



INFORMATION ON EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ISRAEL  
מידע על שוויון וצדק חברתי בישראל  
مركز "أدفا" - معلومات حول المساواة والعدالة الاجتماعية في إسرائيل

## Students Passing Matriculation Exams in 1999

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- In 1999, 41.4% of all Israeli 17-year-olds passed their matriculation exams. In 1998, the figure was 38.5%.

Sources in the educational system expressed satisfaction with the fact that the proportion of students successfully completing their matriculation examinations exceeded the 40% mark for the first time. This satisfaction derives from a perception that there is a steady, if slow, increase in the proportion of youngsters qualifying.

Yet it would be a mistake to think that an overall decrease in the gaps in educational achievement will come about as a consequence of slow, routine progress of this nature. To illustrate: During the last two decades, the rate of success in the matriculation exams rose by ten percentage points for the relevant age cohort each decade - from 20% in 1980, to 30% in 1990, and to 40% in 1999. At this rate, assuming it continues, it would take another 60 years for all Israeli seventeen-year-olds to pass their exams.

Israel cannot afford such a tempo, firstly because it dooms large segments of the student population of next two generations to less than full realization of their potential as individuals. Secondly, it seriously limits the possibilities for development of the Israeli economy and society.

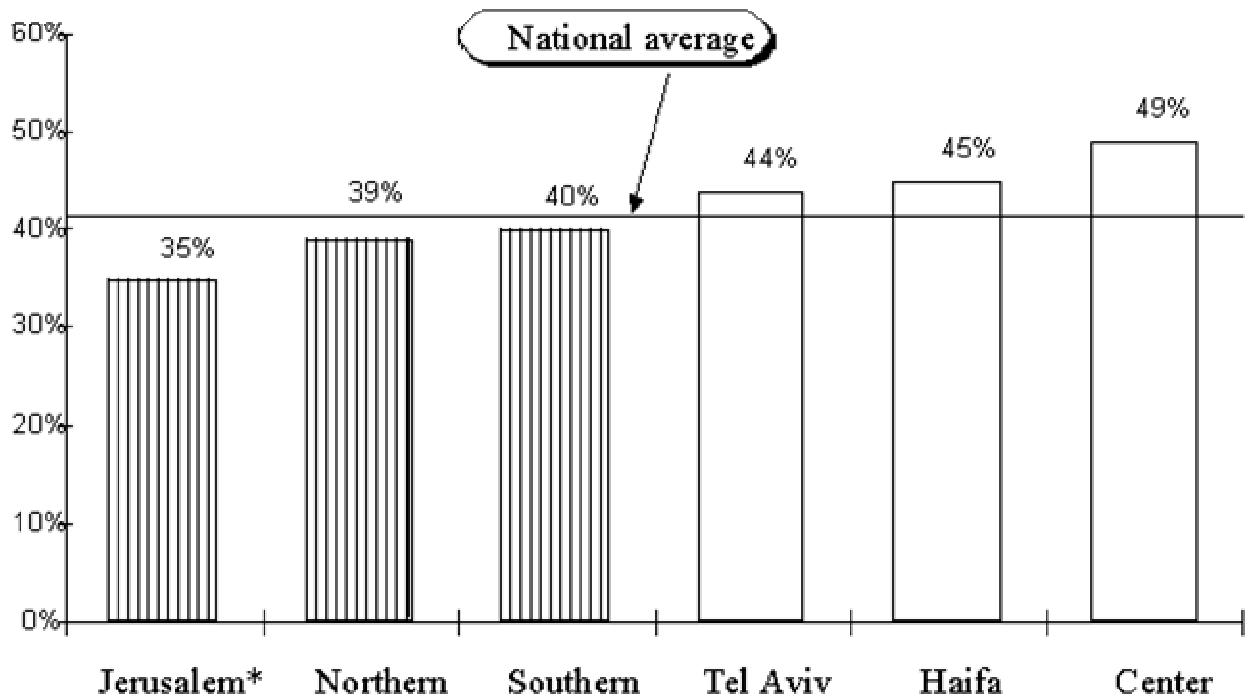
### Nearly Half the Localities Fall Short of the National Average

Three Ministers of Education - Amnon Rubenstein, Yitzhak Levy and Yossi Sarid - spoke publicly of aspiring to a 50% success rate in the near future. One might ask, of

course, why 50% and not 100%. Meanwhile, are still a long way from attaining even the modest goal articulated by the three ministers.

- This modest target was attained in only 32 of 103 localities in Israel with 10,000 or more residents. (These are the localities included in the reports of the Ministry of Education; See Table 1.) In other words, only in 31% of these localities was the percentage of matriculates as high as 50%.
- Most of these localities are long-established and/or well-to-do communities in the center of the country: Haifa (51%), Kiryat Bialik (51%), Petah Tikva (53%), Rehovot (54%), Hod Hasharon (54%), Herzliya (56%), Ganei Tikva (56%), Kfar Saba (56%), Nes Ziona (59%), Kiryat Motzkin (59%), Ramat Gan (59%), Mevaseret Zion (60%), Ramat Hasharon (60%), Kiryat Ono (60%), Ra'anana (64%), Givatayim (65%), Givat Shemuel (66%), Kiryat Tivon (72%) and Maccabim-Re'ut (79%). Along with these, are Carmiel (51%), Yehud (52%), Yavne (53%), and Yokne'am 'Illit (56%); as well as the regional councils of Eshkol (54%), Emeq Yizre'el (54%), Biq'at Bet She'an (55%), Emeq Hayarden (57%), Shomron (59%), Gezer (59%), Derom Hasharon (60%), Mateh Binyamin (60%), and Golan (70%).
- In about half the localities - 45 out of 103 - the percentage of students passing the matriculation exams was *below the national average* (i.e., less than 41.4% of all youngsters aged 17 in the locality). Particularly conspicuous here are Arab localities and the Jewish development towns.
- In all but two (Kafr Qari' and 'Ar'ara) of the Arab localities, the percentage of students passing the exams was *lower than the national average*. The lowest percentage was in Umm el Fahm. In 'Ar'ara, the level was 42% of the age cohort (in other words, only slightly above the national average).
- In 15 of the 21 Jewish development towns included in Table 1, the rate of success in the age cohort was *lower than the national average*. In only six of the development towns - Yavne, Yokne'am 'Illit, Carmiel, Netivot, Afula and Arad - was the success rate higher.

**Figure 1: Success Rates in the Matriculation Exams by Region, 1999**  
(100% = all 17-year-olds)



\*Data for the city of Jerusalem do not include residents of East Jerusalem.

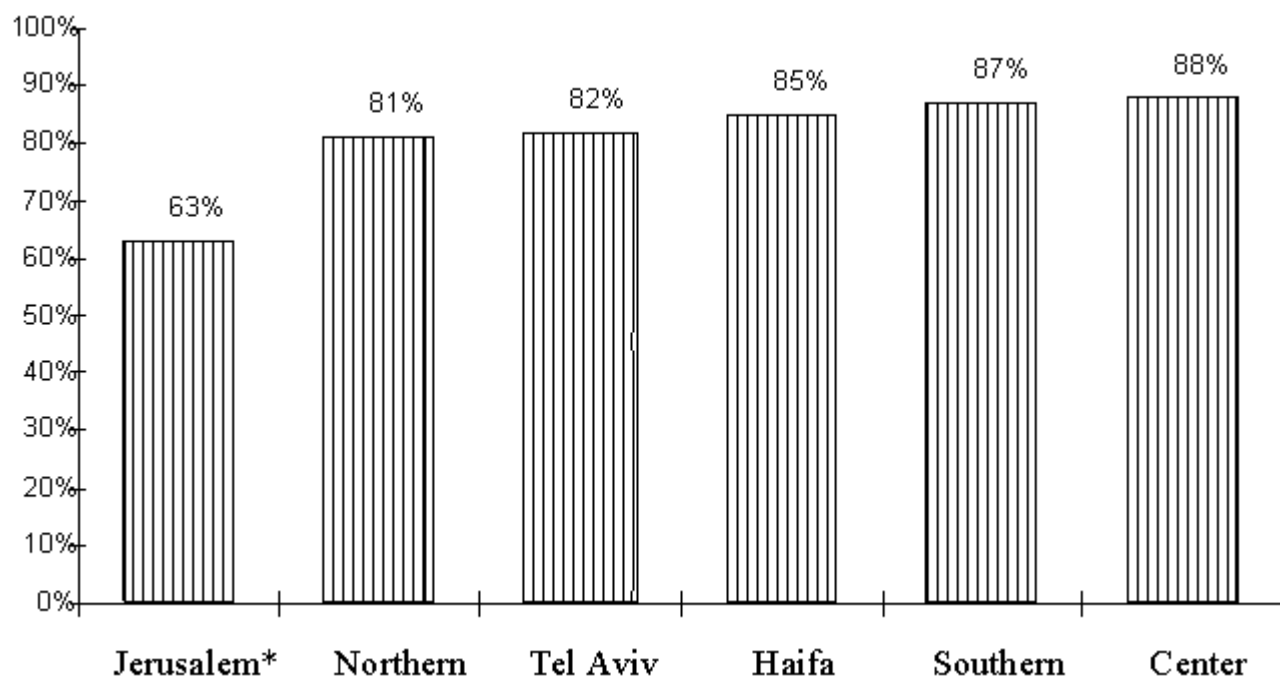
Source: Table 1, below.

### **Rate of Success in the Matriculation Exams, by Region**

Figure 1, above, reveals that there are significant differences in success rates among regions. The highest rates were in the Central, Haifa and Tel Aviv regions. The lowest were in the Jerusalem, Northern, and Southern regions.

In the Central, Haifa and Tel Aviv regions, the rate of attainment is above the national average, while in the Jerusalem, Northern and Southern regions, the rate is lower than the national average. One may also note that in the Central, Haifa, and Tel Aviv regions, success rates range between 44% and 49%, while in the Jerusalem, Northern and Southern regions, they range between 35% and 40%.

**Figure 2: Students in 12<sup>th</sup> Grade as a Percentage of 17-year-olds by Region, 1999**



\*Data for the City of Jerusalem do not include residents of East Jerusalem.

Source: Table 1, below.

### **Students Remaining in School through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade, by Region**

Figure 2 portrays one of the two main reasons for the differences found among various regions of the country in rates of success in the matriculation exams: The regions where the success rates are low typically have high student dropout rates; thus, fewer students reach the stage of sitting for matriculation examinations.

In the Northern and Jerusalem regions, about a quarter or more of young people do not get to 12<sup>th</sup> grade at all, whereas in the Central region only 12% do not make it to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The Southern region has a relatively high proportion of students who continue through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, but a relatively low rate of success on the matriculation exams.

In several regions, actual dropout figures are higher than those shown in the chart. The localities in Table 1, on which the chart is based, have 10,000 or more residents. If the smaller localities were also included, the dropout figures would go up. This is especially so with respect to Arab localities, where nearly half the 17-year-olds are not in school (in 1998 - 44%, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract 1999*: Table 22.12). In Jerusalem, the lower proportion studying in 12<sup>th</sup> grade reflects an increase in students studying in *Haredi* (ultra-Orthodox) educational institutions.

- The second reason for the low rates of success in matriculation exams is that many young people - about 45% of the cohort - are channeled into vocational tracks (Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract 1999*: Table 22.12), in which only a minority of students take a full program that prepares them for the matriculation examinations. Hence only 34% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in the vocational tracks pass the examinations, compared with 61% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in academic tracks (Central Bureau of Statistics, *Matriculation Examination Data for 5758 (1999)*, p.3).

## **Matriculation and University Entrance Requirements**

A matriculation certificate in and of itself does not entitle a graduate to study at university. Israeli universities have determined that in order for a student to be qualified to apply for admission to university, his or her matriculation certificate must include certain components - English at the 4-point level or higher, and mathematics at the 3-point level or higher.

In 1999, 86.7% of those who passed their matriculation examinations met these minimum criteria (in 1998, the figure was 87.3%, in 1997, 86.2%, and in 1996, 83.1%). In other words, in the last analysis, in 1999, 35.9% of 17-year-olds met the minimum requirements for university entrance.

The table below presents data published by the Ministry of Education on the proportion of students who meet these minimum criteria from the various population groups. No significant difference is evident between boys and girls, but there are significant differences between graduates of the academic track (89.6%) and graduates of the vocational track (76.9%); between graduates of state public schools (91.8%) and graduates of state religious schools (82.2%); and between Jews (89.2%) and Arabs (69.8%), Druze (67%), and Bedouin (47.5%). The Ministry of Education does not publish data that permit differentiation between well-to-do Jewish neighborhoods and poorer neighborhoods, or between long-established cities and development towns.

### **Proportion of high school graduates with matriculation certificates who also meet minimal requirements for admission to university, by selected groups 1996-1999**

	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>
Boys	84.3%	86.7%	88.1%	88.2%
Girls	82.1%	85.8%	86.6%	85.6%
Academic track graduates	86.6%	89.3%	90.2%	89.6%
Vocational track graduates	70.4%	74.6%	76.0%	76.9%

Jews	84.9%	88.8%	89.7%	89.2%
State public schools	89.9%	91.0%	92.0%	91.8%
Religious public schools	65.9%	82.1%	83.7%	82.2%
Arabs	70.3%	69.4%	70.3%	69.8%
Druze	62.4%	57.8%	65.0%	67.0%
Negev Bedouin	44.8%	41.2%	50.0%	47.5%

**Sources:** Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, Pedagogical Administration, Examinations Division. *Matriculation Examination Data*, various years.

*Table 1:*

**Matriculation Certificates Obtained, by Locality, 1997-1999**  
(localities with 10,000 or more residents)

Name of locality	No. earning matriculation certificate			Matriculates as % of 12 <sup>th</sup> -graders			Matriculates as % of 17-year-olds		
	1997	1998	1999	1997	1998	1999	1997	1998	1999
Umm el Fahm	123	127	90	27%	27%	19%	18%	19%	14%
Or Yehuda	107	168	197	26%	38%	43%	21%	34%	39%
Or Akiva	69	74	104	33%	35%	46%	23%	31%	40%
Ezor	68	60	68	49%	45%	44%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Eilat	114	146	194	32%	30%	36%	20%	27%	36%
Ofakim	65	90	94	27%	31%	33%	19%	28%	28%
Ariel	70	79	95	41%	47%	45%	35%	40%	43%
Ashdod	797	891	1,023	46%	48%	49%	38%	40%	43%
Ashkelon	514	608	720	45%	46%	55%	34%	42%	48%
Baqa el Gharbiyya	122	78	102	42%	25%	31%	32%	22%	28%
Beer Sheba	854	883	1,048	40%	40%	45%	33%	34%	39%
Bet She'an	89	118	118	31%	38%	39%	28%	42%	39%
Bet Shemesh	114	154	188	38%	46%	48%	29%	37%	41%

Bnei Brak	324	283	320	43%	23%	26%	13%	10%	11%
Bat Yam	832	898	940	48%	51%	53%	39%	44%	47%
J'dida-Makr	98	91	97	72%	65%	71%	38%	35%	37%
Givat Ze'ev	67	75	80	53%	58%	55%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Givat Shemuel	112	110	118	61%	65%	73%	56%	61%	66%
Givatayim	345	305	312	64%	63%	64%	66%	59%	65%
Gedera	55	57	79	45%	43%	59%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ganei Tikva	84	73	101	54%	53%	64%	N/A	N/A	56%
Dimona	199	216	251	45%	41%	47%	32%	36%	39%
Daliat el-Carmel	52	77	84	29%	35%	43%	22%	32%	35%
Hod Hasharon	288	300	324	52%	57%	59%	51%	52%	54%
Herzliya	799	742	800	58%	55%	59%	55%	52%	56%
Hadera	433	540	538	43%	54%	49%	37%	47%	44%
Holon	1,204	1,154	1,191	50%	49%	48%	45%	44%	45%
Haifa	1,978	2,065	2,122	63%	64%	65%	54%	49%	51%
Jews	1,862	1,909	1,962	65%	66%	65%	59%	54%	56%
Arabs	116	156	160	40%	50%	60%	23%	24%	24%
Tiberias	199	202	261	35%	36%	42%	26%	29%	37%
Taibe	152	152	151	36%	45%	38%	29%	30%	31%
Tira	103	83	101	50%	43%	50%	30%	26%	32%
Tirat Hacarmel	83	90	128	36%	38%	48%	26%	30%	43%
Tamra	84	81	121	29%	29%	45%	20%	20%	30%
Yavne	300	315	351	59%	55%	60%	50%	53%	53%
Yehud	158	172	178	46%	48%	54%	44%	51%	52%
Yafia	63	81	94	34%	47%	48%	24%	31%	N/A
Yokne'am 'Illit	63	71	101	48%	42%	55%	35%	39%	56%
Jerusalem (Jews)	2,481	2,537	2,637	52%	54%	55%	36%	32%	32%

Kafr Kana	71	61	66	43%	36%	41%	24%	22%	24%
Kafr Manda	37	51	50	27%	33%	28%	15%	20%	19%
Kfar Saba	786	800	779	65%	65%	61%	60%	57%	56%
Kafr Kassem	88	57	87	47%	35%	44%	34%	22%	33%
Kafr Qar'i	71	96	113	39%	46%	53%	32%	40%	47%
Carmiel	290	328	356	52%	54%	53%	43%	50%	51%
Lod (Jews)	242	239	319	35%	37%	45%	*27%	*27%	*36%
Lod (Arabs)	36	31	53	32%	30%	41%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Eshkol RC	96	72	87	56%	45%	54%	53%	45%	54%
Beer Tuvia RC	113	108	120	49%	56%	52%	47%	42%	46%
Biq'at Bet She'an RC	116	126	110	57%	59%	55%	58%	63%	55%
Golan RC	108	129	168	62%	60%	73%	49%	54%	70%
Gezer RC	155	148	189	70%	60%	69%	55%	44%	59%
Derom Hasharon RC	132	123	167	63%	59%	64%	55%	38%	60%
Hagilboa RC	108	114	126	52%	54%	58%	27%	29%	30%
Hagalil Ha'elyon RC	160	163	111	53%	56%	48%	67%	68%	46%
Hevel Modi'in RC	120	108	112	57%	51%	60%	40%	36%	31%
Hof Hacarmel RC	102	78	110	58%	48%	52%	34%	33%	28%
Lev Hasharon RC	77	97	85	51%	54%	61%	43%	61%	47%
Mateh Asher RC	235	114	143	66%	52%	59%	78%	32%	40%
Mateh Binyamin RC	265	207	227	71%	69%	67%	60%	58%	60%
Mateh Yehuda RC	187	165	213	50%	49%	58%	41%	38%	48%
Emeq Hayarden RC	108	116	114	59%	60%	63%	54%	53%	57%
Emeq Hefer RC	250	321	278	60%	63%	64%	48%	45%	39%
Emeq Yizre'el RC	238	237	268	67%	70%	67%	66%	47%	54%
Shomron RC	100	126	141	56%	59%	59%	38%	53%	59%
Mevaseret Zion	194	219	215	63%	68%	65%	57%	61%	60%



Maghar	93	96	120	40%	37%	42%	24%	27%	32%
Migdal Ha'emeq	114	143	147	32%	44%	42%	30%	34%	33%
Maccabim Re'ut	152	155	190	78%	72%	78%	69%	70%	79%
Ma'aleh Adummim	99	160	200	41%	48%	51%	28%	47%	50%
Ma'alot Tarshiha	56	77	83	37%	39%	40%	19%	26%	26%
Nahariya	255	255	300	46%	47%	51%	40%	41%	48%
Nes Ziona	192	221	234	55%	60%	56%	46%	58%	59%
Nazareth	399	376	408	45%	42%	48%	37%	36%	39%
Nazareth 'Illit	258	262	211	52%	49%	43%	35%	40%	33%
Nesher	129	125	120	55%	55%	54%	50%	52%	46%
Netivot	79	110	125	33%	39%	40%	28%	42%	42%
Netanya	1,047	1,098	1,211	48%	50%	53%	41%	44%	48%
Sakhnin	109	159	142	34%	49%	43%	24%	36%	32%
Acre (Jews)	208	180	247	39%	37%	43%	*33%	*27%	*35%
Acre (Arabs)	58	54	62	40%	42%	50%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Afula	229	276	291	40%	44%	48%	33%	39%	42%
Arrabe	96	92	62	51%	42%	26%	27%	29%	19%
Arad	150	159	180	50%	51%	55%	44%	42%	47%
'Ar'ara	99	77	100	48%	43%	51%	41%	32%	42%
Pardes Hanna-Karkur	156	182	204	43%	44%	48%	35%	34%	38%
Petah Tikva	1,239	1,231	1,394	54%	55%	58%	48%	48%	53%
Safed	108	131	161	39%	43%	49%	30%	34%	40%
Kalansua	52	60	62	29%	31%	39%	19%	23%	22%
Qiryat Ono	211	191	205	58%	59%	60%	59%	56%	60%
Qiryat Ata	280	301	359	44%	42%	46%	33%	38%	45%
Qiryat Bialik	308	306	308	52%	54%	52%	47%	49%	51%
Qiryat Gat	264	305	273	36%	45%	38%	33%	37%	33%

Qiryat Tivon	132	130	143	60%	65%	62%	55%	65%	72%
Qiryat Yam	238	249	282	46%	44%	48%	33%	39%	43%
Qiryat Motzkin	325	331	378	56%	57%	62%	49%	53%	59%
Qiryat Malahki	127	120	141	33%	33%	39%	32%	33%	37%
Qiryat Shemona	110	182	141	36%	55%	42%	29%	51%	39%
Rosh Ha'ayin	164	176	178	48%	48%	42%	41%	46%	42%
Rishon Lezion	1,420	1,658	1,637	51%	56%	52%	45%	52%	49%
Rahat	59	64	114	25%	26%	33%	8%	12%	20%
Rehovot	771	795	822	56%	57%	58%	51%	54%	54%
Ramle	232	262	306	30%	37%	41%	20%	24%	28%
Ramat Gan	881	940	901	62%	65%	61%	60%	62%	59%
Ramat Hasharon	408	369	395	66%	63%	65%	64%	54%	60%
Ra'anana	726	789	790	65%	66%	66%	57%	65%	64%
Sederot	66	102	116	30%	39%	40%	21%	34%	39%
Shoham	N/A	N/A	65	0%	0%	60%	N/A	N/A	46
Shefaram	104	116	165	43%	48%	51%	22%	24%	34%
Tel Aviv - Jaffa	1,986	1,919	1,995	57%	57%	60%	49%	46%	49%
Jews	1,932	1,895	1,935	57%	57%	60%	51%	50%	53%
Arabs	54	24	60	59%	24%	67%	18%	7%	17%

*\*Includes Jews and Arabs.*

RC = Regional Council

## About the Data

The data on results of the matriculation examinations are taken from publications of the Ministry of Education, Office of the Spokesperson.

The data published by the Central Bureau of Statistics are based on data files from the Ministry of Education. In these files, the place of residence is the locality registered in the student's identity card.

The calculation of the proportion of those attaining a matriculation certificate among all 17-year-olds was done by the Adva Center. The Central Bureau of Statistics does

not publish data on the population of localities by age cohort, but rather by five-year age groupings. Hence, in order to arrive at an approximation of the number of 17-year-olds, we divided the figure for the 15-to-19 age group by five. The data on the 15-to-19 age group are taken from *Local Authorities in Israel, Physical Data, 1996-1998*, published by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Note that the figure derived is only an approximation, and therefore is presented in a separate column. We decided to use this figure despite its limitations, because of its importance in interpreting data on success in matriculation examinations in each locality: To evaluate the local educational system, the number of matriculates among all young people in the locality is no less important, and perhaps more important, than the number of matriculates among all 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

We call on the Ministry of Education to publish figures on the proportion of students attaining matriculation certificates in the relevant age group in each and every locality - and not just for the overall population.

**List of development towns:** Eilat, Ofakim, Bet She'an, Bet Shemesh, Dimona, Hatzor Haglilit, Tiberias, Yavne, Yokne'am 'Illit, Yeroham, Carmiel, Migdal Ha'emeq, Ma'alot- Tarshiha, Mizpe Ramon, Nazareth 'Illit, Netivot, Acre, Afula, Arad, Safed, Qiryat Gat, Qiryat Malakhi, Qiryat Shemona, Sederot, Shelomi (Central Bureau of Statistics, *Labor Force Surveys 1995*, p.36). The localities Hatzor Haglilit, Yeroham, Mizpe Ramon and Shelomi are not included in the list because they have fewer than 10,000 residents.

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