality operates a national call center for older persons and their families. The call center was established in 2008 and serves as the central address for obtaining information regarding all rights, services and benefits available to older persons generally, as well as specifically for each individual caller.

The call center is a nationwide program involving national and local authorities that grant rights and benefits to older persons. It serves all groups of older persons and promotes the full exhaustion of the rights and benefits offered to them. The Call Center receives approximately 100,000 calls per annum and it is inspected and supervised the Ministry for Social Equality.

The call center, or \*6050 hotline, offers callers a rights assessment procedure. This procedure includes an assessment of the caller's personal background by means of a questionnaire, classification of the caller and referral for assessment by the relevant authority (for example, it may refer the caller to the National Insurance Institute of Israel, the Ministry of Health, local authorities, among others) and a recommendation for the handling of the matter.

The call center also performs periodic follow-ups for each application and reminders are sent to the relevant authorities wherever necessary. The callers are notified of the referral of their case and after the examination of their matter is complete, they are notified of the rights to which they are entitled, as approved by the relevant authority. All replies are examined by experts employed by the call center.

In addition, the call center performs outreach activities such as approaching older persons regarding unexercised rights, sending representatives to community centers or special events to raise awareness to the possibility of performing a rights assessment procedure. The Ministry for Social Equality is constantly working to create additional means of communication with the call center, including a newsletter and posting on Facebook and other social media outlets.

In addition to this central call center, the government of Israel provides services through several other hotlines on specific rights and available services in order to assist citizens enjoy such services:

- \*9696 hotline: provides counselling for older persons and their families. Information is also available online on the Senior Citizens' Rights section of the **National Insurance Institute of Israel's** website.

- \*8840 hotline: provides the elderly a central address to direct their questions and provides information regarding rights, services and benefits. It also helps them materialize these rights. The information provided by this hotline is also available at the **Ministry for Social Equality**'s website.
- 'Segula' Unit Hotline: provides information to senior citizens and their families about their rights **during hospitalization**. The service is provided by trained adult volunteers and managed by a social worker. The hotline is operated by the **Ministry for Social Equality**.
- The Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services 'Shil' Citizens Advice Service hotline 118: provides information on financial assistance for Nursing Homes for independent and frail seniors and various other services that are provided within the community. Information provided by this hotline is also available at the Senior Citizens section of the **Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services** website.
- The Ministry of Health \*5400 "Kol HaBriut": provides information on Health Insurance and assistance for those suffering from age related health problems. Information can also be accessed at the Senior Citizens section on the Ministry of Health website.
- \*5442 The Ministry of Housing and Construction Call Center: provides information on housing assistance and related issues for senior citizens. Information is also available online on website of the Ministry of Construction and Housing.

In addition to these call centers, the National Insurance Institute of Israel made a [video clip](#) explaining how to fill out a long-term care benefit claim in order to assist citizens with this task.

**The National Insurance Institute** of Israel also offers counseling service for the elderly by which they provide information to senior citizens and their families on their rights by telephone or in person, including home visits.

## Methods and tools

### Data collection and analysis

The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) performs data collection, research and analysis in the field of ageing. The CBS collects statistics at the household and/or individual level, which in turn orients policy formulation and implementation as well as the publication of a wide range of data on the elderly population. One example of a publication that is especially focused on the elderly population is the Report "55 and over Adults".<sup>9</sup>

Data collection on population ageing and its assessments are performed by several government offices, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry for Social Equality and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services<sup>10</sup>, which are the main institutions paying special attention to the elderly population.

<sup>9</sup> Report 55 and over Adults: [https://www.cbs.gov.il/en/Statistical/age55\\_160h.pdf](https://www.cbs.gov.il/en/Statistical/age55_160h.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Activities of the ministries are available here:

Ministry of Health: <https://www.health.gov.il/Subjects/Geriatrics/Pages/default2.aspx>

Ministry for Social Equality: [https://www.gov.il/en/departments/topics/senior\\_citizens\\_subject](https://www.gov.il/en/departments/topics/senior_citizens_subject)



Israel has been collaborating with the United Nations to improve the lives of older persons for many years, and has worked closely with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and its Task Force on Ageing and Task Force on Measuring Institutional Populations for defining indicators and metrics in the field of ageing.

The CBS also publishes data through non-governmental organizations. One example of such cooperation is the Report “Aged +65 in Israel Statistical Yearbook 2017”<sup>11</sup> prepared in collaboration with the Brookdale Research Institute, specializing in the study of ageing.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, the CBS works closely with the Hebrew University's Knowledge Center for the Study of Population Ageing in Israel and jointly disseminates a wide range of data on the elderly population.<sup>13</sup> This Knowledge Center was established to enable the study of the many challenges facing the ageing population.

Since 2008, the center has been working with the assistance of the Ministry for Social Equality and provides extensive research infrastructure through databases, as well as to examining the aging process on its social, health and economic aspects.

Other two important institutions contributing to the research and study of the elderly population and the challenges they face in Israel are the Department of Gerontology of the University of Haifa<sup>14</sup> and the Israel Gerontology Society<sup>15</sup>.

## Awareness raising, advocacy and education

### Education and the elderly

The Government of Israel implements programs to support and encourage education and reskilling of older persons. In 2017 and 2018, 227 people aged 65+ received a degree or academic certificate from institutions of higher education in Israel. Over half of degree recipients were male (57.3%).

### Student Program for Older Persons

The Ministry for Social Equality recruits approximately 500 students annually and grants them a scholarship in return for creating activities for older persons, such as community theaters, lectures to groups, ascertaining the rights of older persons residing in retirement homes, and IT skills trainings.

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Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services: <https://www.molsa.gov.il/Populations/Aged/Pages/Aged.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> Report Aged +65 in Israel Statistical Yearbook 2017: <https://brookdale.jdc.org.il/publication/statistical-abstract-elderly-israel-2017/>

<sup>12</sup> For more information please visit the Brookdale Institute: <https://brookdale.jdc.org.il/category/aging/>

<sup>13</sup> For more information please visit the Hebrew University's Knowledge Center for the Study of Population Ageing in Israel: <http://igdc.huji.ac.il/>.

<sup>14</sup> For more information please visit the Department of Gerontology of the University of Haifa: <http://hw.haifa.ac.il/en/departments/gero/geron-en>

<sup>15</sup> For more information please visit the Israel Gerontology Society: <http://www.gerontology.org.il/about-us/>

This nationwide program also serves to enhance intergenerational relationships between older persons and younger ones, involving also local authorities and community centers.

### **Older Persons Classes**

Since September 2014, the Ministry for Social Equality, via the local authorities, has been providing classes in various topics for older persons taking place in high schools during school hours. This program aims to maintain learning and enrichment frameworks for older persons while strengthening intergenerational relationships. Classes take place twice a week for four hours.

This program is conducted within local authorities that participate on a voluntary basis. In 2016, there were twenty-nine classes for older persons. The Ministry for Social Equality has been promoting this program among additional local authorities.

## **Age-sensitive analysis**

### **Israel in comparison to developed countries**

The percentage of people aged 65+ in the general population of Israel is relatively lower than in other developed countries. The main reason is that Israel has a high fertility rate and therefore the percentage of children aged 0-14, which constituted 28.2% of the population in 2018, is much higher than the average in other developed countries.

### **Stakeholder participation**

Since the community plays a significant role in policies and programs for the elderly, stakeholders can have an active role. The “Community for Generations” initiative was being developed by social services to create a space for the elderly to be partners in identifying the services that are appropriate for them in addition to the assessment of community needs. This practice aims to enable a holistic approach and contribute to better well-being.

### **Active living**

Older persons in Israel are active members of society. For example, in terms of preserving independence in movement as it is reflected in the ability to drive, about 13% of those licensed to drive were 65+ of age in 2018, which is similar to their share of the population (12%).

Furthermore, the daycare model was developed in Israel to promote social interaction and activities. The centers are usually open 6 days a week and provide not only socio-cultural activities, but also meals, personal care and professional therapeutic services. These centers service thousands of people with disabilities and senior citizens.

Moreover, Israel subsidizes vital services such as health care and public transportation for senior citizens. Many programs promote mental and physical health by allowing volunteerism in the police, local authorities and hospitals thus contributing to a sense of belonging and accomplishment.

To promote and provide support for active ageing across different areas, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry for Social Equality and local authorities work in collaboration with institutions such as JDC-Israel-Eshel and NGOs to develop programs and courses. For example, to make sure the elderly population stays active safely, this partnership has led to the development of kits and manuals for the prevention of falls.<sup>16</sup>

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Services runs the “Supportive Community” program<sup>17</sup>, which offers support services for elderly individuals who live in their own homes and wish to continue to do so, while maintaining quality of life, even when they are physically or mentally weakened.

The program is intended for elderly individuals living alone and for elderly couples within the community that is familiar to them. To include them in the community, the program ensures the provision of services such as an emergency helpdesk, medical services, social activities and community patron or matron services.

The objective of the program is to increase joint community activities whilst supporting the elderly. As a result, it provides space for social participation for both the elderly and community members who are interested in contributing.

The leisure activities are regular and take place at least once a week, depending on the local needs of individuals. These activities alleviate of loneliness and foster community bonding whilst increasing a sense of community, involvement and responsibility of members of towards the elderly.

## Participation in society

The primary policy approach to promoting participation, non-ageism, and social inclusion of elderly people has been to enhance measures to prevent poverty and assure a minimum income. Changes have been made, including easing the eligibility criteria, to expand the number of people eligible for minimum income allowances.

At the same time, the government has emphasized the need to take measures to assure the actuarial stability of the National Insurance Institute of Israel. Much effort has been devoted to promoting the rights of the elderly and enhancing the fulfillment of their rights by means of statutory amendments to prevent ageism, disseminating information, raising awareness and assisting the elderly to exercise their rights. Other initiatives aim to promote active ageing in such areas as culture, leisure, health and consumerism.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> For more information please visit:

[https://www.health.gov.il/English/Topics/SeniorHealth/HealthPromo/Prevention\\_of\\_disease\\_and\\_accident/Pages/Prevention\\_of\\_disease\\_and\\_accident.aspx](https://www.health.gov.il/English/Topics/SeniorHealth/HealthPromo/Prevention_of_disease_and_accident/Pages/Prevention_of_disease_and_accident.aspx)

<sup>17</sup> For more information please visit: Best Practices of Social Services in the State of Israel 2015 [https://www.molsa.gov.il/Units/Wings/agafSpecialJobs/Documents/shirutim%20mitavim\\_eng.pdf](https://www.molsa.gov.il/Units/Wings/agafSpecialJobs/Documents/shirutim%20mitavim_eng.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Madrid International Plan review, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services <https://brookdale.jdc.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Madrid-International-Plan-of-Action-on-Ageing-for-Ministry-of-Labour-and-Social-Affairs.pdf>

## **Consumer Club**

The Ministry for Social Equality established a Consumer Club for older persons that campaigns for offers and discounts to members on various products and services. The main objective is promoting benefits from reduced prices from suppliers as well as by means of subsidies from the Ministry for Social Equality.

This is an economic initiative but it also has an additional goal to encourage older persons to venture outside their homes and be active, which affects their physical and mental health. A long term goal of this program is to encourage businesses to understand the economic potential embodied in older persons and to target them with designated offers.

The Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services is expanding this program while focusing more on leisure and cultural activities. This project also offer discount for courses in universities countrywide that are tailored for the elderly. The project “Senior Tuesday” offers discount movie tickets to seniors. In addition, seniors can enjoy discounted prices in museums, heritage sights, excursions, vacation sites and more.

## **Generation-proof, age-sensitive and age-responsive policy development**

### **Capacity and enabling environment for active ageing: the National-Civic Service for Older Persons**

This is a nationwide program that creates a socially supportive environment for older persons experiencing loneliness. This program activates volunteers who interacts vis-à-vis older persons in their residences, in community centers and other places. Each volunteer assists approximately five older persons and are integrated in community activities in dozens of community centers.

This program is an initiative of the Ministry for Social Equality and in 2016, 551 national-civic volunteers were participating in this project, visiting the homes of 2,050 older persons and 110 community centers.

### **Promoting employment among older persons**

The participation of people aged 65+ in the labor market has grown substantially mainly due to a change in policy on retirement age, from 65 to 67 years for men and 60 to 62 years for women. Changes in other areas also reflect the growing awareness of increased life expectancy, which is currently 82.41 years of age (84.1 years for women and 80.3 for men); and adjusted to the active role of older adults within society.

As a result, the development of policy and the supply of services for this age group also changed accordingly. One of the main programs is the national plan lead by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and Social Services.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Brookdale Institute Israel.

Recommendation from the National Masterplan on Ageing of 2017 include a long-term care system that aims to eradicate poverty among Israel's senior citizens, address retirement age policies to make them more in line with increased life expectancy, providing more support for primary care givers, and streamlining the provision of benefits and services for the elderly.<sup>20</sup>

In 2018, 22.4% of the 65+ population participated in the workforce; however the percentage of participants in the labor force decreases with age:

- Age group 65-69: 43.1% participated in the labor force.
- Age group 70+: 11.9% participated in the labor force.

When taking into consideration working hours, 52.3% of those 65+ employed worked full-time (35 hours a week or more) and 47.7% worked part-time. Furthermore, by breaking the data by sex, 63.8% of men worked full-time and 36.2% worked part-time, whereas among women the situation was the opposite, 33.4% worked full-time and 66.6% part-time.

A detailed analysis of the employment data shows that there is a link between the level of education and the rate of participation, in both the population as a whole and older persons aged 65+. Hence, the higher the education level one has, the higher is the labor force participation rate<sup>21</sup>.

In 2018, the participation rate of the 65+ age group with 0-4 years of education was 2.5%, compared to 33.4% among those with 16 years of study and more. 35.5% of those 65+employed with worked in managerial positions or in academia. For comparison, in the general population only 38.9% were in such positions.

### **Promoting Paid Employment of Older Persons**

The Ministry for Social Equality and the "Vehadarta" Association<sup>22</sup> operates the portal "Experience Wanted", which offers jobs to people over the age of retirement only. Activities to enhance their chances of finding work are also promoted, including workshops, guidance in preparing a CV, IT skills training, among other services.

The aim of this project is to locate employers who may be interested in offering paid employment to older persons and older persons who are interested in such employment. Then, appropriate placing is offered, as well as employment fairs, workshops and networking events.

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<sup>20</sup> Brookdale Institute, Report Active Ageing in Israel: Gaps between the Centre of the Country and the Periphery over the Past Decade

[https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active\\_Ageing\\_Index/Second\\_int\\_seminar\\_on\\_AAI/presentations/workshops/02\\_Ayelet\\_Berg-Warman\\_AAI\\_in\\_Israel.pdf](https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active_Ageing_Index/Second_int_seminar_on_AAI/presentations/workshops/02_Ayelet_Berg-Warman_AAI_in_Israel.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> For more information please visit CBS International Day of Senior Citizen's Day Selected Data on Various Topics Regarding Israeli Senior Citizens Aged 65 and Over: <https://www.cbs.gov.il/en/mediarelease/Pages/2019/International-Day-of-Senior-Citizen-Day.aspx>

<sup>22</sup> For more information on the "Vehadarta" Association please visit: <https://www.vehadarta.org.il/english/>

This nationwide program works in partnership with local authorities and the private sector, creating an accessible and adapted infrastructure for job-seeking older persons and employers based on a simple internet portal.

The program benefits both sides; on the one hand it fights against discrimination in the work place based on age, and on the other hand employers benefit from the vast experience and contributions of older persons.

The Ministry for Social Equality also operates Placement Centers in cooperation with JDC-Israel-Eshel and the National Insurance Institute of Israel to establish the necessary infrastructure with local authorities in the placement of elderly people in the world of work, while also offering mentoring and referral to courses and trainings. An “entrepreneurship incubator” for retirees is operated by the JDC-Israel-Eshel, which provides assistance and the tools to establish small independent businesses.

### **Promoting the Employment of Older Persons in the Civil Service**

In 2016, the Ministry for Social Equality in partnership with the Civil Service Commission, JDC-Israel-Eshel, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Justice and the National Economic Council created a pilot program for the employment of older persons within the Civil Service. This program offers auxiliary roles of up to 120 hours per month for a period of up to three years.

### **Services for unemployed older persons**

The Ministry of Economy has been implementing a few projects that provide relevant services for unemployed older persons. For example, the “Midway” is a unique employment program for jobseekers aged 45 to 75 who have work experience who want to reintegrate into the world of work.

The main objective is to improve the socio-economic situation of this population group and integrate adults by strengthening their skills and building on the knowledge and employment experience gained over the years. The program is implemented in partnership with the Ministry for Social Equality, and it raises awareness of the benefits of a multi-age work environment.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> For more information on the Midway Program please visit: <http://4575.jdc.org.il/he/node/1239>