Changing the Relationship Model: Israel, Israeli Migrants, and Jewish Communities

Reinforcing Second Generation Expat Bonds to Israel, Jewish Identity, and the Jewish World

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An analysis of the Israeli migrant community in the Diaspora shows:

- The migrant community can be an asset to both the State of Israel and local Jewish communities.

- Second-generation migrants are exposed to accelerated assimilation processes.

- Israeli parents abroad have difficulty passing on an "Israeli" identity to the next generation.

The main recommendations arising from this analysis and from the data on which it is based are:

- Israel should extend voting rights in Knesset elections to Israeli migrants for a four-year period.

- Israel should support the establishment of kindergartens and schools for Israelis living abroad.

- Israel should support study tracks for the children of Israeli migrants in Jewish schools.

- Diaspora Jewish communities should be open to including Israel expats in organizational life, with special emphasis on education and culture.

- Community institutions should be open to further developing national-Jewish identity and identification frameworks.

- Israeli expats should engage in more conspicuous public support for Israel.

- The Hebrew language is the key to engaging in and understanding Israeli life for second generation Israelis abroad and should be a prominent educational priority.

Background

Current intensive migration trends, which many societies and states are experiencing as a result of economic globalization, have not by-passed Israel. It is estimated, as of this writing, that between 550,000 and 580,000 Israelis and approximatley another 200,000 of their household members have been living in the Diaspora for extended periods (more than a year).

Emigration from Israel is unique in that its principal treatment comes from the parent country, Israel, and much less from the destination countries. The main reason for this is that, in Israel, emigration is viewed as a contradiction of the Zionist tenet of the ingathering of exiles. Thus, in the past, the policy of Israeli governments toward Israeli expats has ranged from ignoring them to denouncing them.

In recent years, however, there has been an accumulation of factors in light of which Israeli government policy – and that of Jewish communities around the world – toward Israeli migrants in general and their children in particular, should be reconsidered. The main reasons are: the number of Israelis who are not living in Israel, as mentioned above and as will be detailed below; Israeli expat communities are more significantly established and rooted abroad, especially in North America; globalization processes and trends; **and most of all, the emergence of a second generation for whom Jewish Identity was formed outside of Israel, and if current trends continue, is expected to undergo accelerated assimilation processes. This is the subject of this paper.**

In recent years, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of Israeli migrant families with children born overseas (from 45% in the 1980s to 70% or more in the 2000s), along with a steady decline of the age at which the Israelis' children emigrate.[1] **The result of these trends is that fewer and fewer children of migrants have had their identity shaped in Israel.** This is occurring against the backdrop of natural processes of minority integration into the majority society (when it is open and accepting, as it is in the countries in which most Israeli expats live) and their adoption of its national identity.

In all aspects of the preservation and cultivation of Jewish-Israeli identity in the Diaspora, the most recent data show that **among Israelis overseas who are interested in maintaining a connection to Israel,** less than two-thirds have enrolled their children

in a Jewish educational system of any kind, supplementary or day school (60.6%), and only slightly more than a quarter (27.4%) have ever been members of a Jewish or Israeli youth movement. Only half (among the first generation) participate in any community activity (50%).[2] These statistics, and others, cast doubt on the ability of Israeli expat communities to transmit and nurture Jewish-Israeli identity in the second generation.

The doubt is even stronger given the sociological processes influencing the children of migrants who, unlike their parents, are exposed to two societies and for whom the sense of identity is less about a geographical-political space and more a product of family belonging, socio-economic class, or religious connection. Generation1.5 – children who lived in Israel until age 14[3] – were reared in and members of an Israeli-majority society; after migrating, they find themselves – from a national, cultural and religious perspective – part of a foreign ethnic minority. And generation 2.0 – those born in the Diaspora – are expected to internalize a national identity and culture of, and connection to, a country in which they have never lived. Israel is, at best, secondary to their experience.

Both generations 1.5 and 2.0 lack the first generation's effective mechanisms for identity preservation, and as a result – especially in the pluralistic countries of the West – exhibit different ethnic identities from that of their parents. They are more vulnerable to assimilation and a concomitant multi-dimensional decline in their Israeli ethnic distinctiveness. This assimilation manifests in their economic, educational, and cultural absorption into the majority society, as well as in their patterns of residence, marriage, and social networks. Their ethnic identity often becomes so marginal, in terms of group affiliation and its place in the individual's entire conception of self, that it is all but abandoned.

This paper includes: a summary of what we know from the scarce research on the phenomenon in various destination countries; various quantitative estimates of the populations under discussion; an analysis of the phenomenon from a sociological perspective, especially the implications for identity; and action-oriented policy recommendations for the Government of Israel, Jewish communities, and Israeli expats themselves for facing troubling trends as well as for seizing the possible opportunities inherent in them.

I would like to thank the staff of the Jewish People Policy Institute for their advice and clarifications, Professor Moshe Sikron for his statistical assistance, and Dr. Lilach Lev-Ari, whose writings focused my attention on this phenomenon.

Emigration from Israel, the shift from censure to acceptance of a fait accompli

Emigration from Israel has been of concern to the state since its founding, but most of the research relating to it as a sociological phenomenon began in the 1970s. In the first decade of this research (until the end of the '80s) researchers identified the processes of the migrants' settlement in the destination countries and the formation of Israeli expat communities there. These Israeli expat enclaves were predominantly found in urban centers with large Jewish communities, but were mostly separate from them. Often regarding one another skeptically, each community held the other "at a distance." Beginning in the early '90s, the phenomenon of the second generation gained attention, that is, the children of émigrés born outside of Israel (the vast majority in North America). From the beginning of the 21st century, there has been growing recognition among émigrés of the permanence of their migration, and the first signs of their institution building in the form of local Israeli community organizations and umbrella groups became visible.

Unlike other migrations, which are usually examined from the point of view of the destination country, emigration from Israel is examined mostly from the point of view of the mother country – Israel. There are several reasons for this: one of the most important is that emigration from Israel has historically been a source of controversy – some would say it still is – weighted with negative ideological baggage. The negative image of emigration from Israel derives from the claim that out-migrants breach Zionist ideology, that their move opposes the historical direction of ingathering the Jewish people to Israel. According to this view, Israeli emigration undermines the demographic and ideological struggle for Jewish rights and sovereignty in the Land of Israel. As a result, some researchers have claimed that we must regard emigration from Israel as a special case, different in its motivations from other migrations due to its negative connotations, and because, they claim, full integration of those who have experienced Jewish sovereignty into destination countries is unachievable.

In this paper, I have chosen to adopt the differentiation made by Gold (2002), who regards the study of emigration from Israel as being divided into three main approaches, each one motivated by different ideological factors that dictate its basic assumptions.

It is my assertion that this differentiation also explains the vastly different estimates of the numbers of Israelis overseas,which share a similar bias.

Despite differences between the various schools of study, which will be detailed below, there are a number of assumptions for which there is broad agreement. Among them: the assumption that Israeli out-migrants, on the whole, voluntarily emigrate in search of improved opportunities, and are part of a global trend known as the New Migrants – a global voluntary migration movement motivated by economic factors and cultural preferences, that is, by the quest for a higher standard of living, increased personal liberties, and self-actualization. Similarly, there is no challenge to the assertion that Israelis prefer to migrate to developed English-speaking Western countries that offer the possibility of social and cultural mobility, speak a familiar language, and in which out-migrants often have familial or other social ties. Researchers also agree that the largest Israeli community outside Israel is in the United States, which is home to between half[4] and two-thirds[5] of all Israeli expats.

Regarding the numbers themselves, there are disparate estimates motivated by ideological and other factors. In this paper, I rely on the estimates of Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics and of Cohen (2011), which are the most detailed and up-to-date available as of this writing.

Emigration from Israel: The Field of Study

Gold (2002) suggests dividing the field of study of Israeli emigration into three main schools or approaches, which to a large degree parallel the sociological processes Israel has undergone since the 1970s:

A. **"Yordim"** – This approach, which largely characterized researchers of the 1970s and 1980s, related to the phenomenon of out-migration from Israel from the country of origin's ideological-moral viewpoint. From its inception, Zionism considered immigration to Israel as *aliyah* (ascent) – a supremely positive value – and to leaving it as *yerida* (decent), a moral decline anathema to the Zionist ethos and the security of the state. Researchers who adhered to this approach tended to focus on the difficulties of migration and integration Israelis experienced overseas while stressing that they were "displaced." In their view, Israelis, having experienced sovereign Jewish life in Israel, have difficulty adapting to life as a minority in the Diaspora (unlike the Diaspora Jew for whom this life is normal). Their critics

claimed that emphasizing the adaptational difficulties was meant to reaffirm the validity of Zionism. This research construct, though it still exists (albeit not as declaratively as in the past), has weakened in recent years, among other reasons because of change in the expat profile and in Israeli society's attitude toward them and Zionism writ large. Among the prominent researchers who supported this approach were Sobel (1986), Greenberg (1979), and Shokeid (1988), as well as certain demographers who overstated the numbers of *yordim*, possibly with the aim of enhancing the phenomenon's negative resonance. So it was, for example, in a 1981 Jewish Agency survey that reported some half a million Israelis living in the United States, or the survey by the Los Angeles Federation in 1983, which found that 100,000 Israelis lived in the Los Angeles area alone.[6]

B. **"Migration Studies"** – This approach, which stresses the economic dimension, and, therefore, purports to be more ideologically neutral, is also identified with the researcher's national-ideological biases. Here, though, we actually have researchers who live in the Jewish communities of Western countries that are the focus of Jewish and other migrations. Their approach, which is fundamentally economic, analyzes Israeli migration vis-à-vis economic theories of agency and self-interest, according to which individuals work and migrate motivated by the desire to maximize profit and take advantage of opportunities to improve career, education, income, standard of living, etc. Burawoy (1976); Portes and Borocz (1989); DellaPergola (1992). This approach relates to migration as a free market of countries encouraging immigration on one hand, and on the other, skilled migrants who select their destination country according to their ability to maximize gains there. Unlike the *Yordim* school, this approach does not emphasize a special connection between the ethnic identity of migrants and their mother country. Researchers who advocate this approach tend to focus on the many resources available to Israeli migrants (language, culture, profession and physiognomy) and on their ability to adapt relatively easily to the host society.

C. **"Transnational" or "Cosmopolitan"** – This approach has its beginnings in the 1990s. The concept of "transnational migration" is drawn from the world of global non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and relates to migrants as "multi-locational" or "multi-national" (transnational). Advocates of this approach emphasize that, unlike in the past, there is no expectation that migrants will lose connection with their original society and with other communities of the same ethnic origin elsewhere. This approach emphasizes the multi-dimensionality of

the migration process and the ability of migrants to combine resources from the country of origin and the destination country. It examines the phenomenon through the migrants' collective experience as a "cultural diaspora."

The transnational is, in essence, a post-modern approach that regards identity and cultural and geographic origins as fluid, and stresses connections to different groups, different backgrounds, and different practices. The Israeli migrants' experience is interpreted according to this approach as an attempt to maximize **freedom** – as a response to the rigidity of boundaries in the original society. This theory stresses, as noted, the ability of migrants to combine resources, social networks, and available identity elements from a number of sources to expand their autonomy from any single nation state, and in order to relieve obligations or maximize benefits of citizenship, taxation, military service, various racial and communal hierarchies, gender roles and religion. Negative aspects of this approach, according to its critics, are that it emphasizes emotional alienation and displacement and challenges identity coherence.

As noted, the designation of a specific kind of migration as transnational is borrowed from international organizations and particularly from various types of cooperative NGOs. This definition seeks to differentiate between the nature of the new migration, which ascribes a central role to various ongoing connections with the homeland (familial, political, cultural, economic, demographic, etc.), and the nature of migration in the past, which was characterized by the struggle to build a new life in the destination country and the expectation of increasing disconnection from the country of origin over time as integration into the destination society strengthens.

The social space of transnational migrants stretches across a number of locations and changes frequently to accommodate the network of relationships and obligations migrants develop in more than one place (Glick Schiller et al., 1992, 2004; Cohen, 1997; Gurnizo and Smith, 1998; Gold, 2002; Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004; Smith, 2005 Lev-Ari, 2008, 2010; Rebhun and Lev-Ari, 2010; DellaPergola, 2011).

Of the three schools, the transnational approach is regnant in today's research as an explanation of the emigration phenomenon, and it is most relevant in understanding the second generation's experience. The other two schools offer explanations that have weakened over time, but still hold some validity. The extent

of transnational mobility among Israeli migrants depends, among other factors, on social characteristics, family ties, economic situation, occupation, as well as the character of the host society, including its perspectives and policies vis-à-vis global migration. Adult migrants of means are most likely to maintain a transnational lifestyle, integrating into the destination country while maintaining strong ties to Israel. On the other hand, young migrants or those of lower economic status are less likely to maintain these ties, and sometimes they fray altogether.

The Identity of Generation 2.0

Components of personal identity include core beliefs, values, roles and the experience one accumulates over a lifetime. Identity is constructed in an ongoing process that begins in childhood and varies in intensity according to age, circumstances, milestones involving life-changing decisions, such as marriage (especially among ethnic minorities), and career choice. Adolescence is a critical period in the formation of personal identity (Marcia, 1980; Erikson, 1969). It is a time of individuation, experimentation, and clarification when various questions come to the fore, such as religious and political beliefs, and the consideration and contemplation of possible careers and other roles in adulthood. As one's ethnic identity is often consolidated at this time of life, it requires the careful attention of researchers and policymakers.

For generations 1.5 and 2.0, members of a minority in the destination countries, the challenges of identity consolidation are more complicated than for non-migrants (Markstrong-Adams, 1992). Identity results from selecting and combining aspects of two cultural value systems. The Israeli case may be more complex than others because of the twin differences of religion and nationality. [7]

As most Israeli migrants have no physical characteristics setting them apart from the majority group (especially when it comes to North America), they have the option to underplay the cultural characteristics that do set them apart and seamlessly integrate into the majority society. **Those who do wish to preserve their Israeli identity have difficulty finding modes and opportunities for its expression in the Diaspora.** This is, in part, because the Israeli national identity is young, dynamic, and still in a formative stage. The primary components of Israeli identity include a Jewish-political-national ethos and a specific geographic reference space, the State of Israel, the sole nation with a Jewish majority and a Jewish public sphere. As a result, the Jewish-Israeli identity lacks rituals that can be easily transplanted or practiced outside its borders or divorced from its public sphere. Israeli migrants, most of whom are secular (69.9% define themselves as such),[8] grew up with this Israeli identity without needing to consciously establish or assert it. Israel supplied educational and other inculcating social mechanisms without its religious aspects, which provide a system of transportable rituals and values aimed at preserving Jewish identity. In other words, when the Jewish-Israeli identity is disconnected from its existential home it seems

that it is unable to serve in absentia as a central and authentic identity framework, especially since those in question experienced it in Israel only briefly during their childhood, if at all. **The result is that for generations 1.5 and 2.0 Israeli identity steadily weakens in relation to the identity of the destination country, sometimes to the point of disappearing entirely.**

Possible Alternative Identity Frameworks:

The transition from characteristically deterministic frameworks – those in which individual identities are fixed and not subject to change – to voluntary expressions of identity, in which individuals choose and customize identity and the degree of their identification in a "marketplace of alternative identities" – has diverted academic discourse around identity away from issues of group cultural organization and cohesion toward the individual and how individuals interpret the significant components of their own identities. Giddens (1991) defines the modern world as reflexive and argues that "the reflexivity of modernity extends to the core of the self and becomes a reflexive project of identity formation," i.e. it is the individual who is responsible for the creation of the self, its formation, plasticity, and preservation (Giddens, in Ritzer, 2006). When it comes to forming the identity of generations 1.5 and 2.0, the construction and preservation of an Israeli identity mainly transpires at the individual level.

As mentioned, the main theoretical framework for analyzing the phenomenon of emigration from Israel today regards migration as a transnational process. "One of the possible identity manifestations of the transnational migrants is **the diasporic identity**, which is based on symbolic psychological elements of the migrants' ethno-national identity." (Lev-Ari, 2010). This identity coalesces with the formation of a significant migrant group, and after the initial absorption stages – integration in the host society's educational and economic systems and local language acquisition – have been completed. Only then is it possible to create and strengthen formal and informal networks based on common origins that can work to preserve the group's uniqueness and safeguard its interests both in the host society and country of origin. This, in effect, is the "Israeli bubble" or what creates the sense of "living at home overseas," (Galchinksy, 1998; Sheffer, 1986; all in Lev-Ari, 2010).

Expressions of Israeli identity in the Diaspora, especially among the first generation, include: giving children Israeli names, speaking Hebrew at home, regularly following

news and television shows from Israel (especially via the Internet), visits to Israel, belonging to Israeli social networks, advocacy on Israel's behalf and donating to Israeli or pro-Israeli organizations. Among generations 1.5 and 2.0 the scope of expression and intensity of ethnic identity are more limited and mainly manifest in speaking Hebrew, friendships with other Israelis, joining Israeli youth movements, and, at a later age, some join the Israeli army or participate in a Birthright or MASA program.

It seems that in the North American Israeli migrant community the process of constructing a transnational diaspora is indeed under way. Today, at least some Israeli expat communities have reached a sufficient level of organization and strength to raise collective demands that Israel recognize their legitimacy and standing. An example is the "World Council of Israelis Abroad"[9] conference held in Canada in 2011, in which Israel's Minister of Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs, Yuli Edelstein, participated. Topics such as "Relations between the State of Israel and Israelis Overseas" and "Building an Israeli Community Overseas" were discussed. The establishment of the Israeli American Council in Los Angeles and Moatza Mekomit in New York are even more recent examples.

Cohen and Haberfeld (2003), who examined the degree of economic success among the Israeli migration's first and second generations in the United States, found that members of the first generation were more prosperous than their American counterparts, including Americans of similar background and education, and that "members of the migration's second generation even managed to exceed the first generation's achievements in terms of salary and income" (page 154). Cohen and Haberfeld conclude their article with the claim that the road to "economic assimilation," which usually takes several generations for other migrant groups, has taken less than a single generation in the Israeli case. These and other findings show that Israeli ethnicity does not present an obstacle to economic mobility in the United States, and, as such, also does not serve as a catalyst or spark for expressions of identity or ethnic awareness, which arise from perceptions of discrimination and deprivation.

According to Bean and Stevens (2003), ethnic identification is more evident among the lowest and highest social classes. In their view, "symbolic ethnicity" can occur among those who have successfully integrated economically and particularly among the children of migrants from the upper classes. They (the children of Israeli migrants among them) are expected to employ their ethnicity and expressions of

ethnic solidarity less as an instrumental tool (for economic mobility) and more as a subjective and autonomous expression of the individual.

One aspect of transnational migration is **identity dynamism**, a plasticity or fluidity of identity than can manifest in: change in national loyalty, fragmented or partial identity, loyalty to two countries or, conversely, a lack of commitment to either. Ethnic identity construction for migrants and their children is a dynamic process subject to constant negotiation between the migrants and their host society. The nature of the process differs depending on the migrants' ethnicity, status in the destination country, and the purpose of migration, as well as on the host society's dominant view of migration generally and the migrant's specific country of origin. The migrant's other needs and identity characteristics such as appearance, religion and personal migration narrative also play a role.

The formation of significant migrant communities in destination countries, along with diminishing host society demands that they relinquish their cultural distinctiveness in the "melting pot," facilitate pluralistic narratives in which various immigrant groups structurally integrate while retaining their social and cultural distinctiveness. Some, particularly in North America, have claimed the metaphor of the "salad bowl" in place of the "melting pot." These trends have contributed to a renewed rise of ethnic belonging and to identity dynamism through what is described as **"ethnic identity"** and **"symbolic ethnicity,"** (Tur-Kaspa, Pereg and Mikulincer, 2004). Both terms relate to the representation of ethnic identity as part of an individual's overall identity. But these definitions are not rigid, rather, they are subject to the interpretation of the individual according to his or her experience and needs. According to Gans (1979, 1994), group identity, which in the past was embedded and based on a common destiny, history, and heritage, has become open to individual choice and interpretation. One can choose whether and how to adopt it and assign its relative significance within the totality of the self.

Ethnic identity comprises the totality of characteristics deriving from the individual's belonging to a group, and is shared with other group members. It is distinct from **personal identity,** which expresses the totality of characteristics that distinguish the individual from his or her environment, (Tur-Kaspa, Pereg and Mikulincer, 2004, all in Bar-Lev, 2010). Ethnic identity relates to different social and cultural aspects: self-identification as a group member, the sense of belonging and commitment to the group, positive and/or negative attitudes toward the group, shared views and

values, historical memory, as well as language, behavior and customs that position the individual in a certain cultural context. The more significance the individual assigns the specified group, the greater its influence on his or her self-conception.

Phinney (Phinney, 1996; Rotheram and Phinney, 1987, p. 13) defines ethnic identity as one's feeling of belonging and commitment to an ethnic group, and its cognitive component in the individual's perception, emotions, and behavior that derive from belonging to the group, (in Tur-Caspa, 2008, p. 39). The effects of ethnic identity also touch tangential areas such as religious or political identification. Others claim that ethnic identity occupies the place once filled by structural ethnic behaviors and expressions, such as living in bicultural neighborhoods, belonging to a community, and patterns of intra-communal marriage. Gans, who assumes that assimilation is a linear process (Gans, 1994), claims phenomena appearing as evidence of ethnic or religious "revival" only represent a new stage in the ethnic group's process of assimilation into the local general culture and society (Revhon and Lev-Ari, 2011, pp. 108-109).

From a sociological perspective, there are two prominent research models for studying ethnic identity (Tur-Kaspa, Pereg and Mikulincer, 2004):

- The **Extremities Model** considers identification with an ethnic group and identification with the majority group as the two poles of a linear continuum. Accordingly, integration into the majority group comes at the expense of ethnic identity. It posits, therefore, that one cannot simultaneously identify strongly with his or her ethnic group and with the majority group (Andjo, 1998; Makabe, 1979; Simic, 1987; Ullah, 1985).

- The **Two Dimensional Model** considers the two identification groups – the ethnic and the majority – as mutually independent that do not necessarily occur at the expense of the other (Berry, Trimble and Olmedo, 1986). By combining the two group identities, in different degrees, four possible ways of constructing an identity result (Tur-Kaspa, Pereg and Mikulincer).

1. Bicultural orientation – maintaining strong identification with two groups (as an Israeli and as a member of the majority society);

2. Marginalization – the absence of identification with either group;

3. Assimilation – integration in and identification with the majority culture;

4. Enclave/separation – self-segregation within a minority ethnic group and exclusive identification with it (identification as "Israelis only").

When we examine the identity of members of the Israeli migration's second generation, it is efficacious to understand their identity challenges and the alternatives they face by employing the two-dimensional model. As the children of immigrants, members of generations 1.5 and 2.0 are exposed to many pressures; they experience cultural difficulties with their immigrant parents as well as with their local peer group. They often lack memory of the country of origin with which they are identified, and having grown up in the destination country, they exhibit greater fluency in its language than that of their country of origin, and have inculcated its social and cultural norms. **Their identity is not encapsulated at one of two poles (extremities model), but rather, takes its place in a field that changes depending on the individual's attitude toward the general society and on an ongoing cost-benefit assessment of ethnic identification.** From among the four possibilities on the identification and segregation continuum enumerated above, most generation 1.5 and 2.0 migrants fall between the bicultural orientation and assimilation. The marginalization and ethnic enclave categories are easier to identify and quantify, but account for only a small proportion of the population. Lev-Ari (2010) claims that Israelis who identify with Israel and the Israeli community while feeling alienated from the local society ("Israeli enclave") are mostly those who emigrated with their parents after age eight.

Matrix of the Two-Dimensional Model and the Direction of Identity Trends Among Generations 1.5 and 2.0
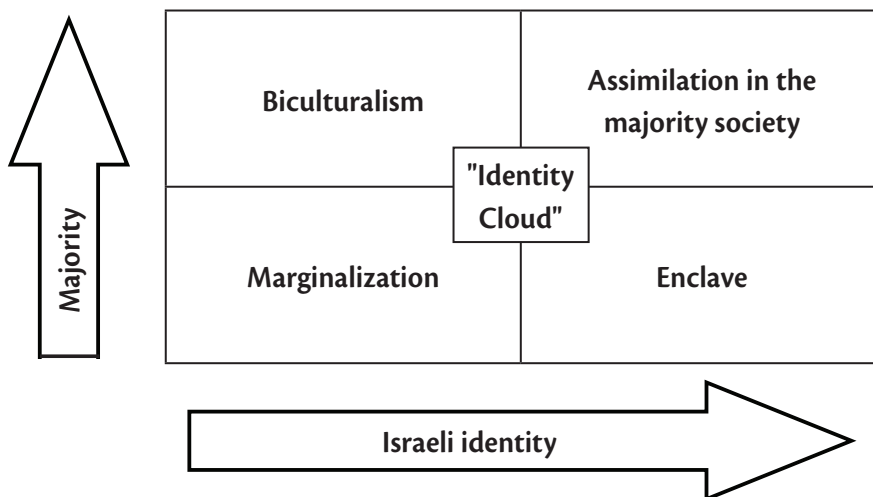
There are several examples that support the validity of the two-dimensional model of out-migrant identity in the Israeli case: Rosenthal (1989), in her study of Israelis who received American citizenship and live in Brooklyn and Queens, found that while in the parental generation, 63% identified as Israelis, among their children fewer than 7% identified as Israelis while 55% identified as Americans. She further found that the children of Israelis who attended Jewish schools better integrated into Jewish-American culture than the children of Israelis who attended public schools. Those in public schools better preserved their Israeli identity.

Gold (2002) claims, in regard to Israeli migrants in the United States, that members of generations 1.5 and 2.0 are more involved than their parents in non-Jewish society, and their identification with it is comparable to their identification with Jewish society, while their parents prefer to identify with Israeli or with Israelis in the United States rather than with the local non-Israeli community.

Lev-Ari (2008), who studied Israeli immigrant communities in Europe, particularly in Britain and France where there are large concentrations, found that while the first generation maintains its link to Judaism and Israel mainly through their connection to Israel and Israeli culture, generations 1.5 and 2.0 experience ongoing assimilation processes. Among those born abroad, the focus of identity was primarily the birth country itself – Israel was secondary. Lev-Ari further claims that following the move overseas, the Jewish and Israeli components of identity of both the young and the adults changed. The first generation now feels, more than the young, that "following the move overseas, the Jewish religion is more important to them than before (39% and 18% respectively), and that it is also more important to them to observe Jewish customs than before. On the other hand, for the young it is now important, more so than for the adults, to integrate into non-Jewish society (37% and 15% respectively), and, similarly, it is more important to the unmarried to form social connections with non-Jews (37% vs. 16%)."[10]

Regarding marriage, 74% of respondents in Europe do not rule out or condemn intermarriage and regard it as a private matter between the partners. While almost all of the first generation are married to Jewish partners, about a quarter of generations 1.5 and 2.0 intermarry or live with non-Jewish partners. In a study Lev-Ari conducted in the United States (2010) of young people in *Garin Sabra*, pre-*Sabra* and other programs, more than 50% did not rule out marriage with a non-Jew or thought that the matter is a personal one between the partners. Regarding

community organization participation in Europe, Lev-Ari found that generations 1.5 and 2.0 are almost completely uninvolved in voluntary Israeli groups (mostly Sephardim), a fact that was especially conspicuous among Israelis interviewed in France. In numbers: 23% of the young people in France maintained intensive ties with the non-Jewish community; 30% spent their leisure time with non-Jewish friends; 61% stated that they do not belong to or are not active in the Jewish community; and 77% do not live in Jewish neighborhoods. In conclusion, Lev-Ari states that without a change in existing trends, it is reasonable to assume that a high proportion of members of generations 1.5 and 2.0 will assimilate into the majority society.

Revhon and Pupko's study of Israeli expats around the world (2010) shows a similar picture: Of their respondents, **some 40% of Israeli children do not participate in a formal Jewish education system and 70% do not participate in any Israeli or Jewish youth movement.** This statistic is troubling given the fact that the educational system – both formal and informal – is a major engine of identity formation and transmission.

The identity picture among generation 2.0 can be understood by looking at the experience of other ethnic diasporas. Portes and Rumbaut (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001; Portes and Zhou, 1993, in Lev-Ari, 2010, p. 35), who studied the descendants of Spanish, Cuban, Mexican and other migrants, noted that members of the second generation had a fairly smooth transition in adopting a general American identity, and conclude that the question of ethnic identity is a matter of personal choice. The researchers found that most generation 1.5 and 2.0 migrants identify with their parents and with their tradition on certain occasions **depending on the level of convenience/comfort** they feel in each specific context. The researchers described this phenomenon as **"segmented assimilation."**

Lev-Ari (2008) claims that, with respect to generations 1.5 and 2.0 of Israelis in Europe, "they are more aware of manifestations of anti-Semitism and even feel it, while their parents felt it less acutely, if at all." Further, generations 1.5 and 2.0 reported that they prefer not to speak Hebrew outside the home, as it identifies them as the children of immigrants or as Israelis, which they have no interest in highlighting, particularly during periods when Israel is perceived negatively in world public opinion. These findings correspond with those of Waters (1990), that individuals choose for themselves the cultural and ethnic aspects with which they feel comfortable identifying, preserving and emphasizing, while downplaying or abandoning ethnic characteristics they find problematic.

Additionally, Lev-Ari (2008) claims that the identity preservation mechanisms of generations 1.5 and 2.0 are weaker than those of their parents. At the same time the pressure on them to make identity choices is greater, especially in educational institutions. The identity of generations 1.5 and 2.0 is constructed along a continuum of adaptation to the host society. Their process is more organic than that of their parents, and so their identity is more connected to the host society. From here, she concludes that "in an intergenerational comparison the strength of the transnational experience weakens, as the members of generations 1.5 and 2.0 anchor their social contacts and their identity in the local non-Jewish society while their parents construct a transnational Israeli identity as immigrants in Europe.

In the United States, the situation of Israeli migrants differs from those in Europe, although they share some characteristics. From the cultural perspective, the national identity of Israelis in the United States is mostly based on the subjective feeling of Israeli-ness and Jewish-ness, and includes elements of secular Israeli Judaism. This, as we have said, is the binational **diaspora identity**, which on one hand is integrated economically and structurally, and on the other maintains the country of origin's cultural contours, values, and narratives enabling expats to feel "at home abroad." Despite the size of the Israeli community, which makes it possible to maintain a distinct ethnic identity, here too the intensity of ethnicity weakens with the transition from the first migrant generation to the next.

As the data show, only 40% of respondents enroll their children in Jewish day schools, and 22% send their children to supplementary education programs (the percentage of all Israelis is lower as the respondents do not comprise a representative sample of all Israeli expats). The remaining almost 40% do not send their children for any Jewish education, formal or informal. These numbers are especially striking when combined with residence in non-Jewish neighborhoods, which influences attitudes and opportunities pertaining to intermarriage and the preservation of Jewish and Israeli identity.

The following tables relate to generations 1.5 and 2.0 and show the extent of participation and involvement of Israelis and their children in Jewish institutions. **It should be noted that the data relate, in the words of the report's authors, "to the central core of Israelis abroad who have a high level of Israeli identification."**[11] In light of this caveat, we cannot exclude the possibility that the numbers for Israelis who do not seek a connection to the State of Israel (a connection that in many instances has parallels with Jewish identity) will be significantly lower when it comes to maintaining an Israeli or Jewish ethnic identity.

Community Involvement among Israelis Abroad, by Place of Residence (%)

Place of residence	Frequency of synagogue attendance				Participation in social/ cultural activities
	Never	Several times a year	Once a month or more	Total	Do participate
Total	27.4	50.4	22.4	100	50.1
USA	23.9	51.5	24.6	100	54.2
Canada	26.2	59.2	14.6	100	53.2
Latin America	13.7	52.1	34.2	100	54.3
France	28.2	49.4	22.4	100	41.9
England	37.2	38.5	24.4	100	40.9
Germany	63.6	29.5	6.8	100	32.7
Central/western Europe	33.5	47.4	19.1	100	43.4
FSU	20.0	58.9	21.1	100	56.0
Asia-Africa	38.5	43.1	18.5	100	40.9
Oceania	31.4	50.0	18.6	100	45.8

From: "Distant but Close," 2010 (Hebrew original – *Rehokim Krovim*)

Participation (ever) by Children in Jewish Formal and Informal Education Systems, by Place of Residence (%)

	Formal Jewish education				Youth movement
Place of residence	None	Supplementary	Day-school	Total	Do participate
Total	39.3	21.6	39.1	100	27.4
USA	33.1	26.5	40.4	100	28.5
Canada	40.5	17.7	41.8	100	34.0
Latin America	30.4	8.9	60.7	100	43.1
France	37.7	24.6	37.7	100	26
England	42.6	24.1	33.3	100	18.2
Germany	60.0	24.0	16.0	100	15.9
Central/ western Europe	51.0	15.5	33.5	100	23.5
FSU	58.1	15.5	33.5	100	34.7
Asia-Africa	48.7	17.9	33.3	100	15.5
Oceania	50.0	5.8	42.2	100	25.4

From: "Distant but Close," 2010, (Hebrew original – *Rehokim Krovim*). The emphases are the author's.

The report states that, "in general there is a high degree of correlation between the frequency of synagogue attendance and participation in local Jewish social and cultural activities."[12] If we accept this finding (as it regards the committed core), future trends do not bode well.

Assessing the Size of the Israeli Migrant Population

In order to develop policy for generations 1.5 and 2.0, we must first estimate the size of the target population. However, to do so we must overcome several obstacles and be cognizant of the data's limitations. The first obstacle lies in the fact that migrants from Israel do not declare "emigration" as the purpose of their travel when leaving Israel, and there is no available formal or normative definition of who is an Israeli migrant. Further, those leaving Israel are not asked to declare either their destination or the purpose of their travel. Therefore, when we endeavor to map the distribution of Israeli migrants, we must rely on census and statistical reports from the destination countries (when available) or alternatively, on educated estimates.

Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) defines an Israeli émigré as an Israeli **citizen** who remains overseas for more than a year, on the condition that s/he had previously resided in Israel for more than 90 consecutive days.[13] This definition leads to certain distortions because it includes as an "Israeli émigré" any person who takes citizenship in Israel, remains there for three months, and then leaves the country. This definition includes, for example, *olim* who only passed through Israel briefly en route to a third country, or who tried to make *aliyah* and returned to their country of origin after a short time, even though the most significant component of their identity and self-definition is not Israeli. A more precise definition would include a revised minimum residential period of time (in years) in Israel before emigration.

Another variable deserving reexamination is the period of time overseas after which a person is defined as an émigré. As noted, according to the CBS, an émigré is one who left Israel and remains overseas continuously for more than a year. A consequence of this definition is that many Israelis, including *shlichim* (emissaries), students, post-doctoral fellows and those traveling after their army service are defined as émigrés, even though they do not intend to settle abroad permanently.

Given its political implications for the identity and future of the State of Israel, the question "Who is an Israeli émigré?" is subject to various interpretations. There are some who try to limit its scope and others who try to broaden it. Institutional interpretations (government ministries, national institutions) at various times

have attempted to instill feelings of betrayal and guilt in the émigré population, as well as reinforced feelings of mission and importance among those living in Israel. Interpretations by other elements have sometimes served as a means of criticizing various government policies, or, in the case of anti-Zionist groups, as propaganda against the Zionist narrative and the connection between Jews and their homeland.

An example of the first type of broad interpretation is found in the estimates made during the 1980s of the number of Israelis living in the United States, which ranged between 300,000 and 500,000. These estimates mainly relied on two reports. One, issued in 1981 by the Jewish Agency, fixed the number of Israelis in the United States at half a million.[14] A second report, published by the Los Angeles Federation in 1983, claimed that 100,000 Israelis were living in the Los Angeles area alone, and that their total number in the United States amounted to several hundred thousand.[15] In 1997, the Los Angeles Federation conducted another survey and found that the number of Israeli-born Jews within its jurisdiction totaled only 14,000. This shows the wide variance between estimates and actual figures of who had qualified as an Israeli in the estimate the federation presented 15 years earlier, and illustrates the difficulty of determining the number of Israeli expats.

Another example of an over-broad interpretation of migrant numbers can be found in Gold and Moav's article on the Israeli "brain drain" (2006) in which they note, based on an estimate by the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption from late 2003, that 750,000 Israelis – 12.5% of the total Jewish population of Israel – lived outside of Israel. Yet another example can be found in an article published by Ynet.co.il on March 5, 2002, which was based on Ministry of Interior figures, and stated that **a million** Israelis were living in foreign countries at any given moment (according to the following break-down: 450,000 Israeli citizens – Jews and Arabs over 18 – and an additional 550,000 children under 18).[16]

Israel is an immigrant society. Emigration from it must be examined vis-à-vis two main parameters: A) migration by Israeli-born citizens; and B) secondary migration by immigrants whose absorption was unsuccessful. Examining emigration from Israel without taking these parameters into account creates a distorted picture in which the rate of emigration from Israel is unusually high, when in fact it is not. When we examine Israeli-born emigration, we find that it occurs at a moderate rate, similar to or even lower than that of countries with a comparable level of development.[17] This fact is particularly significant in light of Israel's complex security and economic reality, which one might intuit to have boosted emigration levels.

Recent Estimates:

CBS Estimate A:

According to CBS figures published in August 2011: "Between the founding of the State and 2009, some 678,000 Israelis left and did not return after an extended stay overseas of a year or more including the deceased[18] (based on cumulative migration balances, 1948-2009). According to mortality rates in Israel, the estimated number of Israelis who died overseas during this period is between 106,000 and 136,000. Thus, the estimated number of Israelis living abroad at the end of 2009 ranges from 542,000 to 572,000 (Jews and Arabs). This estimate does not include children born overseas."[19]

CBS Estimate B:

At the end of 2008, an integrated census was taken in Israel. For this purpose, a technique was developed for estimating the number of those listed in the registry of residents but not included in the census. This model found some 518,000 Israelis who had been abroad for a period of a year or more, allowing for visits of up to three months (90 days) cumulatively. This number does not include nearly 290,000 Israelis included in the population registry as "non-residents" (those who relinquished their citizenship, or children registered in consulates but not in the population registry). It does not include all children of Israelis born overseas. However, it does include those who died abroad. The discrepancy between the two estimates is due to definitional differences (a total of 648,000-672,000 according to this estimate).

Cohen (2011)

Cohen (2011) offers an additional estimate based on data on Israeli-born residents in the United States and on Jews who migrated to Israel, lived there for an unknown length of time, and then moved to the United States, which was gathered from the US Immigration and Naturalization Service and the US Census Bureau. He estimates the total number of Israelis living abroad at the end of 2006 at 544,000, of whom 244,000 were born in Israel and 300,000 born outside Israel but had lived in Israel for a period of time (*noshrim*in Hebrew, "drop outs" in English). The number includes Jews and Arabs but does not include children born to Israelis abroad or their non-Israeli family members. Adjusting this number to 2010 using CBS migration balance data puts the number at around 580,000.

A more detailed breakdown of these figures shows that they include more than 100,000 Israeli Arabs (as of 2000),[20] and more than 100,000 other immigrants who emigrated to a third country or returned to their country of origin a short time after their entering Israel. According to data from the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption that are based on the Ministry of the Interior's border control database: "Of some 1.1 million *olim* who arrived in Israel between the beginning of 1989 and the end of 2002, some 100,000 left Israel, representing 8.8% of all the immigrants."[21]

Estimates of the Number of Children Born to Israelis Abroad

Estimating the number of children born to Israelis abroad is even more complicated due to their dispersal and their registration as natives in their countries of birth. Additionally, the scarcity of information on marriage and fertility patterns of Israelis abroad, which vary from one destination country to another and include differences in intermarriage rates that derive from factors such as the size of the local Jewish community and the size of the Israeli expat community, the type of migration, the migrants' socio-economic status, etc., makes it difficult to arrive at any figures, much less definitive ones. The 2011 comprehensive study of the relatively strong New York Jewish community shows that the rate of Israeli members of this community who marry non-Jews is low. The study states that the rate of out-marriage is over 23% for the greater New York Jewish community, but the number is only 9% for Israelis. We might attribute this low rate, among other factors, to the large number of opportunities for in-marriage within a strong community such as New York, but the study does not differentiate between the first generation of Israeli migrants and generations 1.5 and 2.0. Hence, this low number should be regarded with caution. In any case, reliable figures on the number of Israeli children in Jewish communities around the world do not exist. Locating these children requires extensive fieldwork that has yet to be conducted. Despite this, we will attempt to create a **minimal estimate** based on existing data so that it can serve as a basis for policymaking.

If we accept the abovementioned CBS estimate and assume that the number of Israelis abroad is approximately 550,000, and assuming that their fertility rates match those of the secular population in Israel, we can estimate that 12.5-15% of the population are children under the age of 15, amounting to a total of approximately 70,000, of whom half to two thirds reside in the United States.[22]

Along with these statistics about the New York community, there are various statistics from other communities that point to more intensive intermarriage trends. This, among other factors, is a result of the characteristics of the Israeli migrants: about two thirds of Israeli émigrés are male; more than 75% are under the age of 50; and some 70% define themselves as secular.[23] In other words, this is mostly a population that is liberal (that does not exclude intermarriage), is younger than the Israeli population

and has, therefore, greater potential for growth than the overall Israeli population. Statistics from the Australian census shown below support this line of reasoning.

Australian census data published in 2006 (ABS) shows that the population of migrants from Israel to Australia largely conforms with populations of Israeli migrants in the West. The most recent figures available are from 2003, when there were 7,789 Israeli-born Australian residents (not including Gaza and the West Bank), with the vast majority of them living in Australia's urban centers. The median age for this group was 40 (40 for males, 39 for females). More than 60% identified as Jews, with another 10% reporting no religion (a category not unusual to Jews). Approximately 20% identified as Christian or Muslim and the remainder (less than 10%) identified as "other." In 2003, 302 children were born in Australia who had at least one Israeli-born parent. Among women, in 38.3% of births their partners were also Israeli born; among men, only 25.6% had Israeli-born partners (the fertility rate among Israeli-born women in Australia was 2.294 and among Israeli-born men, 2.263). In other words, of the 302 babies born in 2003 with at least one Israeli parent only 50 had two Israeli parents, that is, 16.66% of all births. Thus, in 83% of the cases, only one of the parents was Israeli born. From this we can assume that the population of Israelis in Australia grew significantly as a result of marriages to partners who were not Israeli-born. These data show a different picture than the one we saw in New York and raises concerns about rapid assimilation of Israeli expats in destination countries.

If a similar phenomenon exists in other communities, the number of children should be much greater than thought. In order to validate or negate this phenomenon, we urgently need further research.

Conclusion:

The picture that emerges from an analysis of the sociological trends that characterize generations 1.5 and 2.0 of Israeli migrants differs from their parents in terms of the centrality of Israel to their identity. Generations 1.5 and 2.0 are better integrated in the local community, their social networks are more diverse, and the focus of their identity is the destination country. It further shows that for Israelis, processes of "economic assimilation" took less than a generation. Economic and cultural integration (particularly in the United States) are expressed, among other ways, in the formation of an Israeli ethnic identity as a non-binding framework and as a means of subjective and autonomous expression of the individual, which may manifest in absence.

When members of generations 1.5 and 2.0 seek to preserve and express their Israeli identity overseas, they encounter a problem, since Israeli identity is closely tied to the Israeli geographic-political space, customs and behaviors that can be transplanted outside of it are few. Additionally, because of the presently weak and irregular connections between many of the Jewish communities and the Israelis, the tools the communities have developed to maintain Jewish identity and to deal with assimilation are not available to Israelis.

In order to respond to these challenges, the Government of Israel should act toward the children of Israelis in the same manner it acts toward the Jews of the Diaspora: by working to broaden the range of opportunities and possibilities for expressing Israeli identity in the Diaspora, and by strengthening and encouraging Israeli transnationalism. For their part, the Jewish communities should consider the Israelis a target population. Jewish organizational structures should strive to include Israeli expats in key communal positions, and to develop educational and cultural frameworks for them that resonate with their Jewish-national affiliation.

Preserving the identity of Israeli migrants and more effectively including them in Jewish community life is in the interest of all concerned. For Israel, a strong and committed Jewish-Israeli community abroad is a source of strength; for the Jewish community, Israelis and their children could be a source of demographic enhancement and of identity renewal, as well as a bridgehead for ties with Israel. For the Israelis themselves, strengthened connections with the State of Israel and the Jewish community offer a better guarantee of identity continuity.

Policy Recommendations for Strengthening Jewish-Israeli Identity among the Children of Israelis Abroad, and for Strengthening their Ties with the State of Israel and with Jewish Communities Worldwide

Recommendations to the Government of Israel:

General:

Given the right incentives for strengthening and deepening Israeli identification among the second generation of Israeli migrants and for including them in Jewish communities abroad, the children of migrants – transnational, Hebrew speaking, with family both in Israel and the Diaspora – can be expected **to represent a bridgehead and link** between Jewish communities and the State of Israel.

Actions of the Israeli government and its representatives toward the migrants and their children should be conducted bearing in mind the ideological implications of such actions for the Zionist idea and the interpretations that are likely to be made to giving recognition to the Israeli diaspora and investing in it. The government should emphasize that the most complete and correct moral Zionist choice for Israelis is that they live in Israel. However, recognizing the current situation and for reasons enumerated above, the government is working to preserve the connection with Israeli communities abroad with an emphasis on the second migrant generation, and to strengthen their Israeli-Jewish identity, including their integration into their local Jewish communities.

Any policy that is taken should consider the characteristics of Israeli communities in target countries, as well as the characteristics of the host society. The challenges and resources of children of Israelis in North America are different from those in Europe, Australia, or South America.

Further, as a basis for future policy, the current research gaps need be closed, in relation to the characteristics of generations 1.5 and 2.0 of Israelis overseas, including: their number and the identity trends emerging among them.

Action Recommendations:

A. **The Government should work to expand the opportunities and the possibilities for expression of Israeli ethnic identity overseas by the second migrant generation.** Research shows that the integration of the children of Israeli migrants in host societies (especially the United States) is rapid and successful. The processes of economic integration, which for other diasporic communities took generations, has lasted less than a single generation for most Israeli migrants. One of the consequences of this rapid integration, when combined with the unique characteristics of Israeli identity and those of Israeli migrants, is the formation of a "thin" and subjective Israeli ethnic identity that might have but a marginal place in the life of the individual.

Contributing to this, too, is the feeling that the Israeli public and establishment dissociate themselves from the *yerida* phenomenon and the dearth of opportunities in the day-to-day lives of the second generation to give expression to Israeli ethnic identity (beyond the dimensions of personal or pro-Israel activism), and the special characteristics of the Israeli national identity as location dependent.

In order to limit and change this trend, there is a need to work to broaden the spectrum of opportunities available to individuals and communities to express their belonging to and identification with Israel.

Examples of activities to enhance these opportunities are:

- **Varying and strengthening Israeli youth movements active overseas,** (their current scope of activity is significantly smaller than required). A substantial part of the process of shaping and sorting out an individual's identity occurs during adolescence. Identity forming experiences in Israeli youth movements have a high potential to influence the formation of **the future identity of Israeli youth abroad**.

- **Establishing Israeli cultural centers**[24] that will work to strengthen Israeli identity and the feeling of national belonging. These centers would enhance the connection to the State of Israel by disseminating knowledge about Israel and Israeli culture, and by teaching the Hebrew language. This would be akin to existing frameworks in other Western countries that cultivate ties with their diasporas, such as the Alliance Française, the Goethe Institute,

and the British Council. The Hebrew language is of paramount importance in cultivating and preserving ethnic identity, in reinforcing connections to the State of Israel, and in understanding the realities of life there.

- Support for the establishment of Israeli schools and kindergartens overseas. There are highly successful and profitable models of Israeli educational institutions, especially for preschoolers (for example, the Moscow JCC). These institutions meet the need of many Israelis for a Jewish-national (as distinct from Jewish-religious) education system, and their establishment should be encouraged. A number of countries have overseas educational arrangements, including the United States and France, which sponsor private schools designed to teach about their histories and values. It is recommended that the programs of such schools combine local curricula and Hebrew programs that are recognized by Israeli educational institutions and credentialing authorities for purposes of higher education or employment, in order to encourage expressions of transnationalism and to make it easier for students who choose to live in Israel.

- As a supplement to the previous recommendation, in places in which there is no organized Israeli community, the Israeli government should ask the Jewish community to engage in a special effort to include the Israelis' children in educational frameworks and community institutions. It appears that the Jewish education system is the primary setting for encounters between the Israeli community and other Jews. It is recommended that the Israeli government work to provide incentives for such encounters by earmarking budgets, supplying educational content, and enhancing the network of emissary teachers.

- Grant voting rights in Knesset elections to Israelis abroad for the first four years following their departure from Israel, on the condition that each voter registers with an Israeli embassy, consulate, or other authorized institution. This recommendation is expected to have an influence mainly on first generation migrants, but since they are their children's main socializing agents, strengthening and preserving their connections with Israel can be expected to have an effect on their children. For Israelis abroad, involvement with the State of Israel is a way for them to come together and provides a focal point for building and maintaining a community. Furthermore, for

many Israelis – mainly those who are secular – Israeli political identity is a way of expressing ethnic identity. Keeping them involved in the Israeli political system, whether by allowing them to vote for the Knesset[25] or by granting them representation in some other general Jewish body[26] with influence on life in Israel, is likely to have a positive impact on the durability and intensity of their connection to the State of Israel.

• The migrants' practice of dividing time between Israel and a second country of residence should be encouraged in order to remove barriers to transnationalism and to cultivate transnational ties between the migrants and the State of Israel. Such a step could be accomplished through concessions in the areas of taxation, asset holdings and investments in Israel. Removing barriers to the children of Israelis interested in living and studying in Israel, with an emphasis on recognizing examinations (e.g., the SAT), certificates, degrees, and professional accreditation acquired overseas would make it easier for the children of Israelis who wish to come to Israel and integrate into Israeli society.

B. **Connection to Israel and repeated exposure to it has a significant impact on Israeli identity fortification.** Efforts such as encouraging visits to Israel, providing incentives for the children of Israelis to participate in high school in Israel study programs and in Birthright trips along with members of Diaspora communities, providing periodic discounts on flights to Israel for children of Israelis in a way that encourages families to spend their vacations in Israel, or providing the first semester of university study free of charge to children of Israelis are some additional ways to strengthen this connection.

C. Studies show that parents have a central role in creating and cultivating Israeli ethnic identity. Therefore, it is recommended that any new policy adopted in relation to members of the second generation should also be applied to their parents, including:

• Creating special study materials based in cyberspace for parents who are interested in teaching their children themselves or via the Internet, including: virtual instruction (kindergartens and schools), uploading text books, children's books and shows onto the Internet.

• Raising awareness of the sociological processes the Israeli migrant community experiences among Israeli parents in order to strengthen their children's Israeli-Jewish identity.

D. Improving Israel's image. Members of generations 1.5 and 2.0 will choose to highlight aspects of ethnic identity that are regarded favorably within their milieu, and alternatively, they will hide aspects that are regarded unfavorably. Efforts should be made, therefore, to lower the price of identifying with Israel and to increase the incentive for doing so, by emphasizing those aspects in which Israel has a comparative advantage.

Recommendations for Jewish Communities:

In the past, relations between the Jewish establishment (particularly in the United States, the main migration destination) and Israeli expats have been characterized by a mutual alienation fed by two main sources: Zionist ideology and religious affiliation. The Israelis considered themselves as representing a different world view and a distinctive way of life (even though they chose to leave it) while the communities adopted the Zionist idea (to which they considered themselves party through financial and other support for Israel), and viewed those who emigrated from it in a negative light, as, among others, can be seen from the American Jewish establishment's positive attitude toward Jews from Russia compared to their negative attitude toward migrants from Israel.[27] From the perspective of religion, even secular Israelis considered themselves part of the Orthodox framework and viewed the Jewish experience in the United States – which brings together various religious streams, alongside the Orthodox – as foreign and sometimes threatening. Such perceptions still exist, although their intensity is less than in the past. The second generation of Israelis who have grown up and matured in the destination countries, adopting their languages and customs (including religious expressions of Judaism), and who are also influenced by changes in Israel's own religious experience, provides an opportunity for a rephrasing of the relations between the two communities based on deepening interactions, collaboration, and reciprocity.

Given this situation, the two sides should understand that inclusion of the Israelis – and especially their children – in local Jewish communities will serve as an engine for the renewal and demographic and identity reinforcement essential for both sides, and will strengthen the ties between the communities and the State of Israel.

Action Recommendations:

1. **Increase the Israelis' involvement in the communities** by integrating Israelis and the children of Israelis into key roles in community life, especially when it comes to shaping education policy and cultural activities related to Israel, **and particularly when it comes to community efforts to forge a connection with the Israelis.** Such integration can be expected to contribute to the sense of belonging Israelis feel within Jewish communities abroad and to an expansion of their participation and support.

2. **Encourage the establishment of Israeli-national frameworks for Jewish identity and identification,** which conform with how Israeli expats perceive their Jewish identity and their belonging to the Jewish collective. Such frameworks will enable these Israelis to take part in them and to more readily identify with them. Israeli national holidays can provide an opportunity for connecting communities. As part of this effort, possible avenues of cooperating with the Government of Israel should be explored to establish Israeli Jewish education systems and for integrating Israeli content into Jewish schools in a way that speaks to Israeli migrants' national identification.

3. **Establish a joint committee of Jewish community members and Israeli migrants** that includes Jewish educators and activists. This would make it possible to explore ways of adapting the efforts the Jewish communities are making to expand their activities and reach those not yet involved, in response to existing identity trends among Israelis overseas, with an emphasis on the younger generation.

4. **The range of possibilities for encounters between the children of Israelis and members of the local Jewish community should be expanded –** among other ways, through joint cultural and leisure activities, youth movements, etc. Official Israeli institutions such as *HaBayit HaYisraeli* and Israeli consulates can serve as a key resource in implementing this recommendation.

5. **Avenues for activities and cooperation with those who have thus far been absent from the dialogue should be explored.** It appears that the kinds of options for affiliation and involvement Chabad offers are attractive to many Israelis. It is recommended that similar approaches be adopted for reaching those in the Israeli community who seek patterns of Jewish belonging similar to those they knew in Israel.

Recommendations for Israeli Expats

In recent years, the Israeli community abroad has become economically and culturally established to a significant degree, while an increasing Israeli readiness to accept the communities' independent existence over the long term is also detectable. These trends have led to the beginning of new Israeli groupings in their various communities that include local leaders and groups of educators and activists. These groups have an important role in charting the new relationship between Israeli migrants and the State of Israel, and, at the same time, between Israeli migrants and their local Jewish comimunites.

Action Recommendations

* **Increase cooperation between the Israeli groupings** in various locations, including information sharing, and disseminating best practices, and jointly develop educational tools and content.

* **Reach out to the local Jewish community.** The Israeli impulse to maintain a distinctive and separate culture and identity is compatible with interactions with, and closer ties to, local Jewish communities.

* The leaders of Israeli communities abroad should **take active steps to strengthen ties with Israel.** This would help the Israeli public see Israeli expat communities as allies.

* Generations 1.5 and 2.0 should be encouraged to study Hebrew as it is an identity tool that can enable the children of expats to maintain a natural and independent connection with the State of Israel and with the Israeli life experience.

Endnotes

1   Lev-Ari, 2008.

2   Revhon and Pupko, 2010.

3   The concept of "generation 1.5" appears in Cohen and Haberfeld, 2003 and also serves Lev-Ari's analyses of 2010, 2011. It describes those who emigrated before age 14 and who acquired their education or at least their secondary/supplementary education overseas (the article relates to the United States).

4   Lev-Ari and Revhon, 2011.

5   Cohen, 2011.

6   NJPS – Israelis in the United States: Reconciling Estimates with the NJPS.

7   Even when Israelis want to take part in the Jewish American experience, which, though different from the majority culture nevertheless enjoys recognized status, they find it significantly different from what they knew at home (except for the Orthodox, of course).

8   Revhon and Pupko, 2010.

9   World Council of Israelis Abroad, Building Bridges to World Jewry and the State of Israel. Toronto, January 18-20, 2011.

10   www.knesset.gov.il/.../heb/.../alia2008-01-02.doc.

11   Revhon and Pupko, 2010.

12   Revhon and Pupko, 2010. Chapter 4.4.

13   The consecutive 90-day test was instituted to avoid counting as migrants or returning residents Israelis who come for a visit.

14   http://www.jewishfederations.org/page.aspx?id=46358.

15   http://www.jewishfederations.org/page.aspx?id=46358.

16   http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-1732189,00.htm.

17   Cohen, 2011; Sicron, 2004.

18   **It is important to point out that defining who is overseas for more than a year raises a number of problems, and in effect again causes over-estimates.** Not everybody who lives overseas for a particular period is an émigré, the rates at which they return to Israeli are higher than with other countries. American censuses show that more than a third of Israeli natives who left Israel between 1975 and 1980 returned by 1990 after an average stay of two-and-a-half years (Cohen and Haberfeld, 2001). Cohen claims that this number is low and that the number of those returning among those who spend between a year and two years overseas is higher and stands at two-thirds.

19   Press release: Departures and Returns in 2009 by Israelis who lived more than a year consecutively overseas, 16.8.2011.

20   Shaps, M., 2007 (CBS), in Cohen, 2007.

21   Immigrant Absorption in Israel: A Book for Research Abstracts for the years 2000-2008, p. 257.

22   From an interview by the author with Professor Moshe Sikron, 14.11.2011.

23   Revhon and Pupko, 2010.

24   For more on this subject see: Maimon, D., Mirski, Y., Kraus, M., and Karasenty, Y., 2009. Arevut, Responsibility and Partnership: A policy proposal to the Government of Israel on strengthening Jewish identity and intensifying the connection to Israel among young Jews around the world. Jewish People Policy Institute, Jerusalem.

25   Karasenty, Y., and Hakman, I., 2011. Voting by Israelis Overseas, Jewish People Policy Institute, Jerusalem.

26   See proposals on this subject: A Global Forum for the Jewish People, The Jewish People Policy Institute, 2005, Jerusalem.

27   Lahav, G., and Arian, A. 1999.

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