



Existing challenges and required solutions for integrating Yotzim from ultra-Orthodox society into academia

Report of research conducted at the request of the Council for Higher Education as part of building an optimal model for integrating those leaving the Ultra-Orthodox community into academia, planned for initial inclusion in the upcoming Council for Higher Education five-year plan.

This study examined the existing challenges and the required solutions for integrating those who have left Ultra-Orthodox society (Yotzim) into academia. In this framework, four focus groups were conducted with 21 men and women who had left ultra-Orthodox society from 11 different academic institutions, who are in the midst of their studies, completed their studies in the past year, or were students and left their studies. In dividing the challenges according to stages of learning, we found great complexity in the stages of entering degree studies, during which special assistance is required. This includes the stage of deciding what and where to study, the stages of overcoming educational gaps, the period of pre-academic preparation program, and the first year of degree studies.

The challenges faced were divided according to types of difficulties: the study–pedagogy challenge includes difficulty with study skills, difficulty with specific subjects, and the need for supportive assistance in entering academia; the financial obstacles; and the social and emotional challenges. An additional challenge raised was that of accessing rights for Yotzim, in institutions where such rights exist.

Proposed responses include a variety of possible solutions in each of these areas, which could be adopted by the Council for Higher Education or the institutions themselves, and also by the entities that provide support and assistance to Yotzim.