

Source Sheet Companion

Explainer: Introduction to the Bedouin Community in the Negev



This source sheet companion lists the sources used in the Explainer, offers resources for further learning, and shares additional information. We hope you take advantage of these sources to learn more about the Bedouin Community in the Negev and to support your efforts to educate others.

Notes on the numbers and sources used to create the Explainer

Most of the statistics come from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and the Knesset Research and Information Center (RIC). These reports often group Bedouin citizens into the general "Arab" category or place them together with Bedouin citizens from the Galilee and central Israel. This broad categorization obscures the unique socio-economic characteristics and challenges of Negev Bedouin. Some of the data in this explainer comes from the Dedicated Research Database on the Bedouin of the Negev at Ben-Gurion University, which may present outdated information due to limited funding.

This lack of comprehensive data makes it challenging to identify the specific needs and characteristics of different Bedouin populations. Creating further difficulties, since Negev Bedouin represent only 3.5% of Israel's population the number of respondents in surveys is often insufficient to yield reliable information.

As a result of these discrepancies and the challenges in data collection and analysis, the statistics provided should be viewed as approximations. These issues underscore the difficulties in effectively planning for Bedouin communities in Israel and understanding their distinct experiences as a subgroup within the larger Arab minority.

Identity

1. This explainer talks about the experiences of the Bedouin community in the Negev region of Israel. Bedouins also live in the Galilee and central Israel, but are considered different sub-groups with distinct lifestyles, history, context, and challenges, and are not covered by this infographic.
2. Ben Gurion University of the Negev. "[Demographics Interactive Tool](#)." [Hebrew]. June 2023.
3. NAS Consulting. "[Employment in the Arab Bedouin Society in the Negev](#)." [Hebrew]. p.9. May 2022.

4. Elsana, M. [Left to Fend for Themselves: Israel's Bedouin are Struggling with COVID-19](#). Middle East Institute. 29 October, 2020.
5. Ben Gurion University of the Negev. "[Demographics Interactive Tool](#)." [Hebrew]. June 2023.
6. Islam is central to Bedouin life and significantly influences practices and traditions. Politically and socially, Bedouin are part of Israel's Arab minority, holding full Israeli citizenship and participating in the country's society, economy, and politics. Additionally, similar to many Arab citizens, many Negev Bedouin have strong connections to the broader Palestinian community, including deep familial ties to the West Bank and Gaza, and may include Palestinian as an important aspect of their national identity.

Geography

7. IMA - Israel Medicine Association. "[Inadequate Healthcare and General Inequity in the Periphery](#)."
8. IATF. "[Government Resolution 1279 – Socio-Economic Development of Negev Bedouin](#)." March 2022.
9. The Knesset Research and Information Center. "[Data on the Negev Bedouin](#)." [Hebrew]. 10 July, 2023.
 - a. The recognized localities include the city of Rahat and six towns: Laqiya, Tel Sheva, Kuseife, Ar'ara BaNegev, Segev-Shalom, and Hurah.
 - b. There two regional councils, Neve Midbar and Al-Kasom, include 12 settlements. Neve Midbar includes Abu Qrenat, Abu Talul, Bir Hadaj, and Qatzar a-Sir. Al-Kasom includes Tarabin, Umm Batin, Al-Sayyid, Sawa, Kuhla, Makhul, and Drijat.
10. Beer Sheva and the Negev. "[BGU International - Beer Sheva & the Negev](#)."
11. Israeli CBS. "[Regional Statistics](#)." [Hebrew].
12. [Can This Israeli Bedouin City Become "Mini Istanbul"?](#) - Haaretz - Moshe Gilad - 10.13.2022.

Land and Housing

13. Dukium - Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality. "[Between Discrimination and Abandonment: The Bedouin Recognized Villages and the Jewish Settlements in the Negev](#)." 21 March, 2014.
14. Some unrecognized villages predate Israel State's establishment in 1948. In the first years of the state, Bedouin settlements were concentrated in the Siyag region, covering some 10% of the region, where most remain to this day. Other localities were built before a 1965 Planning and Construction Law, which re-zoned most of the Negev as agricultural, making many homes retroactively illegal. There have been several plans attempting to settle the state-community claims over the land.
 - a. IATF: [The Bill on the Arrangement of Bedouin Settlement in the Negev \("Praver-Begin Plan"\)](#). July 2013.
 - b. On June 30, 2023, the government approved the GR-704 "Zip Codes" Plan for Advancing the Regulation of Bedouin Settlement in the Negev for the Years 2023-2025.

Prime Minister's Office. [PM Netanyahu at the First Meeting of the Ministerial Committee on Bedouin Sector Affairs: "We need the Bedouin to be part of this great success story, in every respect."](#) 21 June, 2023.

Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality. [Updates from the Negev/Naqab: Chikli's plan to develop the Negev-Naqab.](#) June 2023.

c. Akevot Institute. [The Bedouin Siyag plan: "Facilitating control on the ground" and "creating enclaves to break contiguity."](#) July 2021.

15. Urbanologia at Tel-Aviv University. ["The Unrecognized Villages in the Negev Through the Lens of Intergenerational Justice: Urbanology."](#) [Hebrew]. July 04, 2023.
16. The Knesset Research and Information Center. ["Implementation of Compulsory Education Law for Three-Year-Olds in the Bedouin Community of the Negev."](#) [Hebrew]. 30 March, 2023.
17. The Association for Civil Rights in Israel. ["The Unrecognized Bedouin Villages in the Negev – Facts and Figures: Association for Civil Rights in Israel."](#) 31 December, 2019.
18. Dukium - Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality. ["Enforcing Distress: House Demolition Policy in the Bedouin Community in the Negev."](#) June, 2016.
19. The Association for Civil Rights in Israel. ["The Unrecognized Bedouin Villages in the Negev – Facts and Figures: Association for Civil Rights in Israel."](#) 31 December, 2019.
20. Dukium - Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality. ["Infogram on Home Demolitions During 2022."](#) 08 August, 2023.

Economy and Mobility

21. The socio-economic plans for the Bedouin communities in the Negev grew from a NIS 3 M five-year plan in 2017 to NIS 5.2 M in 2022.
 - a. IATF: ["Government Resolution 2397: Socio-Economic Development Plan for Negev Bedouin."](#) 3 March, 2017.
 - b. IATF: ["Government resolution 1279 – Socio-economic Development of Negev Bedouin."](#) 30 March, 2022.
22. NAS Consulting. ["Employment in the Arab Bedouin Society in the Negev."](#) [Hebrew]. p.13. May 2022.
23. The poverty rate does not account for unrecognized villages.
24. This statistic means that out of 10 possible rankings of socio-economic strength, Bedouin recognized localities fall in the two lowest categories.
Israeli CBS. ["Geographic Unit Characterization and Socio-Economic Classification of the Population: 2019 Report."](#) [Hebrew]. 04 June, 2023.
25. Adva Center. ["2021 Society Snapshot: COVID-10 and Inequality Epidemics in Israel."](#) [Hebrew]. 2021

26. [Polygamy Persists Among Israel's Bedouins but Women are Pushing for Change.](#) NPC News. - Yardena Schwartz - 10.22.2018.
27. [Frontiers in Psychology. "Ontological Security, Trauma and Violence, and the Protection of Women: Polygamy Among Minority Communities."](#) 1 October, 2021.
28. Boulos, S. ["A Critique of Israel's Approach to Polygamy within Palestinian Communities in Israel."](#) Women Against Violence (WAVO). 2020.
29. Abraham Initiatives. ["The Bedouin Population in the Negev."](#) March 2012.
30. The Knesset Research and Information Center. ["Monitoring and Evaluation of the Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Program for the Bedouin Population in the Negev: 2017-2021."](#) [Hebrew]. p.7. 28 June, 2023.
31. *ibid.*
32. New Israel Fund (NIF). ["Advancing Social Welfare With Bedouin Women."](#) 07 June, 2023.
33. Jahshan Batshon, N. [Ending Neglect: The Business Sector Can and Should Integrate Bedouin Communities.](#) 13 TV. [Hebrew]. 15 September, 2022.
34. Ahronheim, A. [Record Number of Bedouin Drafted into IDF in 2020.](#) The Jerusalem Post. 07 October, 2021.
35. Tirosh, O., Cohen, D., Berlin, B., Levi-Kovshi, A., & Somekh, S. ["Employment Patterns and Barriers to Employment in the Bedouin Population in the Negev: Summative Evaluation Study."](#) RR-935-23. [Hebrew]. p.13. Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute. 2023.
36. *ibid.* p.16-19.

Higher Education

37. NAS Consulting. ["Employment in the Arab Bedouin Society in the Negev."](#) [Hebrew]. p.64. May 2022.
38. *ibid.*
39. *ibid.*
40. Tehawkho, M., Kalisher, E., & Mushkalov, K. ["Hebrew Language Proficiency in Arab Society: Barriers to Acquisition and Strategies for Overcoming Them."](#) [Hebrew]. Aaron Institute for Economic Policy | Reichman University. September, 2022.

Changemaking and Community Development

41. You can see a selection of initiatives with emphasis on NGOs and grassroots projects that have been initiated and led by members of the Bedouin community.

Shared Society

- [Ajeec Nisped](#)
- [Joint Arab-Jewish Emergency Relief Cent](#)
- [Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equal](#)
- [Al-Yamama Theater](#)

Arts and Culture

- [Annual International Film Festival](#)
- [Land of Tents](#)
- [The Desert Embroidery Project](#)
- [the Rahat Center for Fine Arts](#)

Sustainability

- [The Sayyid Al-Harumi Initiative - Energy](#)
- [Wadi Attir](#)

Housing and Planning

- [Bimkom](#)

Women's Mobility

- [Amerat of the Desert](#)
- [Bedouin Women for Themselves](#)
- [Sidreh / Lakiya Negev Weaving](#)

Education and Youth Leadership

- [Tamar Center Negev](#)
- [Desert Stars](#)
- [A New Dawn in the Negev](#)

Employment

- [Siraj](#)
- [Switch Center](#)

42. NAS Consulting. "[Enhancing social services through civil society organizations as part of Government Decision 1279 for the socio-economic development of the Bedouin community in the Negev.](#)" [Hebrew]. p.26. July 2023.

Resources for Further Learning

This source sheet companion offers resources for further learning about the issues pertaining to the Bedouin communities in the Negev.

Identity

- Watch: The Ask Project. [Israeli Bedouin: What is it to be Bedouin today?](#) Corey Gil-Shuster. 16 October, 2022.
- [Compilation of Resources from the National Library of Israel.](#)
- Movie: [Eid.](#)

State-Community Relations

- Listen: Occupied Thoughts by FMEP. [The Bedouin in the Negev, w/ Peter Beinart & Tal Avrech.](#) Peter Beinart. 20 September, 2019.

Women

- Watch: [BRIEF ENCOUNTERS | The Bedouin Woman Breaking with Tradition and Blazing Her Own Path](#). Leah Ballas. i24News. 17 February, 2017.
- Watch: ["Hope is a Woman's Name" - Amal Elsana Alh'jooj in Conversation with Jessical Steinberg](#). New Israel Fund UK. 12 December, 2022.
- Movie: [Sand Storm](#).

Land and Housing

- Watch: [Inside Israel's Bedouin City of Rahat](#). i24News. May 25, 2021.
- Watch: [Virtual Tour of Unrecognised Bedouin Villages](#). Adi Tufik. New Israel Fund UK. 04 January, 2022.
- Watch: [Developments in Bedouin Village Recognition](#). IATF. 26 October, 2022.

Economy

- Watch: [Siraj | Advancing Hi-Tech in the Bedouin Community](#)
- [Breaking the Code: Meet the Bedouin Women Breaking Into Israeli High-tech](#) - Haaretz-Nati Tucker - 06.02.2021
- [The Woman Helping Fellow Bedouins Enter Israeli High-Tech](#) - Israel 21c - Diana Bletter - 08.08.2023
- [Is Ma'agaley Ta'asuka \(Circles of Employment\) Program Suitable for Women from the Unrecognized Villages in the Negev?](#) - Nagabiya: Bedouin Society Knowledge and Research Hub - Sara Helman - June 2024.

Arts and Culture

- [Palestinian Embroidery? It's in Vogue](#) - Haaretz - Sheren Falah Saab and Malak Ayoub - 10.19.2021
- [The Women Behind Israel's Budding Bedouin Food Scene](#) - Haaretz - Ronit Vered - 12.25.2021
- [Rare Israeli Bedouin Audio Archive Digitized to Boost Study of Nomadic Society](#) - TOI - Jonah Mandel - 02.23.2021

The Community Post-Oct 07

- Watch: [Grief and Resilience in the Negev: Bedouin-Jewish Emergency Responses](#). IATF. 28 November, 2023.
- [When Rockets Fall, Bedouin Israeli Citizens Have Nowhere to Hide](#) - NPR - Geoff Brumfiel, Majd Al-Waheidi - 05.05.2024.
- Watch: [Partners in Fate](#). Have you seen the Horizon Lately?
- Watch: [The First Joint Arab-Jewish Emergency Relief Center](#) - Channel 12
- Watch: [The Kidnapping of Samer Tlalka](#). Have you seen the Horizon Lately?
- [Existence in the Shadow of War](#) - Nagabiya: Bedouin Society Knowledge and Research Hub - 07.08.2024.