

The New Israeli Emigration

Magnitude and Nature of Outbound Migration after October 2023

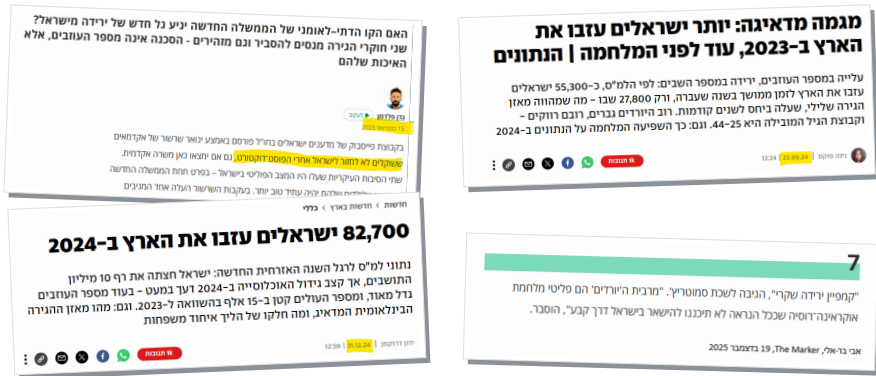
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The public debate ran ahead of the data



Press headlines, 2023–2025: Feldman; Fuchs; Drukman; Bar-Eli (*TheMarker*).

Press coverage was intense and largely data-free — our work is the first systematic measurement.

This paper

Questions:

1. Did Israeli emigration actually rise after October 2023?
2. Who is leaving — and is it rooted Israelis, or transitional olim?

We find:

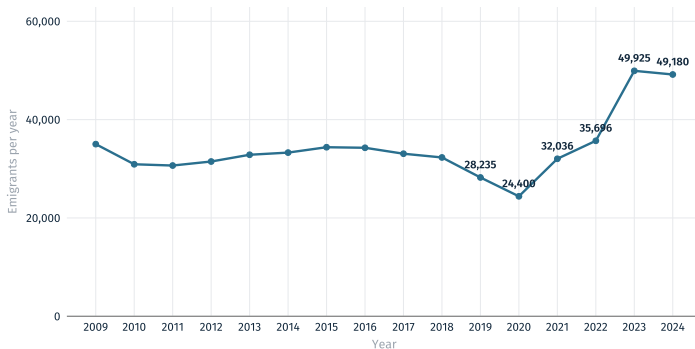
- Outbound broke sharply above its 2010–2022 trend — and it is not the olim
- Leavers are educated and high-skilled: tech workers, STEM, physicians
- Returns are at a record low; the net gap widened from both ends

CBS administrative records (population register · tax authority · border patrol), entire Israeli population, 2009–2024. Emigrant = abroad ≥ 3 consecutive months, absent for most of the following year. New olim excluded. [▶ aliyah series](#)

Outbound migration broke above its 2010–2022 trend

Annual Israeli emigrants (excluding new olim), 2009-2024

Individuals who exited Israel for at least 3 months straight and spent at least 270 days abroad the following year



Source: CBS research room.

[▶ olim-only series](#)

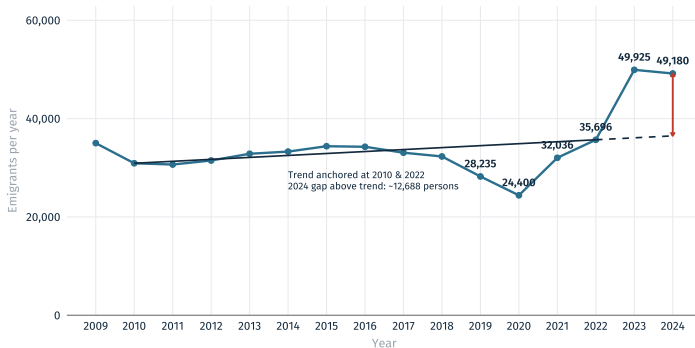
[▶ quarterly timing](#)

2024 sits ~15K above the pre-2023 trend; the rise is not driven by olim moving on. The 2020–21 COVID deficit did not fully explain the 2023–24 surge.

Outbound migration broke above its 2010–2022 trend

Annual Israeli emigrants (excluding new olim), 2009–2024 (with 2010–2022 trend)

Individuals who exited Israel for at least 3 months straight and spent at least 270 days abroad the following year



Source: CBS research room.

▶ olim-only series

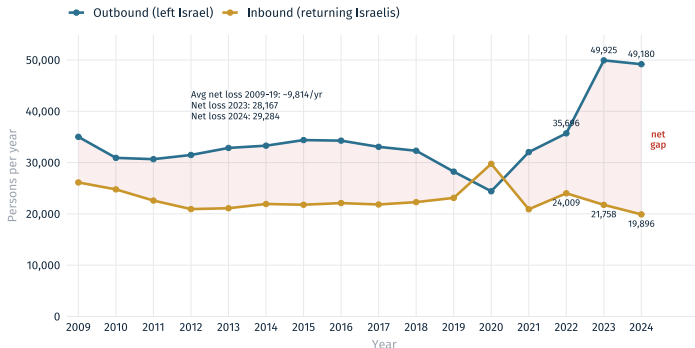
▶ quarterly timing

2024 sits ~15K above the pre-2023 trend; the rise is not driven by olim moving on. The 2020–21 COVID deficit did not fully explain the 2023–24 surge.

Returns are at a record low: the gap widened from both ends

Outbound vs inbound Israelis (excluding new olim), 2009-2024

Outbound and inbound flows (border-crossing records); shaded area = net loss of Israelis



Source: CBS research room.

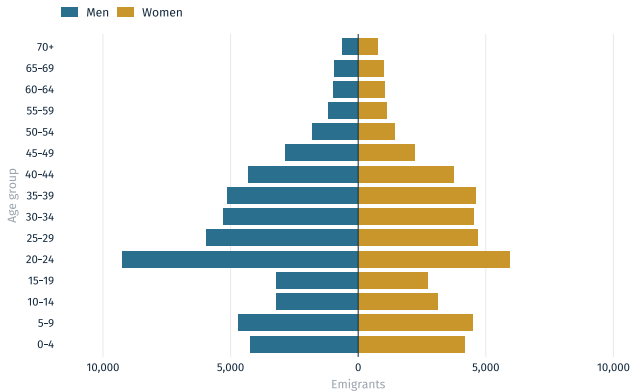
Israeli-born vs foreign-born

Pre-war (2009-2019) annual net loss: ~8 000-10 000 persons/year. In 2023-24: ~25 000-30 000/year. Outbound surged while inbound fell to its lowest level on record.

The 2023–24 leavers: age profile

Age pyramid of the 2023-24 emigrants

Israelis who left in 2023-2024 (pooled), 9-month definition, by sex and 5-year age group



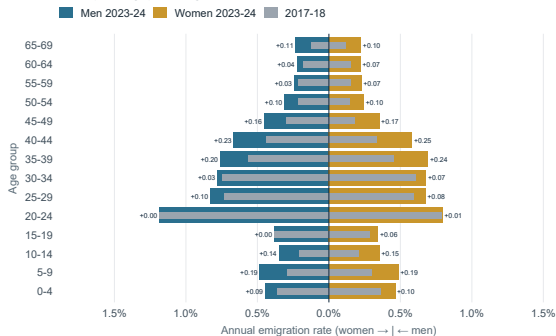
Source: CBS, pooled 2023-24 outbound.

The surge in emigration rates cut across all prime ages

Who is most likely to leave -- and is that changing?

Annual emigration rate = avg. emigrants 2023-24 as a share of 2024 population, by age band and sex

Difference labels = percentage-point change from 2017-18



Source: CBS research room.

► age mix

► vs 2017-18

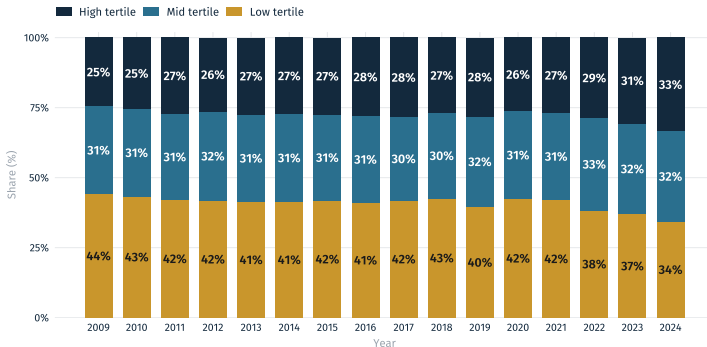
► vs pop.

► 2017-18 vs pop.

Who leaves: the income mix shifted toward the top tertile

Emigrants by income tertile, 2009-2024

Share of income-ranked emigrants; income-ranked subset (~55-58% of emigrants)



Source: CBS; income-ranked subset (~55-58% of emigrants).

▸ regressions

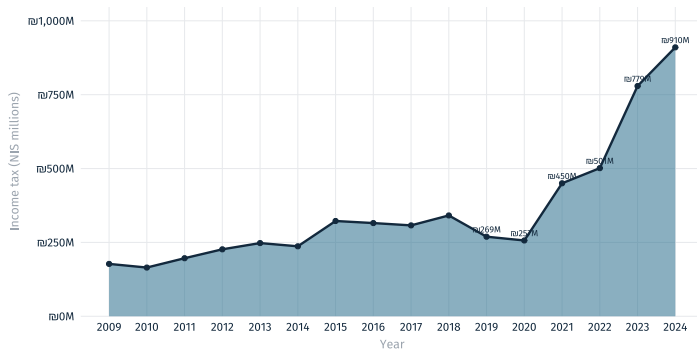
▸ avg. tax per leaver

■ Composition tilted up, yet in the individual-level data the income gradient per se is weak; the skill margin does the work.

What it costs: the leavers' tax base accumulates

Annual income tax paid by emigrants in last year before departure, 2009-2024

Income-ranked subset (~55-58% of emigrants); NIS millions



Source: CBS research room; income-ranked subset.

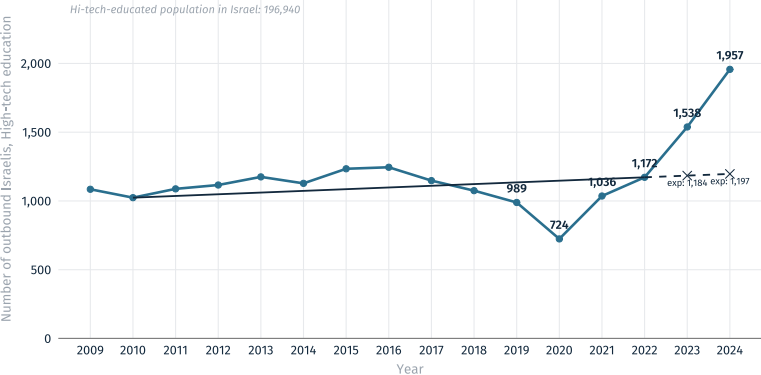
[► the inbound side](#)

By 2024 the annual income tax paid by emigrants in their last year in Israel reached ~NIS 780M — and has been rising sharply since 2021.

Brain drain: hi-tech educated at record highs

Emigrants with hi-tech education, 2009-2024

Israeli emigrants; baseline stock printed on chart



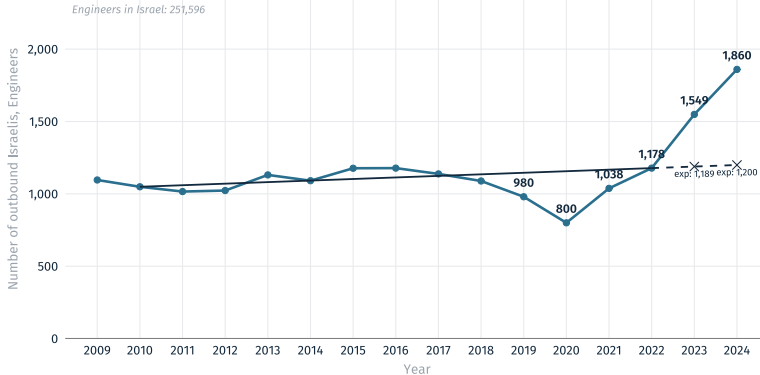
Source: CBS research room; baseline stock: CBS population counts.

[▶ return rates](#)

Brain drain: engineers at record highs

Emigrant engineers, 2009-2024

Israeli emigrants; baseline stock printed on chart

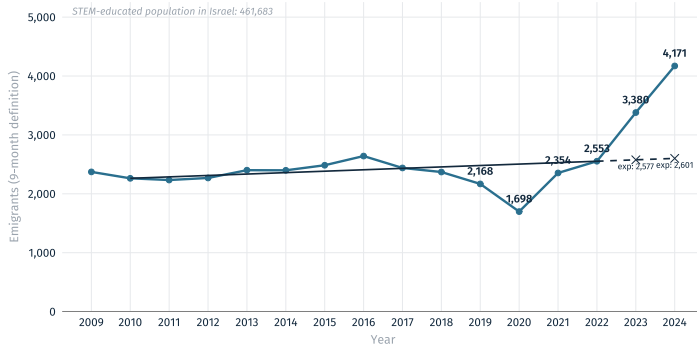


Source: CBS research room; baseline stock: CBS population counts.

Brain drain: STEM at record highs

Emigrants with STEM education, 2009-2024

Individuals who exited Israel for at least 3 months straight and spent at least 270 days abroad the following year



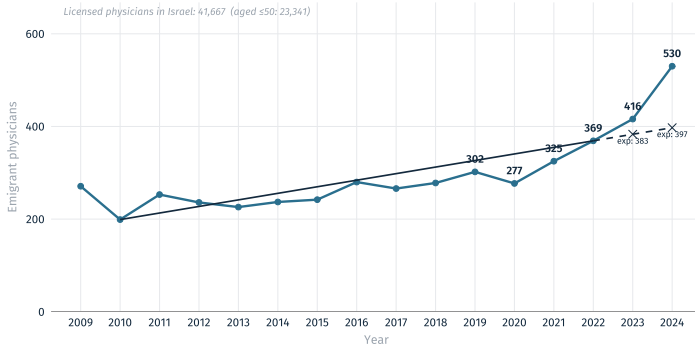
Source: CBS research room; baseline stock: CBS population counts.

Counts at record highs in every skilled group; against the stocks, annual rates remain below 1% — but the trend is steep.

Physicians: elevated outflow, returns uncertain

Emigrant physicians, 2009-2024

Individuals who exited Israel for at least 3 months straight and spent at least 270 days abroad the following year



Source: CBS research room.

► which doctors leave

► return rate

► inbound

Physicians are expected to leave for fellowships and return; the question is whether the return leg still closes at its historical rate.

Summary and next steps

What we find:

- Outbound migration **broke above its 2010–2022 trend**; the rise is not olim or the foreign-born.
- Returns are at a **record low**; the net balance widened from both ends.
- Composition tilted **educated, high-skill**; income per se is a weak margin.

Next:

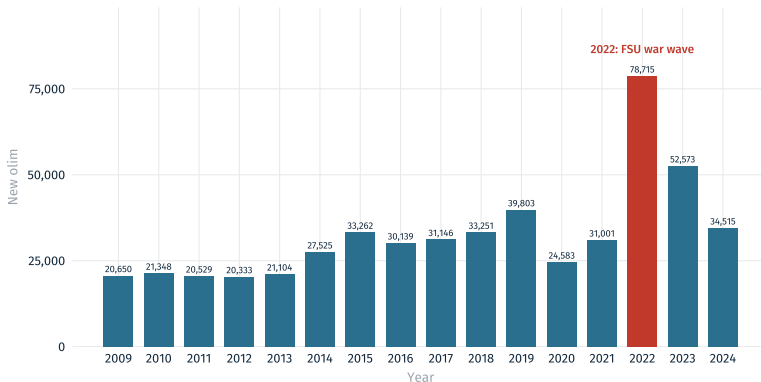
1. **Return permanence**
2. **Selection in rates**
3. **Market effects**

Thank you. Ater | Bergman | Zamir

Appendix: the 2022 aliyah surge was driven by the Russia–Ukraine war

Annual aliyah (new olim) to Israel, 2009–2024

New immigrants by arrival year; this inflow is counted separately from Israeli emigration

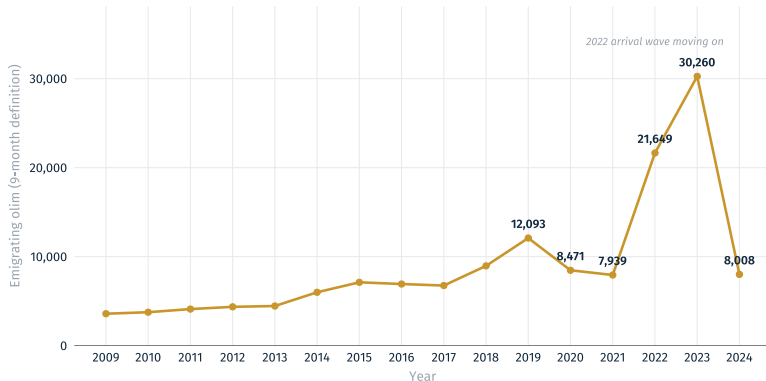


Source: CBS olim counts.

Appendix: the olim-only outbound series has its own dynamics

Emigration of recent olim, 2009-2024

New immigrants who subsequently left Israel (9-month definition); excluded from the headline series

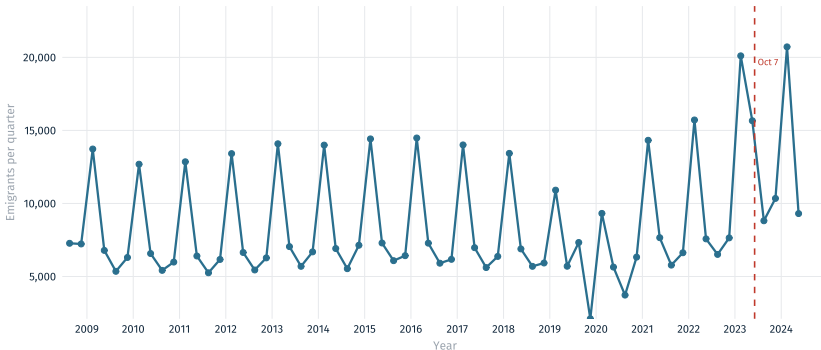


Source: CBS research room.

Appendix: the outbound surge started in Q3 2023 — before October 7

Quarterly outbound Israelis, 2009--2024

Quarterly outbound by border-crossing records; Oct. 7 2023 marked



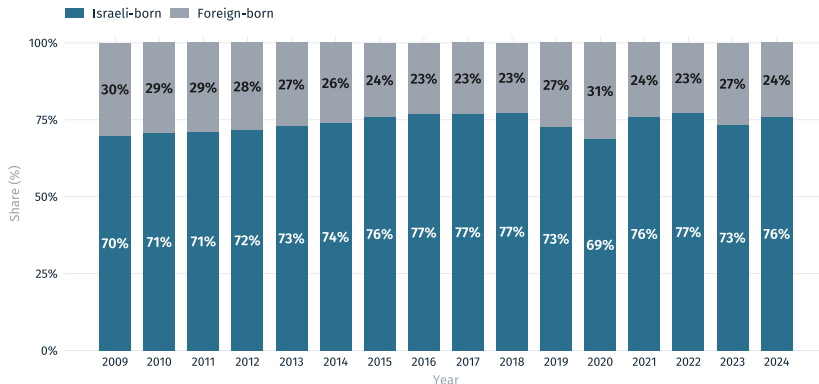
Source: CBS research room.

I The peak in quarterly outbound was Q3 2023 (July–September), before the October 7 attacks; the war reinforced but did not initiate the surge.

Appendix: the leavers are Israeli-born, and increasingly so

Emigrants by place of birth, 2009-2024

Share of each year's outbound by nativity; excluding new olim

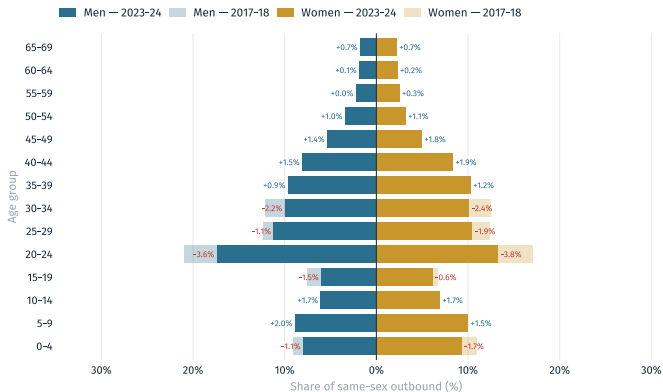


Source: CBS research room.

Appendix: age profile of the 2023–24 leavers vs 2017–18

Age profile of emigrants: 2023–24 vs 2017–18

Each bin's share of same-sex outbound; solid = 2023–24, faded = 2017–18; label = pp change (teal = grew, red = shrank); 70+ omitted

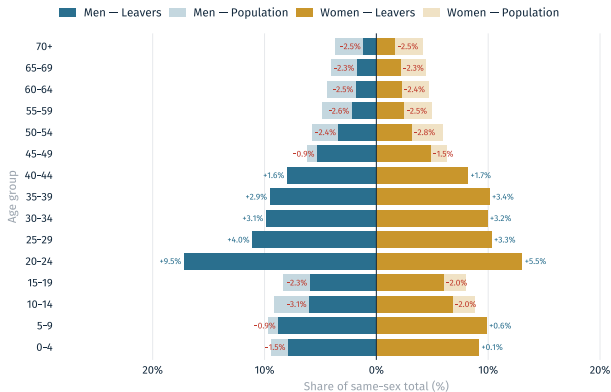


Source: CBS age pyramids, pooled 2017–18 and 2023–24 outbound; labels = percentage-point change in bin share.

Appendix: leavers vs the resident population, by age

Age profile of 2023-24 leavers vs the 2024 resident population

Each bin's share of same-sex total; solid = leavers (2023-24), faded = population (2024); label = pp difference (teal = over-represented, red :

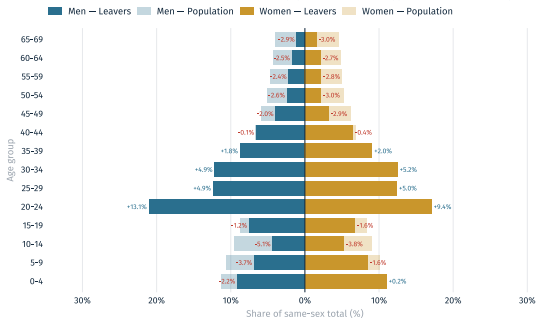


Source: CBS age pyramids; 2024 resident population; labels = percentage-point over/under representation.

Appendix: 2017–18 leavers vs the resident population, by age

Age profile of 2017-18 leavers vs the 2018 resident population

Each bin's share of same-sex total; solid = leavers (2017-18), faded = population (2018); label = pp difference (teal = over-represented, red = under-represented)



Source: CBS age pyramids, pooled 2017–18 outbound; population = CBS Statistical Abstract 2019, Table 2.3 (resident population, average 2018); 70+ omitted (suppressed for leavers); labels = percentage-point over/under representation.

Appendix: income gradient – regression estimates

Specification		Est.	SE
Log-income gradient	No controls	-0.0024	(0.0022)
	+ Demographics	-0.0017	(0.0019)
	+ Education	-0.0036	(0.0036)
	+ Fixed effects	0.0011	(0.0021)
Decomposition	Predicted log income	-0.0131	(0.0077)
	Residual log income	0.0000	(0.0000)
Quintile bins (raw, vs Q3)	Q1 (bottom)	0.0094	(0.0076)
	Q2	0.0032	(0.0026)
	Q4	-0.0015	(0.0009)
	Q5 (top)	0.0018*	(0.0008)
Quintile bins (+ FE)	Q1 (bottom)	-0.0018	(0.0049)
	Q2	0.0003	(0.0009)
	Q4	-0.0012**	(0.0003)
	Q5 (top)	-0.0002	(0.0007)
Within-field; returns-to-skill normalized (z)	log income $\times$ field FE	0.0001	(0.0009)
	Returns-to-skill (z)	-0.0015	(0.0015)

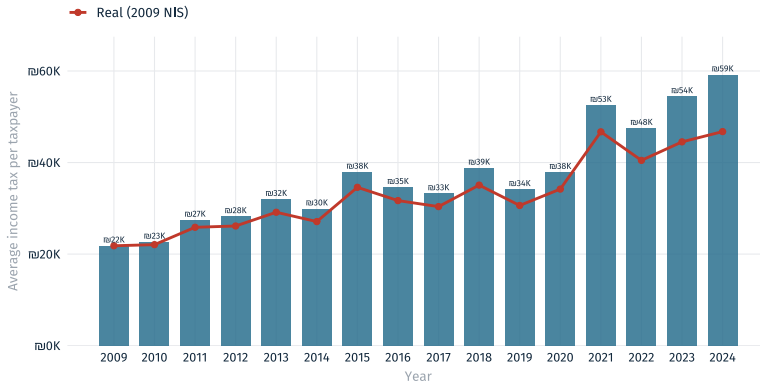
Dependent variable: emigration indicator (= 1 if left Israel). LPM. FE = district $\times$ year; within-field spec also includes industry FE. Returns-to-skill (z -scored).

SEs clustered by district; sample: living citizens, positive 2023 income, age 23+. * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Appendix: the average leaver pays more and more tax

Average income tax per emigrant taxpayer, 2009-2024

Income-ranked subset; bars = nominal NIS; line = real (2009 NIS, CBS CPI deflation)

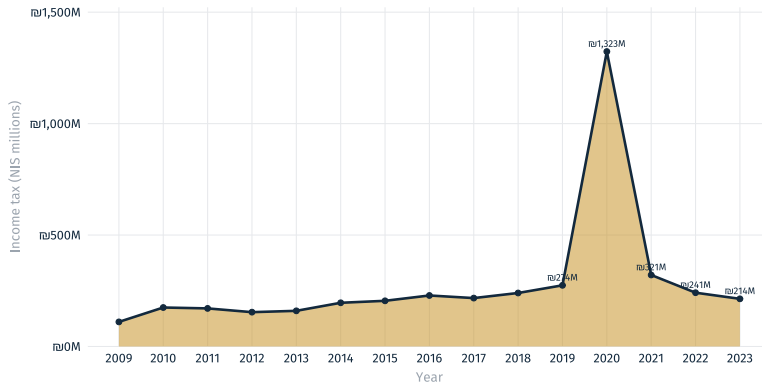


Source: CBS research room; income-ranked subset.

Appendix: the inbound stream brings back less tax than leaves

Annual income tax paid by returning Israelis in first year back, 2009-2023

Income-ranked subset; 2024 returnees not yet available; NIS millions

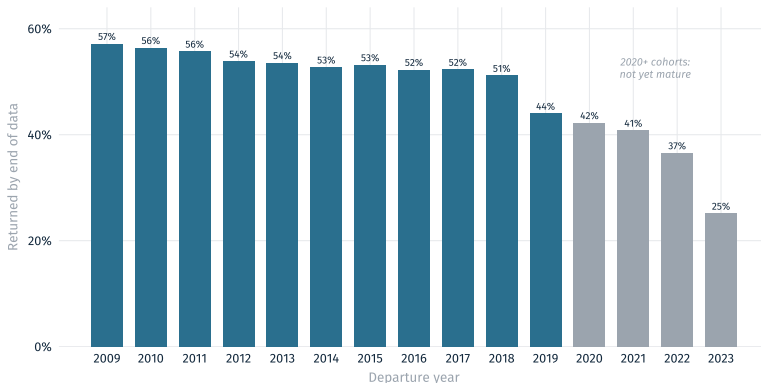


Source: CBS research room; income-ranked subset.

Appendix: Israeli emigration is historically circular

Share of each departure cohort that has returned to Israel

Leavers (9-month definition) observed returning by end of data; recent cohorts have had less time to return

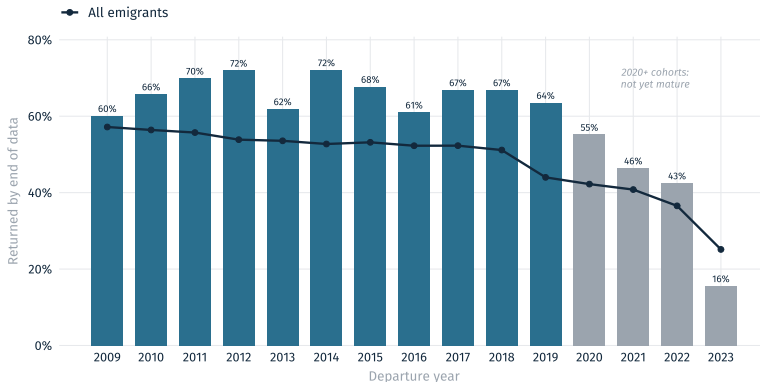


Source: CBS research room; 2024 cohort omitted (return rate anomalous in current extract).

Appendix: doctors used to return more than anyone

Physician return rate by departure cohort (bars) vs all emigrants (line)

Share of each cohort of leaving doctors observed returning by end of data

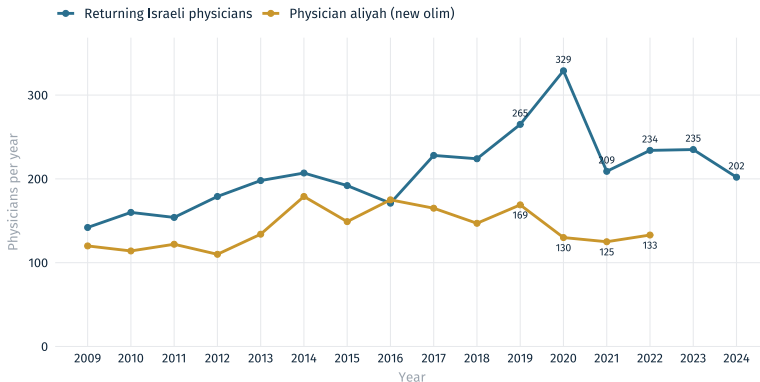


Source: CBS research room.

Appendix: the inbound physician streams

Physicians coming in: returning Israelis and new olim, 2009-2024

Returning physicians under the 9-month definition; physician aliyah available through 2022

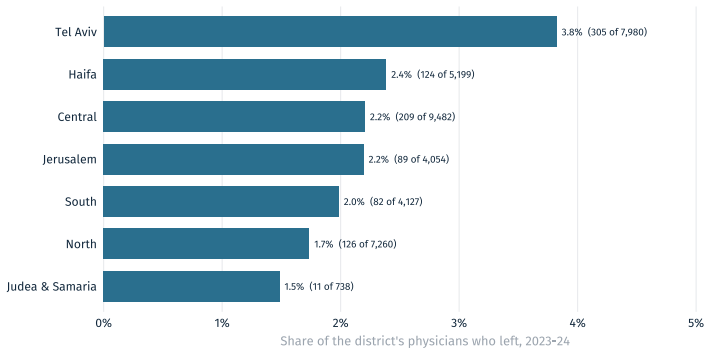


Source: CBS research room; physician aliyah available through 2022.

Which doctors leave: by district

Physicians leaving in 2023-24, as a share of each district's doctors

Leaving doctors divided by the district's physician stock; pooled 2023-24



Source: CBS doctors drill-down, pooled 2023-24; rates use each district's own physician stock.

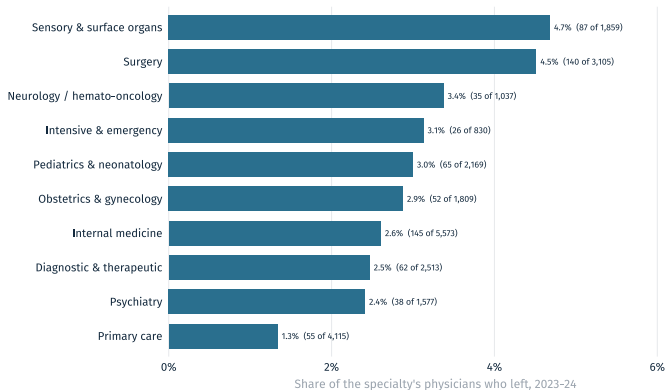
[▶ by sub-district \(nafot\)](#)

[◀ back](#)

Which doctors leave: by specialty

Physicians leaving in 2023-24, as a share of each specialty's stock

Leaving doctors divided by the specialty's physician stock; unclassified specialties excluded; small cells censored at ~10 by CBS

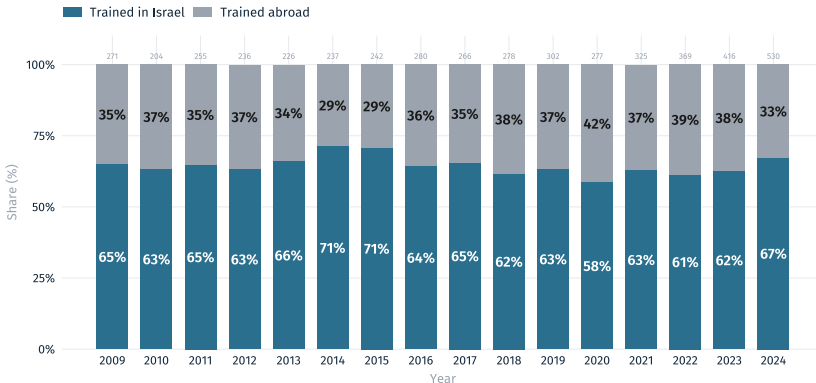


Source: CBS doctors drill-down, pooled 2023-24; rates use each specialty's own stock.

Which doctors leave: country of training

Emigrant physicians by country of medical training, 2009-2024

Proportional; N = total emigrant physicians shown above each bar

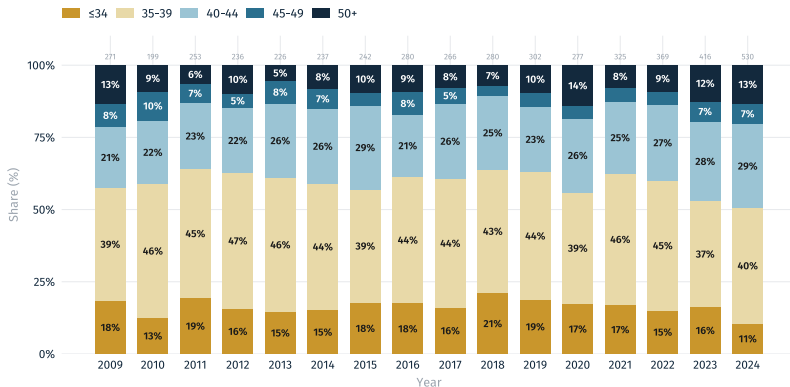


Source: CBS doctors drill-down.

Which doctors leave: age

Emigrant physicians by age band, 2009-2024

Proportional; N = total emigrant physicians shown above each bar

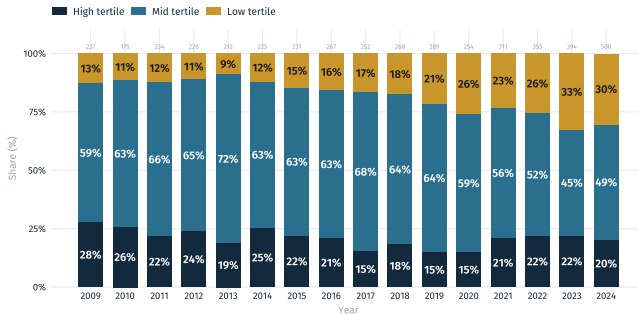


Source: CBS doctors drill-down.

Which doctors leave: income

Emigrant physicians by income tertile, 2009-2024

Proportional; N = total income-ranked emigrant physicians shown above each bar



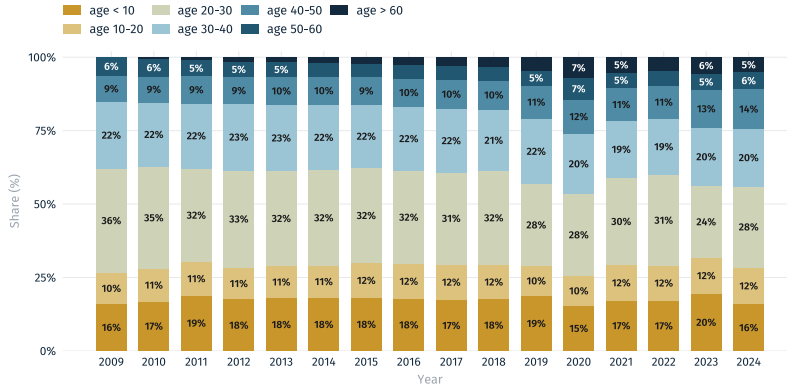
Source: CBS doctors drill-down.

The 2024 leavers are increasingly Israel-trained, prime-age, and drawn from the middle of the income distribution.

Appendix: age mix shifted toward prime working ages

Age composition of emigrants, 2009-2024

Share of each year's outbound by age group

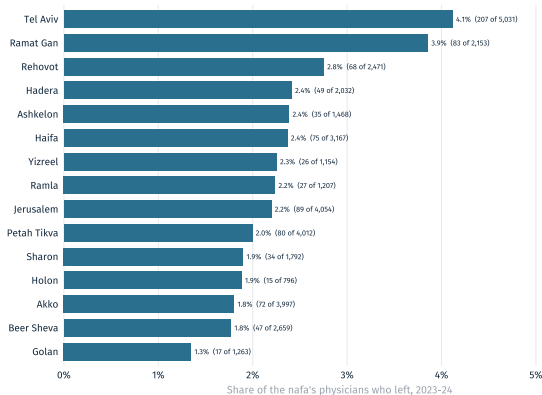


Source: CBS research room.

Appendix: physicians leaving by sub-district (nafot)

Physicians leaving in 2023-24, as a share of each nafa's doctors

Leaving doctors divided by the nafa's physician stock; nafot with <15 leavers suppressed by CBS



Source: CBS doctors drill-down, pooled 2023-24; nafot with fewer than 15 leavers are suppressed.