



Kav Mashve • קו משווה

# **BREAKING FREE OF THE RINGS**

## Internal Barriers and Challenges to the Integration of Arab Graduates into the Labor Market "A Field Perspective"

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## The Challenge:

### Maximal and effective integration of Arab graduates into the labor market in their field of study.



Only 22% of Arab graduates are employed full-time in their field.

In recent years we have witnessed a steady increase in the number of college and university students from Arab society in Israel (an increase of 80% in the past seven years<sup>1</sup>) followed by an increase in the number of Arab graduates (237% in the past 16 years<sup>2</sup>). These numbers are encouraging and show that with proper planning and integrative systemic action (The Council for Higher Education / Planning and Budgeting Committee, the government, civil society organizations, employers and the Arab community itself) we can change reality and achieve major breakthroughs. However, the rate at which Arab graduates find suitable employment (in their field) has not kept pace with the increased number of graduates. A study conducted by Kav Mashve (non-profit organization), in conjunction with the Edmond de Rothschild Foundation, reveals that **only 22% of Arab graduates are employed full-time in their field**<sup>3</sup>. The result is a growing pool of unemployed graduates as well as graduates who are employed in jobs for which they are overqualified, or for which an academic background is not required, and accordingly their wages are less than they are capable of earning. If this phenomenon continues, it will negatively impact not only the motivation of young Arabs to integrate into Israeli society, but also the Israeli economy, which today is paying a heavy (economic and social) price for failing to integrate marginalized populations in the job market. (Some have estimated the cost of non-integration of Arabs into the job market at about NIS 40 billion per year<sup>4</sup>, and more recent assessments reveal that the failure to integrate Arab men **under conditions equal to Jews** costs the

<sup>1</sup> According to data presented by the Council for Higher Education / Planning & Budgeting Committee.

<sup>2</sup> According to data presented by the Haredi Institute for Public Affairs, published in "Quality of Life Among Israel's Population Groups", Nitsa Kalimer (Kasir) and Dimitri Romanov.

<sup>3</sup> According to a study conducted by Kav Mashve and funded by the Edmond de Rothschild Foundation, July 2018, not published.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.calcalist.co.il/conference/articles/0,7340,L-3731666,00.html>  
<http://surveys.sni.technion.ac.il/files/events/20.04.2009/background.pdf>

economy about NIS 10 billion a year<sup>5</sup>, while the return on investment to encourage the employment of Arab women stands at a conservative estimate of 7% of GDP<sup>6</sup>).

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## The common explanations

In view of the above-mentioned gap between the number of academic degree holders and the number of graduates who have integrated into the job market in their field, we need an in-depth understanding of the reasons, challenges and barriers facing Arab graduates on their way to becoming fully integrated into the job market.

In recent years, common professional literature (academic studies, studies by NGOs and government documents) has offered various explanations for the above-mentioned gap, which can be attributed to three main groups: (1) the state, (2) the employers, and (3) the Arab society, including job applicants. Most of the discussion in this document focuses on the third group, however, it is impossible to present a complete picture without reference to the role of the state and employers in this grim situation. **With regards the state**, countless documents and reports have been published claiming that the state invests far fewer resources in the education of an Arab student compared to a Jewish student in Israel (hours of education, development, number of students in a class, enrichment hours, and so forth. For example, according to data published by the state, Jewish students with low socioeconomic status receive higher funding than their counterparts in Arab society. The gap stands at about 30% in primary school, from 50% in the junior high and reaches 75% in high school<sup>7</sup>). **With regards to the employers**, despite a significant increase in awareness and in the desire for diversity in the workplace – there are still many factors that lead to underrepresentation of Arab employees in the workplace including: the political atmosphere

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<sup>5</sup> 'Employment of Arabs in Israel - the Challenge of the Israeli Economy', 2010 Caesarea Conference.

<sup>6</sup> The Labor Market of Israeli Arabs – Key Features and Policy Solutions, Kasir (Kalinier), Nitsa and Eran Yashiv (2014), Tel-Aviv University.

<sup>7</sup> Systematic Plan for the Economic Integration of Arab Society, Authority for the Economic Development of Minorities in the Ministry for Social Equality, July 2016.

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This paper presents a systemic view to understanding the barriers. Such a view is very important when we want to design a strategic response and innovative models of action, which break away from conventional thinking and lead to a breakthrough.

in Israel; fears of 'the other'; lack of familiarity with the Arab society; employers' lack of accessibility to the Arab candidates; The role of the state and employers in this problem cannot be overlooked, but it is also important to discuss in depth the barriers and challenges faced by young adults in Arab society, who are the future job applicants in the Israeli economy.

The challenges and barriers presented in professional literature<sup>8 9</sup>as reasons for the underrepresentation Arab employees in the Israeli economy are as follows:

**Geographical distance from employment centers, lack of public transportation, cultural and language gaps, lack of subsidized child-care centers, no military or national service, lack of trust in the system, discrimination by employers and a lack of connections** (every third employee in Israel is recruited at the referral a friend<sup>10</sup>).

While these reasons are correct, they require further elaboration, noticing nuances and a systemic view. The various challenges and barriers are interrelated and empower each other. It is wrong to treat them separately; it is important to understand them as a whole.

This paper presents a systemic view to understanding the barriers. Such a view is very important if we want to design a strategic plan with innovative models of action, which break away from conventional thinking and lead to a breakthrough.

## A new model – a structure of 'Rings'

The purpose of this paper is to propose an in-depth look at the challenges and barriers facing the integration of Arab graduates into suitable employment. These explanations are based on our experience at Kav Mashve working and meeting with thousands of young Arabs in

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<sup>8</sup> See, for example, an analysis of the barriers to employment integration in the tender for the operation of employment advisory centers for the Arab population by the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services: Section 3, page 41.

<sup>9</sup> Eran Yashiv and Nitsa (Kaliner) Kasir, Calcalat hechevra haravit b'Yisrael, in "Orot ve'tzlamim b'calcalat hashuk - hameshek ha'yisraeli, 1995-2015", Falk Institute, The Hebrew University (edited by Avi Ben Bassat, Reuven Grunau and Asaf Zussman).

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.themarker.com/career/1.2230213>

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The structure of concentric rings (a ring within a ring) described below presents a hierarchy of rings that work together and result in the dismal lack of integration and the underutilization of human capital.

high schools, universities, colleges and the workplace. Some of the explanations put forward are a rephrasing of the familiar barriers mentioned above and others are new observations. One of the innovations we propose in this paper is the arrangement of barriers and challenges within a structure of "rings". The metaphor of the ring describes a protected, separated and withdrawn reality, sometimes like a bubble, but with less penetrable and more rigid borders. The structure of concentric rings (a ring within a ring) described below presents a hierarchy of rings that as a whole leads to the lack of integration and the underutilization of human capital.

## The cultural ring

For the most part, the discourse on the cultural differences of Arab society<sup>11</sup> in relation to the society of the Jewish-Western majority focuses on aspects of **collectivism as opposed to individualism, respect for authority, patriarchal society, traditional restrictions on women**<sup>12</sup>, etc. This discourse discusses the differences between Arab society and secular Jewish society in a way that establishes the gaps and does not show the way to a solution. Further, it does not take into account the developments that have taken place in recent years, as the rate of exposure to the world "outside the cultural ring" rises among the young generation.

In our work at Kav Mashve, we noticed an interesting and important common denominator among the senior members of Arab society, those who were successful in business and / or reached senior management levels. In their past, at a relatively early stage in life, most of them either experienced intensive and significant exposure to Jewish society in Israel, or worked / lived overseas for an extended period of time. This experience acquainted them with Jewish society (or a different society), gaining them full mastery of the language, an understanding of the culture and the ability to navigate it freely. Arabs who

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<sup>11</sup> See an in-depth discussion of the cultural issues: principles of work and intervention adapted to Arab society in welfare services in Israel. Nisam-Ikhtilat, Ben-Rabi, Sabo-Lal, Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute, the whole of Section 2.3.

<sup>12</sup> See the analysis of Nitza (Kaliner) Kasir in a presentation to the organization Maoz, February 2019, Introduction to Socio-Economic Strength with an emphasis on Community Employment, on the website of the Haredi Institute for Public Affairs.

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have had this experience were naturally more willing to integrate and to fully display their skills in their career track.

The reality of most young adults in Arab society is much less exposure to and involvement with Israel's Jewish majority. It could be said that they grow up within a monocultural ring that reflects the group within Arab society to which they belong, and they have little acquaintance with other groups in general, and with Jewish society in particular. The schools that most children in Arab society attend are locally oriented and offer a very limited range of extra-cultural experiences. Most of the communities in which young Arabs grow up are disconnected from the experience of Israel's Jewish majority. The language (Arabic), the customs, the holidays, the media – everything is different and detached from the language and culture of the Jewish majority. In addition, the Arabs do not serve in the army, Israeli society's 'melting pot', where young soldiers meet and mix with all sectors of Israeli society. All of these create a kind of 'ring' in which young Arabs grow up, detached from Israel's Jewish society.

Nothing prepares young adult Arabs (who often excelled at school) for the crisis they are going to experience in their encounter with Jewish society in academic and employment contexts. They are unaware that they grow up in a 'ring', and they only gain this awareness later on when they have to cope with the challenging encounter with Jewish society in their first year at university and after that in the job search process. In most cases, this encounter is too challenging, leading to high rates of depression, drop out, avoidance, seclusion and a change in direction.

One of the common explanations for the underrepresentation of Arabs in the job market (except in education and medicine) is that Arab candidates have a lack of trust in the prospect of Jewish employers offering them a job. However, in view of the above-mentioned "cultural ring" it could be said that this lack of faith stems from detachment, lack of familiarity and exposure and fear of the unknown, rather than from a real issue of trust.

## The family-clan ring

The Arab family is usually cohesive, protective and rooted within a larger clan, with greater and wider ties than the nuclear family. Despite the fact that a large proportion of Arab families live below the poverty threshold (47% in 2017<sup>13</sup>), the family pulls together to contribute to the success of all its members, who support each other in times of crises, stands up for each other and avoid unnecessary risks, and guide the young, showing them the way. Arab children grow up in an environment which on the one hand takes care of all their needs, and on the other requires them to be loyal and act in accordance with cultural codes. The family greatly influences the choices, desires and dreams of its young members. Studies that examined the influence of parents on career decision-making considerations show that parents and family are the main source of information and consultation<sup>14</sup>.

Accordingly, the statistics of career choice among youth (most of them in the fields of teaching, medicine and nursing) suggest that family and community have a profound and decisive influence on these choices. Young Arab adults are not always aware of this influence and report that their choice of profession was based on their personal dream or on the perceived status of the profession (an evaluation of the society)<sup>15</sup>. Sometimes the influence of the parents is clear and direct (speeches, family conversations, sanctions, etc.) and sometimes these are "subterranean" influences, the kind that the young adult internalizes and understands alone.

Accordingly, it is not surprising to see many Arab young adults choose a career in education and medicine (medicine, nursing and pharmacy) since these professions are in line with cultural and family codes. In the case of medicine, it is a prestigious family achievement for a son / daughter to become a doctor, and as for nursing and pharmacy, the chances of finding work in these professions are very high and not considered "risky" (in the speculative sense), and

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<sup>13</sup> According to the Poverty Report of the National Insurance Institute, 2017.

<sup>14</sup> See for example: Considerations, Needs, Barriers and Challenges in Selecting an Education and Career in Arab Society in the Authorities in which the Ryan Centers Operate, Tables 9, 10 and 13. A mapping report for JDC Israel and Alfanar, Mashav Applied Research.

<sup>15</sup> The Springboard to High-Tech, Yael Mazuz Harpaz and Ze'ev Krill, Ministry of Finance.



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The percentage of Arabs working in the high-tech industry is 1.4%, and the percentage of students in Arab society studying engineering and architecture (13%) is significantly lower than the percentage of students in Jewish society studying these subjects (22%).

are therefore 'recommended' by the family. Teaching has become controversial in recent years and the high level of unemployment in the field makes it difficult to find work (and thus there is a certain decline in the rate of those choosing this profession). On the other hand, teaching offers convenient work hours and a relatively short travel distance from home. One of the implications of the phenomenon is an unnatural distribution of talent from Arab society and low representation of those with high potential in the STEM and engineering professions. The rise in recent years of students from Arab society who go into engineering, computers and biotech is encouraging and indicates a somewhat positive change in the influence of the family ring – however it has not yet been proved that this rise has increased the number of employed graduates in these fields. Thus, according to a study by the chief economist at the Ministry of Finance, the percentage of Arabs working in the high-tech industry is 1.4% (1.3% men and 0.4% women)<sup>16</sup>, and the percentage of students in Arab society studying engineering and architecture (13%) is significantly lower than the percentage of students in Jewish society studying these subjects (22%)<sup>17</sup>.

There are also certain differences between men and women in this context, the most significant being the pressure on men from an early age to begin thinking about money, earning a living, building a house, and "arranging" life. This pressure causes men, from a young age, to focus on finding ways to "make money", and many of them "fall in love" in this non-academic path or just get stuck there due to financial hardship and the need to financially support the nuclear family (a common case is that of a stay-at-home mother and a father who took early retirement due to physical exhaustion, with the financial burden falling on the son<sup>18</sup>). In light of this, we can understand the decreasing rate of men compared to women in academic studies, and even earlier, in high school achievements.

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<sup>16</sup> The Springboard to High-Tech, Yael Mazuz Harpaz and Ze'ev Krill, Ministry of Finance.

<sup>17</sup> See Report of the Higher Education System in Israel, 2016, The Council for Higher Education.

<sup>18</sup> Yashiv Eran and Nitsa (Kaliner) Kasir, 2010, "Patterns of Labor Force Participation Among Israeli Arabs", Bank of Israel survey 84.

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The most significant difference is the pressure on men from an early age to begin thinking about money, earning a living, building a house, and "arranging" life.

Arab Women, on the other hand, are pressured to obtain high grades in high school in order to get accepted to academic studies and acquire a degree, giving them social status that allows them freedom, welfare and choice. At the same time, many Arab women are pressured from a young age into finding a worthy husband and starting a family (unlike secular Jewish society). This pressure leads to a rise in the number of academic women over the years, and even an increase in the number of women who choose academic tracks that lead them into high-demand professions (such as computer science, engineering, biotechnology, etc.). However, many female graduates still tend to go into teaching, allowing them to remain close to home and thus combine work with the upkeep of the home, or to integrate into positions that do not require an academic background.

The reality described above creates a situation in which young Arabs grow up in a kind of "ring", which, on the one hand protects, unites and connects the family unit, yet on the other hand closes off new experiences and prevents contact and exposure to the challenging outside world that requires adaptation. This 'ring' makes it difficult to develop independence, initiative, risk-taking, dream fulfillment, etc., so that when young adults emerge from the 'ring', they face significant difficulties, causing them to either return to the 'ring' or to choose the comfort zones of non-academic jobs.

## The identity ring (national-religious-political)

The reality into which young Israeli Arabs are born is that of a minority in their own country, a long-standing political reality of discrimination and oppression. The nation-state law recently enacted is another nail in the coffin of shared Israeli identity. In addition to the majority-minority relations, the intra-Arab reality in Israel presents a challenge in formulating a coherent identity. Every individual needs to form his identity in a mélange of competing and sometimes conflicting messages. The vast majority of Israeli Arabs identify themselves as Palestinians, but they are the Arabs of 1948, who remained in Israel despite the Nakba. They bear a blue identity card and an Israeli passport, so that throughout

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the world they are considered Israelis, and whilst the Jewish majority in Israel expects loyalty to the State of Israel, it has difficulty accepting the fact that the national identity of Arab Israelis is often very different. In addition, they each belong to a different religious / ethnic group: Muslim, Christian, Druze, Bedouin (north and south), Circassian, etc.

In order to illustrate the complexity of identity explained here, we may refer back to 2017, when Yacoub Shaheen, a Palestinian from Bethlehem, won the TV reality show "Arab Idol", captivating the entire Arab world. This event received much attention and was much talked-about among Arab Israelis, while the 2018 Eurovision Song Contest winner, Neta Barzilai, aroused little interest among Arab Israelis. Another interesting example is a recent incident that angered football enthusiasts: a number of media outlets claimed that Mohamed Salah, a native of Egypt and the world's top Arab footballer (who also plays for Liverpool), announced that he would not be willing to play with Mounas Dabbour, an Arab, a Palestinian, an Israeli citizen – Due to his being Israeli<sup>19</sup>.

The confusion of identity among Arab Israelis is intensified when it is joined by “regular” issues in identity formation, such as gender, sexual identity and other aspects of adolescence, causing increased difficulty in relation to their adolescent counterparts in Jewish society. And of course all these affect and constitute a barrier in contexts of employment.

## The personal-psychological ring - the fear of success

In our meetings with students and job applicants, we often come across talented people with an inferiority complex, feelings of self-worthlessness, low self-esteem, and the belief that they are not worthy of key positions in leading companies. The pressures (‘rings’) described above (identity, family and culture) are internalized and influence young adults, making them afraid to take risks,

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<sup>19</sup> This news may be unreliable, since in an era of fake news, there is no proof that Mohamed Saleh actually uttered these words. However, the debate and the public outrage over the event do deserve attention.

afraid of failure and even afraid of success.

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In order to escape this mechanism, it is sometimes necessary to rebel, to be different, to flee, to take criticism and even be ostracized. Of course, these are a very high price to pay and many sufferers prefer to stay clear of these situations than pay the price.

The fear of success is a situation that prevents a person from achieving his goals and moves him away from opportunities that can lead to perceived success by thinking, unconsciously, that success is a dangerous situation that comes with a heavy personal and social price. The fear of success stems from a feeling of unworthiness, causing a person to act unconsciously to validate this belief and prevent success.

In order to escape this mechanism, it is sometimes necessary to rebel, to be different, to flee, to take criticism and even be ostracized. Of course, these are a very high price to pay and many would prefer to stay clear of these situations than pay the price.

Further, in our meetings with young Arabs, we encounter a relatively low level of self-awareness and lack of familiarity with their own strengths and weaknesses. When we work with them one-on-one for the purpose of self-reflection and to provide feedback, they learn new things about themselves, that come as a surprise and with a sense of initial discovery. We also notice that very little work was done throughout their high school years in terms of development of the Self, coping with difficulties and psychological complexity.

The element of maturity and age must also be taken into account; the young men and women we meet from Arab society begin their academic studies at a younger age (about 4-5 years) than their Jewish counterparts, and have had less life experience (they did not serve in the army or went on a post-army trip abroad, etc.). The pressures described above, together with the youths' lack of access to counseling or therapy of a psychological nature, create a situation in which the job applicants we meet come with a low level of maturity, and although they may have high cognitive abilities, they lack the soft skills and emotional intelligence needed to navigate their way through the complex career journey.

This effect works down the road even for those who are accepted to a job but do not strive enough for

promotion, and therefore remain throughout their career in low positions in the corporate hierarchy. According to a study conducted by Shaldor on behalf of the Collective Impact Initiative, only 0.3% of managers in the business sector are from Arab society<sup>20</sup>.

It seems that the pressures described above damage the strong and long-term sense of self-efficacy and the ambition to get ahead and realize one's full potential.

**Figure 1 - A graphic description of the "rings" concept**



## The price

**All the above-mentioned come with a price, which boils down to one thing:** that Arab graduates do not integrate into suitable jobs as they should in a normal situation in a functioning society (except in the medical and paramedical professions).

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4624384,00.html>

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Civil society must focus on the blind spots in the system and offer specific interventions, with leverage potential and strategic influence, that will address the challenges and pull young men and women out from the Arab community out of the ring system described above.

The consequences are as follows<sup>21</sup>:

- A high dropout rate from academic studies or a change of profession.
- It takes Arabs longer to obtain a bachelor's degree compared to Jews.
- Lower average scores (mainly due to low grades, especially in the first year of studies).
- Many graduate students do not apply for positions in Jewish companies.
- Graduates who do apply and are rejected refrain from applying for other positions.
- Many job candidates have a low level of maturity and are rejected by employers due to this.
- Many employees do not advance to management positions and thus do not maximize their ability and do not serve as role models.

## What can be done?

The main purpose of this paper is to outline the barriers and rings described above. In-depth discussion of the solutions requires a different framework, and therefore, we present a preliminary discussion only with a main course of action that relates to what civil society can do to advance solutions to the problem.

First, the main responsibility for changing this reality lies with the government, which needs to significantly change the quantity and quality of its investment in formal and informal education in Arab society, and enable more bridges and connections to Jewish society. However, such change depends on many variables, some of which are political and some of which take a long time. Therefore, there is no choice but to offer complementary interventions of civil society, whose role is to urge for action in the system and to create models of change.

## The role of civil society

Since civil society cannot make structural and systemic changes in the education system – that's the government's role – it must focus on the blind spots in

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<sup>21</sup> Additional data can be found in: The Arab Society in Israel (9): Population, Society, Economics (2018), Van Leer Institute, and in The Econom of Arab Society, Eran Yashiv, Nitza (Kaliner) Kasir. The study will appear in the book "Orot v'tsilim b'calalat hashuk haravit", edited by Avi Ben-Bassat, Reuven Grunau and Asaf Zussman.

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The required intervention cannot and should not presume to change culture and society. It should expose the youth to processes and phenomena outside society, help widen the options and exposure of youth, develop the abilities and soft skills required to successfully integrate into Israeli society, with an emphasis on developing a meaningful career path.

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## When to intervene?

Every point in time during the years of schooling, from kindergarten through 12th grade, can be good and right. However, influencing and changing the education system is a difficult task, given the Ministry of Education's hegemony and dominance over the formal education system. Therefore, in this context, an interesting point in time for intervention is the period after high school, after 12th grade, when high school graduates complete the last framework of the Compulsory Education Law, and embark on life as independent young adults. At this point, most young Jews (excluding the ultra-Orthodox) enlist in the army, offering them the opportunity to experience different roles and develop interpersonal relationships that are disconnected from the circles of life in which they were raised. The situation of young Arabs is different: due to their non-participation in military service, they experience the labor market at a younger age and at a lower level of maturity. They do not receive the guidance that the military framework provides young Jews. After completing their high school studies, they have to stand on their own feet and cope with complex life tasks. Their transition from adolescence to adulthood is short-lived and poses difficult demands<sup>22</sup>. Unfortunately, many of them get into a situation referred to in literature as a "period of inactivity": inactivity refers to a situation of non-integration (ages 18-21) in a formal framework,

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<sup>22</sup> Nasreen Haj Yihya, The Barriers of Arab Youth in Israel from High School to the Labor Market. Bayan Journal, Issue No. 9, November 2016.

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The period of transition after 12 years of schooling is a critically important period for shaping identity grooming abilities, forming connections and social orientation and leaving the 'ring' system.

such as employment, studies, or vocational training<sup>23</sup>. In Israel, according to official statistics of the Central Bureau of Statistics, levels of inactivity among young Jews is similar to the level of inactivity among young people in European countries (about 17.3%), while the rate of inactivity among Arab youth is much higher and reaches about 24%<sup>24</sup>.

The transition from adolescence to early adulthood is the most significant period for shaping one's future. During this period, young people formulate expectations and aspirations for the future concerning vocational training, education, career and family planning. The process of formulating expectations and aspirations is referred to in professional literature as "orientations to the future"<sup>25</sup>, defined as an array of aspirations, expectations and actions taken by young people in relation to their future in the domains of work and education<sup>26</sup>. **Groups that do not adequately develop their skills, abilities, social networking or command of the dominant language in their country, may find it difficult to integrate into the labor market<sup>27</sup>.**

## Preparatory courses and “post -12th grade” programs

Whether it is a group of "inaction" or stronger groups - the period of transition after 12 years of schooling is a critically important period for shaping identity developing abilities, forming connections and social orientation and leaving the 'ring' system described in this paper.

In light of this, there has been a surge in recent years in the number of programs for high-school graduates in the year of transition to adult life. It is no coincidence

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<sup>23</sup> From a doctoral dissertation by Nasreen Haj Yihya, not yet published.

<sup>24</sup> Eckstein, Zvi, and Momi Dahan, 2011. High Unemployment Among Arab Youth, Jerusalem: The Israel Democracy Institute (Caesarea Economic Policy Planning Forum).

<sup>25</sup> Social class background and the school-to-work transition. in *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 2008(119):55-69 · February 2008.

<sup>26</sup> Khattab, Nabil, 2003. *Fantasy, Rationalism or Opposition: Social and Gender Construction of Future Orientations Among Palestinian Youth in Israel*, doctoral dissertation, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

<sup>27</sup> Benvenisti, R., Zeira, P. and Raphael, A. (2012) *Vulnerable Youth in Processes of Transitions to Adulthood: Needs, Services and Policy: research summary report*, Hebrew University.



that Israel's Jewish society offers a wealth of flourishing pre-military preparatory programs different types of service years and volunteer years etc.; these programs are geared to the great potential that exists in influencing youth during the post-12<sup>th</sup> grade period.

However, there are few such programs in Arab society. Some of the reasons are related to Arab society's opposition to pre-military preparatory programs and to any framework that is associated with the Ministry of Defense or has a military connotation. Another objection relates to the stigma attached to the idea of the preparatory program, which is perceived by many in Arab society as helping the weak. However, this paucity of programs is also related to the lack of budgets for



informal education and the lack of awareness among Arab society of such programs. This is most definitely a systemic blind spot within society and the government, and by taking targeted corrective measures, a reality-changing effect can be achieved here.

## Summary and preliminary action

The development of innovative post-high school programs, known in the US as gap year programs, seems to be of great importance in addressing the challenges described in this paper, while positively addressing the challenges and sensitivities of Arab society in relation to such programs. In order to do this, thorough research and planning should be implemented to include the

following steps:

- Chart out and evaluate such programs in Israel and around the world.
- Chart out the existing gaps with reference to academia - difficulties and gaps of Arab students, especially in their first year of studies.
- Chart out existing gaps with reference to employers - maturity gaps and the life experience of Arab academic graduates compared to their Jewish counterparts.
- Chart out and analyze the requirements and sensitivities of Arab society, so as to devise appropriate solutions that will receive wide support, with an emphasis on parents and a supportive community.
- Chart out and define the target audience that will lead to the most effective outcome.
- Chart out and mobilize possible partners, such as government officials, the Council for Higher Education, academia, employers and civil society.

**In light of all the above, it would seem worthwhile to focus effort on post-high school programs in Arab society, which take into account the entire structure of rings described above, and emphasize the building of a significant career path and successful integration into Israeli society. Such programs, if well-planned and well-implemented to effectively cope with Arab youth's departure from the rings, will lead Arab youth to a completely different level of maturity when they integrate into academia and the labor market in the ensuing years.**

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***Kav Mashve*** was founded in 2007 by the late industrialist Dov Lautman "I and Dr. Irit Kenan with the aim of promoting the integration of Arab graduates into suitable employment in the Israeli economy. The chairman of the association is Salim Joubran, former judge on the Supreme Court of Israel, and the CEO is *Danny Gal*.

**We are concerned about the low representation of graduates from Arab society in the business and government sectors and are working to correct this distortion and close the gaps.**

In order to realize our mission we work with four main target audiences:

- Arab students: preparation workshops for the working world and a connection to employers and jobs.
- Arab employees in various companies and organizations: training for senior management positions, networking and empowerment.
- Employers: training in the importance of employment diversity and opening doors for candidates from Arab society.
- High school students: career orientation with an emphasis on academic tracks and in-demand occupations in the labor market.

Since its establishment, Kav Mashve has trained thousands of students and high school students in the framework of its various programs and activities, has ensured the placement of hundreds of employees in various companies, and has administered diversity workshops and training to dozens of leading companies and organizations in Israel. In addition, Kav Mashve operates the «Programming Bootcamps» program as part of the efforts of the Israel Innovation Authority to include skilled personnel in Israel's high-tech industry, and also runs a management development program in cooperation with the School of Management at Tel Aviv University.



Further information about the organization can be found at [www.kavmashve.org.il](http://www.kavmashve.org.il)  
and on our Facebook page - **Kav Mashve**