

Survey Findings – Residents of Mixed Cities in Israel

November 2019

Mixed cities provide some of the most fertile ground for contact between Jews and Arabs in Israel. Unlike other places of contact, mixed cities allow for greater partnerships and the formation of relationships between Jews and Arabs, but also inherently have the potential for heightened friction and tensions between the two populations. The survey herein attempts to shed light on the characteristics of contact between Jewish and Arab residents of mixed cities and how these residents feel about Jewish-Arab relationships, their municipality's response to the phenomena, and changes taking place in mixed city settings.

Methodology

The research included two separate phone surveys of 2,100 Jewish and Arab residents from seven mixed cities, including Haifa, Acre, Lod, Ramle, Jaffa, Nof Hagalil, and Maalot Tarshiha. An equal number of Jews and Arabs participated in the survey. 300 residents were surveyed from each city, 150 Jews and 150 Arabs. The survey, conducted in Hebrew and Arabic, was run between November 14-23, 2019 by the Afkar Research Institute, led by Dr. Hisham Joubran.

Key Findings

Relations Between Jewish and Arab Residents

- Generally speaking, Jews and Arabs living in mixed cities assess their relationship as a positive one. Among Jewish respondents, 63% report that their relationships with Arabs are good and 18% report their relationships are very good. Among Arab respondents, 53% report that their relationships with Jews are good and 36% report their relationships with Jews are very good. In total, 81% of Jews and 89% of Arabs report that they have good relations with the counter population.
- Ramle, Lod and Jaffa were the cities in which respondents were the least positive about relations between Jewish and Arab residents. In Ramle, 20% of Jews and 9% of Arabs reported negative relations (bad or very bad). In Lod, 15% of Jews and 13% of Arabs reported negative relations. In Jaffa, 17% of Jews and 6% of Arabs report negative relations.
- Haifa measured the highest rate of good relations between Jewish and Arab residents with only 5% of Arabs and 9% of Jews reporting negative relations between the two populations.

Contact Between Jewish and Arab Residents

- 79% of Arab residents of mixed cities have some form of contact with Jews, and 61% of Jewish residents of mixed cities have contact with Arabs. Most residents of mixed cities have some kind of formal or informal relationship with members of the counter population.

- While Arab residents living in all mixed cities have some contact with Jews (from 72% in Lod and 82% in Jaffa and Haifa), Jews in the cities of Ramle and Jaffa report less contact with Arabs (only 50% of Jewish residents in Ramle and 53% of Jewish residents of Jaffa report having contact with Arabs).
- Most contact between Jews and Arabs takes place in the workplace: 59% of Arabs and 33% of Jews report they have a Jewish/Arab colleague.
- Haifa is the city with the leading rate of contact in the workplace, with 72% of Arabs and 48% of Jews reporting that they have a Jewish/Arab colleague.
- Neighborhood contact is also prevalent in mixed cities. 56% of Jews and 39% of Arabs who have personal contact with a member of the counter population report that the relationship is with a neighbor.
- Nof Hagalil and Jaffa lead with the highest rates of contact between Jews and Arabs. In Nof Hagalil, 61% of Arabs report having contact with Jews and 57% of Jews report having contact with Arabs who are their neighbor. In Jaffa, 56% of Arabs have contact with Jews and 39% of Jews have contact with Arabs who are their neighbor.

Willingness to Have Contact

- Among Jewish residents, 31% completely agree with the following statement: “I will allow my child to play with an Arab child.” 26% of Jewish residents disagree or completely disagree with the statement. The highest rates of disagreement with the statement were measured in Acre (35%), Nof Hagalil (34%) and Ramle (32%). The cities where disagreement with the statement was lowest were Haifa (14%) and Jaffa (15%).
- Among Jews, the rate of agreement for allowing their child to play with an Arab child was significantly higher when the Jewish respondent had personal contact with Arabs: 42% of those who have personal contact with Arabs completely agree with the statement above. In contrast, only 15% of Jews who do not have personal contact with Arabs agree with the statement above.
- Among Arabs, 41% agree or completely agree with the statement: “I will allow my child to play with a Jewish child”. Only 5% opposed the statement.
- 31% of Jews and 22% of Arabs agreed (somewhat or very much) with the statement: “I avoid contact with Jewish/Arab residents.” Agreement with the statement was highest among Jewish residents of Nof Hagalil (38%) and Ramle (34%). Haifa measured the lowest rate of Jews avoiding contact with Arabs (21%).
- The highest rate of Arabs reporting they avoid contact with Jews was measured in Nof Hagalil and Haifa (26% in both).

Education

- 25% of Jews and 36% of Arabs agree with the following statement: “I am willing to have my child study in a bi-lingual school.” An additional 30% of Jews and 45% of Arabs report they “somewhat agree” with the statement.
- Among Jewish residents, the highest rate of support for bi-lingual education was measured in Jaffa (39% “very much agree” with the statement) and in Haifa (29%). The highest rate of opposition was measured in Acre, where 50% of Jews disagree with the statement. Among Arabs, support for the statement was 45% in Jaffa, 44% in Ramle, 42% in Nof Hagalil and 41% in Lod.

- 36% of Jews and 39% of Arabs in mixed cities agreed with the following statement: “I support having core subjects taught jointly between neighboring Jewish and Arab schools”.
- Among Jews, the highest rates of agreement with the statement were in Jaffa (50% agree or completely agree), Haifa (44%) and Maalot Tarshiha (44%). The highest rates of opposition for the statement were in Acre, where 27% of respondents report they disagree with the statement, and in Ramle, where 19% disagree with the statement. Among Arabs, the highest rates of agreement were measured in Jaffa (49% agree or completely agree), Nof Hagalil (47%) and Lod (45%).
- 40% of Jews and 42% of Arabs in all mixed cities agree (agree or completely agree) with the statement: “I support having a joint informal education program for Jews and Arabs”.
- Among Jews, the highest rates of agreement with this statement were measured in Jaffa (52% completely agree) and Maalot Tarshiha (49%). The highest level of opposition to the statement was in Acre, where 19% of Jews report they disagree with the statement, compared to 16% in Ramle.
- Among Arabs, the highest rates of agreement with this statement were measured in Jaffa (55% completely agree), Nof Hagalil (51%) and Ramle (48%).

Mixed or Separated Neighborhoods

- 41% of Jews and 32% of Arabs living in mixed cities agree or completely agree with the following statement: “Jews and Arabs should live in separate neighborhoods.”
- The highest levels of support for this statement among Jews were measured in Maalot Tarshiha (54%) and Acre (52%). The lowest level of support for this statement among Jews was measured in Haifa where 68% disagreed with the statement. Among Arabs, the highest rate of support for the statement was measured in Haifa, where 50% of Arabs agree that Jews and Arabs should live in separate neighborhoods.
- 86% of Arabs and 46% of Jews agreed with the statement: “Municipalities should build new shared neighborhoods for Jews and Arabs.” 47% of Jews disagree with the statement.
- Among Jews, the cities with the highest levels of support for building shared neighborhoods were Jaffa (64%) and Lod (60%). Jewish residents of Acre and Maalot Tarshiha report high levels of disagreement with the statement (73% in Acre and 66% in Maalot Tarshiha).

Fear and Hostility

- 73% of Arab respondents in all mixed cities reported that they are not afraid of entering Jewish neighborhoods. 5% reported they are afraid.
- 55% of Jewish respondents reported they do not fear entering Arab neighborhoods, and 18% reported they are afraid.
- Acre was the city with the highest rate of Jews who fear entering Arab neighborhoods (31% are always or usually fearful), followed by Nof Hagalil (25%), Ramle (23%). The cities with the lowest reports of fear were Jaffa (10%) and Haifa (14%).
- 14% of Arabs living in mixed cities reported they personally experience (always or usually) discrimination or racism. 37% reported they rarely experience discrimination or racism. 44% of Arab responders reported they do not experience discrimination or racism. Arab residents of Maalot Tarshiha reported relatively high rates of discrimination or racism (13% reported they often have this experience and 8% reported they sometimes have this experience). This compares

to 49% of Jaffa residents and 48% of Ramle residents who reported they don't experience discrimination or racism.

- Among Jews, 17% reported that they have experienced racism or discrimination from Arabs, while 26% of respondents report they rarely experienced racism or discrimination. Among Jewish residents of Acre, 28% reported that they often experience racism from Arabs. The lowest rates of racism were experienced in Haifa and Jaffa where 62% of Jewish respondents reported they have never experienced racism from Arabs.
- The survey indicated a correlation between personal contact and feelings of discrimination and racism with the other population: Arabs who have personal contact with Jews report fewer experiences of racism or discrimination. 47% of Arab respondents who reported having contact with Jews say they never experienced racism or discrimination by Jews, compared to 31% of Arabs who do not come into contact with Jews.
- 59% of Jews who have personal contact with Arabs reported that they never fear entering Arab neighborhoods.

Use and Presence of Arabic

- 39% of Jews and 51% of Arabs agreed with the statement: "Municipal services should be available in Arabic and Hebrew."
- Among Jews, agreement with the statement was highest in Acre (52%), Jaffa (49%), and Haifa (45%). Greatest disagreement with the statement was found in Nof Hagalil, where 34% of Jews disagree with the statement. Among Arabs, 65% supported the statement in Jaffa, 61% in Lod and 59% in Ramle.
- 38% of Jews and 52% of Arabs agreed with the statement: "Signs in the city must be printed in Hebrew and Arabic."
- Among Jews, support for bi-lingual signage was highest in Haifa (51%) and Jaffa (48%). The lowest rate of agreement was measured in Maalot Tarshiha.

Municipal Services

- 50% of Arab and 59% of Jewish residents of mixed cities did not agree (disagree or completely disagree) with the statement that "I feel that the municipality provides equal services to Jews and Arabs."
- Among Arab participants, 41% of Acre residents agreed with this statement and 45% of Lod residents agreed with this statement. Among Jewish participants, 64% in Acre stated that municipal services are provided equally and 65% of Lod residents agreed that municipal services are provided equality.
- As far as representation of Arabs is concerned, 68% of Arabs surveyed from all mixed cities agreed (agreed or completely agreed) with the statement: "The representation of Arabs among municipal employees is low." This is compared to 30% of Jews who agreed with this statement. Lod and Acre were the mixed cities where Arabs felt the least represented (73% in Acre and 72% in Lod).