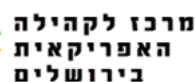


Guide for Integrating Asylum Seekers



December 2018

Guide for Integrating Asylum Seekers



Written by: Anat Guthmann, Ron Peleg

The writers would like to express their gratitude to Adv. Jean-Marc Liling, Or Bienenfeld, Adv. Nimrod Avigal, Kim Yuval, Ofira Ben Shlomo, Miri Barbero Elkayam, Yael Askira, Moran Mekamel, Josie Mendelson and the team at the Jerusalem African Community Center, Dalia Burgana, Dr. Zoe Gutzeit (PhD), Noa Kaufman, Ori Lahat, Keren Hendin, Sigal Rozen and Maya Goldman.

Translation: Elizabeth Tsurkov

Copy editing: Danna Har-Gil

Design: Anat Guthmann

Cover photo: Yair Meyuhas

Published with the generous support
of Patsy and Benny Landa
and the UJA Federation of New York



Table of Content

1. Preface.....	1
2. Introduction	3
3. Background	5
4. Employment	11
5. Housing	16
6. Health	19
7. Welfare	24
8. Education	28
9. Culture and Sports	36
10. Additional Rights	39
11. Conclusion and Recommendations	41
12. Organizations and Bodies Assisting Asylum Seekers in Israel	45

1. Preface

A common misconception is that policies affecting the lives of asylum seekers in Israel are under the exclusive purview of the government, which makes decisions in accordance with the worldview of its members. However, in their daily lives, asylum seekers go to work, send their children to school, establish businesses and maintain community relations – all on the local level. Therefore, municipal regulations concerning the planning of urban space, municipal services and future planning all have a significant impact on the integration of asylum seekers in a city. The successful integration of asylum seekers in a city is a win-win for asylum seekers, the city and its inhabitants.

Glossary

Refugees: refugees are people fleeing their country of origin due to conflict or persecution. Refugees are defined by and protected under international law, in particular, under the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (hereforth: “the Refugee Convention”), to which Israel is a signatory and was among its key initiators, as well as having a central role in the drafting of the Convention.¹ According to the Non Refoulement principle, refugees are not to be expelled or returned to situations where their life and freedom are at risk.²

Internally displaced persons (IDPs): IDPs have not crossed a border to find safety. Unlike refugees, they are on the run at home.

Asylum seekers: refugees who escaped their country of origin where their life and freedom were at risk and whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed.

Subsidiary/complementary protection: protection granted to those who do not meet the criteria delineated in the Refugee Convention but are entitled not to be deported in accordance with the non refoulement principle, which prohibits deporting individuals to a place where they are likely to face persecution.³

¹ The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees: <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10>.

² See more: Hotline for Refugees and Migrants, *Falling on Deaf Ears: Asylum Proceedings in Israel*, (hereforth: “Falling on Deaf Ears”) October 2018, chapter 2. Available online: <https://bit.ly/2FaNHPT>.

³ Ibid.

2 Guide for Integrating Asylum Seekers

Group protection: protection from deportation of asylum seekers due to the conditions in their country of origin, regardless of whether they have filed an asylum application or if it has been rejected.

Stateless person: a person who is not considered a national by any state under the operation of its law.

The Refugee Status Determination Unit (RSD Unit): the unit at the Population, Immigration, and Borders Authority (PIBA), part of the Israeli Ministry of Interior, which examines asylum applications.

2. Introduction

According to 2017 data of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are 68.5 million displaced persons worldwide, of whom 25.4 million are refugees and about ten million are stateless.⁴

The distribution of refugees (including persons in a refugee-like situation) by regions is Africa (31%), Europe (31%, most of them in Turkey), Asia and countries of the Pacific Ocean (21%), the Middle East and North Africa (14%), and the Americas (3%).

The main countries of asylum for refugees in 2017 were Turkey (3.5 million), Pakistan (1.4 million), Uganda (1.4 million), Lebanon (998,900), Iran (979,400), Germany (970,400), Bangladesh (932,200) and Sudan (906,600).

As of the end of June 2018, Israel was home to 8,924,100 residents⁵ and 31,552 asylum seekers⁶ from Sudan and Eritrea as well as over 5,000 children born to them in Israel.⁷ Their share of the population is less than 0.5%.

Asylum seekers began arriving in Israel in significant numbers in 2005, but most arrived in 2010–2012. Since 2013, with the completion of the fence along the Egyptian border, the number of asylum seekers who did not enter Israel through a regulated border crossing dropped sharply. In 2017 and 2018, not a single asylum seeker entered Israel through the Egyptian border.

Although asylum seekers from Eritrea and Sudan have lived in Israel for over a decade, only in 2012 did the State begin allowing them to file individual asylum applications. Most of these applications still await determination.⁸ Israel's governmental policies concerning asylum seekers do not meet its obligations

⁴ UNHCR, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017*, <http://www.unhcr.org/5b27be547>.

⁵ As of the end of September 2018, data of the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics.

⁶ PIBA, *Data on Foreigners in Israel*, October 2018. Available in Hebrew: <https://bit.ly/2ORSOU2>.

⁷ State Comptroller report 68C (2018), chapter: *The Handling of Foreigners who Cannot be Removed*. Available in Hebrew: <https://bit.ly/2wvZWBA>.

⁸ *Falling on Deaf Ears*, footnote 2, chapter 4.

under the Refugee Convention. These policies do not provide concrete solutions that would enable asylum seekers to deal with the challenges of everyday life while awaiting a determination regarding their asylum application. This shifts the burden to local councils, which are forced to handle matters that are usually within the purview of the central government.

Half of the asylum seekers in Israel reside in the central area. Due to geographic limitations imposed on asylum seekers (see Chapter 5: Housing), they are increasingly moving to other locations across the country. Smaller communities of asylum seekers are present in cities such as Jerusalem, Eilat, Netanya, Ashdod and Petach Tikva.⁹ This poses a myriad of challenges to municipalities and local councils in integrating their resident asylum seekers. The need to address these challenges also provides municipalities and local councils with the opportunity for social and economic development while increasing their cultural diversity.

⁹ According to data provided by PIBA (as of May 31, 2018) as provided on September 4 in response to a request by the Center for International Migration and Integration (CIMI).

3. Background

Most asylum seekers who did not enter through a regulated border crossing in recent years (and are labeled "infiltrators" by the government), arrived from Sudan and Eritrea. Government policies, including the various iterations of the Anti-Infiltration Law, the plan to deport asylum seekers to third countries (see below), the Deposit Law (see Chapter 4: Employment), the UNHCR plan and the Social-Economic Plan of the Affordable Housing Center (see Chapter 5: Housing), all deal with these two communities and not asylum seekers residing in Israel as a whole. Therefore, this document addresses the matters affecting asylum seekers from these two countries only, though naturally, its recommendations can be applied to other communities, should the need arise.

It should be noted that many asylum seekers were kidnapped and survived brutal torture in the Sinai torture camps and their relatives have been forced to pay exorbitant amounts as ransom to secure their release. Thousands are suffering to this day the ramifications of the torture, in their countries of origin and in the Sinai torture camps, but few of them receive rehabilitation services in Israel (see Chapter 7: Welfare).

Eritrea

Eritrea is a small country in east Africa whose population numbers about six million people. Eritrea is governed by a totalitarian regime, and is considered one of the most oppressive and closed dictatorships in the world. Eritrean asylum seekers in Israel speak Tigrinya and some speak English, Arabic, Amharic and Hebrew as well.

According to the annual U.S. Department of State's report on human rights practices, published in April 2018: "The most significant human rights issues included arbitrary deprivation of life; disappearances; torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment by security forces, including for political and religious beliefs; harsh prison and detention center conditions; arbitrary arrest; denial of fair public trial; arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy, family, or home; restrictions on freedoms of speech and press; restrictions on internet freedom, academic freedom, and cultural events; restrictions on freedom of peaceful assembly, association, and religion; limits on freedom of internal

movement and foreign travel; inability of citizens to choose their government in free and fair elections; corruption and lack of transparency; restrictions on international nongovernmental organizations; violence against women and girls, including in military camp settings and national service positions; human trafficking; criminalization of same-sex sexual conduct; and forced labor, including forced participation in the country's national service program, routinely for periods beyond the 18-month legal obligation."¹⁰

Both men and women are drafted into compulsory military service that is open-ended, forced to labor in slavery-like conditions in the service of the army commanders. Citizens who resist the regime or the military service are jailed without trial and subjected to severe torture and other forms of ill treatment. Eritrea deprives its citizens of political freedoms, imposes severe restrictions on freedom of speech and movement, and all media outlets are controlled by the country's dictator, Isaias Afaweki. Journalists, public figures, clerics and even ministers who have criticized the regime's policies have been arrested and disappeared. The fate of many remains unknown. Eritrea prohibits the practice of any religion other than the four recognized religions. Followers of other faiths are subject to arrest and torture. The recent peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia has not affected the political situation in the country or the nature and length of the military service, nor has it reduced the grave, widespread violations of human rights in the country.

According PIBA data, Israel is now home to 24,586 asylum seekers from Eritrea.¹¹ Only in 2012 did Israel begin allowing Eritreans to file individual asylum applications. Until then, the State claimed that, because Eritreans enjoyed "group protection" and were not deported back to their country of origin, there was no need to examine their individual asylum applications. Since then, 14,990 Eritreans have filed asylum applications. Of these, 9,874 still await a determination.¹² Only ten Eritreans have been recognized as refugees by Israel since 2012.¹³

¹⁰ U.S. Department of State, *Country Report: Eritrea*, April 2018, p. 1 <https://bit.ly/2RyBBBp>.

¹¹ *Data on Foreigners in Israel*, see footnote 6.

¹² Data as of May 31, 2018, letter of the Head of Enforcement and Foreigners Division to Adv. Elad Kahana, July 15, 2018.

¹³ According to data provided by the legal consultant of PIBA during a hearing at the Knesset Interior Committee on November 29, 2017.

Israel does not recognize defection or evasion of military service in Eritrea as grounds for asylum, and therefore has rejected en masse the asylum applications of Eritreans, based on a legal opinion of PIBA, which is at the heart of ongoing legal proceedings. Despite this, Israel does recognize the widespread human rights violations in Eritrea, so that even those whose asylum requests are denied are not deported from Israel. At the same time, those awaiting a response to their asylum application and those who were rejected are not granted a status that would provide them with any rights or subsidiary protection.¹⁴

According to the 2016 UNHCR Statistical Yearbook, 71.5% of Eritrean asylum seekers worldwide who received a determination on their application in 2016 were granted refugee status. When adding to this the percentage of asylum seekers who received subsidiary protection, the share rises to 90% of Eritrean asylum applicants.¹⁵

Sudan

Sudan is a territorially large country located in central Africa, whose population numbers about 39 million people. The country has suffered from ethnic and religious tensions since its founding, and is ruled by a military dictatorship dominated by the Arab Muslim ethnic group. Sudanese asylum seekers in Israel speak Arabic, and some speak English and Hebrew as well.

The Darfur Region in western Sudan is the site of a territorial conflict raging along ethnic fault-lines. As part of this conflict, Arab militias raid villages and carry out massacres and mass rapes. Since 2003, the genocide in Darfur has killed about half a million people and displaced more than 2.7 million from their homes. The United Nations (UN) previously declared this as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. In 2009, the International Criminal Court (ICC) based in The Hague issued an arrest warrant against the Sudanese President, Omar al-Bashir, based on an ICC indictment for war crimes and genocide in the Darfur region.

The South Kordofan region (also known as the "Nuba Mountains") and the Blue Nile Region that border South Sudan are homes to tribes, some Muslim and some Christian, which oppose the Sharia law imposed on the region in 1984. Rebel groups trying to overthrow the Sudanese regime encountered a mass extermination and displacement campaign, which resulted in the murder and death by starvation of

¹⁴ *Falling on Deaf Ears*, footnote 2, chapter 9.

¹⁵ UNHCR, Statistical Yearbook 2016, 16th edition (February 2018), Table 11

hundreds of thousands of residents in the 1990s. The campaign of mass violence in the Nuba Mountains included aerial bombings by the Sudanese regime, as well as massacres that constituted ethnic cleansing. Those who survived the atrocities are persecuted to this day and are threatened by famine caused by a lack of access to humanitarian aid that is blocked by the Sudanese regime.

Most of the asylum seekers who have reached Israel from Sudan survived the horrors taking place in these regions.

Today, 6,996 asylum seekers from Sudan reside in Israel.¹⁶ In 2007 and 2008, after the first asylum seekers arrived in Israel from Sudan, having escaped the genocide in Darfur, the State of Israel recognized them as refugees and people entitled to a status equal to that of refugees, without examining their asylum applications. The State granted temporary residency, the visa given to refugees, to about 600 Darfuri asylum seekers as a "humanitarian gesture." The Prime Minister at the time, Ehud Olmert, declared, "These are the real refugees."

In 2017, after a number of legal proceedings demanded that the State stop delaying and reach decisions regarding asylum applications filed years ago, the State declared that it would grant temporary residency to 500 Sudanese nationals from Darfur who meet arbitrary criteria related to their age and year of entry to Israel. Later, in 2018, the State declared that it would grant temporary residency to an additional 300 asylum seekers, including those who escaped the Nuba Mountain and Blue Nile regions and who meet the criteria. However, many of those who meet the criteria have yet to receive temporary residency.

Only in 2012 did the State allow Sudanese citizens to file individual asylum applications. Of the 6,598 asylum applications filed,¹⁷ only one Sudanese, originally from Darfur, has been granted refugee status.¹⁸ While the recognition rate of Sudanese nationals as refugees is close to zero in Israel, according to the UNHCR Statistical Yearbook for 2016, 52.1% of Sudanese asylum applicants whose cases received a response that year were granted refugee status. When adding to this number those who received subsidiary protection, the recognition rate rises to 63%.¹⁹

¹⁶ *Data on Foreigners in Israel*, footnote 6.

¹⁷ Data as of May 31, 2018. See footnote 12.

¹⁸ See footnote 13.

¹⁹ UNHCR Statistical Yearbook, footnote 15.

"Voluntary Departure" and Deportation to Third Countries

Due the dangers facing asylum seekers in their countries of origin, Israel respects international law and does not deport them to Sudan or Eritrea. However, starting in 2013, the State began promoting agreements with "third" countries in Africa – Uganda and Rwanda – which are not the asylum seekers countries of origin, for the purpose of deporting Eritreans and Sudanese there. The State even declared that it would begin to jail those who refuse to leave to those countries.²⁰

At the same time, the State "encouraged" asylum seekers to "voluntarily" depart to these third countries by threatening them with detention in the Saharonim and Holot detention centers, as well as imposing taxes and levies that push them further into poverty (see Chapter 7: Welfare).

Following prolonged legal and public campaigns, both Uganda and Rwanda declared that they would not accept asylum seekers forcibly deported to their countries. Therefore, the Supreme Court twice abrogated the deportation plan, ruling that jailing asylum seekers to compel them to "agree" to deportation constitutes coercion.

The Status of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Israel

Refugee Status

According to the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) Procedure, those whose asylum applications are examined and are recognized as refugees by the State, receive the status of temporary residency in Israel (A/5 permit). Temporary residents receive an Israeli identification card, but are ineligible for a passport. They can obtain a laissez-passer after filing a reasoned request. To exit and re-enter Israel, temporary residents require an entry visa. Temporary residency provides the rights to work, medical care under the National Health Law, benefits from National Security and the right to vote in local elections. This status does not provide the right to vote in Knesset elections or be elected to it.

An A/5 visa was given to asylum seekers from Darfur who received this status as part of "humanitarian gestures," to citizens of other countries who are in the process of obtaining citizenship through marriage with Israeli citizens, and in specific humanitarian cases.

²⁰ See more on the "Voluntary Departure" program and deportation to third countries: <https://bit.ly/2AowWuY>.

This permit must be renewed once a year in the PIBA offices open to the general public, in the recipient's area of residence.

Work visa

A B/1 visa is issued to migrant workers who arrive in Israel to work for a limited period. A governmental decision in 2009 granted this visa to a small number of Eritrean asylum seekers. This permit does not provide the recipient with social benefits or rights under the National Health Law. Those who hold the visa enjoy some National Security rights, limited to employees. Holders of B/1 visas can obtain a driver's license in Israel.

This visa is issued for periods ranging from two to six months. Eritrean asylum seekers who hold this visa must renew it at the Bnei Brak PIBA office, while all others who carry this permit should renew it at the PIBA offices open to the general public in their area of residence.

Conditional release permit of asylum seekers

Most asylum seekers in Israel receive a "temporary permit." This permit is granted under Article 2A5 of the Entry to Israel law (henceforth, a 2A5 permit), which states that the permit is to be given "until the exit from Israel or removal from it" of the permit holder.²¹ Asylum seekers must renew this permit periodically, ranging from every few weeks to every six months. The permit does not grant any social rights and is not a work visa, but the State committed itself, to the Supreme Court, not to enforce the prohibition on employing asylum seekers who hold this permit, although the document itself states: "this permit does not constitute a work permit."²²

This permit is provided for periods ranging from two to six months. In some cases, it is given for shorter periods of a few weeks or even a few days. The permit must be renewed at the Bnei Brak PIBA office or in the Eilat PIBA office during certain hours of the general reception (for residents of the city only).

In many cases, the process of renewing these permits is complicated and even humiliating. Every visit to the offices of PIBA means taking a day off from work, which often leads to tension with employers and at times even dismissal. If asylum seekers lose their permit, they are required to pay NIS 250 (\$67).

²¹ Entry to Israel Law, 1952, available in Hebrew: <https://bit.ly/2J954hD>.

²² High Court of Justice (HCJ) 10/6312 Kav LaOved vs. the Prime Minister, verdict from January 16, 2011.

4. Employment

As mentioned, most asylum seekers receive a 2A5 permit, which is not a work permit; however, the State committed itself before the High Court of Justice to allow asylum seekers to work and sustain themselves and not enforce the prohibition on employing them. Any change to this commitment requires the State to issue a notice of the change at least 30 days before the new policy goes into effect.²³

Sums Deducted from Salaries

Those holding 2A5 permits are not eligible for any tax breaks on their income.

Those holding 2A5 and B/1 visas pay a lower monthly tax to National Security, since the benefits they enjoy under the law are more limited than those of residents. To be eligible to receive benefits, asylum seekers must be employed. Asylum seekers are eligible for benefits in cases of work accidents, payment of salaries and compensation in cases their employer goes bankrupt, and in cases of childbirth (the woman receives a hospitalization allowance, a maternity allowance and a maternity grant).

Holders of 2A5 and B/1 visas do not pay the health tax because they are not entitled to any rights under the National Health Law. However, employers are obligated to purchase private health insurance for them and are entitled to defray part of the costs of the insurance from the employees' salary.

20% of the salaries of asylum seekers are deducted for a Deposit Fund. In addition, employers place 16% of the gross salary in the Deposit Fund, which replaces their obligation to pay into a pension fund. The law states that the money in the deposit fund will be given back to asylum seekers upon leaving Israel, or when their status is regularized (for example, if they are recognized as refugees and are granted refugee status). In reality, few of those eligible for withdrawal of the deposit funds were able to do so due to bureaucratic hurdles or because employers did not actually deposit the sums in the Fund, despite deducting them from the wages of the asylum seekers.

²³ Ibid.

Currently, the law applies to all asylum seekers, and no mechanism or criteria exist to exclude specific individuals. However, new criteria have come into force, beginning with salaries paid for November 2018, that reduce the share deducted to the Deposit Fund to 6%. This applies to women, minors, those over 60, single fathers, and recognized victims of human trafficking and slavery. It also applies to asylum seekers suffering from illness who can prove that the deductions would further harm their health, including their mental health.

Costs for Employers

The government levies several fees on employers to discourage the hiring of asylum seekers, despite the fact that most asylum seekers work in sectors suffering a work force shortage, such as restaurants and hospitality, performing jobs that Israelis largely refuse to do. Employers of asylum seekers pay lower taxes to National Security and asylum seekers do not pay a health tax. However, employers are obligated to pay a "foreign worker tax" of 20% of the asylum seeker's gross salary, which makes employing them significantly more expensive.

Asylum seekers	Israelis
The employer's part of the deposit (replaces deductions to pension and compensation in case of termination): 16% of the gross salary.	Workers' benefits – 6.5%; compensation in cases of termination – 6% (totaling in 12.5% of the gross salary or 15.8% if the employer allocates funds for complete severance pay).
National Security For salaries of up to 60% of the average income: 0.49% For salaries above 60% of the average income: 2.55%	National Security For salaries up to 60% of the average income: 3.45% For salaries above 60% of the average income: 7.5%
A Foreign worker tax: 20% of the gross salary.	-
Private medical insurance for a foreign worker: about NIS 250 (\$67). Employers can deduct some of the cost of the insurance from the worker's salary.	-

Municipal Projects in Israel and Around the World

In Germany, there are networks connecting potential employers to asylum seekers who are looking for work. These networks operate through internet websites, open to anyone wishing to register, or through programs run by municipalities. In the latter case, asylum seekers can register with municipalities, which screen them according to their skills and training, and connect them with relevant job opportunities.

In Israel, a similar initiative was launched connecting asylum seekers who were previously held in the Holot detention center with employers in cities where former detainees are allowed to reside.

In Wuppertal, Germany, the municipality set up a program in which social workers interview migrants to assess their professional and language skills to create a database of potential workers for employers wishing to hire them.

The Paris municipality provides language courses and subsidized vocational training, open to all residents of the city. Participation in the courses is not conditioned on legal status.

In Israel, the Center for International Migration and Integration (CIMI) launched a pilot of vocational training for asylum seekers. At the end of the training, the asylum seekers receive an internationally recognized certificate that would allow them to work in their professional field in Israel and in other countries, if they eventually leave Israel.

In Philadelphia, USA, the municipality connected entities granting micro-loans and migrants, whose access to credit is more restricted but who wish to start their own business.

Business Licenses and Vocational Training

Asylum seekers who hold 2A5 and B/1 visas cannot obtain business licenses because they cannot open a file at the Israel Tax Authority to pay the value added tax (VAT). The few who have been able to obtain a business license have done so with the aid of an Israeli business partner.

Asylum seekers can register for vocational training provided by the Ministry of Labor and Welfare, but those with 2A5 permits do not receive a certificate at the

end of the training, and therefore, can not be hired for jobs that require official professional certification.

Economic Benefits

The full integration of asylum seekers in the Israeli economy has the potential to significantly benefit the Israeli market, including: a rise in state revenues from collection of taxes, and payments to National Security in the sum of NIS 126 million (\$33.5 million) annually; a NIS 3.3 billion (\$890 million) increase in the annual domestic product in the sectors of construction, agriculture and hospitality, which are experiencing manpower shortages; and a reduction of hospital debts by NIS 10.3 million (\$2.7 million) annually.²⁴

The integration of asylum seekers into the labor market would offer significant benefits on the local level as well, because their ability to make a living increases their community's resiliency, reducing its dependence on the Israeli community and the municipal welfare and support services.

Recommendations

- Holders of 2A5 permits should be granted the right to open small businesses, and the process made more accessible and user-friendly.
- Asylum seekers who operate business should be given information to facilitate cooperation with the City Development Fund and other municipal development initiatives. Businesses of asylum seekers should be integrated in local business ventures.
- Municipalities should establish databases connecting asylum seekers looking for employment with employers interested in hiring them. As part of this initiative, employees of the municipal welfare department can be trained to identify particular needs of asylum seekers (their professional and language skills, health conditions, etc.)

²⁴ For more, see in Hebrew: The Center for Immigration and Social Integration, the Rupin Academic Center, *Placing Asylum Seekers in Relevant Sectors: Economic Aspects*, July 2016. Available online: <https://bit.ly/2HUejlq>.

Hippolyte d'Albis, Ekrame Boubtane, and Dramane Coulibaly, *Macroeconomic evidence suggests that asylum seekers are not a "burden" for Western European countries*, in *Science Advances*, 20 June 2018: Vol. 4, no. 6 <https://bit.ly/2MKDWWK>.

- Municipalities should establish an array of vocational training courses for their city's residents, in cooperation with local businesses and the City Development Fund. This initiative can operate as a social business.
- In cities that operate programs assisting their residents in various spheres, such as education and employment, asylum seekers residing in the city should also be granted the right to access these services.

5. Housing

The housing market for asylum seekers has several unique characteristics. The rent is usually paid in cash, because most banks refuse to provide checkbooks to asylum seekers. The rent often includes the costs of utilities and municipal taxes. In some cases, the electric bill must be pre-paid. Move-in costs are high due to the large cash security deposits demanded by property owners, as asylum seekers lack guarantors. Alternatively, asylum seekers might rely on Israelis willing to register as guarantors on their behalf.

Asylum seekers also pay exorbitant annual fees to real-estate realtors upon each renewal of the lease. Outside Tel Aviv, many asylum seekers struggle to find apartments and therefore, when an apartment is about to be made available, this information is spread by word of mouth.

Apartments rented to asylum seekers are often subdivided without a city permit. In 2013, the Tel Aviv municipality estimated that, in two neighborhoods where many asylum seekers reside, Shapira and HaTikva, the share of subdivided apartments was 38% and 28% respectively. In cities other than Tel Aviv, rent is lower so that asylum seekers can find undivided apartments whose level of maintenance is comparatively better, though most of them are in the most impoverished neighborhoods.

Many asylum seekers share their apartments with a large number of roommates, both to reduce the cost of living and out of a sense of communal solidarity. As a result, many do not have a lease on their name, which makes it difficult to renew their permit at the PIBA offices and register their children to schools and kindergartens.

Current Situation

Until 2018, a geographic limitation prohibited asylum seekers released from the Holot detention center from living and working in Tel Aviv and Eilat, forcing them to look for alternative places where they could find work, particularly in the Tel Aviv metropolitan area, where public transport is highly accessible. In early 2018, PIBA expanded this geographic limitation to the cities of Tel Aviv, Eilat, Jerusalem,

Petach Tikvah, Netanya, Ashdod and the Pardes Katz neighborhood in Bnei Brak, further curtailing areas where they could live and work.

The entry of a new community into neighborhoods leads to increased use of public spaces, infrastructure and municipal services. To prevent a situation of neglect that could cause friction between local residents and asylum seekers, it is important to take into account the additional use of public services and the different needs of communities ahead of time.

Many communities in Israel have successfully integrated asylum seekers into their cities. For example, some provide support and tutoring to young asylum seekers who arrived in Israel as unaccompanied minors. Other cities provide residents, including asylum seekers, access to public spaces for occasional community events, as well as legal assistance to those renting apartments whose rights are violated by property owners.

Recommendations

- Municipalities should allocate resources to neighborhoods receiving asylum seekers, particularly when these are low-income neighborhoods. Municipalities should maintain the infrastructure and services in these neighborhoods – street-lights, garbage collection and sanitation – to prevent residents from feeling neglected.
- Municipalities should create a fast track for processing requests to sub-divide apartments in a supervised manner, while at the same time increasing enforcement of regulations against property owners who divide their real-estate assets without a permit. The authorities, however, should not take measures against the asylum seekers residing in these sub-divided apartments.
- Public spaces and buildings should be allocated according to the changing needs of the communities: pre-kindergartens, kindergartens, synagogues, community centers, sporting halls, etc. to prevent the use of facilities outside their intended purpose.
- Residents, including asylum seekers, should be encouraged to participate in discussions regarding the changing needs of communities to ensure public space is managed in a more efficient manner, one that is tailored to the needs of the communities.

- A fair realty initiative should be established that would assist renters and property owners. The services of this initiative can include regularizing payment methods, establishing a security/guarantee fund, renting apartments on behalf of asylum seekers, management and maintenance services, legal counseling and assistance, translation services and more. This initiative can operate as a not-for-profit organization or as a social business.²⁵

²⁵ This chapter is based on the *Strategic Plan for the Dispersion and Integration of Asylum Seekers and the Rehabilitation of Southern Tel Aviv*, (2018), the Affordale Housing Center - Faculty of Law, Tel Aviv University. Available in Hebrew: <http://drom-tlv-plan.mdigital.co.il>.

6. Health

Maintaining good physical and mental health is crucial for the integration of migrants, and particularly asylum seekers. When one's health and accessibility to medical care are in jeopardy, going to work, school and attending to one's family become challenging. Without medical insurance, asylum seekers struggle to afford medical care, and any illness or injury threatens their economic stability, which is already precarious.

The National Health Law does not cover asylum seekers in Israel. Employers are obligated to insure their employees, but in reality, most asylum seekers do not have a practical solution for receiving basic medical services, such as treatment by family doctors, OBGYNs, and specialists. The State Comptroller has harshly criticized the Ministry of Health for not formulating a policy regarding this population.

Because they lack preventative care, asylum seekers reach hospitals only when their situation deteriorates and they meet the requirements of urgent care under the Patient's Rights Law. This matter is currently under discussion at the Ministry of Health, which stated that it is looking into mechanisms that would provide asylum seekers and undocumented migrants with medical services.²⁶

Current Situation

Most of the medical care services that do cater to asylum seekers are located in Tel Aviv and its environs.

The 'Terem' clinic, which provides emergency care services, operates in the Tel Aviv central bus station and is partly financed by the Ministry of Health. The clinic offers emergency services, as well as a clinic for diabetics and those suffering from high blood pressure. It provides medicine and blood tests, all financed by the Ministry of Health. In addition to these basic services, the clinic, staffed by volunteer doctors, offers various services, based on the availability of doctors.

²⁶ See also in the State's Comptroller's report 64C (2014) in the chapter *Handling of Foreigners Who Cannot Be Removed from Israel*, available in Hebrew: <https://bit.ly/1AbQ12Y> and in the State Comptroller report 68C (2018), footnote 7.

This clinic provides medical care to a large number of asylum seekers from Tel Aviv and surrounding cities. Terem clinics in other cities also provide emergency medicine services to asylum seekers. For example, the clinics in Jerusalem and Beer Sheva admit asylum seekers one day per week at a reduced cost. To make an appointment, asylum seekers need to contact the Tel Aviv clinic.

The Physicians for Human Rights–Israel (PHR–Israel) NGO operates an open clinic in Jaffa. In addition to providing basic and specialized medical care, it assists patients in dealing with Israeli authorities and employers on issues related to health.

Outside of Tel Aviv, the absence of proper medical coverage is exacerbated by the fact that health services to the entire population of northern and particularly southern Israel are less accessible. There is only one hospital in the Negev, Soroka Hospital, which fails to deal with the heavy workload; public transportation options are limited and asylum seekers need to traverse great distances to reach Beer Sheva for medical care. Patients, especially children, may reach life-threatening conditions and even die due to delays in accessing medical care. Eilat too does not offer any medical care other than the emergency room in the Yoseftal hospital, where asylum seekers without health insurance can receive medical care only when their life is in danger.

Minors

A special arrangement between the Ministry of Health and the Meuhedet HMO enables children of asylum seekers to be insured at a cost of NIS 120 (\$32) per month for the first child and NIS 240 (\$64) for two or more children. This arrangement provides children with all services included under the National Health Insurance Law, except for medical care abroad. To register, parents need to first obtain an A/3 form from the Ministry of Health office in their city of residence. They need to come to this office with their visas and the birth notification form given to them at the hospital, or the birth confirmation document (not a formal birth certificate) given by the Ministry of Interior. Following this, they need to visit a branch of the Meuhedet HMO in their city of residence and register. When registering a child who is not yet six-months-old, there is no waiting period, and the insured child is immediately eligible for all medical services. When registering a child older than six months, there is a four month waiting period for tests and services in facilities

outside of the HMO or ones requiring a commitment by the HMO to cover the cost of care ("form 17").

Many parents and municipal employees (for example, in municipal welfare departments) are unaware of this arrangement, do not know how the HMO operates and therefore do not insure or encourage insuring the children. Family health centers ("Tipat Halav") throughout the country provide only basic pregnancy care for women lacking permanent legal status, while support for an at-risk pregnancy requires the patient to finance the care herself. These family health centers provide immunization and periodic development monitoring for children ages 0-6 free of charge.

Mental Health Services

As part of the reform in mental health provision and the transfer of mental health care to HMOs, minors who are insured by the Meuhedet HMO can receive care in the general mental health center in Jaffa. Adults are not eligible to receive mental health care support because the National Health Law does not cover them. As of 2014, mental health services are provided to asylum seekers at the Gesher clinic in Jaffa, which provides care only in extreme cases. Asylum seekers who do not reside in central Israel struggle to reach the Gesher clinic, another example of the challenges faced by asylum seekers who reside outside of central Israel in accessing health care.

Recently, the State issued a tender for five additional mental health centers across Israel, but it is yet to be actualized. Today, asylum seekers who require mental health support must rely on limited care provided through volunteer psychiatrists at the Terem clinics, by PHR-Israel and other private initiatives. CIMI is currently working with the mental health center in Beer Sheva and the municipal social services department in an effort to provide services to asylum seekers residing in southern Israel.

Treatment of Tuberculosis and STDs

Tuberculosis patients who do not have permanent legal status or health insurance are eligible for medical care financed by the Ministry of Health and the Israel Lung Association, which work to prevent lung diseases. HIV+ patients are eligible for medical care under the national program for treating HIV+ patients who lack legal status. The limited medical care is provided to them through AIDS centers

in hospitals. In addition, two clinics specializing in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) operate in Israel: the HaParsim clinic in Haifa and the Levisnky clinic in Tel Aviv. These are local health centers for diagnosing and treating STDs free of charge, and where patients may maintain their anonymity.

Municipal Health Projects Around the World

The issue of access to medical services is a challenge in many places across the world, and cities that welcome refugees have dealt with it in different ways. For example, in a number of cities in Denmark, local authorities realized that one of the challenges is a lack of understanding and familiarity with the various health care systems. As part of the language classes asylum seekers are obligated to attend, authorities added lessons about the use of the Danish health care system. Research that followed the project documented a significant improvement in uptake of medical services among those who received comprehensive information about it. This example demonstrates the importance of easily accessible information, as well as emphasizing the importance of the various health care services provided, and how to use them.

Recommendations

- Municipalities should approach the Ministry of Health regarding possibilities for providing medical care and insurance to asylum seekers and undocumented migrants.
- Terem clinics operating in localities other than Tel Aviv should be prepared for the arrival of asylum seekers and undocumented migrants who are not covered by the National Health Law. These clinics should cooperate with the Tel Aviv Terem clinic, which has experience in treating this population and has expert medical translators.
- Municipalities can create short-term solutions for mental healthcare provision through NGOs or psychosocial services provided by municipalities, while promoting long-term solutions by engaging the Ministry of Health.
- Schools, kindergartens and family health centers should encourage parents to insure their children with the Meuhedet HMO.

- As part of the mental health reform, pupils should be directed to relevant learning disabilities tests.
- Health, welfare and educational staff in municipalities should undergo training about the services available to asylum seekers, and how to make these services more accessible.
- Municipalities should distribute relevant, up-to-date information, in the languages spoken by asylum seekers, regarding the health services provided in the city. This information should include the location of clinics (the Meuhedet HMO, Terem, hospitals, dentists, mental health clinics, etc.), explanations about the services provided in each clinic, and what asylum seekers are required to bring to appointments (medical documents, payment, referrals from schools, etc.)
- Follow-up care should be adapted to this population, to ensure follow-up with relevant actors. For example, when dealing with minors, future health-care supervision should be coordinated with the health staff at schools.

7. Welfare

The integration of migrants and asylum seekers is closely tied to their personal and communal welfare. This group is an at-risk community, due to the normal challenges of immigration (including language barriers and cultural differences), the absence of legal status and employment in low-paying jobs. Because they lack financial resources, migrants and asylum seekers often require welfare services. In addition, the experiences of escaping their country (in some cases surviving kidnapping and brutal torture in the Sinai torture camps), the journey to Israel, separation from their families, the constant changes in the government's policies, all pose additional challenges to integration and increase the need for welfare services.

The Ministry of Welfare has decided not to provide welfare services to asylum seekers, except in cases when there is an immediate threat to their safety or life. The Ministry of Welfare provides services to at-risk minors, victims of domestic violence whose life is in jeopardy, and those recognized by the Israeli Police as victims of human trafficking and slavery and who reside in specialized shelters. The State Comptroller harshly criticized this policy in his 2014 report.²⁷ In April 2016, a special memo of the executive director of the Ministry of Welfare set forth regulations concerning welfare services for undocumented minors.²⁸

In March 2017, the Ministry of Welfare published a document entitled Proposal for the Ministry of Welfare Policy Regarding Foreign Adults Who Cannot Be Removed [from Israel] in response to the deficiencies identified by the State Comptroller. The State's proposal addresses only four vulnerable populations: female victims of domestic violence, homeless people, people with disabilities, and recognized victims of human trafficking and slavery. Under the proposal, other vulnerable communities, in particular survivors of torture, are left without care or services. These recommendations were forwarded to the Ministry of Finance, which

²⁷ See the State's Comptroller's report 64C (2014), footnote 26.

²⁸ Special executive director memo, no. 100 from April 19, 2016 and the regulation concerning the handling of undocumented minors from April 18, 2016.

transferred only NIS 10 million (\$2.7 million) of the NIS 40 million (\$10.7 million) required by the Ministry of Welfare to provide services to these four groups. Despite the transfer of funds, however, the policy proposal has not been implemented to date, and the most vulnerable asylum seekers continue to be deprived of services and assistance.

This policy of withholding welfare services to communities that require them creates challenges and overburdens local authorities and residents: cases that should have been referred to the Ministry of Welfare are left to the care of the municipal welfare services which become overloaded, potentially generating tension between the asylum seekers and the host community. This situation is particularly harmful to the weakest among the refugee community – women, people with disabilities, people suffering from mental health disorders and patients suffering from chronic diseases.

The Current Situation

While the Ministry of Welfare does not officially provide services to asylum seekers, social workers in several Israeli cities meet asylum seekers requiring assistance and try to help them. However, most of those requiring welfare and social services receive them from NGOs such as Assaf (Aid Organization for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) or from activists and local initiatives.

The Tel Aviv Municipality operates Mesila – the Aid and Information Center for Migrants and Refugees. This center is a branch of the Social Services Department of the Tel Aviv Municipality and operates in southern Tel Aviv, assisting the various migrant communities in the city at the individual, group, and community levels. Mesila employs social caseworkers, communal social workers, pedagogical coaches, art therapists and occupational therapists who help at-risk minors, children with special needs, domestic violence victims, and recognized human trafficking and slavery survivors. Mesila's day center provides services to recognized trafficking and slavery victims from across Israel before and after they enter the rehabilitation shelters to which they are entitled (one year of rehabilitation). During reception hours at Mesila, asylum seekers residing outside of Tel Aviv also receive assistance, particularly in approaching various authorities and requesting social services.

In Jerusalem, a hotline provides assistance to asylum seekers who are city residents. The hotline, run by a social worker and volunteers, works in cooperation with local

organizations and the Jerusalem Municipality. CIMI operates in southern Israel as a mediator between refugee communities and welfare service providers to increase access to those services. The organization employs two coordinators in the south: one in Beer Sheva, which assists asylum seekers across the entire southern region, and the second in Eilat, which assists city residents. CIMI also works closely with the Ministry of Welfare bureau in Eilat, which is short on professional resources due to its remote location. In recent years, this bureau has invested great efforts to address the needs of asylum seekers.

In addition, social workers in hospitals, municipalities and welfare bureaus across the country carry out interventions and help asylum seekers fully exercise their rights when they are eligible for assistance.

Asylum seekers deal with significant hardships and multiple needs while receiving very few services. Members of these communities often endured mental and physical trauma in their countries of origin, en route while fleeing persecution, and in their daily life in Israel. Most of them work in physically strenuous jobs for many hours a day to make ends meet. Most earn very little and the Deposit Law has further pushed this community into unprecedented poverty and hardship, at times to the brink of destitution:

Many asylum seekers are single mothers. Without the family support structure, few are able to put in a full day's work. In families with children with special needs, who are not eligible for disability allowance due to their legal status, at least one parent is usually forced to stay at home and take care of the child.

Children aged 0-3 spend most of their days in unregulated communal pre-kindergartens (known as "babysitters") where neglect is common and children's safety is at risk. Children over the age of three spend their days in state-run kindergartens, but in the afternoon either end up in the unregulated communal kindergartens or roam the streets alone until late, without supervision because their parents cannot afford to leave work early. According to Israeli standards, most of these children are considered at-risk, lacking a stable or safe home and at least one hot meal per day. Neglected, they often wander the streets and face violence and even sexual abuse.

Adults who suffer from chronic diseases or mental illness are not eligible for State assistance, treatment or employment. This also applies to the elderly, who are

often homeless or forced to rely on support from within their community.

Women subject to domestic violence are not eligible for long-term treatment, allowances or rental assistance. They are referred to shelters for victims of domestic abuse only when their life is in danger. The staff in the shelters do their utmost, but because these women are ineligible for many services, the shelter simply serves as a place of refuge until they return home to the community. In addition, neither the women nor their violent partners receive any type of treatment in community settings.

Recommendations

- It's important that the municipality ask the Ministry of Welfare for the allocated funds to provide services to asylum seekers.
- Authorities should conduct needs assessments in all areas where asylum seekers reside and provide guidance to local teams working in those municipalities.
- Municipalities should conduct outreach programs for asylum seeker and migrant communities, using community facilitators. Community facilitation is an important and effective tool when working in a multi-cultural space, and with asylum seekers in particular. These facilitators are members of the community who can provide high-level interpretation services between asylum seekers and municipality employees, social workers, etc. More importantly, this role serves as a socio-cultural bridge between the asylum seekers, the municipality and residents. This role includes the transfer of information (for example, about holiday traditions, communal practices, municipal laws, etc.), facilitation and mediation when a conflict arises, thus creating grounds for dialogue.
- Particularly in municipalities outside of central Israel, special resources and professional support should be provided to the municipal welfare services which must deal with the additional difficulty of remoteness from other support structures.

8. Education

Israel is home to over 5,000 asylum seekers who are minors. About 600 of them arrived in Israel as unaccompanied minors, while others entered Israel with their parents or were born in the country. The vast majority were born in Israel. Israel is a signatory of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and is obligated to provide children with basic rights, including the right to education, regardless of their legal status. In line with this commitment, children of asylum seekers are integrated in Israeli schools and kindergartens.

The Ministry of Education stressed this commitment to the right to education in a memo issued by the Ministry's executive director, which stated:

"The Compulsory Education Law (1949) applies to any child living in Israel, regardless of their status in the Ministry of Interior's population registry. This applies to children of migrant workers at the age of compulsory education who reside in Israel, regardless of the official status of their parents. The Ministry of Education, local authorities and school principals will provide these pupils full services in accordance with their needs. For example, psychological services, regular home visitations, compulsory education provided free of charge at the ages of 3-4, extended hours of schools where this law applies, etc. School principals will report registration of these pupils to the Ministry of Education as part of the number of students, in accordance with regulations issued annually by the Ministry of Education."²⁹

For years, municipalities dealt with the issue of integrating asylum seekers into their school systems in different ways. For example, until several years ago, the Tel Aviv Municipality bused students across the city as part of an integration plan. In recent years, however, this program has been halted and most students attend schools in their neighborhoods. Most refugee children in Tel Aviv study in three schools: Biyalik Rogozin near the Florentin neighborhood, HaYarden School in the HaTikva neighborhood, and Keshet School on HaMasger Street. In addition, there

²⁹ Memo by Ministry of Education executive director, 10(A), June 1, 2000, <https://bit.ly/2TxMZyF>.

are 69 kindergarten classes for children of the asylum seeker community. Mesila is in constant contact with these educational institutions, holds training sessions for kindergarten teachers, assists in facilitation between the schools and parents, and fully cooperates with the city's Department of Enrollment and the Department of Education.

In Jerusalem, the municipality is attempting to ensure integration by determining that children of asylum seekers should not make up more than 10% of the student population at any given school. To implement this decision, the municipality enrolls the children in schools across the city, while ensuring they are able to use public transport.

Between 2008–2012, the Eilat municipality refused to integrate dozens of schoolchildren in the city's school system, sending them to be schooled in an abandoned building outside the nearby Kibbutz Ayalot instead. A petition filed on behalf of 15 children against this policy resulted in a verdict that obligated the municipality to integrate the children in schools in their own neighborhoods, like all other children in Israel. In 2012, the children were integrated in Israeli schools, initially in separate classrooms with children of various ages learning in the same classroom. Eventually, they were integrated into classrooms according to their age group, but not necessarily in accordance with their academic level. Currently, officials in Eilat are working to provide education services in line with the children's needs.

Challenges in Integrating Refugee Students

The State Comptroller's 2014 report stated that over 60 unregulated "babysitter" kindergartens were operating across Tel Aviv. As of the writing of this report, over 90 such unregulated kindergartens are operating across southern Tel Aviv. The operating conditions of these facilities create challenges in integrating the children in the regular school system when they grow older. These kindergartens do not provide adequate conditions for the children, who remain there for long hours, at times 12 hours or more. The children are neglected and the environment does not provide stimulation or educational opportunities.³⁰ These facilities have a small number of caregivers for a large number of children and operate from

³⁰ State Comptroller's Office, *Handling of Undocumented Minors in Israel*, Annual report 64C (2014), available in Hebrew: <https://bit.ly/1u4pkBT>.

the early hours of the morning, sometimes as early as 5 AM, until the evening. For much of the day the children are not involved in any activities and there is no regular schedule. The nutrition provided at these "babysitters" is inadequate and there are multiple safety hazards. Several children have died in these facilities in recent years.

Children reach municipal kindergartens from these "babysitters" with developmental and linguistic delays as well as behavioral and emotional problems. In some cases, children enter municipal kindergartens at the age of three without having ever heard a word in Hebrew, nor are they familiar in any way with norms of behavior in educational institutions. Children who reach school at the age of six directly from these unregulated kindergartens do not have adequate tools for integration into the educational system, and exhibit significant delays in language acquisition, cognitive and motor abilities. Schools integrating these children are forced to try to bridge these gaps.

The Tel Aviv Municipality decided to address this problem by offering safe educational facilities for children ages 3-months to 6-years under the Unitaf model. This is a model that helps members of the community to operate child care facilities that are in line with Israeli standards, preventing the conditions of neglect that are the norm in the unregulated kindergartens.

Schools in Tel Aviv, Arad and Eilat report that the main issues affecting refugee students are their poor Hebrew language acquisition, difficulty communicating with parents due to language barriers, challenges stemming from cultural and socio-economic differences, undiagnosed emotional difficulties and complex learning disabilities. Only children registered with the Meuhedet HMO are eligible for psycho-didactic diagnoses, but wait-times for these tests are lengthy. Diagnosis by private institutions is inaccessible due to exorbitant costs. PHR-Israel provides assessment services by psychiatrists, but the availability of these services is extremely limited. The Education Psychological Service bureaus at different municipalities struggle to keep up with demand, and very few such diagnoses are made. Even if children receive a diagnosis, they do not receive the services recommended by professionals (tutoring, psychotherapy, remedial teaching, etc.) for various reasons.

Schools across Israel handle these challenges differently. For example, in Tel Aviv, teachers undergo training in cooperation with the Pisga Center for the development

of teaching staff. Memos and forms are sent to parents in multiple languages, and networks of volunteers assist children identified as requiring aid. In Jerusalem, schools with a large number of refugee pupils have added teachers specializing in remedial education and special education teachers to the staff. These teachers have developed detailed plans including informal diagnoses, additional classes for struggling students and study groups. In Jerusalem kindergartens, teachers receive training and guidance in working with refugee children, and additional assistance comes from early childhood education college students. Some of the kindergartens identified as requiring assistance are given budgets to address the issue of poor Hebrew language acquisition.

Outside of Tel Aviv, there is a shortage of after-school programs (see Chapter 7: Welfare). The African Community Center in Jerusalem operates a tutoring program that assists refugee children in primary school, and CIMI operates an after-school program in Eilat.

Children of asylum seekers do not have ID or visa numbers. The identification numbers given to them are internal numbers of the various ministries. As a result, they have a different internal identification number from each authority: one from the Ministry of Education, one from the HMO, and different numbers if they receive assistance from the Ministry of Welfare or if they were hospitalized. To enroll a child without an ID number in school, the Ministry of Education in Jerusalem creates an internal ID number for them. This number accompanies the child from the age of three throughout their time in the education system, until the 12th grade.

Special Education

The Law of Integration (7th amendment to the Special Education Law) applies to all children, regardless of their legal status. Refugee children with developmental difficulties, physical disabilities or who are on the autism spectrum are eligible for education in a specialized day care from the age of one (Israeli children are eligible for this benefit starting at the age of six months). These children are not entitled to a disability stipend. The Ministry of Welfare and municipalities, however, finance their integration in these specialized day cares. When local authorities pay or allocate funds for this purpose, parents are eligible for discounts on educational payment if they present their pay slips or declare their income.

Starting at the age of three, children with physical or mental disabilities are

eligible for integration in special education kindergartens and schools. They are also eligible for after-school programs and long school days, financed by the Ministry of Education and the municipality. In this case too, parents are eligible for discounts based on economic need if they reside in municipalities that allocate fund for this purpose.

Some payments are required of parents on which discounts cannot be given, and some parents can not afford them. Other payments, including food, PTA fees, etc. are eligible for discounts. Regardless of the parents' ability to pay the fees, their children must be able to continue their education and cannot be taken out of the appropriate school.

Allotment of Municipal and Governmental Resources

The resources and budgets for integrating refugee children in the municipal education system fall under the shared responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the municipality. Municipalities across Israel have found ways to finance special support structures for refugee children. For example, the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem municipalities have dedicated resources for allocating places for children in schools, opening new classrooms and kindergartens, and for pedagogical activities. The issue of parental payments is also under the jurisdiction of the municipality. Many parents do not pay the fees, either because they cannot afford them, or because they do not realize the need and importance. The Tel Aviv Municipality raised the money from donors and with the assistance of volunteers, while other municipalities such as the ones in Jerusalem and Arad covered the unpaid fees from their budgets. The Eilat Municipality received compensation for lost fees from the southern branch of the Ministry of Education, and the municipality finances the operation of the Karev Fund that provides enrichment activities to children across Israel, including refugee children.³¹

Adult Education

Learning the Hebrew language is important for the integration of asylum seekers in the city. Currently, since most asylum seekers have lived in Israel for five to ten years, most of them speak at least elementary Hebrew, and some speak it quite

³¹ From a document of the Knesset Research and Information Center, *Services of the Education System for the Population of Children of Foreigners without Civil Status*, 2014

fluently, enabling them to bridge cultural divides between communities. Investing in teaching Hebrew to those who do not speak it and improving the language skills of those who have not mastered it is an important tool for integration of asylum seekers. Parents need to learn Hebrew to enable them to communicate with their surroundings and assist their children. Oftentimes, parents rely on their children for simple daily tasks, which may contribute to a situation of parentified children, undermining parental authority and hierarchy within the family.

Projects of Municipalities in Israel and Around the World

Programs for teaching the local language to asylum seekers and migrants can be a communal endeavor based on volunteers, as was done in Neukölln in Berlin, where colleges provide training to volunteers interested in teaching German to migrants. This task can also be based on cooperation between communal organizations and NGOs (such as the Israeli "School House"). Many Israeli municipalities have initiated adult education programs that provide language classes and promote adult learning to assist mostly Jewish immigrants to Israel (Olim) and the Bedouin community. Asylum seekers can be integrated into these programs and benefit from them.

Vocational training and professional retraining programs can also assist asylum seekers in their integration. Many asylum seekers wish to obtain academic education or learn a profession in vocational training courses. Several programs in Israel provide asylum seekers with vocational training. Some are operated by NGOs such as the CEC and School House, while others are private companies, such as the Welding College, which offers training and international certification. CIMI provides training courses in vocations required in the Israeli market. Another NGO, ARDC, provides vocational training to teenagers and adults, helps with the employment and integration of asylum seekers into unfamiliar employment sectors, and helps make higher education more accessible to this population. The Association for Adult Education in Israel operates the "Open Pathway to Employment" (Delet Ptucha) program and assists in bolstering language skills and completing education requirements for all population segments residing in Israel.

Mother Tongue Education

Successful integration in a host community requires preserving one's original culture while accepting the new one as well. Combining these cultures drastically decreases marginalization, which is a risk factor for teenagers and young adults. Learning one's mother tongue ensures that children maintain a connection to their culture of origin, assists in strengthening the bond with their parents and reduces conflicts. Such educational programs often emerge within communities and increase the community's cohesion.

Recommendations

- Refugee children should be integrated from a young age in kindergartens operated by Naamat/Wizo or as part of other municipal educational institutions, thus decreasing language barriers and bridging gaps in learning literacy. This integration into the municipal education system should be carried out without segregation, in an effort to reduce gaps, better integrate children in the host localities and communities, while reducing prejudice and xenophobia.
- Solutions for toddlers should be developed according to the Unitaf model, which assists members of the community in operating educational frameworks that provide for the full needs of young children.
- Services on the municipal level should be developed according to the unique needs of the asylum seeker community. Services should be tailored to children in accordance with recommendations of psychological and pedagogical diagnoses that the children should undergo.
- After-school programs should be developed for children of all ages, and particularly children with special needs. Currently, many of the children return to the irregular kindergartens or wander the streets after school hours. It is important to find solutions to this issue, particularly for children ages 3-8.
- Welfare services can assist families in registering and placing children in kindergartens, schools, day care and after-school programs. Providing this assistance will allow parents to go out to work without leaving their children in irregular kindergartens or wandering the streets, thus reducing the risk to their safety, developmental delays, emotional and behavioral problems, etc.
- Training should be provided to teachers, equipping them with tools for working

in a multi-cultural space and familiarizing them with the challenges and unique educational gaps of the student population.

- Children of migrants often require corrective instruction to keep up with the pace of other students. Identifying students who require assistance and implementing early interventions helps the students and supports a uniform developmental level in the classroom.
- Children should be integrated in special education pre-kindergartens starting from age one in non-segregated frameworks.
- Municipalities should work with the Ministry of Education to secure funding dedicated to assisting children of asylum seekers.
- Peer learning: schools should cooperate with other schools that have experience working with asylum seekers, such as Biyalik Rogozin and HaYarden in Tel Aviv, Paula Ben Gurion and the Experimental schools in Jerusalem and schools in Ashdod and Haifa.
- Children should be encouraged to learn their mother tongue, whether at school (as in the Biyalik Rogozin School), or in communal initiatives.
- Municipal departments with programs for teenagers, community police units and external educational programs (such as the Hila program) should cooperate to provide solutions for teenagers. Teens should be encouraged to integrate into existing youth movements to prevent loitering and risky behaviors.
- Asylum seekers should be allowed to participate in local initiatives of municipal adult education departments.
- The development of Hebrew-language instruction and vocational training for adults can be implemented by several cities working together and with cooperation from the private sector.

9. Culture and Sports

Like all other communities, asylum seekers create and participate in cultural events, which vary according to the character of their community. Eritrean asylum seekers in Israel, for example, are mostly Christians who attend church. Therefore, they require spaces to pray, celebrate holidays and perform ceremonies. Setting aside an organized communal space would prevent religious gatherings in municipal parks and other irregular venues, which sometimes creates tension with the host community. Some municipalities have assigned communal spaces that are routinely used by residents of certain neighborhoods or communities for this purpose and have allowed asylum seekers living in these neighborhoods to hold community or religious events in those spaces.

Integrating asylum seekers in neighborhood communal activities and events organized by the municipality will help decrease mutual fears and provide a platform for Israelis and asylum seekers to get to know each other.

Success Stories of Elite Athletes

The Alley Runners Club

The Alley Runners Club is a professional athletics non-profit club established as a social project intended to empower marginalized teenagers through sports. Members of the club include Israeli children, mostly of Jewish Ethiopian descent, but also children of asylum seekers and migrants from Eritrea, Sudan, Nigeria, etc. The club is open to all children and currently operates in southern Tel Aviv, Jaffa, Or Yehuda and Beit Shemesh. The children participate in professional competitions organized by the Israeli Athletics Association (IAA), in training camps, and also represent Israel and the club in Israeli and international competitions. In addition to the physical activities, the children also meet during afternoons for private lessons on various subjects, and receive pedagogical supervision and assistance.

The club has been able to significantly and positively affect the lives of the children in the club, their parents and communities. The children improve in school (the club conditions participation in the program on participating in an educational

track that guarantees graduation from high school with a GED, and tailored preparation for higher education) and there are marked improvements in their social life as well.

The children have also attained professional success: they have represented Israel in international competitions and achieved impressive results in them. For example, a group of six teenage girls from the club represented Israel in the high school international championship held in China. Another group represented the club in the European championship and ranked fourth out of all European teams. Many club members hold national titles in various athletic fields. Two of the club's athletes are part of the reserve team of the UNHCR's refugee team for the next Olympic Games. Three teenage girls who graduated from the club received full scholarships to Israeli and U.S. universities.

Integration of Refugee Children in Israeli Football (Soccer) Clubs

Over the past two years, the Levinsky Library has worked to find a solution for children of asylum seekers and migrants who wish to join professional football clubs in Israel.

Until recently, children of undocumented parents could not receive a player's card and be fully integrated in football teams. This obstacle stemmed from FIFA's system of laws and regulations, under which Israeli football clubs and the Israel Football Association (IFA) operates. FIFA prohibits granting a player's card to undocumented children in order to combat the phenomenon of using recruitment of children into football clubs as a cover for human trafficking. In Israel, this regulation prevents children of asylum seekers from joining football clubs. In most countries in which FIFA operates, the legal status of asylum seekers' children is quickly regularized, and they do not remain in a legal limbo for many years, as they do in Israel.

In 2018, FIFA allowed the IFA to issue a card to a minor asylum seeker for the first time, conditioned on producing the right documents. This process lasts several months and includes many bureaucratic hurdles.

Recommendations

- It is important to allow asylum seekers to participate in all municipal cultural and sports events.

- Children and teenagers should be integrated into sports teams and the process of registration should be made accessible to them.
- Municipalities should organize joint cultural events displaying the cultures of the city's various communities.
- It is important to encourage cultural activities among asylum seekers by assigning public buildings for temporary or permanent use for this purpose.

10. Additional Rights

Driver's License

The Ministry of Transportation has determined that refugees with temporary residency (A/5 visas) and asylum seekers with work visas (B/1) are eligible to hold an Israeli driver's license, but they too face multiple bureaucratic hurdles. However, most asylum seekers hold a 2A5 permit, which prevents them from obtaining a driver's license and bars them from employment in fields that require being able to commute. This also prevents a more even distribution of asylum seekers across Israel, as they are almost entirely dependent on public transportation, which operates poorly in Israel's periphery.

Due to PIBA's ever-changing policies that lead to overload and long lines outside the Authority's offices, refugees with temporary residency permits and work visas at times fail to renew their visas before they expire. They then end up without legal status for weeks and even months. Once the visa expires, they are not allowed to drive. In some cases, where the visa lapsed for longer periods, the Licensing Department at the Ministry of Transportation required asylum seekers to undergo an additional driving test as a condition for maintaining their driver's license.

Allowing asylum seekers to drive would require a change in policy of the Ministry of Transportation to enable those holding 2A5 permits to obtain a driver's license, or a change in the governmental policy regarding the legal status of asylum seekers.

Public Transport Card ("Rav Kav")

In January 2014, the Ministry of Interior announced that it would direct public transport operators to allow those with 2A5 permits and no other identifying document to obtain a personal public transport card ("Rav Kav"), which provides discounts on travel fare. However, children of asylum seekers are currently ineligible to receive a personalized Rav Kav and therefore do not enjoy the student discount when using public transport, since they do not receive a 2A5 permit until they reach the age of 16. This creates a significant financial burden, especially since many of the schools and kindergartens attended by refugee children are far from their home and require taking two buses in each direction. NGOs assisting asylum seekers continue to be engaged on the matter.

The Ministry of Transportation should allow children of asylum seekers to enjoy the student discount on public transportation by issuing them personalized Rav Kav cards, while registering the students through their schools, as is done with Israeli children.

Bank Accounts and Credit Services

According to the 2010 guidelines of the Supervisor of Banks, banks must allow asylum seekers who hold B/1 work visas and 2A5 permits to open bank accounts using these identifying documents. The permit needs to be valid when the account is opened.

Credit services, including issuance of checkbooks and extension of lines of credit are at the discretion of the banks, which usually refuse to provide credit services to asylum seekers. This causes a significant obstacle when asylum seekers try to rent apartments (see Chapter 5: Housing), since rent, payments are usually made with checks. In some branches, banks issue asylum seekers with debit cards as an alternative to credit cards.

The short duration of their permits and prolonged periods of not having a valid permit negatively affects asylum seekers in this regard: due to the Prohibition on Money Laundering Law, banks do not allow any withdrawal or movement of funds in bank accounts if the identifying document of the account holder has expired. Since most asylum seekers in Israel lack a passport, they open bank accounts with their 2A5 permits. In periods between visa renewals, which change in duration in accordance with the fluctuating policies of PIBA, banks prevent account owners from using their accounts and they can not make use of the salaries deposited in their accounts in those periods when their visa lapses. Appeals regarding individual cases to the Supervisor of Banks on this matter yield positive results, but the general policy is to prevent access to accounts by holders of invalid visas.

Municipal Taxes

Under the law, municipalities and local councils can grant asylum seekers discounts on municipal taxes ("arnona") similar to other residents of Israel based on income, disability, age, single parent status, discounts for non-profits and discounts for businesses.

Elderly Asylum Seekers

There are a few elderly asylum seekers in Israel. Asylum seekers are not eligible for old-age pensions and most do not have a pension through their workplace.

11. Conclusion and Recommendations

Israel's policies toward asylum seekers are largely determined by the central government. However, asylum seekers reside in cities across the country, where they integrate into the city's life and fabric. This creates a need for municipalities to balance between the government's policies, which largely marginalize asylum seekers, and between the need of municipalities and local councils to maintain a healthy communal life for the benefit of all residents of the city. Local councils enjoy an advantage due to their ability to operate in a more flexible and creative manner than other governmental bodies; they can handle changes more rapidly and effectively by developing plans and practices for the integration of the refugee community and implement them faster via pilot programming. Below are a number of recommendations for policies to help create an all-encompassing framework to manage the integration of asylum seekers at the municipal level.

A. Developing Integration Strategies Adapted to Each Municipality, Setting Goals and Measuring the Impact of Programs

The municipality and the local council, unlike the government and its ministries, encounter asylum seekers on a daily basis. Keenly aware of the challenges related to the physical and communal space in which asylum seekers live, the municipality is better suited to tailor more precise interventions. These interventions are designed to better integrate asylum seekers, at times wholly separate from the government's policies.

Monitoring the implementation, and measuring the impact of municipal programs will help to improve them and maintain proper budgetary management. This data, which is not collected by the central government, will provide the municipality with an up-to-date snapshot about the number of asylum seekers in the city, the neighborhoods in which they have integrated, etc.

B. Integrating Asylum Seekers in Decision-Making Processes

The precarious legal status of asylum seekers in Israel creates a situation in which they cannot take part in the decision-making process, even on the municipal level,

regarding policies that affect their lives. Including asylum seekers in developing integration strategies will facilitate effective cooperation between the municipality and the refugee community, and provide a deeper understanding about their specific needs and unique challenges in the city. Such cooperation already exists today between asylum seekers and the Israeli Police station in southern Tel Aviv. Cooperation can be carried out through town hall meetings, granting asylum seekers representation on municipal committees, etc.

C. Communal Participation

The entry of a new community into the city, even a small one, creates a change in the public sphere. Effective management of this change and reduction of causes of tension and friction can be done by establishing an action group comprised of city residents, representatives of the refugee community and a representative of the municipality. Such an action group, which would maintain an ongoing dialog on problems and solutions, would create space to work on adaptive solutions and the promotion of joint communal goals.

D. Municipal Adaptability

Many municipalities in cities around the world that integrated migrants, especially ones that absorbed refugees, realized that such integration requires the coordination of all municipal departments. New arrivals require assistance and guidance from residents and migrants who have lived there longer. A number of cities responded by creating a body that would facilitate the mediation required for the integration process of migrants and asylum seekers. For example, the city of São Paulo, Brazil, opened a coordination office responsible for formulating municipal policy concerning the integration of refugees. In other places, such as Chicago, USA, the municipality's involvement in the integration of migrants is extensive, and the municipal body responsible for the integration is the same body providing individualized support to refugees. This body is a combination of a welfare services office and a coordination body. In Düsseldorf, Germany, the city appointed a refugee commissioner who oversees the entire system of integrating refugees in the city. Coordination and consistency across municipal departments is one of the best ways to ensure effective integration of migrants in general and asylum seekers in particular, especially when the coordination takes place in municipalities, between regions and between local councils and the central government.

The situation in Israel is different and the role of the municipal coordinator must be adapted to the challenges facing municipalities and asylum seekers residing in Israel. The current proposal addresses three levels of coordination: with asylum seekers; between various municipal departments; and between the municipality and outside actors.

1. Working with asylum seekers – assistance in integration into the urban space, such as registration of students in kindergartens and schools, assistance in opening businesses, etc. Asylum seekers often lack knowledge or are misinformed regarding their rights and the municipal services to which they are entitled. To provide these services and inform the community, the coordinator would be responsible for mapping out the needs of asylum seekers and the solutions offered by municipalities and the government. In this context, effective work in multi-cultural settings requires municipal employees to be well versed in the cultures of asylum seekers, their outlooks on life and cultural differences.
2. Coordination between municipal departments and formulation of a municipal policy concerning the integration of asylum seekers in the city. The integration of asylum seekers requires joint efforts by the various departments of the municipality such as the departments of education, welfare, tax collection, monitoring and enforcement, preparedness and security, as well as the youth department.
3. Establishing cooperative relations across four different levels:
 - a. **Communication between municipalities and local councils working to integrate asylum seekers within their jurisdictions:** Such ties are essential for discussing challenges, sharing ideas and solution, as well as promoting joint learning and policies. These ties can be established in cooperation with the Center for Local Governance, thus bolstering the ability of these municipalities to engage governmental ministries. Many cities across the world that have integrated migrants use inter-municipal cooperation to expand the policy solutions and services they offer. In Israel, such cooperation would likely yield significant results due to the proximity of localities and the ability to create joint projects.
 - b. **Ties with the government:** Coordination and work with relevant government ministries such as the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of

Internal Security and Ministry of Education to promote policies and solutions for the integration of asylum seekers.

- c. **Cooperation with the UNHCR:** The UNHCR is an important body involved in the integration of asylum seekers in the country, especially before they are granted refugee status.
- d. **Cooperation with NGOs:** Over the years, as we have shown above, NGOs assisting asylum seekers have provided, and are continuing to provide various services to asylum seekers. Establishing ties with these NGOs will allow them to share knowledge they have gained over the years.

E. Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships divide tasks and responsibilities between the public and private sectors when it comes to formulating policies. In effect, this is the cooperation between the sectors, each with its abilities and resources, to provide a service to the population at large. Creating cooperative relationships between municipal initiatives, businesspeople and asylum seekers can assist the integration of asylum seekers in the host community, both economically and socially, by fostering a sense of belonging. Creating employment and professional training opportunities, opening businesses and economic integration in a city will assist local residents as well as local businesses. In addition to providing employment opportunities, local businesses often form the connection between the local Israeli community and the refugee community, and thus integration of asylum seekers in employment opportunities in their places of residence is another tool for their integration.

12. Organizations and Bodies Assisting Asylum Seekers in Israel

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The UNHCR monitors the conditions of asylum seekers in Israel and their needs and acts to provide solutions and services. www.unhcr.org/israel.html.

Hotline for Refugees and Migrants (HRM)

HRM provides legal advice and para-legal assistance to asylum seekers and migrants on issues concerning regularization of their status, renewal of their permits, applications for asylum, release from detention and prevention of detention and deportation. The organization also helps identify victims of slavery and human trafficking. hotline.org.il.

CIMI (Center for International Migration and Integration)

CIMI provides training and professional guidance to local authorities, services providers and other bodies that encounter asylum seekers. The organization ensures that social and communal services are accessible to asylum seekers residing in Israel's periphery. The organization also provides vocational training for adult asylum seekers, operates after-school programming for children of asylum seekers, and provides mentorship for asylum seekers who arrived in Israel as unaccompanied minors. CIMI also operates dialogue and encounter programs between asylum seekers and Israelis in cities in Israel's periphery. www.cimi.org.il.

HIAS Israel

The organization provides legal assistance to asylum seekers free of charge on issues related to regularization of their legal status and other civil affairs. The NGO also provides training to lawyers and students, operates a legal database and delivers a monthly update on Israeli and international case law and articles that may assist in the representation of asylum seekers. hias.org.il/english/.

Kav LaOved

The organization provides individual assistance on issues related to labor rights during office reception hours, online and through a telephone hotline. www.kavlaoved.org.il/en.

Mesila - The Aid and Information Center for Migrant Workers and Refugees of the Tel Aviv Municipality

Mesila operates a reception center that provides asylum seekers with advice, guidance, mediation and assistance in receiving services and dealing with various official instances. The center also helps deal with family problems and cases requiring specialized care. Mesila provides information on various matters relevant to the lives of asylum seekers, including health, health insurance, legal rights, education, housing and apartment leases. The center operates a program supporting at-risk children and teenagers and works to improve the conditions in the community's unregulated kindergartens. In addition, Mesila organizes communal activities and assists recognized victims of human trafficking and slavery. <https://bit.ly/22OT6Na>.

Unitaf

A social enterprise operating daycare centers and after-school programming, which works to convert the unregulated kindergartens into daycare centers that meet Israeli standards. Unitaf works to establish additional education frameworks, and works with parents in the refugee community. www.unitaf.org.

African Refugees Development Center (ARDC)

A community association of asylum seekers from Africa led by asylum seekers and Israelis. The Center provides vocational training for youth and adults and makes higher education more accessible to them; promotes educational activities in schools; provides assistance in finding employment solutions and integrating asylum seekers in the labor market in new sectors; develops training workshops to introduce asylum seekers to the Israeli labor market; helps to write CVs, etc. The Center also works to strengthen the leadership and cohesion of asylum seekers in Israel, mediating and creating joint initiatives between Israelis and asylum seekers. It also works with the asylum seeker communities in the periphery and regularly supports the needs of the community. www.ardc-israel.org.

The Association of Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI)

ACRI leads strategic litigation to protect the rights of refugees and asylum seekers in Israel, and handles and promotes legislative initiatives relating to their rights. www.english.acri.org.il.

Physicians for Human Rights–Israel (PHR–Israel)

The NGO provides basic medical care and care by specialist doctors through a clinic operated by volunteer doctors and nurses. The clinic accepts all those without legal status in Israel except tourists with a valid visa. The organization also assists asylum seekers on the matter of private health insurance. phr.org.il/en/.

Assaf: Aid Organization for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Israel

The organization provides psycho-social support to asylum seekers, assistance to people with disabilities, HIV+ asylum seekers and operates after-school programs for teenagers. assaf.org.il/en/.

Jerusalem African Community Center (JACC)

JACC provides humanitarian and psychosocial assistance. The Center also assists asylum seekers in fully realizing their rights, provides them with language courses, tutoring programs and social events. www.jacc.org.il.

The Negev Refugees Center

A communal center in Beer Sheva that provides assistance in dealing with authorities to fully realize asylum seekers' rights, communal activities and language courses. www.facebook.com/negev.refugees.center.

The Refugee Assistance Program of the LGBT Association

A program offering assistance to LGBT refugees and asylum seekers: legal assistance, psycho-social support, financial assistance and guidance in dealing with authorities and bodies related to health and employment. www.lgbt.org.il/lgbt-minorities.

The Terem Clinic for Undocumented Migrants

A joint initiative of the Ministry of Health and the Terem network, which provides medical services to any person within the State of Israel who is excluded from the National Health Law and does not have health insurance. Terem provides basic emergency room services and operates a clinic for those suffering from diabetes and high blood pressure, financed by the Ministry of Health. Similar services are provided during certain hours in Beer Sheva and Jerusalem. <https://bit.ly/2Lrfniv>.

The Levinsky Clinic, Tel Aviv

A communal clinic for tracking and treating sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) that operates as part of the Tel Aviv Health Bureau. It provides a host of medical and psycho-social services: diagnostic tests, medication, consultation, assistance and guidance regardless of legal status. <https://bit.ly/2S9Hntj> ; <https://bit.ly/2ECsqwL>.

HaParsim Clinic, Haifa

A clinic operating as part of the Haifa Health Bureau that provides medical services, diagnostic tests for STDs, medical treatment and consultation regardless of legal status. <https://bit.ly/2S9Hntj> ; <https://bit.ly/2ECsqwL>.

Israel Lung Association, Tel Aviv

A center for diagnosing and treating tuberculosis. islung.org/he/ppd.

The School House

Operates courses for adults in Tel Aviv: English language courses, computer skills, preparation for higher education, cultural skills and public speaking. www.schoolhouse.org.il.

CEC – Community Education Center (the Levinsky Garden Library)

A communal center in Neve Shaanan, Tel Aviv, which provides evening courses for asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, after-school programs, a cultural center and a library at the Levinsky Garden in southern Tel Aviv. thegardenlibrary.org.

The Eritrean Women Center

A community center run by Eritrean women, offering courses and professional training for women, individual support, assistance in completing asylum applications and the resettlement process to Canada. www.eritreanwomenscenter.org.

Kuchinate

A collective of African women that creates crochet products and conducts workshops, communal meals and traditional coffee ceremonies. The collective operates as a psycho-social business. The members of the collective earn a fair wage and receive psycho-social services. www.kuchinate.com.

The Hotline for Equal Opportunities in Education

Each year before of the start of the school year, the Legal Clinic for Educational Policy at the law faculty of Haifa University operates a hotline for the public to promote equal opportunity in education. During the school year, the Clinic can be reached by email: law.haran@gmail.com or through the Facebook page of the clinic. www.facebook.com/lawclinicforeducating.

Israel AIDS Task Force

The group operates a psycho-social support system for HIV+ people and their relatives, and provides life-saving medication to those excluded from the National Health Law. <https://bit.ly/2A0qyKr>.

The Adult Learning Association in Israel

The association develops unique educational programs for adults and works to integrate them into the labor market across the country. www.adultlearning.org.il.