



**The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies
Center for the Study of Haredi Society**

Establishment of Haredi High-School Yeshivas in Israel

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2016



The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies

Center for the Study of Haredi Society

The Center is supported by UJA Federation of New York



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This project was supported by Maimonides Fund, UJA Federation of New York
and The Russel Berrie Foundation

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Preface

The topic of Haredi education and core studies reached the forefront of the Israeli public discourse during July 2016, in regards both to the Jerusalem municipality and the nation. The issue garnered great attention both within the Haredi community and beyond it. One can learn much from the public discussion on the potential implementation suggested in this report of the establishment of Haredi high school yeshivas and on the challenges involved in doing so.

In regards to the Jerusalem municipality, the topic of Haredi education and core curriculum rose to the top of the public consciousness following the budget allocation of 1.6 million shekels in the Jerusalem Municipality to the Hachmey Lev yeshiva. The municipality also attempted to dedicate temporary space to this yeshiva in the neighborhood of Ramot Shlomo. The budget was approved in a controversial process and faced harsh objection from the representatives of Lithuanian Haredim in the municipality that campaigned against the yeshiva in unprecedented strength¹. The Haredi media too enlisted to support the political position of these Haredim, but in the Haredi websites “Kikar Hashabbat” and “Behadrey Haredim,” posts supporting different viewpoints were uploaded, similarly to in the Haredi radio stations “Kol Hay” and “Kol Barama.” The topic was covered in the secular and general media as well, on “Reshet Bet” (of “Kol Israel”), and in the newspaper “Jerusalem Post.”² An evaluation of the Haredi public response to such publicity exhibited great support in the establishment of Haredi high school yeshivas. In the survey that was posted in “Kikar Hashabbat” website on the topic, about two thirds of the respondents supported the development of Haredi high school yeshivas.³

At the national level, the topic reached the public eye due to the political Haredi demand to change the law regarding budgeting the “Exempt” (*ptor* in Hebrew) Haredi elementary schools in which core subjects are not taught. A group of about 800 Haredi parents initiated a petition calling on the Minister of Education to allow interested Haredim to offer their children the core subjects.⁴ Following the petition, many of the campaign leaders were interviewed in both

¹ See Behadrey Haredim website: <http://www.bhol.co.il/104221/>

² <http://www.jpost.com/In-Jerusalem/Wisdom-of-the-heart-not-of-the-bagrut-460408>

³ http://www.kikar.co.il/poll_results.php?poll_id=459

⁴ <http://www.atzuma.co.il/libabai>

Haredi and non-Haredi media, on radio stations, and different internet websites. In the Haredi websites “Kikar Hashabbat” and “Behadrey Haredim,” columns supporting the core curriculum written by Haredim were published, as well in the non-Haredi news websites “NRG” and “Ynet.” The petition was covered also by the “Haaretz” and “Makor Rishon” newspapers.⁵ For the first time, Haredi parents dared to openly express their lack of satisfaction with the current model of Haredi education, going against their political representatives. It is important to note that a number of rabbis, including the Rabbi David Yosef, the son of the late Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, also openly supported the core curriculum in Haredi educational institutions.

The recent happenings point to the increasing trend of Haredi parents requesting to send their children to schools that offer full core curricula. Evaluation of the political stance of the Haredi leadership, as it was expressed in this recent conflict, exposes that this leadership is strongly object to forced incorporation of the core curriculum in Haredi educational institutions. Still, it is unclear if this political leadership will also object to the provision of an alternative option for Haredi parent who which to send their children to such schools, especially when among the Haredi public there is an open and clear demand for a core curriculum in Haredi education. The Minister of Education was publicly recorded in an interview with “Galei Zahal” radio station, stating, “I am committed to any parents who wants it, any Haredi parent who is interested for his child to study core curriculum subject – his wish will be addressed. I say it again, any Haredi parent who is ready to send his child to a fitting institution, I’ll take care of him.”⁶ The minister’s words were subsequently quoted in the Haredi websites for many to read.

This report offers a framework for wide action to develop the model of the high school yeshivas. The authors of this report argue that the development of the high school yeshivas will be most sustainable and successful through collaboration with philanthropists and with the public sector, particularly the Ministries of Treasury and Education. This report can serve as an important basis upon which to promote the development of high school yeshivas in Israel.

⁵ <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/.premium-1.3022139>

⁶ *Galei Zahal*, 31.7.16.

Executive Summary

It is essential to develop Haredi high-school yeshivas as a normative educational track parallel to the *yeshivot ketanot* in order to expand Haredi youth's accessibility to higher education and employment.

Background

Significant processes have been taking place in Haredi society for about 15 years leading to increasingly greater participation of Haredi men in employment and higher education in Israel. Nevertheless, an analysis conducted by the Research Center for Haredi Society at the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies shows that despite rising participation rates in employment and education, significant obstacles remain. A large portion of the Haredi men seeking higher education do so at colleges with weak academics and limited options. These limitations affect the employment profile of Haredi students upon the conclusion of their studies. It appears that the educational gaps resulting from a historical lack of core curriculum studies continue to present a significant obstacle for many Haredi young people on their path to acquiring an education. We must, therefore, examine possibilities for promoting a change beginning in the high school years that can create a better foundation for Haredi high school graduates to gain greater access to higher education or to employment possibilities.

Along with the *yeshivot ketanot*, the standard path for Haredi education among 27,000 high school-aged children, there are currently (in 2016) 16 Haredi high-school yeshivas directed towards studies leading to a matriculation certificate. Some are longstanding institutions while others were founded in the past decade, during which the number of students at those yeshivas has risen from approximately 600 to 1,400. Most of these yeshivas are oriented towards groups not representative of mainstream Haredi society (immigrant families from developed countries, graduates of *kiruv* ("outreach") institutions, and *baalei teshuva* families). Five of the sixteen existing high-school yeshivas are intended for students from mainstream Haredi society, with total attendance of around 300 students.

Purpose of the Study

This document is aimed at analyzing possibilities for expanding access to the high-quality track of Haredi high-school yeshivas that target mainstream Haredi youth, as a parallel alternative to the *yeshivot ketanot*. The proposed Haredi high-school yeshiva track will combine religious studies with general studies geared towards obtaining a matriculation certificate, all the while maintaining the Haredi lifestyle customary in mainstream Haredi society.

This document is meant to assist those interested in advancing the establishment of this model, i.e., government policymakers, local councils, public nonprofit organizations, philanthropic institutions and, naturally, various entrepreneurs interested in operating in this area.

The study presents the current state of affairs of Haredi education for high school-aged boys in Israel. It assesses the character of existing Haredi high-school yeshivas oriented toward higher education and analyzes obstacles and opportunities for establishing Haredi high-school yeshivas, considering the educational character of the institutions, an estimation of expected demand, anticipated opposition, proposed locations, and the economic model. Additionally, the document describes the desired model for Haredi high-school yeshivas and presents objectives and recommendations for advancing their establishment in the coming decade.

This study's conclusions are based on extensive research that includes gathering and analyzing data on the Haredi education system from various sources, including: interviews with officials in the education system, i.e., inspectors, directors/principals, financial managers of educational institutions; experts in education and education-related budgeting; in-depth interviews with heads of Haredi high-school yeshivas; an online questionnaire for potential parents in Haredi society aimed at assessing demand, opportunities and obstacles; an analysis of the research team's findings, and sketching out possible objectives.

10-Year Program for developing Haredi high-school yeshivas

Based on the research, a 10-year program was prepared for developing existing Haredi high-school yeshivas and establishing new institutions with the support of entrepreneurs and organizations. This study outlines the objectives for the

development and establishment of a Haredi high school yeshiva track and a 10-year program outlining the steps necessary to turn this track into a normative educational alternative to *yeshivot ketanot*.

Basic assumptions

The basic assumptions are founded on research and accumulated experience.

1. Increased attendance in the Haredi high-school track, coupled with societal change within the Haredi community, point to the potential for significant demand for this framework..
2. Findings indicate that the current social climate is oriented towards supply-driven demand.
3. Any breakthrough in the possibility of developing a Haredi high-school yeshiva track is conditional on targeting the Haredi mainstream.
4. Analysis of social obstacles reveals that it is vital that the educational profiles of Haredi high-school yeshivas be of a clearly Haredi nature and that their academic achievements, both in religious studies and general studies, be of high caliber.
5. Tuition costs must be competitive with conventional tuition costs for *yeshivot ketanot*.

Objectives and recommendations

The outline of growth objectives for the 10-year program takes into consideration the necessary cultural change for establishing Haredi high-school yeshivas as a real and sustainable alternative educational track. The outline includes the following recommendations:

1. Recommended model for Haredi high-school yeshivas

Target population

In order to establish academically-oriented Haredi high-school yeshivas as a normative track in Haredi society, the school must target the Haredi mainstream. This includes veteran Israeli Haredi families in which the man is a graduate of the

world of Haredi yeshivas and the woman a graduate of a Haredi women's high school (seminary).

Educational profile

The educational profile of Haredi high-school yeshivas must be characterized by complete commitment to a Haredi lifestyle, in which Torah studies and fear of God are leading values, and the Haredi dress code and other social codes are observed.

Academic level

The Haredi high-school yeshiva will maintain a high scholastic level both in religious studies and in general studies. At the end of their schooling, students will have achieved the scholastic level expected at *yeshivot ketanot* to enable them, should they so desire, to continue their religious studies at a *yeshiva gedola*. Students will conclude their studies eligible for a full and even expanded matriculation certificate in general curriculum studies.

Optimal size

In order to enable scholastic diversity and an economic basis, the Haredi high-school yeshiva must contain at least eight classrooms and be attended by approximately 240 students.

Growth rate in terms of student numbers

During the initial years, one classroom will open in the Haredi high-school yeshiva with enrollment of at least 20 students. By the fifth year, the number of enrolled students will total at least 100 in four classrooms, i.e., an average of 25 students per classroom. In the tenth year, the school will consist of eight classrooms attended by at least 216 students, an average of 27 students per classroom.

2. Systemic objectives of the 10-year program

Student numbers

The overall number of students at Haredi high-school yeshivas (including those targeting immigrant families from developed countries, graduates of

kiruv institutions, and *baalei teshuva* families) will total 4,000. The number of students attending Haredi high-school yeshivas will represent 8.5% of all male high school-aged Haredi students. The number of students attending yeshivas targeting mainstream Haredi society, currently 300, will rise to approximately 1,600 students.

Institutions

Development of a Haredi high-school yeshiva track during the 10-year period that targets Haredi mainstream will cultivate and expand the five existing yeshivas (Meorot, Mativta, HaMidrasha HaHasidit, Hedvat HaTorah, and Hachmey Lev). At the same time, four new yeshivas will be established under the 10-Year Program. The number of students at existing yeshivas will grow from 300 to approximately 1,100 students. The number of students enrolled in the new yeshivas will total approximately 500 by the end of the 10-year program. Some of the institutions will be residential facilities, some partially residential, and some without a residential option. Approximately 2/3 of all yeshiva students will be housed in a residential facility.

3. Partnerships and initiatives – roles

In order to promote the expansion and establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas, there must be cooperation among the following entities: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, local councils, education networks, philanthropic foundations, and local entrepreneurs. Each entity's contribution to advancing the development process is as follows:

Ministry of Finance:

- ✓ Increase the 'Call for Proposal' budget with the aim of reducing the operational deficit during the development process ('Call for Proposal' is a budgetary framework to give additional funding to Haredi schools that teach secular studies)
- ✓ Approve construction allocations for approximately 72 classrooms during the course of the 10-Year Program – for nine yeshivas, eight classrooms per yeshiva

- ✓ Earmark a budget for the Rural Education Administration – for residential facilities at Haredi high-school yeshivas

Ministry of Education:

- ✓ Define the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas as a policy objective
- ✓ Grant a license for opening new institutions
- ✓ Grant recognition to Haredi high-school yeshiva residential facilities
- ✓ Establish a support team for existing and new yeshivas

Local councils:

- ✓ Allocate land for building the institutions. Allocate temporary spaces for prospective yeshivas during the construction period.
- ✓ Extend financial support to the institutions

Education networks:

- ✓ Education networks will serve as a general administrative and educational platform for establishing the yeshivas
- ✓ It is recommended to rely on networks that have already established Haredi high-school yeshivas, e.g., the Society for Advancement of Education, ORT, and AMIT

Philanthropic foundations:

- ✓ Obtain resources for balancing operational budgets of the yeshivas during the establishment process
- ✓ Obtain resources for constructing buildings for residential facilities and *batei midrash*

Community entrepreneurs in education:

- ✓ Educational entrepreneurs will lead the new Haredi high-school yeshivas during their first years

- ✓ Educational entrepreneurs in the Haredi community will serve as change agents within Haredi society, recruiting students and persuading parents

4. Milestones in the 10-Year Program

The 10-Year Program for developing Haredi high-school yeshivas consists of two parallel moves:

- A. Growing existing yeshivas during the first six years
- B. Gradually establishing new Yeshivas beginning in the 2nd year.

Milestones in the 10-Year Program, in two-year phases:

Years 1-2: Guidance and support for five existing yeshivas in order to further establish and expand them. Identify potential locations for establishing new yeshivas and locate suitable partners in the first year. Establish the first new yeshiva in the second year.

Years 3-4: Continued guidance and support for existing yeshivas. Guide the newly established yeshiva. Establish a second new yeshiva in the fourth year.

Years 5-6: Guidance and support for existing yeshivas. Guide the newly established yeshivas. Establish a third yeshiva in the sixth year.

Years 7-8: Guidance and support for the new yeshivas. Establish a fourth yeshiva in the eighth year .

Years 9-10: Guidance and support for the newly established yeshivas.

5. Economic implications

As outlined below (and detailed in Section 3.5), the total amount of philanthropic support that would be needed over the course of the 10-Year Program would be NIS 93 million.

The economic calculation is based on assumptions concerning anticipated revenues for institutions from different sources: Ministry of Education, local councils, tuition and more. Investments in infrastructure are based on standard costs per square meter per student in the required buildings and in standard costs

per square meter construction of buildings of that type. Presented costs consist of operating costs plus the cost of physical infrastructures.

Operating shortfall

1. Operating shortfall of five existing yeshivas:

- ✓ The overall budget required (beyond anticipated revenues) over the course of six years (growth period) for covering shortfalls at the five existing yeshivas targeted for guidance and support – to achieve a balanced budget – totals approximately NIS 9.5 million.
- ✓ The budgetary shortfall at existing institutions is expected to achieve balance in the seventh year.

2. Operating shortfall of new yeshivas:

- ✓ The expected operating shortfall at the yeshivas to be established under the 10-Year Program totals NIS 8.1 million.

3. Total operating shortfall:

- ✓ Total operating costs for the 10-Year Program will total NIS 17.6 million.
- ✓ A 25% increase in the 'Call for Proposal' budget of the Ministry of Education will reduce the scope of the expected shortfall to NIS 12.3 million.

Infrastructure development

Classroom buildings: The Ministry of Education will be tasked with building a total of 72 classrooms for the nine yeshivas.

Residential facility buildings: Five residential facilities will be established under the 10-Year Program (three existing Yeshivas and two new ones to be established in years 2 and 4 of the 10-Year Program) to accommodate the full number of 160 students at each facility, as well as two residential facilities to accommodate the partial number of 80 students each – for two yeshivas (to be established in years 6 and 8 of the 10-Year Program). Overall cost for establishing the residential facilities totals NIS 43.2 million.

Dining room and *beit midrash*: During the course of the 10-Year Program, seven dining rooms will be established as well as seven *batei midrash* for the five existing yeshivas and the two yeshivas opened in years 2 and 4. A temporary solution will be found for the yeshivas that open up in years 6 and 8. Overall cost will total NIS 32.2 million.

Total capital cost for the 10-Year Program will amount to NIS 75.4 million.

6. Implementation Steps

In order to advance the 10-Year Program's implementation, the following steps are recommended:

Establish a steering committee

A joint steering committee that includes representatives from all relevant entities: philanthropic bodies, representatives from government and local councils, public representatives, and executing bodies in the field of education – to assist in advancing the Program, work to remove obstacles, monitor the Program's progress and update objectives as the Program evolves.

Set up a central implementation body

A central implementation body will guide development of existing yeshivas and establishment of new ones by activating entities experienced in the education system, headed by education networks interested in helping advance the 10-Year Program. It is advisable that this be an existing body highly experienced in the Israeli education system. The body must be chosen from among existing education networks with an interest in advancing Haredi high school education, e.g., The Society for Advancement of Education, ORT, AMIT and so forth, or other bodies active in the education system such as the Israeli Public Forum for Youth Villages and Residential Facilities, and the like.

Build a research, guidance, and evaluation apparatus

There are many obstacles to the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas; this challenge necessitates considerable efforts and commitment, and substantial

financial investment. It is essential to build a research, guidance, and evaluation apparatus to assist the Program's central implementation body in assessing modes of operation, measuring its success, and making necessary improvements during the 10-year implementation stages.

We hope that this study will assist all interested parties in advancing the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas leading to increased Haredi participation in higher education and employment in Israel.

Introduction

Over the past fifteen years, significant processes in Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) society have emerged that could potentially increase Haredi participation in employment and higher education in Israel. These processes are encouraged and supported by the government in a variety of ways. At the same time, these processes are fueling strife and profound controversy within Haredi society.

An examination of these processes as they have unfolded over time shows that Haredi rates of participation in the labor market and in higher education are increasing. An analysis undertaken in 2015 by the Center for the Study of Haredi Society at the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies reveals the persistence of major barriers to the expansion of Haredi male employment and higher education. As a result, the demonstrated increase of Haredi male participation in higher education is limited mostly to colleges with considerably low academic caliber and to a small range of disciplines, particularly law and accounting. This narrow range inhibits Haredi graduates' employment profiles and earning ability. Haredi students also exhibit fairly high drop-out rates. Our analysis points to disparities between Haredi men and their non-Haredi counterparts, due to many years of study in the absence of a basic general studies curriculum within the Haredi system. High school-aged males engage solely in religious study at *yeshivot ketanot* (Haredi educational institutions catering to high-school aged boys). This curriculum gap poses a major barrier to young Haredi men because it limits access to high-quality academic institutions and to a broader range of academic disciplines, especially in natural sciences, engineering, and the like. It is therefore imperative to explore possible adjustments to Haredi high-school education that could lay the groundwork for increased Haredi access to higher education and, by extension, to employment options.

Over the past decade nine new Haredi high school level institutions have been founded that offer general curriculum studies alongside religious studies in the traditional *yeshiva ketana* format. The additional general studies are oriented towards the fulfillment of a matriculation certificate, and as such, offer a framework for greater access to academic study. These high school level institutions, known as "Haredi high-school yeshivas," combining secular and religious study for Haredi students are historically rare. These new institutions reflect the growing

realization within Haredi society of the importance of general curriculum studies for high-school boys.

Research on the higher education profile of young Haredim after a decade and a half of effort in this sphere, as well as the trend, observed over the past decade, toward establishing Haredi high-school yeshivas, underscores the need to explore possibilities beyond the *yeshivot ketanot* that can provide a background in general studies to those who wish it. The purpose of this research paper is to examine options for significantly expanding access to the Haredi high-school yeshiva track as an alternative to the prevailing *yeshiva ketana* option. The aim is, ultimately, to better prepare Haredi high-school students for academic study and to ensure their eligibility for knowledge-intensive, high-income jobs – in contrast to the current situation at the *yeshivot ketanot*, which are devoted exclusively to religious study. The proposed Haredi high-school yeshiva track for boys will feature religious study combined with general studies as preparation for the high school matriculation certificate, while at the same time adhering to mainstream Haredi lifestyle norms.

Research Goals

- ✓ Present the contemporary context of Haredi education for high-school boys
- ✓ Provide an in-depth examination of existing, academically-oriented Haredi high-school yeshivas
- ✓ Analyze the possibilities and barriers to the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas, including: the institutions' educational framework, estimated demand, anticipated opposition, location, and financial model
- ✓ Develop a fitting model for Haredi high-school yeshivas
- ✓ Set objectives and formulate recommendations to advance the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas over a ten-year period.

Research Methods

Research tools and processes employed in this study included:

- ✓ Data gathering analysis from a variety of sources on the Haredi education system

- ✓ Interviews with position holders in the education system, such as inspectors, principals, and financial officers of educational authorities
- ✓ In-depth interviews with the heads of existing Haredi high-school yeshivas
- ✓ Online questionnaire for Haredi parents focused on demand, opportunities, and barriers
- ✓ Interview with the Education Budget Director in the Ministry of Finance Budget Department
- ✓ Analysis of findings of the research team and drafting of possible objectives

Contents

Executive summary

Chapter 1: Haredi education for boys: analysis of the current situation

- ✓ Brief review of Haredi high school education: types and nature of institutions, educational models, geographic distribution of the institutions and pupils, and growth forecast for the coming years
- ✓ In-depth examination of the academically-oriented Haredi high-school yeshivas: detailed description of each yeshiva, its target population, teaching faculty, educational philosophy and curriculum, educational attainments, resources, and physical features

Chapter 2: Assessing the potential for establishing Haredi high-school yeshivas

- ✓ Analysis of barriers to, and opportunities for, the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas
- ✓ Discussion of parental demand: Haredi background, location, financial options, and more
- ✓ Assessment of the national and local governments' potential role in establishing and developing Haredi high-school yeshivas
- ✓ Analysis of the economic model of Haredi high-school yeshiva construction and maintenance during development and post-development periods, based on funding from governmental and philanthropic sources, tuition, and other income

Chapter 3: Objectives and recommendations

- ✓ Recommended model for Israeli academically-oriented Haredi high-school yeshivas: institutional character, curriculum, size, and the administrative infrastructure for establishing such institutions
- ✓ Defined objectives for the establishment and development of Haredi high-school yeshivas over a ten-year period
- ✓ Implementation stages of the ten-year program
- ✓ The supervisory, advisory and documentation process.

The research team

The research team included Professor Amiram Gonen, Rabbi Bezalel Cohen, Meir Kraus, Yamit Naftali, Yo'ad Shahar and Eliezer Hayun of the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies. Rabbi Cohen is the head of the Society for the Advancement of Education's Hachmey Lev Yeshiva. The Society was a partner in this scholarly undertaking. The research team is grateful to everyone who contributed experience and knowledge to the project. The study aims to assist those interested in promoting the Haredi high-school yeshiva model: government policymakers, local authorities, NGOs, philanthropic organizations and, of course, educational entrepreneurs who would like to be active in this field. The research team hopes that this document will lay the necessary groundwork and will serve all stakeholders in the effort to establish Haredi high-school yeshivas, and henceforth to increase Haredi participation in Israel's higher education system and labor market.

Sponsors of the research project

The research project is sponsored by three philanthropic bodies interested in current trends in the Haredi society in Israel: UJA New York Federation of New York, Maimonides Fund, and the Russel Berrie Foundation.

1: Haredi education for boys: an analysis of the current situation

This chapter presents the current state of affairs in Haredi secondary education for boys, the types and character of its institutions, its education models, the geographical distribution of its institutions and students, and its forecasted attendance growth in the coming years. After analyzing the overall Haredi system for boys, we present an in-depth investigation of academically oriented Haredi high-school yeshivas, including a detailed description of each yeshiva, its target population, educational outlook, curriculum, educational achievements, resources, and physical infrastructure.

1.1 Elementary education for boys

Elementary education for Haredi boys is based on a common model for all institutions, albeit with certain differences in their curricula. Elementary schools for Haredi boys are known as ‘Talmud Torah’ or ‘Cheder’ and are attended by pupils for a total of eight years (ages 5-14), from Grades 1-8. During these years children acquire basic knowledge in Torah studies and in general subjects. As would be expected, religious studies occupy the most important position in the school curriculum and take place during the first part of the day. Progressively, pupils study the *siddur*, the Five Books of Moses and the books of the Prophets and then move on to studying the *Mishna* followed at a later stage (Grades 4 and 5) by Gemara study. The extent of Gemara studies increases gradually from year to year until Grades 7 and 8, when most of the study time is devoted to Gemara. In their first years pupils acquire basic skills in general subjects, i.e., reading, writing, grammar, reading comprehension, arithmetic, nature, geography, history and so forth. These subjects are studied several hours each day, mainly in the afternoon. However, in the higher grades (Grades 7-8), lessons in these subjects are reduced to a minimum or are ceased entirely. English is not studied at all in the majority of *Talmud Torah* schools, nor do the schools conduct physical education (sports) classes.

Most *Talmud Torah* schools conduct a long school day beginning in the lower grades, and the school day is extended progressively as students move to higher

grades. Students are either served a hot lunch, bring sandwiches from home, or go home for lunch before continuing their school day, depending on the institution.

Legal status of Haredi educational institutions

All schools in Israel are characterized by one of three categories of legal status: (a) “official” – state-owned schools; (b) “recognized but un-official” – schools that are privately owned but under state supervision; and (c) “exempt” – privately owned schools with a license to operate but not under any significant state supervision. Legal status has real implications for the nature of an institution, its curriculum, teaching staff, and sources of funding. Haredi *Talmud Torah* schools also divide into the above categories. In the 2014/15 school year, some 103,800 pupils attended 457 elementary institutions for Haredi boys. Beyond the numbers of pupils and institutions mentioned above, there are approximately 30 mixed Haredi institutions (for boys and girls) that target children from traditional homes interested in acquiring a Haredi education. Approximately 7,400 pupils attend these institutions. In this present study, however, we shall not refer to the traditional population attending mixed Haredi institutions, which are not of the mainstream.

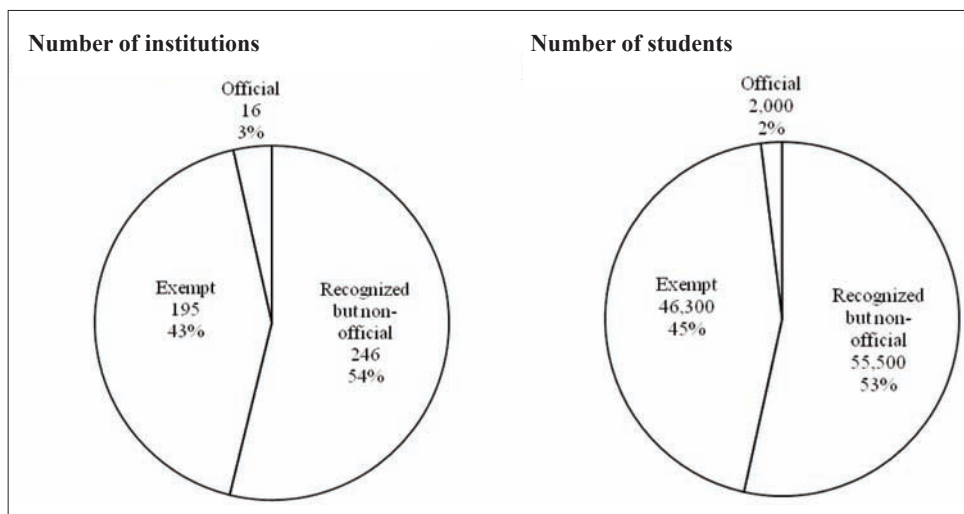
Pupils and institutions in Haredi education, according to their legal status:

Institutions with ‘recognized but un-official’ status – In order to preserve the independence of Haredi education, Haredi institutions are not state-owned but rather privately owned by Haredi education networks and associations. These institutions receive between 75% and 100% of the full amount of state budgeting for state-owned institutions, with the Haredi institutions themselves paying teachers’ salaries. The institutions are required to employ a suitably qualified teaching staff and teach core subjects to the extent that budgeting permits. To a large extent schools are supervised by the Ministry of Education. In the 2014/15 school year, the number of pupils enrolled in ‘recognized but un-official’ institutions stood at approximately 55,500 (53% of pupils in elementary institutions for Haredi boys). Out of these, 18,900 are enrolled in the ‘Independent Education Network’ of Agudat Yisrael, and 18,250 in the ‘Ma’ayan Hahinuch Hatorani’ network, affiliated with the Shas movement. The number of institutions with this status stood at 246 (54%) – see Table 1.1

Institutions with ‘exempt’ status – Some Haredi elementary institutions for boys have opted for ‘exempt’ classification, receiving only 55% of full state budgeting in exchange for greater freedom of action. They are not obliged to follow Ministry of Education rules concerning teaching staff qualifications or curriculum, and the extent of Ministry of Education supervision at these institutions is very low. In the 2014/15 school year some 46,300 pupils (44%) attended such institutions. The number of institutions with this status stood at 195 (43%) – see Table 1.1

Institutions with official status – The 2013/14 school year saw the inception of public Haredi educational institutions under full state ownership. The principals and teaching staffs at these institutions are directly employed by the Ministry of Education, with the institutions fully funded and their curricula supervised by the Ministry. In the 2014/15 school year, some 2,000 pupils (1.9%) attended these institutions. The number of institutions with this status stood at 16 (3%) – see Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Institutions and Pupils in Haredi Elementary Education, by Institution status, 2014/15



Source: Processing of data taken from Ministry of Education website

Table 1.1: Institutions and Pupils in Haredi Elementary Education, by Legal Status, 2014/15

Legal Status of institution	No. of Institutions	No. of Pupils
Recognized but non-official	246	55,500
Exempt	195	46,300
Official	16	2,000
Total	457	103,800

Source: Processing of data taken from Ministry of Education website

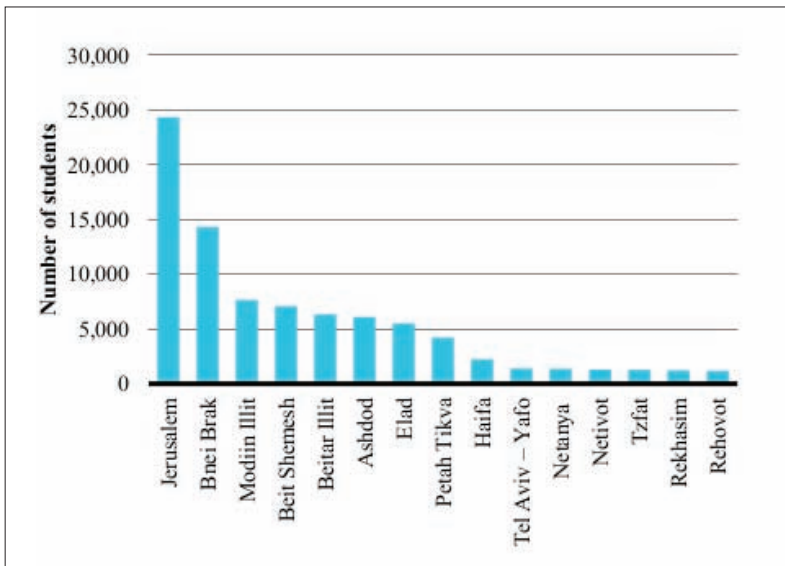
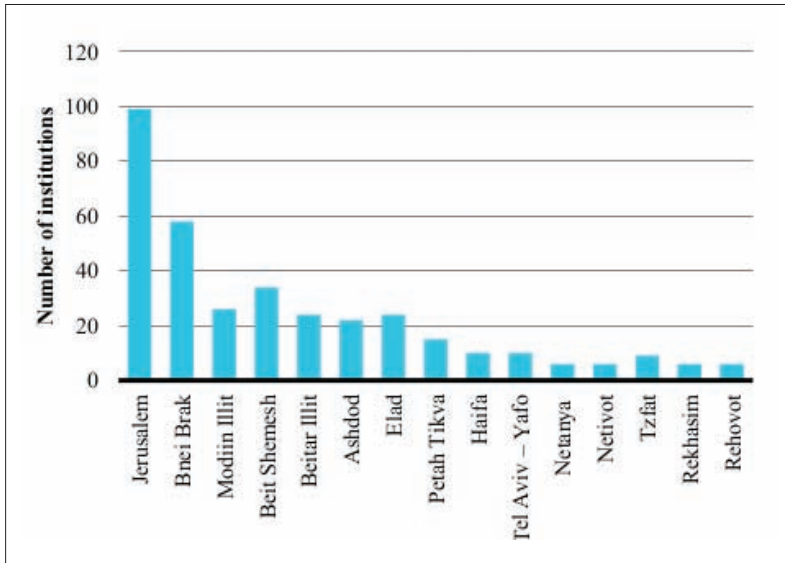
Table 1.2 presents data on Haredi elementary education by locality. The main concentrations of institutions and pupils are located in the largest residential concentrations of the Haredi population – Jerusalem and Bnei Brak. Between these two cities, the highest concentration is in Jerusalem (Table 1.2 and Figure 1.2).

Table 1.2: Institutions and Students in Haredi Elementary Education, by Locality, 2014/15

Locality	No. of institutions	Number of students		Locality	No. of institutions	Number of pupils	
		Number	Percent			Number	Percent
Total	457	103,803	100.0	Haifa	10	2,237	2.2
Jerusalem	99	24,349	23.5	Tel Aviv – Yafo	10	1,410	1.4
Bnei Brak	58	14,325	13.8	Netanya	6	1,374	1.3
Modiin Illit	26	7,644	7.4	Netivot	6	1,312	1.3
Beit Shemesh	34	7,092	6.8	Tzfat	9	1,267	1.2
Beitar Illit	24	6,340	6.1	Rekhasim	6	1,228	1.2
Ashdod	22	6,097	5.9	Rehovot	6	1,165	1.1
Elad	24	5,531	5.3	Others – 55 localities	102	18,212	17.5
Petah Tikva	15	4,220	4.1				

Source: Processing of data taken from Ministry of Education website

Figure 1.2: Number of Institutions and Students in Haredi Elementary Education, by Locality, 2014/15



Source: Processing of data taken from Ministry of Education website

1.2 Haredi education for high school aged boys

In this section we present an overall picture of Haredi education for high school aged students: *yeshivot ketanot*, high-school yeshivas, and other institutions. Later we take an in-depth look at the high-school yeshivas, which are the subject of this study.

1.2.1 The *yeshiva ketana*

The standard secondary educational institution for Haredi youth is the *yeshiva ketana*. In the 2014/15 school year, some 310 *yeshivot ketanot* operated in Israel, with approximately 9,000 students in each cohort with a total of approximately 27,000 students in Grades 9 through 11. The majority of Grade 12 students attend *yeshivot gedolot*. The distribution of students in the different grade levels (Grades 9 to 11) in *yeshivot ketanot* during the 2014/15 school year is presented in Table 1.3 below.

Table 1.3: Students at *yeshivot ketanot*, by Grade, 2014/15

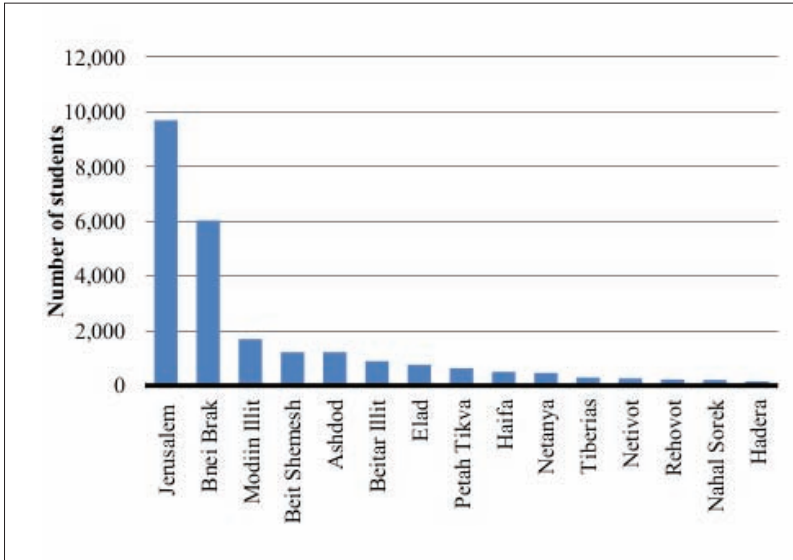
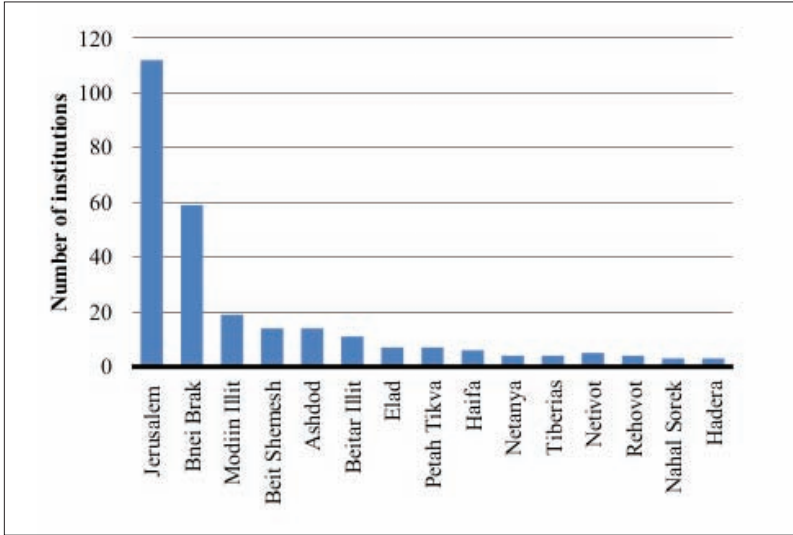
Grade	No. of students
Grade 9	9,236
Grade 10	8,884
Grade 11	8,957
Total	27,077

Source: Processing of data taken from Ministry of Education website

Geographical distribution of *yeshivot ketanot*

The geographical distribution of the *yeshivot ketanot* runs parallel to the residential distribution of the Haredi population in Israel. The distribution of *yeshivot ketanot* and their students by locality is presented in Table 1.4 and Figure 1.3. Again, Jerusalem heads the list with the greatest number of institutions and students, distantly followed by Bnei Brak.

Figure 1.3: Number of Institutions and Students at *yeshivot ketanot*, by Locality, 2014/15



Source: Processing of data taken from Ministry of Education website

**Table 1.4: Institutions and Students at *yeshivot ketanot*,
by Locality, 2014/15**

Locality	No. of institutions	No. of students	Percent	Locality	No. of institutions	No. of students	Percent
Total	312	27,077	100%	Haifa	6	507	2%
Jerusalem	112	9,692	36%	Netanya	4	467	2%
Bnei Brak	59	6,034	22%	Tiberias	4	295	1%
Modiin Illit	19	1,701	6%	Netivot	5	265	1%
Beit Shemesh	14	1,227	5%	Rehovot	4	223	1%
Ashdod	14	1,222	5%	N. Sorek	3	204	1%
Beitar Illit	11	899	3%	Hadera	3	158	1%
Elad	7	767	3%	Others (28)	40	2,784	10%
Petah Tikva	7	632	2%				

Source: Processing of data taken from Ministry of Education website

Numbers of students and classrooms in *yeshivot ketanot*

In the vast majority of *yeshivot ketanot* there is only one classroom per cohort. The average number of students per classroom is 30. A small number of yeshivas have two classrooms per cohort and only a few have three per cohort.¹ The average total enrollment of a *yeshiva ketana* is about 90 students. The distribution of yeshivas by enrollment size is as follows:

¹ We are unable to gather explicit class data as the yeshivas usually do not report on internal classroom distribution.

Table 1.5: *Yeshivot ketanot*, by Number of Students at Institution

Number of students at institution	Number of institutions	Number of students
Up to 100 students	218	12,810
101-200 students	77	10,431
More than 200 students	17	3,836
Total	312	27,077

Source: Processing of data taken from Ministry of Education website

Educational structure, curriculum, and method of study at *yeshivot ketanot*

The *yeshiva ketana* is a three-year institution (Grade 9-11) attended by students (aged 13-17) during the week from morning to evening. The *yeshiva ketana*'s daily schedule can run as long as 14 hours (7:00-21:00). Study time is almost fully devoted to Gemara. The daily agenda includes three prayer services and three meals. Apart from lessons given by rabbis-teachers, students mainly study independently in pairs (*Havruta* style learning) in a *Beit Midrash* ('study hall'). In this form of self-study, the students review and study content they have learned in lessons taught by the rabbis. These lessons in the majority of *yeshivot ketanot* are delivered with no use of pedagogical or didactic aids and in most cases without the use of a blackboard and certainly no other instructional instruments.

Gemara studies are divided into two sections: *iyun* and *beki'ut*. *Iyun* ('scrutiny') is the deliberate and in-depth study of Gemara and its commentators in order to acquire the ability to understand and delve into all of its issues, and takes place in the late morning. *Beki'ut* (proficiency) is the fast and cursory study of Gemara with minimum of commentary, designed to acquire general knowledge and familiarity with the Gemara's broad world of concepts, and takes place in the afternoon hours.

The students are tested from time to time on their studies, in writing or by oral exam. Students do not take official or external exams and they receive no report cards. Furthermore, there are no parent meetings for student progress reports or the like.

Studies at *yeshivot ketanot* take place throughout the year, aside from the *ben hazemanim* ('between the times') holidays – during the month of Tishrei (from Yom Kippur to Rosh Hodesh Heshvan), the entire month of Nisan, and in the month of Av (from the Ninth of Av until Rosh Hodesh Elul). Most yeshivas do not organize trips or social activities during the school year.

Beyond the study requirements, Haredi yeshivas are characterized by a clearly Haredi atmosphere indicated by a strict dress code and a parallel social code concerning the use of and exposure to all sorts of technological devices, the Internet, and to general culture.

Residential facility

The transition from *Talmud Torah* to *yeshiva ketana* coincides with the transitional phase of Haredi youth, from childhood to adolescence. The student almost entirely leaves home to remain in the study environment with his peers and is required to dedicate his best efforts and most of his time to studying Torah, primarily acquiring understanding and knowledge through Gemara study. In most *yeshivot ketanot* there is a residential facility that enables the boys to live within the yeshiva space for the entire duration of their studies. In such frameworks, students also remain at the yeshiva for a portion of the Sabbath days each month. In other *yeshivot ketanot* students return home each evening. We estimate that approximately 80% of *yeshivot ketanot* operate in a residential framework.

Educational staff at the *yeshiva ketana*

The educational staff at a *yeshiva ketana* typically includes the following positions:

- ◆ *Rosh Hayeshiva* (principal) of the institution – Responsible for determining the yeshiva's character, selecting staff, and overseeing student admissions, addition to the financial and physical aspects of the yeshiva. Occasionally serves also as a *ram* (teacher) or as a *mashgiach* (spiritual supervisor).
- ◆ '*Mashgiach*' or spiritual supervisor – In charge of the religious/spiritual facet of the yeshiva, sets binding rules at the yeshiva and is responsible for their enforcement, delivers talks to students on ethical matters and religious outlook, and is responsible for imposing sanctions on students who do not abide by the rules and terminating a student's studies at the yeshiva if necessary.

- ◆ *Ram* (acronym for '*reish metivta*' [Aramaic]) – Yeshiva teacher responsible for instructing students in daily Gemara *iyun* lessons in the morning hours in cooperation with teachers who teach Gemara *bki'ut* lessons in the afternoon. Thus each classroom has two Rams, one for *iyun* lessons and one for *beki'ut* lessons.
- ◆ *Meshiv* ('answerer') – Rabbi who sits in the *Beit Midrash* during studies, accompanies the different havrutas, and helps students in understanding Gemara.
- ◆ *Madrich* (counselor) – Supervises behavior of students in the residential facility, during afternoon recess, and in the nighttime hours.

These positions are held by graduates of Haredi *yeshivot gedolot* who over the years have functioned as *avrechim* (young married kollel scholars).

Social-cultural composition of students at *yeshivot ketanot*

The social-cultural composition of students at *yeshivot ketanot* reflects different trends in Israel's Haredi community. The basic division is between groupings of *yeshivot ketanot* affiliated with the Lithuanian, Hassidic, and Sephardi groupings which, in turn, divide into subgroups with different characteristics reflective of religious priorities, lifestyle, teaching methods and more. Each subgroup in Haredi society will typically have its own *yeshiva ketana*.

Along with this division into various social-cultural groupings in Haredi society, we find in each group a clear hierarchy among *yeshivot ketanot*, based on students' scholastic level and required achievements. In point of fact, this is a highly elitist system that is graded by the community. This educational tracking of students according to community, family, and scholastic ability is deeply engrained and widespread; nonetheless, the fundamental educational and scholastic model of *yeshivot ketanot* is common to all Haredi communities.

Continuation of studies following *yeshiva ketana*

Upon completing their studies, *yeshivot ketanot* graduates are referred for continued study at a *yeshiva gedola*, which are also intended exclusively for Torah study and particularly intensive, in-depth Gemara study. The issue of

continued studies following *yeshiva ketana* is a significant factor in the decision of parents and students when choosing a *yeshiva ketana*. Graduates of prestigious *yeshivot ketanot* will be referred accordingly to prestigious *yeshivot gedolot*.

Budgetary aspects of *yeshivot ketanot*

Israeli law has defined *yeshivot ketanot* as ‘unique cultural institutions’, thus making it possible to legally exempt them from teaching ‘core’ general subjects, despite their receiving a state budget. The extent of state budgeting is approximately 60% of full budgeting for a classroom in the official education system. In addition, the majority of *yeshivot ketanot* are budgeted as ‘residential facilities.’ The economic model of *yeshivot ketanot* is based on the state budget, tuition costs (approximately NIS 500 – NIS 1,000 per month), and donations. That said, it should be pointed out that the costs of studies at *yeshivot ketanot* are relatively low due to the curriculum being based on self-study and only a small number of lessons delivered by the teaching staff. These institutions do not conduct expensive studies such as science studies, so naturally there is no need for the infrastructures required at regular learning institutions, e.g., laboratories, computers, etc.

1.2.2 The Haredi high-school yeshiva

Over the years a small number of Haredi high-school yeshivas in Israel have operated in parallel to the *yeshivot ketanot* model. The high-school yeshiva model is widespread in national-religious education in Israel and we find a great deal of similarity to many educational institutions in Haredi communities in North America and Western Europe. However, at this point, the high-school yeshiva is still an extremely limited phenomenon in Israel’s Haredi society. The Haredi high-school yeshiva is meant to combine intensive Gemara studies, as is customary in the yeshiva world, with general studies that lead to eligibility for a full matriculation certificate. Such yeshivas target students whose parents seek to equip them with tools for entering the labor market when the time comes. The goal of this section is to further familiarize ourselves with existing Haredi high-school yeshivas, identify their potential for growth and expansion, and analyze the key difficulties they face.

Main characteristics

Haredi high-school yeshivas are four-year institutions (Grades 9 to 12) in which students take high-school matriculation exams in Gemara (5-units) and in all compulsory subjects. Most Haredi high-school yeshiva students enter these schools with prior background in general subjects after having graduated elementary schools that deliver a full curriculum of ‘core’ general subjects. Haredi high-school yeshivas have an organized curriculum, hand out periodic evaluation reports to students, and hold parent meetings from time to time in order to report on the scholastic status of each student.

The daily schedule of Haredi high-school yeshivas is long and demanding, no less and perhaps even more so than that of *yeshivot ketanot*. However, a portion of the afternoon hours is dedicated to general studies in English, math, history, language, civics, physical education, and Bible and Judaism studies – studies that do not take place at all in *yeshivot ketanot*.

Haredi high-school yeshivas have a relatively more open approach concerning the dress code and use of and exposure to technological devices and the Internet. Students at these yeshivas are more exposed to Israeli society and culture, albeit at differing levels among the various yeshivas.

The majority of Haredi high-school yeshivas encourage their graduating students to continue their studies at a *yeshiva gedola*. Yet in some cases, continuing students enroll in a *yeshivat hesder* (yeshivas combining advanced Talmudic study and IDF service), direct IDF service, or academic studies at institutions of higher education.

Haredi high-school yeshivas – older (pre-2005) and new

Up until 2005, five previously established Haredi high-school yeshivas were in operation in Israel, attended by less than 600 students. Over the past decade, ten new Haredi high-school yeshivas were opened and are currently attended by approximately 1,350 students. This trend of growth and expansion stems from the following trends: the natural growth of the Haredi population, the focus of Haredi high-school yeshivas on targeting additional populations, and internal change processes occurring within Haredi society. We can distinguish several differences between the previously established (before 2005) and new (since 2005)

Haredi high-school yeshivas. The older Haredi high-school yeshivas are under the supervision of the state-religious education system within the Ministry of Education while the new Haredi high-school yeshivas, since their inception, have been under the supervision of the newly formed Haredi district of the Ministry of Education. In general, the older Haredi high-school yeshivas were located outside of and distant from significant residential concentrations of Haredi population, as are some of the new Haredi high-school yeshivas. Still, a portion of the new yeshivas have been established within or adjacent to concentrations of Haredi population.

Existing Haredi high-school yeshivas – detailed description

For discussion purposes we define the Haredi high-school yeshiva as an institution in which at least half of the curriculum consists of Gemara and other religious studies and whose students are enrolled in full matriculation studies of general subjects. In this study, 16 institutions meeting these criteria were found in Israel. The following detailed description is based on interviews conducted with the majority of these yeshiva principals as well as documents describing the yeshivas to their target audiences and the yeshivas' educational codes. Their order of presentation is presented according to their seniority. Information on the yeshivas was gathered from different sources; some of the yeshivas also filled out a questionnaire prepared for this purpose.

1. Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash in Tel Aviv-Yafo

Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash / Yeshivat Harav Amiel was founded in Tel Aviv in 1938 by Rabbi Moshe Avigdor Amiel. This was the first Haredi yeshiva in pre-state Israel that combined general studies with religious studies – the only yeshiva of its type in Israel for about 50 years. In the beginning the yeshiva was headed by Rabbi Reuven Trop, an outstanding yeshiva scholar. Rabbi Elazer Menachem Shach (the eventual leader of the Lithuanian Torah world) started out as a Ram at the yeshiva. For decades, Rabbi Yehuda Kolodetsky served as head of the yeshiva, which is today headed by his son, Rabbi Katriel Kolodetsky.

The yeshiva is known for its high study demands and the strict regimen it upholds as regards its students. The study day lasts for 13 hours, with only about

two and a half hours allocated for secular studies. Due to the sparseness of the secular studies, students attend the yeshiva for five years rather than four, as is customary in Israel's other Haredi high-school yeshivas.

The target population of Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash consists of Grade 8 graduates² from 'modern' Haredi families. The yeshiva has served mainly as a solution for the class of well-off Haredi families who wish their sons to be independent and self-supporting when they grow up as well as well-founded in the Torah. The families' relatively high socioeconomic status permits them to afford the high tuition costs. Adjacent to the yeshiva is a residential facility for students who do not live in the area.

From the beginning, Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash has directed its students towards continued religious study at *yeshivot gedolot*, followed by continued studies in institutions of higher Torah education. Despite having a matriculation certificate, most graduates continue into higher Torah studies at a Haredi *yeshiva gedola*; only a small portion opt for *hesder* yeshivas or another IDF service track.

Numerous graduates of Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash have taken positions at Haredi *yeshivot gevohot* as well as the rabbinical and religious judiciary domain. Many other graduates have integrated into all other areas of Israeli society.

According to data from the Ministry of Education, the number of students at this yeshiva has been falling for 15 years. We do not, however, possess any information regarding the causes for the decrease. Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash is under the supervision of the state-religious education department of the Ministry of Education.

2. Yeshivat Ma'arava / Machon Rubin in Matityahu

Yeshivat Ma'arava is Israel's second Haredi high-school yeshiva. The yeshiva was founded in the 1985/86 school year in the town of Matityahu by Rabbi Baruch Chait (Chayat). The yeshiva's founding aroused the opposition of the rabbis, primarily Rabbi Elazar Menachem Shach. In order to surmount this opposition, the yeshiva was established outside of the two largest Haredi

² Until the 2009/10 school year, the yeshiva was also attended by 7th and 8th graders.

concentrations – Jerusalem and Bnei Brak – in the Haredi-Zionist settlement of Matityahu. Additionally, the yeshiva focused itself on a target population consisting of the sons of modern Haredim and of immigrants from Western countries. Its name in official publications was rendered as Ma’arava Rubin Academy, deliberately avoiding the term “yeshiva.”

In the beginning, the decisive majority of the yeshiva’s students were indeed of Anglo-Saxon origin. Over time, the majority has shifted to native Israelis, mostly of Ashkenazi origin and from families of relatively high socioeconomic status. Admission to Yeshivat Ma’arava is conditional on successfully passing a personal interview and external testing by a professional institute.

The yeshiva has become highly successful and is today considered the most successful and in-demand Haredi high-school yeshiva thanks to its excellent staff, outstanding students, and high level of studies in all areas. The yeshiva also benefits from excellent physical conditions. It is located in new and spacious buildings, and conditions in the school and residential facility are of extremely high quality. The tuition cost for Yeshivat Ma’arava is the highest among all the Haredi high-school yeshivas, with parents paying more than NIS 3,000 per month.

The vast majority of the yeshiva’s graduates continue into the largest and most prestigious institutions in the Lithuanian yeshiva the world. Yeshivat Ma’arava has kept its size over time at approximately 150 students. Each grade consists of some 40 students and the yeshiva has no interest in surpassing this number. Yeshivat Ma’arava is also under the supervision of the state-religious education department of the Ministry of Education.

3. Yeshivat Nehora in Mevo Horon

Yeshivat Nehora, situated in the settlement of Mevo Horon, was founded in the 1995/96 school year by Rabbi Avraham Greenbaum. From its inception, the yeshiva targeted both the modern Haredi sector and the national-religious sector (particularly the “national-Haredi” sector – “Hardal”); however approximately six years ago it became an entirely Haredi yeshiva due to the fact that additional high-school yeshivas were founded in the national-Zionist sector.

The establishment of Yeshivat Nehora was also met with opposition from Rabbi Elazar Shach. But upon the ascent of Rabbi Aharon Leib Steinman to the leadership of the Lithuanian community, Rabbi Greenbaum succeeded in obtaining silent consent for the yeshiva's existence.

Yeshivat Nehora is located on a spacious campus equipped with new and roomy buildings. Tuition cost is also high – approximately NIS 2,400 per month – and it is considered to be of similar socioeconomic status to that of Yeshivat Ma'arava. Its student population, however, is more varied in terms of ethnic background. Tuition is slightly lower than Ma'arava and many students are eligible for discounted tuition costs. Nehora graduates are typically guided into continuing their paths at Haredi *yeshivot gedolot*. Most of the cohorts at the yeshiva consist of a single classroom, but once every four years, a second classroom is opened up. Generally speaking, the number of students attending the yeshiva also remains stable (140-170). Yeshivat Nehora is also under the supervision of the state-religious department of the Ministry of Education.

4. Yeshivat Neharde'a in Ganei Tikva

Yeshivat Neharde'a was founded by the Poalei Agudat Yisrael movement in the 2002/03 school year in response to increasing demand for the three already existing older Haredi high-school yeshivas. Upon its establishment, the yeshiva was denounced in a published letter written by Rabbi Yosef Shalom Eliashiv, which led to a portion of its intended staff withdrawing from the initiative, but the yeshiva still opened. In its initial years, the yeshiva was headed by Rabbi Rafael Frank; today it is headed by Rabbi Baruch Landau. Over the years the yeshiva has wandered from place to place, from its first location in Yad Binyamin, to Beit Meir, to Nehalim, and finally to its present location in Ganei Tikva. Tuition cost is lower than that of Ma'arava and Nehora yeshivas, and stands at NIS 1,700 per month for external students and NIS 2,000 for students in the residential facility. Graduates are guided into *yeshivot gedolot*, mainly those that target graduates of Haredi high-school yeshivas. The number of students attending Yeshivat Neharde'a has remained low over the years, with 15-20 students in each grade. The yeshiva is under the supervision the Haredi district of the Ministry of Education.

5. Yeshivat Meorot in Beit Shemesh

Yeshivat Meorot was established in Beit Shemesh in the 2003/04 school year, first headed by Rabbi Oren Granit. The yeshiva's establishment was founded on an ideological outlook espousing the ideal of young, educated, and broadminded Haredi men taking part in all life areas. Its establishment broadened the available offering of Haredi high-school yeshivas, mainly from a geographical aspect. The yeshiva places emphasis on connecting the Bible and writings of the Sages with everyday life, volunteering and contributing to the community, and ecological and environmental issues. Yeshivat Meorot is characterized by its positive approach toward the country and toward Zionism, including an Israel studies program and the students participation in Masa Israeli (Israeli Roots Odyssey). Its graduates are guided primarily towards *yeshivot gedolot* meant for Haredi high-school yeshiva graduates, though some will also be referred for military service in a framework compatible with Haredi lifestyle. The number of students at Yeshivat Meorot has risen and fallen over the years, linked perhaps to competition from other Haredi high-school yeshivas in the vicinity and the opening of new Haredi high-school yeshivas in recent years. Tuition costs are lower (NIS 1,800 per month) than those of the older Haredi high-school yeshivas, but still significantly higher than at *yeshivot ketanot*

Most of the yeshiva's students are residents of the area. The yeshiva situated itself distant from Haredi neighborhoods in Beit Shemesh due to the opposition that accompanied its establishment there. For nine years the yeshiva was located in a rented building. Three years ago the city of Beit Shemesh allocated land to erect a permanent building for the yeshiva. Yeshivat Meorot is under the supervision (Haredi) of the Ministry of Education.

6. Yeshivat Or Menachem in Ashkelon

Yeshivat Or Menachem opened in Ashkelon in the 2006/07 school year. The yeshiva was established by Chabad followers and targets local residents who have come closer to Judaism following contact with Chabad emissaries. The yeshiva is undergoing continued growth as it combines Torah and the pursuit of worthy conduct in its educational model. The staff is composed of Chabad followers, but it appears that its students do not come from homes that could be defined as Haredi. We have no details concerning the form of continued education the

yeshiva encourages its graduates to pursue. Yeshivat Or Menachem is under the supervision the Haredi district of the Ministry of Education.

7. Yeshivat Metivta Beit Shemesh in Beit Shemesh

In response to the evolving English-speaking Haredi community in Beit Shemesh, Yeshivat Metivta Beit Shemesh was founded in the 2011/12 school year. The new yeshiva was an initiative of olim parents who sought to establish an institution in the format customary in Haredi communities abroad. The yeshiva started out as a branch of Yeshivat Meorot in Beit Shemesh. Later, it branched off and joined the ORT education network. The yeshiva is headed by Rabbi Avishai Brown and has met with great success in the community of Haredim-olim in Beit Shemesh. Rabbi Brown points out that the yeshiva is not meant to alter the orientation of Haredi high-school yeshivas in Israel, but rather to provide a solution for a population seeking a different sort of education. This is the first Haredi high-school yeshiva in Israel attended solely by external students, and there is no existing residential facility option. The yeshiva strictly upholds a high standard in the quality of its students both spiritually and scholastically. Screening is meticulous and there is no intention to grow beyond one classroom per cohort.

The first location of the yeshiva was outside the boundaries of the town of Beit Shemesh, in the adjacent Moshav of Zano'ah. The yeshiva's location in Moshav Zano'ah was the result of Haredi opposition to the establishment of a Haredi high-school yeshiva within Beit Shemesh but this year, the yeshiva moved to a location within the Beit Shemesh city limits. The yeshiva is situated in a rented building.

The first group of students graduated from the 2014/15 school year and most students have continued into Haredi *yeshivot gedolot*. The cost of tuition is NIS 1,500 per month. Yeshivat Metivta Beit Shemesh is under the supervision the Haredi district of the Ministry of Education.

8. Yeshivat Derech Emuna in Moshav Tirosh

In response to the great difficulty of second-generation *ba'alei teshuva* boys in integrating into *yeshivot ketanot*, Rabbi Avraham Abergel founded Yeshivat Derech Emuna in the 2011/12 school year. The yeshiva is currently headed by

Rabbi Yitzhak Herman. It was first located in the religious Moshav Beit Meir and later moved to Moshav Tirosh. The yeshiva's students are mostly followers of the Breslov branch of Hasidism who are of Mizrahi/Sephardi background. The yeshiva's establishment ran into strong opposition from Breslov rabbis. In recent years the number of students has stood at approximately 40, the small number apparently due to internal opposition to the yeshiva's path within the Hasidic community. The yeshiva recently joined the Branco Weiss education network. Monthly tuition cost totals NIS 1,100 and most students are in need of discounted tuition. Yeshivat Derech Emuna is under the supervision the Haredi district of the Ministry of Education.

9. Yeshivat Yedidya in Petah Tikva

Yeshivat Yedidya, located in Petah Tikva, targets the *kiruv* population – students from non-Haredi homes who received a Haredi elementary school education. Experience shows that the large majority of this population does not integrate successfully into a *yeshiva ketana*. The yeshiva was established in the 2007/08 school year by Rabbi Blitstein and is currently headed by Rabbi Isser Shpray. Yeshivat Yedidya operates under the guidance of Haredi Torah sages and has gained their approval due to the fact that the yeshiva does not target boys from Haredi homes. Its leadership views it as a 'ex post facto' institution that is needed by its target population and not a fitting 'from the outset' one for Haredi boys in general. In its first years the yeshiva did not send its students for matriculation exams; only in the 2012/13 school did the yeshiva implement a matriculation curriculum. The yeshiva has undergone a significant process of expansion in recent years and it now has several classrooms per grade. Students study in *Havrutot* with *avrechim* in order to impart the yeshiva style of learning. The yeshiva's goal is to lead as many students as possible to continued studies at a *yeshiva gedola*. Tuition costs are NIS 1,100 per month, however most of the students receive a discount of approximately 40%. Yeshivat Yedidya is under the supervision the Haredi district of the Ministry of Education.

10. Yeshivat Hedvat Hatorah

Yeshivat Hedvat Hatorah was opened in Jerusalem by Rabbis Meshulam and Aharon Brandwein in the 2013/14 school year. The yeshiva is meant to provide

a solution for Jerusalem residents interested in an external institution without a residential facility framework. The yeshiva targets mainstream Haredi families that wish their boys to be instilled with broad knowledge and open-mindedness in addition to conventional yeshiva learning. Students are affiliated with all groups and denominations of the Haredi society. Most of them (~70%) are of Ashkenazi descent, with a large portion consisting of olim or the sons of olim from Western countries. The yeshiva was established by the Amit education network. In the 2014/15 school year, for the first time ever in Haredi education, a middle school was opened at Yeshivat Hedvat Hatorah.

The yeshiva is located in an office building rented by the city of Jerusalem. Physical conditions at the site are very difficult. The yeshiva's establishment did not run into any overt opposition by the rabbis on account of a quiet understanding that was reached between the yeshiva's founders and the rabbis but the yeshiva's leaders were asked to avoid locating the yeshiva within a clearly Haredi neighborhood. Tuition for Hedvat Hatorah totals approximately NIS 1,000 per month, similar to the conventional cost of *yeshivot ketanot*. The yeshiva intends to guide all of its graduates into studies at *yeshivot gedolot*. Yeshivat Hedvat Hatorah is under the supervision the Haredi district of the Ministry of Education.

11. Yeshivat Hachmey Lev

Yeshivat Hachmey Lev in Jerusalem is owned by the Society for Advancement of Education and was established in the 2013/14 school year by Rabbi Bezalel Cohen for Haredi boys who do not wish to devote their time to studying Talmud in a *yeshiva ketana*. The yeshiva's purpose was to enable Haredi boys who graduate Haredi elementary education to choose their future path in life and to achieve "the study of the Torah together with an occupation." The yeshiva is geared to boys from all the groups and sectors in the Haredi community out of recognition of the fact that that many Haredi boys are suited to this framework. Because of the character of the target population (students from the Haredi mainstream who studied in elementary school with a meager curriculum of core subjects), the yeshiva has to adapt the educational (closing gaps in all the general subjects), culturally (the accepted dress code of the *yeshivot ketanot*)

and financially (reasonable school fees). The yeshiva is in its third year and is located in a small building in the grounds of the Boyer High School's residential facility in the Bayit Vegan neighborhood. In the 2015/16 school year a marquee was constructed next to the building for use as a *Beit Midrash* and dining room. The yeshiva residential facility is in the Givat Mordechai neighborhood and students are bussed between the two locations. Over the years the yeshiva has encountered severe opposition in the Haredi community for several reasons: the attempt to locate the yeshiva in neighborhoods with a high concentration of a Haredi population; its place as one of the first two Haredi high-school yeshivas in Jerusalem together with Yeshivat Hedvat Hatorah; its clear statement that it is an institution teaching secular subjects on principle and about the need of many boys to study in such an institution. Hachmey Lev Yeshiva directs each graduate to the track that is suitable for him – *yeshiva gedola*, *hesder* yeshiva, the army or higher education – on condition that he will maintain a Haredi way of life. The yeshiva's students come from all Haredi population concentrations. Jerusalem students sleep at home and the others live in the residential facility. Tuition is NIS 1,000 for external students and NIS 1,250 for residential facility students. The yeshiva is supervised by the Haredi district of the Ministry of Education.

12. Hamidrasha Hahasidit in Betar Illit

In the 2014/15 school year a Haredi high-school yeshiva intended for the Hasidic community was established for the first time. The yeshiva was established by Rabbi Menachem Bombach within the LeZion BeRina high school that he heads in Beitar Illit. The new class was separated from the rest of the school and named Hamidrasha Hahasidit.

Rabbi Bombach adapted the yeshiva and its character to Hasidic characteristics by means of a suitable staff and a thoroughly Hasidic atmosphere. The process drew opposition within the city however the quiet support of the Karliner Rebbe who owns the buildings made it possible to open the institution. Hamidrasha Hahasidit is under the supervision of the National-Religious education department of the Ministry of Education. Because of the yeshiva's special character it has small classes of about eighteen students each.

13. Yeshivat Yehoyada in Gan Yavne

Following the success of the Yeshivat Yedidya with the *kiruv* population, another Haredi high-school yeshiva, Yehoyada, was opened by Rabbi Iser Sprei in Gan Yavne in the 2014/15 school year. This yeshiva's population is similar to that of Yedidya.

14. Yeshivat Ziv Or in Karmiel

In continuation of Rabbi Avraham Greenbaum's activity in Yeshivat Nehora and the Wolfson Foundation, focusing on the *kiruv* population, Yeshivat Ziv Or is also intended for this sector of population, and opened in Karmiel in the 2014/15 school year.

15. Yeshivat Or Avner in Kfar Sitrin

A Haredi high-school yeshiva owned by the billionaire Lev Leviev operates in the Zvi Sitrin youth village. The yeshiva was originally intended for immigrants from Bukhara and later reached out to Haredi boys who had not found their place in *yeshivot ketanot*. The head of the yeshiva is Rabbi Menachem Cheivy, and staff members all belong to Chabad Hasidism. The yeshiva offers its students vocational studies together with Torah study; some students also take matriculation exams. The yeshiva's students seem mainly to come from *ba'alei teshuva* families. It was not possible to acquire data on the students in the yeshiva over the years.

16. Yeshivat Agadelcha

In the 2015/16 school year the Ort education network, in collaboration with the Or Chaim *yeshiva gedola* headed by Rabbi Reuven Elbaz (a member of Shas's "Council of Torah Sages"), this Haredi high-school yeshiva was opened for *ba'alei teshuva* Sephardi families.

Summary of data on Haredi high-school yeshivas

During the years from 2005/06 to 2015/16 the number of students in Haredi high-school yeshivas grew from 562 students in 2005/06 to 1,343 in 2015/16 (Table 1.6 and Figure 1.4).

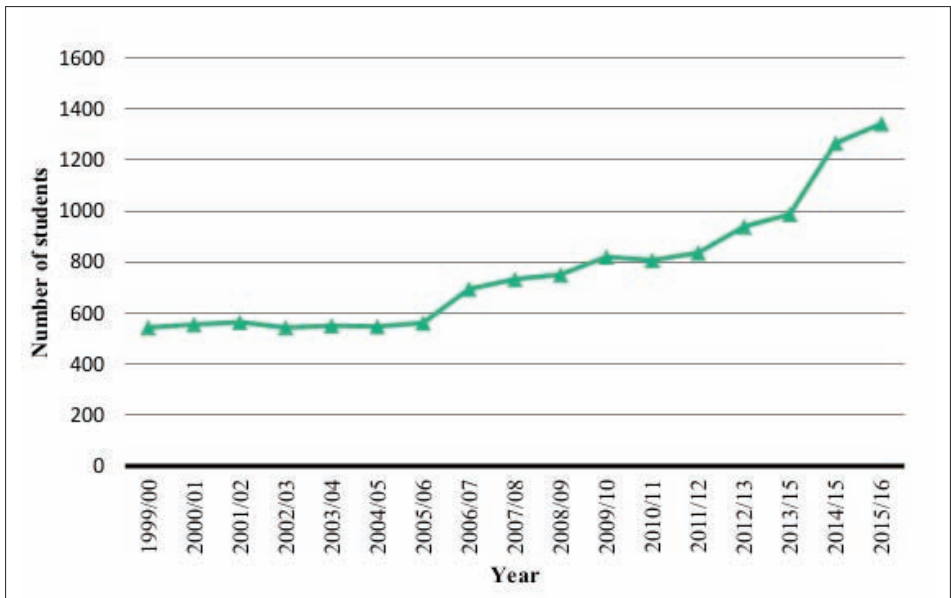
**Table 1.6: Number of Students in Haredi high-School Yeshivas,
by year, 1999/2000 – 2015/16**

School year	Total no. of students	School year	Total no. of students	School year	Total no. of students
1999/2000	544	2005/6	562	2011/12	837
2000/01	556	2006/7	695	2012/13	939
2001/02	565	2007/8	733	2013/15	988
2002/03	544	2008/9	751	2014/15	1,267
2003/04	551	2009/10	821	2015/16	1,343
2004/05	548	2010/11	808		

Grades 9–12 in fourteen schools (not including Or Avner and Agadelcha yeshivas)

Source: Processing data taken from the Ministry of Education’s website

**Figure 1.4: Number of Students in Haredi high-School Yeshivas,
by School year, 1999/2000 – 2015/16**



Grades 9–12 in fourteen institutions (without Or Avner and Agadelcha)

Source: Processing data taken from the Ministry of Education’s website

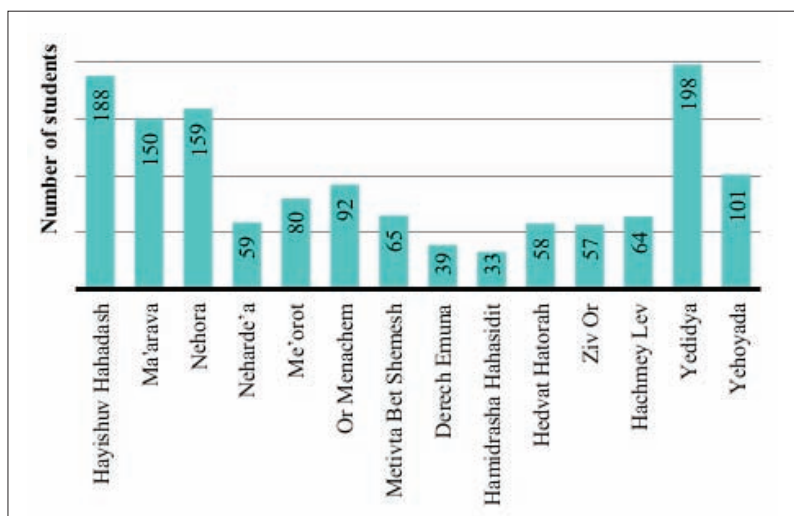
Data on the number of students in Haredi high-school yeshivas in the 2015/16 school year are presented in Table 1.7 and Figure 1.5.

Table 1.7: Number of Students by Haredi High-School Yeshivas, 2015/16

Haredi high-school yeshiva	Locality	Number of students	Haredi high-school yeshiva	Locality	Number of students
Hayishuv Hahadash	Tel Aviv	188	Derech Emuna	Moshav Tirosh	39
Ma'arava	Matityahu	150	Hamidrasha Hahasidit	Betar Illit	33
Nehora	Mevo Horon	159	Hedvat Hatorah	Jerusalem	58
Neharde'a	Ganei Tikva	59	Ziv Or	Karmiel	57
Me'orot	Beit Shemesh	80	Hachmey Lev	Jerusalem	64
Or Menachem	Ashkelon	92	Yedidya	Petah Tikva	198
Metivta Beit Shemesh	Beit Shemesh	65	Yehoyada	Gan Yavne	101

Source: Data from the Ministry of Education's website

Figure 1.5: Number of Students by Haredi High-School Yeshivas in the 2015/16 School year



Source: Processing data taken from the Ministry of Education's website

Analysis of the characteristics of the Haredi high-school yeshivas shows that they can be divided into three categories:

- 1. Older Haredi high-school yeshivas** – these yeshivas are geared to the modern Haredi elitist population. Parents are professionals with a high income and the boys arrive with some background in general studies. The parents want their sons to study and acquire a matriculation diploma and at the same time to continue to the leading Haredi yeshivas. The yeshivas in this category are: Hayishuv Hahadash, Ma'arava, Nehora and Neharde'a. The Metivta Beit Shemesh yeshiva opened in a similar trend (even if it appears to be geared more to the Haredi mainstream and to families of a lower economic status). These Haredi high-school yeshivas are not favored by the Haredi leadership but are not perceived as a threat to the *yeshivot ketanot*.
- 2. Lechathila (from the outset) Yeshivas** – yeshivas that were established according to a world view that sees the model of “Haredi high-school yeshiva” as the correct and fitting model from the outset for some Haredi boys. Me'orot in Beit Shemesh, Hedvat Hatorah and Hachmey Lev in Jerusalem and Hamidrasha Hahasidit in Betar Illit belong to this category. These yeshivas are geared to Haredi boys from a more conservative background and from the mainstream, and therefore the opposition to their existence is more severe.
- 3. New Haredi high-school yeshivas for ba'alei teshuva and kiruv students** – yeshivas for students of the second generation of *ba'alei teshuva* families and for graduates of Haredi elementary education but who come from non-Haredi homes. These yeshivas were established to suit the nature of the students educationally and culturally. They are Yedidya, Yehoyada, Ziv Or, Derech Emuna and Agadelcha yeshivas. Or Menachem and Or Avner are also aimed at this audience. These yeshivas are usually welcomed by the Haredi leadership, as they are not intended for the Haredi mainstream.

Apart from the differences among the target population groups of Haredi high-school yeshivas there are further differences that are manifested in several main points:

- ◆ **Differences in tuition fees** – whereas the older Haredi high-school yeshivas are intended for a Haredi population group that is well off and has financial ability, the new ones are aimed at population groups unable to pay high tuition fees.
- ◆ **Differences in the need to make up gaps in general studies** – the more the yeshiva aims at Haredi mainstream boys lacking a background in general studies, the greater the need for extra tuition to close the gaps from elementary school.
- ◆ **Differences in cultural characteristics** – the difference in target population groups is expressed in the dress code, rules of conduct and other aspects. Each yeshiva molds its place in the social and educational arena through these characteristics.
- ◆ **Differences in directing graduates to continued studies** – the older yeshivas direct their students to Haredi *yeshivot gedolot*. The most significant challenge and parental concern regarding high-school yeshivas is the question of which educational institutions students will attend following the new high-school yeshivas.

In Figure 1.6 we draw a chart of Haredi high-school yeshivas by their economic status and social-cultural stream of their target population.

**Figure 1.6: Haredi high-school yeshivas
by economic status and social-cultural stream of target population**

Economic status	Social-cultural stream in Haredi society				
	Conservative	Mainstream	Modern	<i>ba'alei teshuva</i>	<i>kiruv</i>
High			Ma'arava		
Medium-high		Metivta Beth Shemesh	Hayshuv Nehora		
Medium		Hedvat Hatorah	Neharde'a		
Medium-low	Hamidrasha Hahasidit	Me'orot Hachmey Lev		Or Menachem Kfar Sitrin	Ziv Or Yedidya Yehoyada
Low				Derech Emuna Agadelcha	

Older institution **New institution**

The older yeshivas are situated in the upper-middle to upper class squares and are directed towards more modern groups in the Haredi population. The new yeshivas cover a wide range of Haredi society. Some of them are in the middle to lower-middle class squares of the mainstream and conservative streams and others are in the lower-middle to lower class squares of the *ba'alei teshuva* and *kiruv* populations. In this way the Haredi high-school yeshivas have changed from institutions directed to a fairly narrow population range to institutions that serve many varied target groups from many parts of the socioeconomic and cultural map of Israel's Haredi population.

Haredi high-school yeshivas whose development this research document is intended to encourage are those that are aimed at Haredi mainstream from the outset. Only success in recruiting a significant group of students from Haredi mainstream will make it possible for the Haredi high-school yeshiva to become a normative option in Haredi society. Therefore, the Me'orot, Metivta Beit

Shemesh, Hamidrasha Hahasidit, Hedvat Hatorah and Hachmey Lev yeshivas and others like them that will be established in the future will be the basis for creating the change and turning the Haredi high-school yeshiva into a normative track of Haredi education

Predicted growth

As can be seen from the data on students in Haredi education for boys of high school age, approximately 80% of Haredi boys in each cohort study in *yeshivot ketanot*. According to this data, we wish to estimate the future expected growth of *yeshivot ketanot*.

The number of students (boys and girls) in first grade in schools in the Ministry of Education's Haredi division in the 2015/16 school year is 29,500. Assuming that 50% of the students are boys, approximately 12,000 will therefore begin *yeshivot ketanot* in the 2023/24 school year, an increase of about 30% compared to the present number of students.

1.2.3 Other Haredi high schools

Alongside *yeshivot ketanot* and high-school yeshivas, there are other institutions for Haredi boys of high school age that operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Education's Haredi district. Below is a description of the kinds of institutions³ and their characteristics.

Hasidic yeshivas

Alongside *yeshivot ketanot*, which are defined by law as a "special cultural institution," are a number of yeshivas that are not included in this definition. In these yeshivas there are a few lessons in English and mathematics and in some of them students take matriculation exams in Talmud, although they do not take examinations for a full matriculation diploma. In the 2014/15 school year there were nineteen such yeshivas attended by 3,150 students. Most of these institutions

³ Categorizing the institutions was done with the help of Rabbi Benayahu Tevila – general inspector of the Ministry of Education's Haredi division.

belong to Chabad, and some of them to other Hasidic groups (such as Karlin and Nadvorna).

Schools for youth in the process of dropping out

In light of the high dropout rates of Haredi youth from the world of yeshivas, various schools have been established over the years for Haredi youth in the process of dropping out. These schools offer a curriculum that includes general and vocational studies with little religious studies. The majority of the students in these schools do not practice a Haredi way of life; they are exposed to Israeli society and culture and use of the Internet and technology, and they certainly do not dress according to the Haredi dress code. The schools are distinguished from one another in their target population, curriculum, rules of behavior, etc.

Most of these schools (about thirteen institutions) are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and some (about five) are under the supervision of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Most belong to the large education networks such as Ort, Amal, Atid and Amit, and some of them offer technological studies under the auspices of the Ministry of Education's Science and Technology Administration.

In the 2014/15 school year thirteen schools for Haredi youth in the process of dropping out operated under the supervision of the Ministry of Education attended by approximately 1,450 students, of whom about 1,100 are in technological education in eight schools. We do not have data on the number of students in institutions that operate under the supervision of the Ministry of the Economy.

High schools for students from national-Haredi backgrounds or those undergoing a process of becoming increasingly Haredi

There are also a number of National-Religious schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Education's Haredi district, mainly those of the National-Haredi sector as well as a number of Haredi schools aimed at graduates of state-religious schools who wish to continue their studies in Haredi yeshivas. This population does not belong to the target group of the research population. In the 2014/15 school year there were nine such schools, attended by 950 students.

1.3 Dropping out of Haredi schools at high school age

The school dropout rate of Haredi boys is worryingly high. This phenomenon, which in the past was hidden from public awareness, has become visible over the years, but its extent and its severity are not sufficiently known to most of the Haredi public or even to many people who work in the field.

The professional definition in the educational field of the term “dropping out” relates to students who began their studies at the beginning of a particular school year and at the end of that year were not in any educational framework. This definition is relevant to all students until the end of Grade 12. In Haredi society, on the other hand, the term “dropping out” relates to social dropping out. This is manifested when a young person ceases to self-identify as Haredi, changes his dress code, and is no longer punctilious about Jewish practice in the way in which he was educated in the Haredi community. The term also relates to a boy who has stopped studying in a *yeshiva gedola* in favor of work or vocational studies or, of course, a boy who does not function normatively and is drawn to the life of the streets and idleness. In Haredi discourse, the term “dropping out” relates to young men of any age until marriage. Although it is possible to identify a correlation between dropping out in the educational sense and dropping out in the social-religious sense, in this document we will deal with dropping out according to the professional definition in the education system.

The widespread assumption among professionals is that the accepted curriculum in the *yeshiva ketana*, of Torah study from morning to night and mainly Talmudic study, is a significant cause of the extent of dropping out because of the great difficulty that students, who are not necessarily suited to this challenge, face in coping with this curriculum. There are six main groups of Haredi boys at risk of dropping out of school:

- a. **Graduates of *kiruv* schools**⁴ – students from non-Haredi families who were sent to elementary Haredi education have great difficulty in coping with the demanding curriculum in the *yeshiva ketana*, which demands full dedication

⁴ For decades the Haredi community has run elementary schools (mainly those of the Hinuch Atzma'i and Ma'ayan Hahinuch Hatorani networks) for children from non-Haredi homes, in order to educate them in the path of Torah observance, and Haredi organizations invest much effort in registering children from non-Haredi homes in these schools.

to Torah study of a kind that is unfamiliar in their home and is not necessarily supported by the family.

- b. Sons of *ba'alei teshuva* families** – children of families who have chosen to join the Haredi community and return to the path of Torah observance often do not manage to adapt themselves fully to the educational, spiritual and cultural demands of Haredi schools. These boys are not necessarily at one with their parents' choice. Sometimes, they also feel a degree of alienation in the Haredi community and many of them do not last in the *yeshivot ketanot*.
- c. New immigrants** – boys whose families have migrated to Israel from Haredi communities abroad frequently have difficulty fitting in with Haredi education in Israel, which is more closed and stricter than in their countries of origin. The fact that abroad it is more acceptable to combine religious and secular studies in high school exacerbates the difficulty of these boys in adjusting to the *yeshiva ketana*.
- d. Mizrahi/Sephardi boys** – the yeshiva model in Israel has a clear Ashkenazi-Lithuanian tradition. The dropout rate of students from a Mizrahi/Sephardi background can be identified as being much higher than that of students from an Ashkenazi background.
- e. Boys from welfare families** – boys from families in which there is a difficulty in the family's functioning for different reasons may find themselves outside the yeshiva framework with greater frequency as they lack family support to cope with the demands of the curriculum and the school's character.
- f. Boys with learning disorders and behavioral problems** – these boys have difficulty meeting the high educational, spiritual and behavioral demands of *yeshivot ketanot*, and they are liable sooner or later to remain without a suitable school.

As has been noted, dropping out of school is usually accompanied by dropping out from a social, religious, and normative point of view. These young boys have difficulty taking responsibility for their life and acquiring education or a trade that will enable them to continue and succeed in their lives. The dropout rates of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) for the years 2006/07-2010/11 are presented in Table 1.8.

**Table 1.8: Dropouts from Haredi Education in Junior High School
(Grades 7–8) and Senior High School Age Groups,
by School Year, 2006/07-2010/11**

School year	No. of dropouts	Percent of all students in Haredi schools in the junior and senior high age groups
2006/07	3,002	6.2
2008/09	2,909	5.9
2010/11	1,914	3.5

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Haredi Society(in preparation)

These dropout rates are very high. The sharp decrease in the dropout rates in the 2010/11 school year is apparently related to the opening of the Ministry of Education's technological track for Haredi boys. Dozens of classes opened in this track for Haredi youth in the process of dropping out; most classes were opened by the large educational networks: Amal, Ort, Atid and Amit. Some Haredi boys who dropout find themselves in the local authorities' departments for the advancement of youth partial educational frameworks, where they study for a few hours a day for partial matriculation. We do not have data on the number of students in these frameworks.

2: Assessing the Potential for Establishing Haredi high-school yeshivas

This chapter offers an analysis of the barriers to, and opportunities for, the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas. It also looks at the demand for this kind of framework in terms of parents who might consider it: Haredi background, location and financial options. The chapter also assesses the potential role of national/local government in building and developing Haredi high-school yeshivas, and analyzes the economic model for Haredi high-school yeshiva construction and maintenance during the development and post-development period, based on governmental and philanthropic funding sources, tuition, and other sources of income.

2.1 Barriers facing Haredi high-school yeshivas

Development of the Haredi high-school yeshiva framework in Israel is currently hindered by barriers on two main levels:

- ♦ **General-Haredi level:** rabbinical and political circumstances that create ideological and political opposition to establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas:
 - **Haredi rabbis** exert ideological influence and even pressure upon the Haredi public to remain loyal to the *yeshiva ketana* model and to refrain from sending boys to Haredi high-school yeshivas
 - **Politicians** fight at the political level against public and private fundraising as well as allocation of public land for high-school yeshivas
- ♦ **Individual and family level,** within the community, manifested in the following areas:
 - **Ideological commitment to the *yeshiva ketana* model of “religious studies only” as the sole educational model suitable** to prepare Haredi youth for life as full-fledged, accepted members of Haredi society
 - **Social pressure** of various kinds, brought to bear by the community on those who send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas; the heavy social price such parents are liable to bear is meant to dissuade them from their choice

- A prevailing perception among Haredi parents that many institutions identified as Haredi high-school yeshivas are of **“low quality” in terms of student and instructional level**
- Widespread parental concern that **the failure to amass sufficient knowledge or to acquire appropriate general-studies skills at the “heder” (primary school) level** will place their sons at a disadvantage in Haredi high-school yeshivas where general studies are taught at a high level, making such institutions an unwise choice
- The **high tuition** currently charged by some of the Haredi high-school yeshivas is an obstacle for large numbers of Haredi parents who would be interested in such a framework but are unable to bear the heavy financial burden

Beyond these two planes of difficulty, yet another challenge is becoming more acute: that of **recruiting suitable teachers** for the new high-school yeshivas that have been founded in recent years, especially in secular subjects. These teachers must be familiar with Haredi society and regarded by students and especially by parents as posing no threat to Haredi way of life. This challenge also exists, to some degree, with regard to religious studies teachers. The Haredi high-school yeshivas’ target population expects a certain style of teaching that differs from the *yeshiva ketana* standard, and appropriate teachers have to be sought. The supply of such teachers in both the religious and the secular study spheres would presumably be augmented by Haredi graduates and certificate recipients of academic institutions, if measures are taken to encourage them to study relevant subjects and to seek employment in Haredi high-school yeshivas.

2.1.1 Opposition and barriers on the institutional level

Historical background

The challenge of integrating religious and general studies in the education of young Haredi males has been a matter of concern in Haredi communities of Europe and North America since the second half of the 19th century, due to their economic condition. The idea of combining religious and secular studies under one roof sparked bitter controversy within Haredi society. Among the initiators of a theoretical and practical effort to integrate the values of traditional Jewish

society with features of modern culture were German rabbis Samson Raphael Hirsch (*Torah im Derech Eretz* – Torah study combined with worldly occupation) and Azriel Hildesheimer (“*B’chol derachecha da’ehu*” – “Know Him in all your ways”), Rabbi Yitzhak-Dov Halevi Bamberger of Hungary, and Rabbi Yitzchak Yaacov Reines of Czarist Russia. Rabbi Hildesheimer, the rabbi of the Eisenstadt Jewish community (now in Austria, formerly in Hungary), founded a yeshiva framework in his city in 1851 that included secular studies as preparation for the state matriculation exams. This integrative framework survived for 18 years despite vigorous opposition from the traditional Haredi leadership.⁵ In 1883 Rabbi Reines founded a yeshiva by the name of Torah Umadda in the town of Svencionys that featured general studies in addition to religious studies, but due to harassment he closed the yeshiva four years later. In 1905 he founded another yeshiva with the same name in the city of Lida (now in Belarus). The controversy over combining religious and secular studies was one of the factors behind the historic rift between the Mizrahi and the Agudat Israel movements. The controversy extended beyond Europe to North America, where Haredi high schools were founded at a rapid pace alongside *yeshivot ketanot*.

Institutional opposition to the older Haredi high schools

The controversy regarding combined religious-secular studies erupted in Israel in 1938 when the idea was raised of establishing Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash / Yeshivat Amiel in Tel Aviv. The yeshiva was founded by Rabbi Avigdor Amiel, Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv. Although Rabbi Amiel was one of the leaders of the Mizrahi movement and an ideologue of religious Zionism, the yeshiva itself developed along Haredi lines. In its early days it was headed by Rabbi Reuven Tropp, a *talmid hakham* (distinguished Torah scholar) and quintessential product of traditional yeshiva training. Rabbi Elazer Shach was Rosh Metivta (senior teacher of religious studies) there at the start of his career in the country.⁶ The yeshiva was occasionally denounced in the Haredi press, in Israel and abroad.

Rabbinical opposition to Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash focused not only on the idea of secular studies taking place in an institution where sacred texts

⁵ Lupo, Yaakov (2007), *Haredi Opposition to Haredi high-school yeshivas*. Jerusalem: Floersheimer Institute for Policy Studies, p. 15.

⁶ Lupo, 2007:9.

are taught, but also to the use of the term “yeshiva” to describe a framework where something other than religious studies are pursued. A 1938 article entitled “The New Danger,” in *Das Vort*, the journal of *Va’ad Hayeshivot* (the Yeshiva Committee), published in Vilna, asked why the Tel Aviv institution was being called a “yeshiva”.⁷

It should be emphasized that the place chosen for the Haredi high-school yeshiva was Tel Aviv and not Jerusalem, the heart of the Old Yishuv (body of Jewish residents) in the country. Moreover, the yeshiva’s name testifies to its Haredi target population – the new Haredi Yishuv composed mainly of new Haredi immigrants that, before moving to Bnei Brak during the 1950s-1960s, were concentrated in Tel Aviv. The Jerusalem of the Old Jewish Yishuv (settlement in Hebrew) was perceived by other Haredim as a place where it was hard to establish educational institutions not aligned with the ethos of the Old Jewish Yishuv.

Yeshivot gedolot that arrived in the country during the British Mandate also found their way to places outside of Jerusalem, seeking to avoid friction with the rabbis of the Haredi Old Yishuv. Thus, in 1925, a *Yeshiva gedola* called Knesset Yisrael / Slobodka relocated to Hebron after first exploring possibilities in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Petah Tikva.⁸ During the 1920s and 1930s a number of *yeshivot gedolot* were founded outside of Jerusalem: Yeshivat Lomza in Petah Tikva, Yeshivat Novardok in Tel Aviv and Bnei Brak, Yeshivat Hechal Hatalmud and Yeshivat Volozhin in Tel Aviv.⁹ In Haifa, in 1928, a *yeshiva ketana* named Tiferet Yisrael was founded, which offered matriculation-oriented secular studies. The common thread linking all of the aforementioned institutions was their distance from the Haredi community of Jerusalem’s Old Yishuv.

For many years after Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash was founded, no one was prepared to establish Haredi high-school yeshivas due to the fear of rabbinical opposition. The next Haredi high-school yeshiva was founded in 1985. Before Yeshivat Ma’arava was established, Rabbi Baruch Chait, its founder and head, sought rabbinical permission but encountered fierce opposition. Ultimately Rabbi Chait did obtain authorization from other rabbis; some openly supported

⁷ Lupo, 2007:8-9.

⁸ Tikochinsky, 2015: 215-222.

⁹ Tikochinsky, 2015: 283.

the project while others approved it behind the scenes. Rabbi Elazar Menachem Shach, the leader of Lithuanian Haredi Jewry in Israel at the time, objected to any change or deviation from the norm for Lithuanian yeshivas, refused to give his imprimatur to Yeshivat Ma'arava, and in the newspaper *Yated Ne'eman* publicly called upon readers not to enroll there, though he did not order teachers at the yeshiva to quit their jobs, which would likely have caused the institution to close its doors.¹⁰

Rabbinic opposition to the Haredi high-school yeshiva concept was rooted in both ideology and fear its impact on the path to rabbinical leadership. Rabbis were concerned that Haredi teens who may otherwise excel in *yeshivot ketanot* and henceforth eventually reach the rabbinical leadership, would be pulled away from this path by the religious-secular educational opportunities at Haredi high-school yeshivas. Rather than continue their Torah study, rabbis worried, teens at Haredi high-schools would become *ba'alei batim* (laymen, those who do not study Torah full time). To soften the rabbinical opposition, admitted students agreed to attend a *yeshiva ketana* only when authorized to do so by a senior rabbinical figure.¹¹

As with Yeshivat Hayishuv, rabbinical opposition surfaced during the period of Yeshivat Ma'arava's establishment over the use of the term "yeshiva" for an educational institution featuring an element of secular study. To dull the edge of this criticism, official Yeshivat Ma'arava publications referred to the institution as Ma'arava Rubin Academy, thereby avoiding use of the word "yeshiva."

There appear to be two reasons why Yeshivat Ma'arava did not encounter rabbinical opposition of sufficient magnitude to close its doors. One was the composition of its student body. During the yeshiva's early years, the vast majority of its students were children of families from English-speaking countries, where the model of a high school with both religious and secular studies was widespread among the Lithuanian Haredi population and among those who had originated in Germany and central Europe. The high tuition led to a situation where most students were from families of relatively high socioeconomic standing for Haredim, with a deeply-rooted ethos of preparing young people to earn a respectable living.

Another factor was the location of Yeshivat Ma'arava. The yeshiva was founded in Moshav Matityahu, far from the large concentrations of Haredim. The

¹⁰ Lupo, 2007: 27.

¹¹ Lupo, 2007: 27.

village of Matityahu itself was founded in 1981 by Haredi-Zionist immigrants from the United States, who arrived as a community with the aim of establishing a new settlement. The village of Matityahu and Yeshivat Ma'arava were founded before the Haredi town of Kiryat Sefer, later known as Modi'in Illit, was established in 1996. It is likely that, had Modi'in Illit preceded Matityahu, the founding of Yeshivat Ma'arava next to the Haredi town would have met with vehement opposition, and that the yeshiva would not have been able to occupy its current premises.

Rabbinical opposition also came to the fore with regard to the Haredi high-school yeshiva Nehora, founded in 1995 by Rabbi Avraham-Yitzchak Greenbaum. At first the yeshiva was located in Mevasseret Zion, adjacent to Jerusalem. Due to harsh opposition on the part of Haredi rabbis, the yeshiva closed for a brief period immediately after its establishment, reopening shortly afterward in Mevo Horon, a religious settlement in the Ayalon Valley, east of the "Green Line" and southeast of what would eventually become the city of Modi'in. Mevasseret Zion's proximity to Jerusalem's large Haredi community appears to have been the source of the bitter rabbinical opposition; Rabbi Greenbaum sought another site, farther from Jerusalem and not identified as a major Haredi center.

A study by Yaakov Lupo states that, despite the harsh criticism to which Yeshivat Nehora was subjected in its early days, and especially during Rabbi Shach's tenure, Rabbi Greenbaum nevertheless did obtain behind-the-scenes support for his educational venture.¹² The fact that public attacks on the yeshiva ceased proves that Haredi rabbis accepted the necessity of the study track it offered. Rabbi Greenbaum, in an interview with Lupo, maintained that the yeshiva under his direction complies with the rulings of major Torah scholars and constitutes no radical departure. Rabbi Greenbaum also stated that Haredi society would lose many of its students – "*hutznikim*" (immigrants) and others who have trouble with the "only religious studies" approach – if the additional study track that he was offering did not exist. He further noted in the interview that Yeshivat Nehora does not compete with the *yeshivot ketanot* or accept students from those institutions without authorization from the heads of the relevant *yeshivot ketanot*.

Early on, in order to defuse rabbinical objection, Yeshivat Nehora appears to have targeted the religious Zionist (especially the "Haredi Zionist") public as

¹² Lupo 2007: 26.

well as the Haredi public. Over the years, however, it became a primarily Haredi yeshiva. Moreover, as with Yeshivat Ma'arava, Yeshivat Nehora's reliance on the sons of English-speaking immigrants is a way of ensuring demand for a yeshiva that combines religious studies with secular studies leading to a matriculation certificate, while also minimizing rabbinical opposition. The rabbinical leadership seeks to protect the Haredi mainstream from the Israeli "melting pot" by containing them within the *yeshiva katana* framework absent of secular studies; the leadership does not consider the sons of immigrants to be part of this Haredi core group, and therefore is less vocal in its opposition to Yeshivat Nehora.

The founding seed of the **Neharde'ah** Haredi high-school yeshiva began operating during the 2002-2003 school year, on the premises of the Yad Binyamin education center established by the Haredi Poalei Agudat Israel (PAI) movement, in cooperation with the Nahal Sorek Regional Council, a local authority composed of religious-Haredi localities situated between the towns of Gedera and Kiryat Malachi. At the time of its founding, Yeshivat Neharde'ah was headed by Rabbi Raphael Frank, who recruited students from Haredi schools across the country.¹³ The Haredi leadership, headed by Rabbi Aharon-Leib Steinman, instructed Rabbi Frank to cease his activity in this sphere,¹⁴ but Rabbi Frank disregarded the directive and proceeded to establish the kernel of the Haredi high-school yeshiva in Yad Binyamin.¹⁵ The yeshiva continued to draw the ire of the more conservative Haredi circles but, according to Rabbi Frank, an attack in the *Yated Ne'eman* newspaper brought him increased publicity followed by numerous inquiries from parents.¹⁶

Yeshivat Neharde'ah's ability to withstand rabbinical opposition was rooted in the composition of the demand for student spots and its location. Most of the students who enrolled in it were the sons of Haredi immigrants, mainly from the United States, who were *ba'alei batim*, academic degree holders and professionals. The yeshiva's first home in Yad Binyamin, on the premises of PAI, provided a heterogeneous setting for the institution's early years. After two years the yeshiva moved to Ramot Shapira on the grounds of the religious moshav Beit Meir, in the Jerusalem corridor. Later it moved again, to Moshav Nehalim, a religious moshav

¹³ Lupo, 2007: 28.

¹⁴ *Yated Ne'eman*, August 13, 2003.

¹⁵ Lupo, 2007: 8.

¹⁶ Lupo, 2007:28.

near Petah Tikva. The yeshiva's most recent relocation occurred in 2014, when it moved to Kiryat Yismach Moshe in the town of Ganei Tikva, just north of the city of Kiryat Ono. This Hasidic quarter was founded during the 1960s by the Sassover Rebbe, Chananya Yom Tov Teitelbaum, who reversed his decision to seek a Bnei Brak location due to personal opposition to him for being a "Zionist rebbe." Kiryat Yismach Moshe would ultimately become home to a Haredi high-school yeshiva.

Location was also a factor in the struggle against rabbinical opposition to **Metivta Beit Shemesh**, a Haredi high-school yeshiva founded in 2010. The institution's initiative encountered harsh rabbinical resistance. The Lithuanian rabbinical elite, headed by Rabbi Yosef Shalom Eliashiv and Rabbi Aharon Leib Steinman, signed a "da'at Torah" manifest in April 2010 on page 1 of the Haredi *Yated Ne'eman* newspaper, stating:

*We wish to address rumors of a radical innovation, the founding of a high-school yeshiva in Beit Shemesh. Heaven forbid that anyone provide support for the endeavor or in even the smallest way undermine the framework or the standing of the holy yeshivot; our sons' success lies solely in devotion to Torah and fear of Heaven, with no admixture of alien elements. Fathers may not send their sons to institutions of this kind, but only to holy yeshivas; then they will be rewarded with much happiness and the success of their sons.*¹⁷

It should be noted that eight years earlier a Haredi high-school yeshiva, **Me'orot**, had been founded in Beit Shemesh without generating the kind of opposition aroused by Metivta Beit Shemesh. The deep animosity elicited by the city's second high-school yeshiva appears to have had two causes, both political. The first was the involvement of a political party, Tov, which itself had recently been founded and several of whose members were connected with the Metivta Beit Shemesh initiative. The second was the election of a member of the Shas political party as mayor of Beit Shemesh.

At first the institution's opponents strove to prevent the opening of Metivta Beit Shemesh. Failing that, they pressured the institution's founders not to establish it in the Ramat Beit Shemesh neighborhood, where the city's Haredi population was concentrated. The yeshiva's founders rented a house in a Moshav Zano'ah

¹⁷ Yair Ettinger, *Haaretz*, October 28, 2010.

bordering Beit Shemesh, but kept the name Metivta Beit Shemesh.¹⁸ After much effort, a home for the yeshiva was found in the old part of Beit Shemesh, avoiding the new section of Ramat Beit Shemesh with its large Haredi concentration.

The idea of establishing a Haredi high-school yeshiva in an area where large numbers of Haredim reside still seems to generate very strong resistance on the part of the Haredi religious and political leadership, and is not something that can be accomplished within a short time frame. Those who found such institutions must still be prepared to house them outside of large Haredi residential concentrations.

Institutional opposition to the newer Haredi high-school yeshivas

Location was also found to be a factor in rabbinical opposition to Yeshivat Hachmey Lev in Jerusalem. Since that institution opened its doors in 2013, it has been housed in a small building in the yard of the secular Boyer School, owned and managed by the Society for the Advancement of Education. The Society admitted the yeshiva to its longstanding network of non-Haredi educational institutions. But the yeshiva's student numbers increased each year as additional classes were opened, making it necessary to seek another site in Jerusalem where the institution could be expanded. The municipality at first allocated land in the Ramot Alon neighborhood, in the northern part of the city, where Haredim had begun to settle in recent years in large numbers. However, local Haredi groups and the local Haredi leadership, including members of Haredi political parties in Jerusalem, vehemently objected to allocating a site for Yeshivat Hachmey Lev in this Haredi part of town. An alternative site proposed by the municipality, to the east of the Ramat Eshkol neighborhood which in the preceding years had become a Haredi-majority area, was rejected as well due to Haredi resistance.

Location was also a major factor in the search for a home for Yeshivat Hedvat Hatorah. Haredi leadership, as expected, rejected a proposal that the yeshiva be located in a Haredi area in north Jerusalem with a high Haredi population concentration. But when, during the search process, it was proposed that the yeshiva be housed in a non-Haredi neighborhood in the southern part of the city, the Ginot Ha'ir community council objected. In their search for a Jerusalem location, the yeshiva's founders were caught between Haredi and non-Haredi

¹⁸ Yair Ettinger, *Haaretz*, October 28, 2010.

opposition. The first real solution to emerge was a site on Hanevi'im Street, on a commercial strip located between a Haredi residential compound to the north and a non-Haredi compound to the south. When the location became too small, the municipality helped the yeshiva find temporary accommodations, once again in non-residential "neutral" territory – the commercial area of Giv'at Shaul.

In an interview with one of the leaders of Yeshivat Hedvat Hatorah it emerged that there was no active rabbinical opposition to the fact of the yeshiva's establishment. Although the rabbis were concerned by the deviation from the standard yeshiva framework, the interviewed founder noted that: "We reached an understanding with them that we would not hurt the *yeshivot ketanot* or take students who were supposed to go to them. Ultimately we operate in coordination with the institutions."¹⁹ Allaying the rabbinical leadership's fears that the yeshiva would actively recruit those suited to the *yeshiva ketana* framework is a means that has been employed by several heads of Haredi high-school yeshivas, who occasionally affirm that the preferred Haredi educational track is indeed that of the *yeshiva ketana*.

There was also serious objection to establishment of the Midrasha Hasidit in Betar Illit in 2014, the first such institution to focus on the Hasidic public. To placate the opposition, the yeshiva's founder instead called it a "midrasha," so as not to challenge the *yeshiva ketana* framework so dear to the Haredi leadership and to many of the Haredi public. This tactic is also reflected in the institution's English name – "Torah Academy."

Means of contending with institutional opposition

Thus, there appear to be several means by which the heads of Haredi high-school yeshivas cope with opposition to their institutions' existence and activity. In general, these yeshiva heads operate under the assumption that, despite the declared and active opposition they encounter, there is nevertheless an unspoken acknowledgement on the part of the Haredi leadership that it cannot do away with Haredi high-school yeshivas; the leadership acquiesces to their operation, albeit with restrictions. Haredi high-school yeshivas are allowed to pursue their objectives under several restrictive conditions:

¹⁹ *Survey of the Heads of Haredi high-school yeshivas*, Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2016.

- ◆ **Location outside of major Haredi population concentrations.** Most Haredi high-school yeshivas in Israel have not been established in Jerusalem or Bnei Brak – the two largest Haredi population concentrations, where Haredim carry great political weight in the local authorities. Only Yeshivat Hachmey Lev and Yeshivat Hedvat Hatorah are located in Jerusalem. Except for the Midrasha Hasidit in Betar Illit, the other institutions are situated in localities that are not Haredi, or are Haredi but not associated with the Haredi mainstream. At this stage of our research, it appears that Haredi high-school yeshivas will continue to be established in local authorities where Haredi political parties have no influence. In these areas, especially ones that already have resident Haredi populations, allocation of public land to Haredi high-school yeshivas may be decided on as a means of ensuring that any further Haredi influx will consist of Haredim who are willing to send their sons to frameworks that prepare their students for post-secondary study and remunerative employment.

- ◆ **Declared focus on the margins of Haredi society.** A significant number of high-school yeshiva heads state that their target population is not students who have a *yeshiva ketana* orientation, but rather the sons of “modern” Haredim, *ba’alei teshuva*, immigrants from Western countries and from the Former Soviet Union, and boys from mainstream Haredi families who have dropped out or are likely to drop out of *yeshivot ketanot* and are in danger of leaving Haredi society. This declared focus helps moderate Haredi leadership’s active opposition. Several yeshiva heads stated in interviews that they coordinate their student recruitment efforts with distinguished rabbis. Some even said that they ask candidates for admission to provide a rabbi’s endorsement of their decision to apply.

- ◆ **Be called something other than “yeshiva.”** Due to the Haredi leadership’s opposition to the use of the term “yeshiva” for Haredi educational institutions where religious and secular studies take place under the same roof, some of the newer institutions call themselves by alternative names, such as “midrasha,” “institute,” and the like.

2.1.2 Barriers on the individual and family level

On this level there is an array of barriers that work to keep Haredi parents from sending their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas. We have chosen to discuss below some of the more prominent barriers: widespread ideological commitment among Haredi parents to the *yeshiva ketana* model; social pressure on parents who send or plan to send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas; a prevailing perception among Haredi parents that many of the Haredi high-school yeshivas are of “low quality” in terms of both religious and secular instruction; the perception that those who attend Haredi high-school yeshivas have a “low” level of adherence to Haredi lifestyle norms; high tuition; and widespread fear among parents that their sons will be at a disadvantage in the high-school yeshiva setting due to knowledge gaps that emerged during their primary school years in the traditional Talmud Torah setting.

Ideological commitment to the *yeshiva ketana* model

The *yeshiva ketana* was for many years the incubator in which teenage Haredi males were prepared for life as full-fledged and legitimate members of Haredi society. The *yeshiva ketana* ideal is one of full-time Torah learning and meticulous adherence to Haredi lifestyle norms in a framework that insulates the student from the threatening world outside. General-scientific studies are considered “dangerous,” and are avoided to protect the young Haredi person from alien influences liable to divert him from the straight and narrow Haredi path. This ideological commitment to the hallowed *yeshiva ketana* model is still very common within the Haredi public, and, for the time-being, keeps many Haredi parents from even entertaining the possibility of sending their sons to a different kind of Haredi educational institution that offers both religious and secular studies.

The *yeshiva ketana*’s dominance in Haredi high school aged boys’ education testifies to this model’s hold over the vast majority of Haredim. In addition to the ideological barrier, there are other obstacles to parents’ willingness to stray from the *yeshiva ketana* model. If these additional barriers are removed, Haredi parents’ commitment to the traditional model of the *yeshiva ketana* may weaken.

Social pressure on parents

No simple or systematic way was found of estimating the impact of social pressure on Haredi parents who express interest in sending their sons to high-school yeshivas. However, such pressure does exist and is exerted through a variety of means.

One type of social pressure is exerted from within the family, when a familial authority figure committed to the *yeshiva ketana* model dissuades parents from choosing high-school yeshivas for their sons by creating strong ideological and religious argument following Torah scholars.

Another type of pressure has to do with social status. Haredim fear that they will pay a social price if a family member chooses to study at a high-school yeshiva. Indeed, there are reports of relatives of high-school yeshiva students being dismissed from traditional Haredi institutions. This potential sanction deters many Haredi parents from sending their son to Haredi high-school yeshivas, despite being convinced that this educational framework would be good for the child in question. There is no way of knowing how much influence should be attributed to the fear of a family's other children being ejected from sought-after Haredi educational frameworks, but, on the basis of some anecdotal information, one may assume that the sanction is relatively widespread.

Yet another form of social pressure is brought to bear in the form of synagogue community participation. A father who sends his son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva risks ostracism by the congregation whose prayer services he regularly attends.

Perception that the high-school yeshivas are institutions of “low” quality.

The term “Haredi high-school yeshiva” is not unambiguous. It encompasses a large number of educational institutions that serve students who have “dropped out” of *yeshivot ketanot* or whose parents are on the margins of Haredi society. Some of these institutions are *kiruv* (“outreach”) institutions, aimed at attracting teens from non-Haredi families to the Haredi way of life, however tenuously. The existence of such “drop-out” and *kiruv* institutions contributes to the low-quality image that often adheres to the Haredi high-school yeshivas generally. We can identify several different types of perceived inferior quality:

Perceived “low” quality of religious studies instruction compared with the high quality of *yeshiva ketana* teaching. Haredi parents who wish to give their sons the opportunity to study secular subjects as preparation for matriculation exams are equally interested in ensuring that their sons receive high-quality instruction in religious subjects, to ensure the boys’ future social status within Haredi society. The highest test of quality instruction is that of the Haredi high-school *yeshiva* graduate’s ability to gain admission to a respected *yeshiva gedola*, and to succeed there.

Perceived “low” quality of instruction in secular subjects. Here as well, the large number of Haredi high schools that are intended for specific populations and that are less competitive academically creates a negative image that deters parents who want their sons to engage in high level study.

“Low” level of adherence to Haredi way of life. Haredi parents want above all else to ensure that their sons remain within the Haredi fold. Here as well, the wide variety of Haredi high school frameworks and the sheer novelty of introducing general studies into the curriculum raise concerns among Haredi parents that their sons’ future Haredi way of life might not be assured.

Perceived “low” quality of students. The four areas of perceived low quality noted above are linked to yet another such area – the quality of students who study in the various forms of Haredi high-schools. Haredi parents certainly do not intend to send their children to educational institutions frequented by students of “lower” quality than those who attend prestigious *yeshivot ketanot*. Prevailing assumptions regarding the “low” quality of the Haredi high-school *yeshivas* challenge the academically-oriented schools in this category to distinguish themselves from the rest.

Concerns regarding knowledge gaps and unpreparedness due to primary school years spend in Talmud Torah settings (without a core curriculum). Haredi parents who might potentially be interested in Haredi high-school *yeshivas* fear that they would be sending their sons on an impossible mission of catch-up; the early Talmud Torah education does not sufficiently prepare students for general studies oriented towards matriculation exams. These parents might prefer to spare their sons this difficulty and refrain from sending them to Haredi high-school *yeshivas*.

Unaffordable tuition costs

The average monthly tuition in *yeshivot ketanot* is NIS 1,000. According to a survey conducted by *Ynet* in 2013 (Farkash, August 18, 2013), the tuition charged by established high-school yeshivas ranges from NIS 1,650 to NIS 2,900 per month. The high number of weekly instructional hours (65 on average), dictated by the need to teach both religious and general studies and the consequent necessity of long school days, is the main reason for the high tuition. Over the years, large numbers of parents have refrained from sending their sons to these expensive institutions, meaning that the student population of the Haredi high-school yeshivas has been limited to the sons of affluent families. The high tuition has constituted a means of socioeconomic screening and acted as a barrier to demand on the part of middle- and lower-middle class families interested in a framework that combines religious and general studies. However, the picture is different for Haredi high-school yeshivas that have been established over the past few years, as indicated by a survey of yeshiva heads conducted in the context of this study; tuition at these institutions ranges from NIS 800 to NIS 1,500 per month. This is close to the average tuition at *yeshivot ketanot* and constitutes a step toward partially lowering the financial barrier faced by Haredi parents. The heads of the newer high-school yeshivas understand that high tuition is a major obstacle to enrollment and have accordingly lowered their fees to the level of the traditional institutions, turning instead to other funding sources such as the Ministry of Education, NGOs, and philanthropists.

2.2 Potential demand for Haredi high-school yeshivas

The growth in institutions and enrollment numbers as described in Chapter 1 points to increased demand for Haredi high-school yeshivas, including those oriented toward higher education. The task of the present chapter is to assess potential demand levels over the coming years. The assessment was conducted via the following means:

1. In-depth interviews with a significant number of Haredi high-school yeshiva heads;
2. A survey designed to provide a tentative indication of the demand for Haredi high-school yeshivas, via an online questionnaire. The survey revealed,

provisionally, an actual or potential willingness among 400 Haredi respondents to send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas.

2.2.1 Demand characteristics, based on interviews with the heads of Haredi high-school yeshivas

In-depth interviews were conducted with eight heads of Haredi high-school yeshivas that combine religious study with matriculation-oriented general studies. These interviews provided information and insights regarding the nature of the demand for Haredi high-school yeshivas. The heads of the Ma'arava and Neharde'ah yeshivas did not consent to be interviewed, and the head of Yeshivat Hayishuv Hahadash could not be reached.

One indication of the level of demand for Haredi high-school yeshivas is the estimated percentage of those admitted to the institutions in recent years, out of the entire applicant pool. We do not have data on the number of those seeking admission to these yeshivas. However, the yeshiva heads interviewed reported that the percentage of applicants admitted is around 40%. Moreover, as we showed above, the number of students in the relevant institutions grew by a factor of 2.4 over the past decade. Based on interviewee-reported student enrollment numbers, as well as the data on the increase that has already taken place, further significant increases may be expected in the future, assuming that the barriers discussed above are handled effectively.

Regarding student background, the yeshiva heads reported that the decisive majority of the fathers are working people. One statistic that is worth noting, however, is that 20% of the students at all of the institutions that participated in the survey are the sons of *avrechim* – full-time Torah scholars. This means that a fair number of mainstream Haredi parents send sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas that do not yet enjoy full legitimacy within the Haredi mainstream and are opposed by the rabbinic leadership. Interestingly, a particularly high percentage (35%) of the students studying at the Medrasha Hasidit in Betar Illit are the sons of *avrechim*.

On another student-background parameter deals with the percentage of students coming from *ba'al teshuva* families. On average, 16% of students are

the relevant institutions fit this category, with the exception of Derech Emuna, Yedidya and Yehoyada yeshivas, which target this specific population and have much higher percentages of students from such families.

Two Haredi high-school yeshiva sectors

When looking at the interviews and the data, we can discern two groups of Haredi high-school yeshivas. One targets “Haredim from birth” while the other is oriented towards *ba'al teshuva* families. Regarding the potential demand for each type of yeshiva, it is worth quoting Rabbi Avraham-Yitzchak Greenbaum, head of Yeshivat Nehora: “Those who think that there is going to be a critical mass are sadly mistaken. There will not be, period. There will be a process, another yeshiva will be founded, and yet another, but the mainstream *heder* will never send half of its students to a Haredi high-school yeshiva.” By contrast, Rabbi Greenbaum sees significant potential demand in a different Haredi sector:

Yeshivas oriented toward the ba'al teshuva world will flourish. Ba'alei teshuva constitute 27 percent of the entire Haredi population; the yeshivot ketanot do not address their needs. They [ba'alei teshuva] are simply not suited to it... They cannot spend all day learning in a yeshiva ketana... Institutions for ba'alei teshuva will pop up everywhere. For this there is huge demand.

Rabbi Oren Granit, head of Yeshivat Me'orot in Beit Shemesh which mainly targets the sons of immigrants from English-speaking countries, commented on the issue of potential demand as follows:

This idea is favored by many families who see it as a crucial framework.

But he does not anticipate a large increase in demand over time:

This place [Yeshivat Me'orot] is big, but one cannot generalize from that. I do hear that about other places [Haredi high-school yeshivas] but I'm not convinced that the places being established indicate a large population; there may be some growth... but I see no extraordinary upsurge.

Other yeshiva heads share Rabbi Greenbaum's opinion regarding the potential for increased numbers of Haredi high-school yeshivas. In their view, these larger

numbers of Haredi high-school yeshivas will serve specific sectors only: sons of modern Haredim coming from Western countries, sons of *kiruv* (outreach) families, sons of *ba'al teshuva* families, and mainstream Haredi teens who do not wish to study in *yeshivot ketanot*. According to these yeshiva heads, the anticipated demand increase from within the Haredi mainstream is not significant. Some rabbis have made a point of noting that the yeshivas they head are not intended for students qualified for *yeshiva ketana* study, and that anyone who is so qualified should attend a *yeshiva ketana*. Yet, one of the Haredi high-school yeshiva heads stated that there is indeed a trend towards the high-school yeshiva, and that these institutions will occupy a “respectable niche” even if the *yeshivot ketanot* remain the mainstream option.

These remarks by the yeshiva heads interviewed also appear to reflect their desire to avoid representing Haredi high-school yeshivas as direct competitors of the *yeshivot ketanot*, so as to deflect active opposition on the part of rabbinical leadership.

Demand in terms of student ethnic composition

Based on interviews with the yeshiva heads, it appears that those Haredi high-school yeshivas targeting non-mainstream populations have high percentages of Mizrahim (Jews of Middle Eastern origin). By contrast, yeshivas targeting Haredi mainstream are attended mainly by Ashkenazim. Moreover, the Hasidic representation in the existing Haredi high-school yeshivas, oriented toward Lithuanian and Mizrahi/Sephardic population groups, is quite limited, though it does exist in some places (Nehora and Hedvat Hatorah). Still, the initial success of the Midrasha Hasidit in Betar Illit, which targets the Hasidic public first and foremost, may indicate the efficacy of supply-driven demand within the Haredi sector as a whole: the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas intended mainly for Hasidic students could potentially spur increased demand among this population group.

Student place of residence

According to the yeshiva head interviews, Haredi high-school yeshivas tend to serve their local and regional markets. Students generally come from the area in which the yeshiva is located. This indicates that the planning of a high-school

yeshiva in a given area should take into account the particularly local potential demand. Similarly to the establishment of particular institutions, such as yeshivas specifically for Hasidim, the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas requires a deep understanding of the local communities and adaptation accordingly.

2.2.2 Online survey to identify potential demand

The survey was conducted by JIIS researchers in late April-early May 2016, by means of a digital questionnaire that was prepared especially for this study and posted on the *B'Hadrei Haredim* website and other Internet-based discussion groups. The sample is not representative. Respondents were self-selected and belong to the subgroup of Haredim who use the Internet, many of whom may, by definition, be willing to give their sons the opportunity to study general subjects. But despite the lack of statistical representativeness with regard to all Haredi subsectors, the survey made it possible to identify a large number of Internet-using Haredim who wish to send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas. Data on respondent characteristics were gathered via the survey as well.

The questionnaire

The online questionnaire contained questions relating to several different spheres:

- ◆ Demographic, gender, employment, cultural, educational and geographic (locality of residence) characteristics of the respondents;
- ◆ Reasons for willingness to send a son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva;
- ◆ Degree of familiarity with the concept of the Haredi high-school yeshiva, via students in the extended family, sons of neighbors or friends of sons;
- ◆ Maximum tuition that would be affordable for the respondent.

The entire questionnaire is available in Appendix A.

The study group

The questionnaire was filled out by 433 people during the ten days in which it was posted on the Internet; the vast majority of questions were answered. The key

question was: “When the time comes, will you be willing to send all of your sons to study in a Haredi high-school yeshiva?” The respondents had three choices – “Yes,” “Maybe,” and “No.” The question was answered by 421 respondents; 12 respondents did not respond. Of the 421 who answered the question, 350 (83%) said “Yes,” 44 (10%) said “Maybe,” and 27 (6%) said “No.” (Table 2.1). The fact that the first two groups (“Yes” and “Maybe”) amounted to 394 respondents (93%) may be taken as an indication that the high-school yeshiva framework is a potential option for a significant number of Haredi-Israeli Internet users, especially those who visit the *B’Hadrei Haredim* website. These “Yes” and “Maybe” respondents were designated as the study’s research group and their responses were subjected to detailed analysis.

It should be noted that, of those actually or potentially willing to send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas, 69% had a son up to age 12, meaning that the issue of where their son would be studying was of immediate relevance to them. By contrast, 31% of those actually or possibly willing to send their children to high-school yeshivas did not have a son aged 12 or under, but could be considered to be future patrons of such yeshivas.

Table 2.1: Respondents to the Question of Willingness to Send a Son to a High-school yeshiva by Type of Answer

Type of answer	Number	Percent
Yes	350	83.1
Maybe	44	10.5
No	27	6.4
Total respondents	421	100.0
Did not respond	12	

Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

Demand motivators – reasons for sending a son to a high-school yeshiva

We wanted to map the reasons that guide those who are actually or potentially willing to send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas. The online questionnaire

included a question designed to identify these reasons. We provided two response choices: “To prepare the son for an honorable *parnasa* (earnings)” and “Son’s wish.” We also offered a third option: “Other reason,” enabling respondents to answer in detail. The response distribution is presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Respondents Actually or Potentially Willing to Send a Son to a Haredi High-School Yeshiva, by Reason

Reason	Number	Percent
Parnasa (earnings)	277	72.3
Son’s wish	21	5.5
Other reason	85	22.2
Total respondents	383	100.0
Did not respond to this question	11	
Total responding “Yes” or “Maybe”	394	

Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

The “Livelihood” reason (the Hebrew word for earnings, “*parnassa*,” comes up frequently in Haredi conversations) was chosen by 72.3% of the respondents to this question who were actually or potentially willing to send a son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva. This economic factor is the decisive one – a fact that will undoubtedly please policymakers in the government and the Knesset who wish to expand Haredi participation in paid employment. By contrast, the percentage of respondents who referred to their sons’ wishes as the reason for their willingness is very small, indicating that the motivation for high-school yeshiva enrollment comes mainly from parents who view this option as one likely to ensure a better financial future for their sons.

The “Other” category, chosen by 85 respondents (22.2%), sheds light on the overall outlook that informs the choice to send one’s son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva. In addition to the offered responses – earnings (*parnasa*) and son’s personal preference – respondents noted ideological and educational reasons for potentially choosing the high-school yeshiva. These reasons are grouped in Table 2.3 by main topics: religious outlook (“*hashkafa*”), ensuring a complete education

for the son in all areas, letting the son choose for himself, accommodating the son's learning style, and developing the son's abilities.

Regarding the issue of accommodating the son's learning style and developing his abilities, it is worth quoting at length one respondent who seems to express concerns faced by many Haredi parents: "An intensive yeshiva environment where only Talmud and *Musar* (ethical and moral topics) are studied does not suit my son intellectually. He needs additional challenges in order to be motivated to study. Besides this, I'm of course interested in expanding [my son's] horizons and fostering [his] academic ability and the ability to earn a living from an early age."

Although the "Other" category accounts for only a small share of respondents who are actually or potentially willing to send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas, the group's responses nevertheless indicate, if only tentatively, that the willingness is rooted not only in completely utilitarian concerns (ensuring future livelihood), but also in a philosophical/religious outlook that views the existence of a Haredi high-school yeshiva framework combining religious and secular study as vitally important.

Table 2.3: Other Reasons for Willingness to Send Sons to a Haredi High-School Yeshiva

<p>Religious outlook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maimonides' reconciliation of Torah and science ✓ The Work of Creation is also to be learned via Torah study ✓ <i>Yafe Talmud Torah im Derech Eretz</i> – “The study of Torah is praiseworthy if combined with worldly occupation (i.e. – work).” ✓ Belief in combining Torah with worldly occupations ✓ Outlook, way of life ✓ Beyond livelihood, it's a matter of outlook and way of life ✓ Instill understanding, wisdom <p>Giving the son a complete education in all areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Both to prepare the son to earn a livelihood, and – perhaps more importantly – to ensure that he has a more general education and broader knowledge so that he serves God in a more complete, perfect manner ✓ To equip the son with a broader array of skills for the future ✓ Comprehensive knowledge ✓ To ensure that the son is well-educated in areas other than Torah ✓ I'm in favor of combining Torah with work and with general studies ✓ Ability to understand the world and to study Torah at a high level ✓ Broadening horizons in Torah study and other areas of knowledge 	<p>Letting the son choose for himself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enabling him to go where he wants to go later in life ✓ Understanding that in life you [have to] give the opportunity to choose, and that when you do something it's out of desire, and then everything looks different; a heavy conscience or coercion cannot motivate a child to want something that he doesn't want <p>Accommodating the son's learning style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Chanoch lana'ar al pi darko</i> – “Educate a child according to his way” ✓ Let him study in the place that best suits him ✓ Son's individual need ✓ Broadening horizons, self-awareness, self-actualization <p>Developing the son's abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Put his capabilities to use ✓ Develop skills, abilities and independence ✓ Intellectual openness and life skills ✓ Developing abilities and broadening horizons ✓ A serious educational framework contributes to development and enriches the child.
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Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

Characteristics of respondents who were actually or potentially willing to send sons to a Haredi high-school yeshiva

This section presents data on the characteristics of respondents to the Internet survey who stated that they are or might be willing to send a son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva. The most notable characteristics are the parents' relatively young age, the fact that a decisive majority work for a living (*ba'alei batim* in Haredi terms), and the fact that many of them are graduates of Lithuanian yeshivas and are, for the most part, Ashkenazi-Lithuanian.

Family status: The vast majority (89%) of the respondents actually or possibly willing to send their son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva are married or were married in the past (divorced or widowed). However, young single people (11%) also expressed willingness to send their future sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas. Young singles who expressed such willingness are in the group of respondents who have no children up to age 12 (31%) and are actually or potentially willing to send sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas – a future pool of demand. 74% of the respondents are men, while only 26% are women.

Age: most (65%) of the respondents who indicated willingness or potential willingness to send sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas are young adults under the age of 35 (Table 2.4). Of these, 11.5% are in the 18-24 age group. This phenomenon thus appears to be prevalent mainly among younger people.

Table 2.4: Respondents Actually or Potentially Willing to Send a Son to a Haredi High-School Yeshiva, by Age Group

Age group	Number	Percent
18-24	45	11.5
25-34	215	55.0
35+	131	35.0
Total respondents to the age question	391	100.0
Did not respond to the age question	3	
Total responding 'Yes' or 'Maybe'	394	

Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

Occupation: The vast majority (85.6%) of respondents actually or possibly willing to send sons to a Haredi high-school yeshiva work for a living, full-time (Table 2.5). It would indeed be expected that demand for Haredi high-school yeshivas would come from Haredim who work. Of special interest, however, is the percentage of *avrechim* (6.4%) who are actually or potentially willing to send their sons to a high-school yeshiva, as well as the percentage of those who work half a day and learn in *kollel* (Torah-study institution for married men that pays a stipend) half a day (8%). The latter respondents represent the core of Haredi society who are committed to the ideal of full-day or part-day Torah study, yet they also constitute a sixth of those who are actually or potentially willing to send sons to educational frameworks that combine religious and general studies.

Table 2.5: Respondents Actually or Potentially Willing to Send a Son to a Haredi High-School Yeshiva, by Father’s Occupation

Father’s occupation	Number	Percent
Employed	319	85.6
Works half a day and learns in kollel half a day	30	8.0
Full-day kollel <i>avrech</i>	24	6.4
Total respondents to the occupation question	373	100.0
Did not respond to the occupation question	21	
Total responding ‘Yes’ or ‘Maybe’	394	

Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

Ethnic affiliation: The ethnic affiliation question was an open one, and the answers reflect respondent self-definitions. The majority (74.5%) of those actually or possibly willing to send sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas defined themselves in one way or another as Ashkenazim (Table 2.6). Of these, most defined themselves as Ashkenazim without noting the specific cultural stream or subgroup to which they belong. Of those who did note a specific subgroup, Lithuanians outnumbered Hasidim. This statistic is likely connected to the fact that Lithuanians also outnumber Hasidim among Haredim who pursue higher education.

Table 2.6: Respondents Actually or Potentially Willing to Send a Son to a Haredi High-School Yeshiva, by Self-Reported Ethnic Affiliation

Ethnic affiliation	Number	Percent
Ashkenazi, no specific subgroup noted	154	44.2
Lithuanian	77	22.3
Hasidic	28	22.3
Ashkenazi – interim total	259	74.5
Mizrahi/Sephardi	59	16.9
Mixed	15	4.3
Undefined	15	4.3
Total respondents to the ethnicity question	348	100.0
Respondents who did not respond to the ethnicity question	46	
Total responding ‘Yes’ or ‘Maybe’	394	

Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

Type of *yeshiva gevoha* (high, i.e., post-secondary yeshiva): The male respondents were asked about the type of yeshiva in which they had studied or were studying. 72.0% of the respondents stated that they had studied at a Lithuanian *yeshiva gevoha* (Table 2.7). This finding indicates that Lithuanian *yeshiva gevoha* graduates are the main source of Haredim who are actually or potentially willing to send sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas. The figure is higher than the one in Table 2.7 below that breaks down the ethnic affiliation of those actually or potentially willing to send sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas, in which the total share of Ashkenazim is only 64.5%. This disparity appears to reflect the presence of Mizrahim/Sephardim who studied at Lithuanian yeshivas.

Table 2.7: Respondents Actually or Potentially Willing to Send Sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas, by Type of *Yeshiva Gevoha* in which Male Respondents Studied

Type of <i>yeshiva gevoha</i> in which the male respondent studied	Number	Percent
Lithuanian yeshiva	277	72.0
Hasidic yeshiva	55	14.3
Sephardic yeshiva	17	4.4
Other type of yeshiva	15	3.9
Yeshiva for <i>ba'alei teshuva</i>	3	0.8
<i>Yeshivot gevohot</i> – interim total	367	95.4
High school	9	2.3
Did not study	9	2.3
Total respondents to the <i>yeshiva gevoha</i> question	385	100.0
Did not answer the <i>yeshiva gevoha</i> question	9	
Total responding ‘Yes’ or ‘Maybe’	394	

Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

The overall picture is one in which most of the demand for Haredi high-school yeshivas originates in Lithuanian Haredim. The Lithuanian tradition of erudition in religious studies is also reflected in a drive for excellence in general studies. This tradition has been transmitted over the past few decades to Mizrachi/Sephardi Haredim who have studied in Lithuanian *yeshivot gedolot*. If large numbers of Lithuanian Haredim come to accept the Haredi high-school yeshiva model, they will serve as the pioneers who will help to confer normative status on this model to others in mainstream Haredi society.

Place of residence: The geographic distribution of those actually or possibly willing to send sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas is presented in Table 2.8. This distribution is consistent overall with that of Israel’s Haredi population. Over half of the respondents live in the country’s two major Haredi concentrations – Jerusalem (35.5%) and Bnei Brak (17.6%); Jerusalem’s exceptionally large share

compared with Bnei Brak is notable. The other Haredi population concentrations in central Israel – Petah Tikva (9.9%), Beit Shemesh (8%), Elad (6.6%) and Modi'in Illit (5%) contribute their share as well. Among the localities mentioned, only Jerusalem and Beit Shemesh already have Haredi high-school yeshivas. Of the cities lying outside the large Haredi concentrations, Petah Tikva is prominent. There is evidence that Petah Tikva is home to a growing concentration of “modern” Haredim who are leaving Bnei Brak to settle there. Petah Tikva shows signs of being a location for a new Haredi yeshiva due to potential demand there and in nearby Bnei Brak, where opposition to the establishment of a Haredi high-school yeshiva is expected to be strong. It is worth noting that 5% of the respondents who are actually or possibly willing to send sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas live in Modi'in Illit, a city that was founded specifically for primarily Lithuanian Haredim, and is the home of several *yeshivot gevohot* and *kollelim*.

Table 2.8: Respondents Actually or Potentially Willing to Send Sons to Haredi High-School Yeshivas, by Locality of Residence

Locality of residence	Number	Percent
Jerusalem	129	35.5
Bnei Brak	64	17.6
Petah Tikva	36	9.9
Beit Shemesh	29	8.0
Elad	24	6.6
Modi'in Illit	18	5.0
Beitar Illit	7	1.9
Other localities	56	15.5
Total respondents to the locality question	363	100.0
Did not respond to the locality question	31	
Total responding 'Yes' or 'Maybe'	394	

Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

Presence in the surrounding environment of boys studying in a Haredi high-school yeshiva: the Internet survey questionnaire presented three questions pertaining to the presence of Haredi high-school yeshiva students in the respondents' surrounding environment. Respondents were asked whether anyone – in their extended family, among neighbors, friends of their sons – had attended or sent sons to study at a Haredi high-school yeshiva. The distribution of the respondents in their answers to these three questions is presented in Table 2.9. A little less than half of the respondents answered that someone in their extended family (45.9%) or a neighbor (46.5%) had sent a son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva. Over half (59.5%) responded that a friend of a son had been sent to such an institution. Ultimately, we can generalize that half of the respondents to these questions live in environments where people send sons to study at Haredi high-school yeshivas, and that they are familiar with the phenomenon. However, the challenging finding is actually that half of the respondents do not know anyone in their surrounding environment who sent a son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva – and yet they expressed actual or potential willingness to send sons of their own to such schools. It appears that, rather than having first-hand familiarity with Haredi high-school yeshivas in their immediate environment, these respondents have a conceptual familiarity with the phenomenon that transcends the social-familial space. We may consequently presume that actual or potential willingness to send a son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva is undergoing a broad diffusion process beyond the confines of specific surrounding environment of people familiar with the Haredi high-school yeshiva phenomenon from their immediate environment. That is, the idea of sending a son to a Haredi high-school yeshiva could have fairly wide resonance within the communal Haredi space, pointing to significant demand potential beyond the present Haredi high-school yeshiva enrollment numbers, assuming that current barriers to the realization of that demand are removed.

Table 2.9: Respondents Actually or Potentially Willing to Send Sons to Haredi High-School Yeshivas with Regards to Question on Presence in the Surrounding Environment of Boys Studying in Haredi High-School Yeshivas, by Type of Answer and Type of Environment

Type of Answer	Type of Environment					
	Number			Percent		
	Son in extended family	Son of neighbor	Friend of son	Son in extended family	Son of neighbor	Friend of son
Yes	179	181	226	45.9	46.9	59.5
No	211	208	154	54.1	53.5	50.5
Total respondents	390	389	380	100.0	100.0	100.0
Did not respond to this question	4	5	14			
Total	394	394	394			

Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

Affordable tuition: In the section on barriers inhibiting development of the Haredi high-school yeshiva framework, the high tuition charged by older yeshivas of this kind was noted as an obstacle to many Haredim who wanted to send their sons to them but could not afford to. New yeshivas charge significantly lower tuition, averaging NIS 1,000 per month. The Internet survey results indicate that the latter level of tuition is acceptable to many of the respondents who expressed actual or potential willingness to send sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas (Table 2.10). The question posed in the survey questionnaire was: “What is the maximum monthly tuition that would enable you to send your sons to a Haredi high-school yeshiva, and beyond which would not be affordable for you?” The respondents were given four options: NIS 500, NIS 1,000, NIS 1,500, NIS 2,000. Table 2.10 presents the response distribution.

Table 2.10: Respondents Actually or Potentially Willing to Send Sons to Haredi High-School Yeshivas, by Maximum Monthly Tuition

Maximum monthly tuition	Number	Percent
NIS 500	97	25.2
NIS 1,000	199	51.7
NIS 1,500	58	15.1
NIS 2,000	31	8.0
Total respondents to the tuition question	385	100.0
Did not respond to the tuition question	9	
Total	394	

Source: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies Internet survey, late April-early May 2016

Over half of the respondents chose the NIS 1,000 option as the maximum tuition that they could afford. This sum is identical or similar to the tuition that is commonly charged by newer Haredi high-school yeshivas. 15.1% of the respondents chose NIS 1,500 while only a small number (8.0%) chose NIS 2,000 as the maximum tuition that would be affordable for them, compared with a quarter of the respondents for whom the maximum affordable tuition was just NIS 500. Some 86.9% of respondents chose one of the two lower tuition levels (NIS 500 or NIS 1,000) as affordable for them. Based on these answers we may assume that the respondents in question belong to the lower middle class. This is an indication that the aspiration to send one's sons to a Haredi high-school yeshiva is expanding beyond the upper middle class – the longtime client base of older Haredi high-school yeshivas. A growing proportion of Israeli Haredim participating in the labor market is attaining lower middle class status – indicating potential growth in demand over the coming years, as Haredim enter the labor market in larger numbers. It will be necessary, however, to ensure that tuition is affordable for this expanding Haredi middle class. A look at the ratio between age and maximum affordable tuition shows that all age groups are sensitive to tuition levels, though the 25-34 age group is the most sensitive of all.

Characteristics of those who answered “No”

As noted in Table 2.1, only 27 respondents stated that they are not willing to send their sons to a high-school yeshiva. This number by no means reflects Haredi society as a whole, given that the survey is not representative, was conducted via the Internet over a short period of time, and was aimed entirely at identifying and characterizing Haredim who do want their sons to be educated in a Haredi high-school yeshiva framework. Even so, it is worth looking at the reasons behind the negative answers received. Six respondents stated the reason why they are not willing to send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas. One of them expressed allegiance to the hegemonic outlook of Torah study as a way of life:

If continuity in the way of Torah is to be ensured, a high-school yeshiva as an accepted option is impossible. As someone for whom Torah is a way of life, I think that one must aspire to maximum success in Torah learning, to at least the same degree that a person studying secular subjects aspires to excellence.

A second respondent fears the impact of the Haredi high-school yeshiva on her son's future in Haredi society: “The reason I'm unwilling is that the child can go to this kind of yeshiva ‘only in order to get a matriculation certificate,’ and ultimately he won't want to go on to a holy *Yeshiva gedola*, but rather to the army or to [civilian-national] service.”

A third negative responder shares this concern:

[The next step is civilian service] + a degree, which would essentially cause him to be not truly Haredi. If he wants to do a degree after he's married, he can make up the material.

These three respondents express the fear that choosing the Haredi high-school yeshiva framework will lead to abandonment of Haredi society and adoption of a different way of life.

Two other respondents wrote about the image that, in their view, is associated with the Haredi high-school yeshivas' target population:

The only chance of succeeding is with confused Americans, those who spent time in modern yeshivas, etc.

If you try to enter the mainstream they'll send you packing... The product is suitable for a European population that includes ba'alei batim. It's for rich families or... [marginal youth], and that's a shame. It doesn't work with Torah-observant families in Israel.

These two respondents appear to be reacting to the prevailing image of the older high-school yeshivas and of the institutions that target marginal groups. But recent years have witnessed signs of change, as mainstream Haredim are beginning to consider the Haredi high-school yeshiva model as something other than a last resort.

2.2.3 Interviewee remarks and suggestions

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to add remarks and suggestions regarding the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas. Many remarks and suggestions were received, testifying to deep involvement and preoccupation with this issue. Based on the suggestions, the high-school yeshiva appears to be of interest to large numbers of Haredi families, who are becoming more and more open to the idea of educating their sons in frameworks that combine religious and general studies. The remarks and suggestions have been grouped by topic.

(a) Issues of religious outlook pertaining to the choice of the Haredi high-school yeshiva framework

Few of the respondents believe that Haredi high-school yeshivas offer a solution to the *yeshivot ketanot*'s unsuitability for all children. At the other end of the spectrum, only a small number of respondents stated that they would send sons to a Haredi high-school yeshiva as their "first choice," based on ideology. These answers are consistent with the finding that the main driver of demand for the Haredi high-school yeshiva framework is parental desire to ensure that their sons can earn a decent living.

Respondent remarks

Solution to the yeshiva ketana's unsuitability for all students

- ✓ *A child who isn't managing in the regular framework, for whom it isn't a good fit and the staff doesn't know how to deal with him or help him, and he can become frustrated and upset that he isn't managing even though he has good abilities – should go to a Haredi high-school yeshiva that can help him and benefit him;*
- ✓ *As part of my work in the education field I often encounter good, smart, God-fearing children who aren't suited to a regular yeshiva ketana framework. There are even some boys who, due to their unsuitability don't find any framework and end up on the street. High-school yeshivas can definitely be the answer for those boys;*
- ✓ *If they manage to put the issue of boys unsuited to yeshiva on the agenda, and basically take the approach that they're trying to help these boys, the situation will change;*
- ✓ *Haredi high-school yeshivas are the best answer for a Haredi family worried about the fate of an adolescent and concerned that he'll end up in the street.*

The high-school yeshiva as a first-choice alternative to the yeshiva ketana

- ✓ *Haredi high-school yeshivas as a first choice rather than a less desirable expedient, with no apologies for the parents having made this choice;*
- ✓ *I was bothered by the question about whether we would send our children to a high-school yeshiva if they weren't suited to a yeshiva ketana. Sending to a high-school yeshiva, in our view, and I think also in the view of many others, is an ideal and is aligned with our value system. It would be a shame if the high-school yeshivas were to be permanently written off as solely for those not admitted to yeshivot ketanot. When that happens, good boys from good families will no longer want the framework, and that's too bad. As I see it, studying in a high-school yeshiva is a challenging experience that is suited only to those with high abilities;*
- ✓ *The study level should be high. Also the level of the students. And it should be a suitable option for normative kids from good families. And not just a yeshiva for dropouts or troubled kids;*
- ✓ *Torah learning is the main thing but integrating secular studies [should be] the default, not just for those who aren't capable;*
- ✓ *Haredi high-school yeshivas should be high quality and numerous. There should be a real alternative to the "black" yeshivas;*
- ✓ *Haredi high-school yeshivas are absolutely a first and ideal choice, I hope more good yeshivas like them are founded, unlike the high-school yeshivas that became too Haredi.*
- ✓ *I sent my two grownup boys to Yeshivat Ma'arava, and if we had any doubts beforehand, then during their time studying there, and especially as the years have passed since they graduated, I've become firmer in my belief that this is the ideal way, and not necessarily in terms of earning a decent living later on, but for educational reasons, good study skills (no less than any prestigious yeshiva ketana!), life skills, maturity and independence.*

(b) Social pressure

The social pressure against sending sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas that was discussed earlier was mentioned again in the respondent remarks, though not extensively. This may reflect the fact that the respondents belong to those circles within Haredi society that do not fear social pressure. Nevertheless, indications of the existence of social pressure, or the fear of it, can be gleaned from those who did make some mention of it. Examples that came up included family pressure, difficulty with *shidduchim* (finding marriage partners), and the possibility that the siblings' education may be jeopardized. Several respondents express the hope that as the number of Haredi high-school yeshiva students increases, social pressure will decrease. One respondent hopes that this will remove the "stigma" associated with families who send their sons to such yeshivas.

Respondent remarks on social pressure

- ✓ *The obstacle I'm faced with is a lack of desire to deal with some of my family members;*
- ✓ *We won't be able to send our boy to one of the aforementioned institutions, and we'll be forced to send him to a yeshiva ketana, unfortunately;*
- ✓ *If a change happens without our sons having to be guinea pigs in terms of their future shidduchim, it'll be worth it;*
- ✓ *There have to be as many people as possible sending, with as little criticism as possible;*
- ✓ *When a boy is sent to a high-school yeshiva and there's no stigma on the student, then most Haredim will send their sons to high-school yeshivas;*
- ✓ *First of all, don't be afraid to open them. What was muktze ["unacceptable"] yesterday is a mitzvah ["commanded," "imperative"] today. The more such yeshivas are opened, the faster people will adjust to the idea and it will go from muktze to mitzvah;*
- ✓ *There's an ugly phenomenon I've encountered, parents who sent a son at the end of eighth grade to a high-school yeshiva, their other children in the lower grades were kicked out of heder as examples, and that really is a deterrent.*

(c) Support is needed from the rabbinical leadership

One factor behind the social pressure against Haredi high-school yeshivas is the guidance of the rabbinical leadership, an issue discussed above. However, only a small number of respondents mentioned this issue. Perhaps those willing to send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas are less sensitive to rabbinical

opposition and are not inclined to wait until the rabbinical leadership removes existing barriers.

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *Without support (at least tacit) on the part of rabbis and great Torah scholars of the generation, the phenomenon won't develop;*
- ✓ *Mobilize a major Torah figure to advocate for the issue and move forward. Don't wait for support from the entire Haredi spectrum because that won't happen;*
- ✓ *It would be advisable to base encouragement of Haredi high-school yeshiva study on Torah and rabbinical opinion;*
- ✓ *Beware of cherem ["excommunication"], don't call it a yeshiva.*

(d) Legitimacy/approval are needed for the Haredi high-school yeshivas

A number of respondents mentioned the need to direct a public campaign within the Haredi public to counteract social pressure in order to increase the legitimization of Haredi high-school yeshivas. The main obstacle perceived by these respondents appears to be the framework's negative image in Haredi eyes, which needs to be rectified. One respondent called it "parental reeducation." Underlying their remarks is the assumption that latent demand exists for Haredi high-school yeshivas among many Haredi families.

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *We sent our son... to a high-school yeshiva... None of his friends went to a high-school yeshiva. Some latitude for legitimacy has to be created in the elementary schools, so children won't need "courage" to go to a high-school yeshiva;*
- ✓ *Opening a yeshiva ketana with a high school [component] entails "parental reeducation;"*
- ✓ *I hope and pray that a day will come when sending a child to a high-school yeshiva will be possible and accepted;*
- ✓ *An outstanding initiative, only maybe it should be done through a broad dialogue within Haredi society so it will get the full support it needs for success;*
- ✓ *Legitimization efforts have to be made in the Haredi public sphere, such as announcements in the newspapers that serve the sector, posters and radio interviews;*
- ✓ *A call to action! Publicity and marketing the goal correctly in all media can raise awareness and create broad recognition. The real solution for dropouts before they get there. Give them a Haredi high-school study framework. If it were presented to the great Torah scholars of our generation with sincerity, the generation would definitely look different!*
- ✓ *There has to be more awareness and more publicity for these kinds of yeshivas.*

(e) Ensuring a Haredi lifestyle/suitable spiritual environment in Haredi high-school yeshivas

Many respondents noted in their remarks that, despite their desire for general studies, they expect to opt for typically Haredi educational frameworks. A large number of remarks touched on this issue, employing such expressions as: “Haredi character”, “yeshiva style”, “real, high-quality Haredi”, “a high religious and spiritual level”, “a sense of spiritual stability”, “good character traits”, “not too modern”. One respondent articulately described the desired character of a Haredi high-school yeshiva that has the additional aim of preparing students to earn a respectable livelihood:

If it were possible to create high-school yeshivas with God-fearing boys who also have spiritual aspirations, at a spiritual level similar to that of regular yeshivas, I think that that would really make it easier for many parents to send their children to institutions that prepare them to earn a decent living when they grow up.

Ensuring a Haredi lifestyle in the Haredi high-school yeshivas appears to be critical to their successful development.

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *Make them available and accessible but with a strong emphasis on maintaining a Haredi character (adherence to norms on the use of technologies, dress, behavior, etc.). Only in that way will they gain legitimacy, and only in that way will they be distinguishable from their Religious Zionist counterparts. Otherwise there will be no need for them;*
- ✓ *Too modern right now. People send to them for the social branding;*
- ✓ *If they have a Hasidic atmosphere and suitable staff from a spiritual point of view, they will be relevant;*
- ✓ *Establish more Haredi high-school yeshivas that are similar in style, atmosphere, dress and mode of speech to the yeshiva ketana. Provide preparation for the matriculation certificate but without detracting from the behavioral sphere or from the yeshiva style;*
- ✓ *The student should have a sense of spiritual stability to the extent possible. And not a situation where because it's all new there's instability during the early years;*
- ✓ *It's important that it be truly Haredi, and of high quality;*
- ✓ *No concessions on the religious level in order to emphasize secular studies. Maintain a high religious and spiritual level in the home as well;*

- ✓ *There is a need for yeshivot with a strong Torah-oriented outlook and a serious approach to Torah study;*
- ✓ *The character of the yeshivas and the religious outlook should be maintained, both in terms of dress and in terms of rules (a little more open, of course), so that these yeshivas don't become stigmatized [as places for] dropouts and suffer harm to their reputation;*
- ✓ *It doesn't matter if it's a regular yeshiva or a high-school yeshiva, what's important is the atmosphere and the investment made in the boy, his education, good character traits, the administration, and the warm and homelike atmosphere that the staff create;*
- ✓ *They should prepare for further study in a "Haredi" Yeshiva gedola as the main option;*
- ✓ *A great idea and I hope it succeeds, only if they manage to adhere to the Haredi norms of yir'atShamayim ["fear of Heaven"] (with openness), and aren't tempted to lower the level;*
- ✓ *They should have boys who fear Heaven, not delinquents;*
- ✓ *It's important that the outward appearance continue to fully adhere to the yeshiva norm;*
- ✓ *Fear of Heaven and meticulous observance of mitzvot at the same level as the older yeshivas, otherwise it's a lost cause;*
- ✓ *Maintain a Haredi lifestyle and religious outlook, talk less about Zionism and the Land of Israel (a characteristic of Religious Zionism);*
- ✓ *An admissions committee that accepts boys who are really Haredi only, no shababniks [young men who deviate from Haredi norms] or hardalim ["national Haredim" – i.e., Religious Zionists who have incorporated some Haredi features into their way of life];*
- ✓ *I would send but only if there's an emphasis on devekut [deep devotion to God, especially as a mystical and Hasidic concept] and closeness to God in an atmosphere of sanctity and purity, with the main motivation guiding secular studies a search for wisdom and a means of supporting oneself, and not automatic belonging to the sphere of careerism and the idea of one's occupation as the essence of life, that is, a place where the emphasis is on "Make your Torah study a fixed practice, and your occupation temporary;"*
- ✓ *A great deal of Torah and holiness;*
- ✓ *Personally, I was a residential facility counselor at a Haredi high-school yeshiva seven years ago, for 3 years. The spiritual status of the boys at that time was not at all what I would want for my son when he reaches the relevant age. So in my opinion it's very important that the spiritual level not, Heaven forbid, be lowered in this kind of institution, despite the potential for it in this framework;*
- ✓ *They should study a vocation there but not give up the outward appearance or refined Haredi behavior; gentleness and patience;*
- ✓ *It's important that there be an educational framework as in a regular yeshiva ketana. I'm referring to a mashgiach [spiritual supervisor or guide], etc.*

- ✓ *My wife and I definitely want to send our children to a framework where they will be able have the option to build a future for themselves not only in the Torah/spiritual sphere... But I still want frameworks that are sufficiently strong from a religious point of view... So we'll be pleased if there are more Haredi yeshivas like Hayishuv Hahadash in Tel Aviv, Ma'arava and the like.*

(f) High level or quality of studies and of students

In addition to the demand for a quintessentially Haredi lifestyle, some respondents expressed a desire for high scholastic level in both religious and general studies, and for high student caliber in terms of behavior (“good boys”). Haredi parents especially fear that Haredi high-school yeshivas occupy a position close to that of the institutions intended for marginal groups within Haredi society (dropouts, *ba'alei teshuva*, *kiruv* students). This sensitivity is discernible in the following remark made one of the respondents:

There is a trend in new Haredi high-school yeshivas that they sometimes admit not-good boys. It happens, sometimes, due to a low level of screening, because they want more boys in the yeshiva, you have to make sure it doesn't happen.

Social positioning worries Haredi parents interested in the Haredi high-school yeshiva model; for this reason they insist on complete segregation of high-school yeshivas based on instructional level and student caliber. This attitude entails the creation of separate Haredi study tracks for students who cannot handle a high academic level.

At the other end of the spectrum are respondents who express a desire to also include “the others:” “not just the very talented,” but also “those lacking basic education,” including boys “who aren’t capable of spending all day on religious studies.”

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *A high scholastic level, in both secular and religious studies;*
✓ *The most important thing to me is to maintain a high level: both in Torah and attitude toward religion, and in secular studies. Present the students with requirements for excellence, both Torah study – depth and breadth – and in scientific and secular subjects;*

- ✓ *Quality, quality, quality!!*
- ✓ *The scholastic level has to be high both in Torah and academic subjects;*
- ✓ *My son studies at Hayishuv and we're disappointed by the lack of investment in spirituality and there's no one to talk to there. The boys curse and speak to each other disrespectfully and hurtfully – I won't be sending my next son there, though I'm not sure where I will be sending him;*
- ✓ *It's important that the boys who go there be of high caliber;*
- ✓ *It has to be for good boys, not for problematic ones;*
- ✓ *If they turn out to be good yeshivas to which boys from good families are sent, and not dropouts, then it will definitely be a possibility;*
- ✓ *It's very important to maintain the quality of the students;*
- ✓ *They should study all subjects seriously (religious and secular) and believe in their chosen path;*
- ✓ *A high scholastic level. An excellent professional staff;*
- ✓ *It's very important to educate for excellence and for loving each other, with no concessions at either end. Don't ease the religious or the professional requirements;*
- ✓ *They should only accept really good boys, and not the trash that don't want to be religious.*

(g) Ethnic composition

There was very little discussion of student-body ethnic composition; the few mentions of this issue dismissed the possibility of segregation based on ethnic background.

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *The yeshiva should be suited to all types of children, not just to the most gifted. Accordingly, there should be basic matriculation plus the option for more intensive work in as many subjects as possible for those who so wish;*
- ✓ *It should serve the needs not only of kids who studied in a Talmud Torah in this style, but also those without basic education who want to move to this kind of yeshiva;*
- ✓ *I would be happy if this kind of framework were a place not necessarily just for stronger kids with bright future study prospects, but also for children who just aren't capable of spending all day on religious studies. That is, the staff should appoint individual counselors who will also address the emotional side of things, and the subject offerings should be varied so that all types of children will be able to find their place, whether in sports, electronics, etc.;*
- ✓ *In my view the ethnic issue is important and I hope and want to think that it won't be an admissions criterion;*
- ✓ *The institution's human diversity is important (Hasidic/Lithuanian/more or less modern, etc.), up to a point, of course.*

(h) A variety of Haredi high-school yeshivas is needed

Until recently the academically-oriented Haredi high-school yeshivas were characterized by a high degree of homogeneity. The vast majority of their students came from modern-Lithuanian backgrounds and from families of relatively high socioeconomic standing. The respondent remarks point to a desire for diversified high-school yeshivas which, the respondents feel, would enable each student to find the most fitting framework. Several respondents expressed a desire for cultural diversity – Hasidic and Sephardic as well as Lithuanian – thereby increasing the number of families interested in this Haredi education track.

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *It's important to have a wide variety of yeshivas so that we can guide the child to the yeshiva that suits him best;*
- ✓ *It has to belong to everyone, not necessary to the "moderns" or to affluent families;*
- ✓ *They should be divided into Hasidic and Lithuanian and Sephardic yeshivas, or at least Ashkenazi and Sephardic; it sounds racist but that's what will lead to willingness among many Hasidim and Lithuanians to send their children to these institutions; the Ashkenazim are the problematic hard core. The Sephardim are more open from the outset to sending their children to places like these and so it's worth creating this division, however painful, in order to draw in the Ashkenazi public;*
- ✓ *I myself studied at a Haredi high-school yeshiva, and I only benefited from it. The only drawback is that in the place I went to they didn't teach Hassidut, but over time I made up the material, since they also didn't hinder that kind of study;*
- ✓ *We need Hasidic Haredi high-school yeshivas;*
- ✓ *Develop departments for new Haredi immigrants from France and South America;*
- ✓ *There shouldn't be too much scholastic pressure, like there is at Ma'arava, and it should be as appropriate for each child;*
- ✓ *Open up a yeshiva ketana and gedola that includes religious and vocational studies, not necessarily for a degree/matriculation.*

(i) Demand for an external framework

Older Haredi high-school yeshivas have residential facilities where the students stay during the school week and sometimes over Shabbat. In the more recently founded institutions, some of the students live at home. This external student

arrangement came up in several respondent remarks that recommended foregoing the residential facility framework. This preference could become a major trend in the coming years.

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *Allow non-residential yeshivas;*
- ✓ *We would very much like some kind of external framework that would ease the current burden of very high payments;*
- ✓ *It's important that the child be external at least until he's 15, so he can be close to his parents;*
- ✓ *They should be external frameworks and should adapt themselves to the boy;*
- ✓ *We won't send a 14 year-old to a residential facility framework.*

(j) Yeshivas in accessible locations

The remarks pay little attention to the issue of where Haredi high-school yeshivas should be located. One suggestion was that a high-school yeshiva be established in Bnei Brak, a city where no such institution yet exists, in contrast to Jerusalem where two Haredi high-school yeshivas were recently founded. One respondent proposes that a Haredi high-school yeshiva be founded near the parent's home so they can monitor their son's status closely. Another respondent suggests establishing Haredi high schools "in the centers of Haredi cities and not in small, faraway localities." This suggestion is apparently based on the perception that many of these yeshivas are indeed located in small towns or on moshavim. It also appears to reflect the idea that the external framework entails geographic proximity between the yeshiva and the student's place of residence.

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *In the Bnei Brak area and at a reasonable price;*
- ✓ *The yeshivas should be accessible. Close to home so the boy can continue to be educated at home under parental supervision, because it's important that the yeshiva not try to "save" the children but rather fit in with the tradition maintained in the home;*
- ✓ *They should be in the centers of the Haredi cities and not in small, faraway localities;*
- ✓ *Accessibility in terms of location;*
- ✓ *They shouldn't be over the Green Line, there's a shortage in Central Israel.*

(k) Affordable tuition

Respondents devote considerable space to the issue of high tuitions at the older Haredi high-school yeshivas. Their remarks convey a sense of deep distress over the inability to make the high payments required. Harsh language is used: “They’re exploiting the parents,” “We’re being torn apart by the tuition,” “It’s not normal,” “Today’s prices are not reasonable,” “A deterrent,” and “A stumbling block.” There are repeated calls to lower the excessive tuition so that even parents who are not of high socioeconomic status can send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas and educate them for “Torah im Derech Eretz.” One respondent states that:

Today’s costs are totally unreasonable; if they improve the [high-school yeshivas] have a good chance of being very successful.

The picture painted by the respondent remarks is one in which very high tuitions are a major obstacle to realizing the demand for this type of Haredi high school.

Respondent remarks on affordable tuition

- ✓ *A normal tuition and not like it is today, where they’re exploiting the parents beyond all proportion;*
- ✓ *There should be a push to lower the costs for parents. It’s unbelievable that due to inability to pay we can’t give our children a future;*
- ✓ *We personally are being torn apart by the tuition due to our belief that this is the right way, but it is truly intolerable;*
- ✓ *Normal prices. Today the minimum tuition and travel expenses comes to NIS 3,000. That’s not normal.*
- ✓ *Competition for Ma’arava, which is outrageously expensive;*
- ✓ *It’s vital that the tuition be lower and that Haredi high-school yeshivas not be an option solely for the narrow stratum of the elite;*
- ✓ *Of course the price has to be reasonable;*
- ✓ *I paid 2,600 shekels in tuition, before private tutoring, pocket money and other expenses. It was very hard but it was important to me;*
- ✓ *There’s no chance that the prestigious yeshivas will charge less than NIS 2,500-3,000 a month. The reason is [that] there isn’t enough supply, which the askuna [wheelers and dealers] torpedo through threats of excommunication by the “gedoilim” [great Torah scholars – sarcastic] (who themselves are held fast in the askuna’s filthy claws) against those who would work to increase the supply. The great demand almost forces the existing high-school yeshivas to screen candidates mainly through the “monetary filter” of tuition, on the assumption that those with money are also what one would term “better families;”*

- ✓ *It's important that it be affordable for families with a few children studying there at the same time;*
- ✓ *Today's prices aren't reasonable and I hope this changes. I have a son at YeshivatNehora and 2 more sons in school. A solution has to be found regarding tuition;*
- ✓ *High tuition deters large families that barely make ends meet from sending their sons to Haredi high schools;*
- ✓ *Lower the tuition;*
- ✓ *The situation today where parents are forced to pay NIS 2,500-3,000 per month doesn't allow them to do this;*
- ✓ *The reality, before pocket money, is NIS 3,200 per month;*
- ✓ *Lower the tuition, it's urgent;*
- ✓ *Tuition at the Haredi high-school yeshivas constitutes an obstacle for those who want to educate their children for Torah im Derech Eretz;*
- ✓ *Yeshivat Nehora is an excellent yeshiva but the cost is too high;*
- ✓ *It should be relevant for everyone, not necessarily for affluent families;*
- ✓ *Today's costs are totally unreasonable; if they improve they have a good chance of being very successful;*
- ✓ *Lower the tuition;*
- ✓ *Tuition should be low;*
- ✓ *Today Haredi high-school yeshivas aren't accessible to people of average income, meaning that the poor remain poor because they don't have money for appropriate education;*
- ✓ *The economic issue is the most critical. Today these yeshivas are very expensive and not affordable for the average family.*

(I) Financial support is needed – stipends and discounts

The complaints about high tuition are accompanied by suggestions, on the part of some parents, that a new system of state financial support for Haredi high-school yeshivas be developed.

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *There should be close supervision and substantial stipends should be provided;*
- ✓ *We would be happy if the existing Haredi high-school yeshivas, which are in financial trouble, were to receive assistance;*
- ✓ *There's no reason why the state shouldn't fully fund them, it should be a clear demand by the Haredi Knesset members;*
- ✓ *The trend should be clear: frameworks subsidized by the government, like regular yeshivas and even much more, like the subsidization of high schools.*

(m) Need for an array of institutions combining religious and secular studies spanning the entire age continuum

Two respondents take a long-term view in their remarks. One would like to institute the combined religious-secular studies model at the primary level (heder or Talmud Torah) as well. Another respondent proposes that such a model be introduced at the post-secondary level, in the *yeshivot gedolot* where students currently engage solely in religious study, as in the *yeshivot ketanot*. In the United States there are Haredi *yeshivot gedolot* that allow their students to study in the evenings at institutions of higher learning.

Respondent remarks

- ✓ *Even beforehand, Talmud Torahs should be created where students study secular subjects at a high level;*
- ✓ *I would be interested in this kind of framework [combining religious and general studies] for the yeshiva gevoha age group.*

Summary of respondent remarks

The respondent remarks encompass a broad spectrum of topics and issues of concern to the Haredi high-school yeshiva. At the heart of these issues lies the definition of this institution's basic objective within the Haredi education system. The remarks reflect the swinging of a pendulum. On the one hand is the goal of serving students who have trouble with the *yeshiva ketana* framework – the “ideal” Haredi educational institution for the high school age group; the Haredi high-school yeshiva is meant to be a solution to this problem. On the other hand, another goal for the Haredi high-school yeshiva is being defined and gaining legitimacy: to provide a “pre-legitimized” alternative to the *yeshiva ketana* featuring a combination of religious and general studies, thereby preparing students for lives of *Torah im Derech Eretz* – Torah study combined with worldly occupation. Most respondents favor the second definition, although their remarks point to the existence of social pressure faced by those who wish to send their sons to Haredi high-school yeshivas. In order to reduce this pressure they note the need to obtain, where possible, the support of the rabbinical leadership, which to date has spearheaded the opposition to Haredi high-school yeshivas.

The respondents also called attention to issue of legitimization of Haredi high-school yeshivas within Haredi society as a whole, and in some cases noted the way in which such support might be obtained. First and foremost is the need to ensure that these institutions maintain a Haredi way of life and a suitable spiritual ambience. The remarks indicate that the combination of religious and general studies should be supplemented by high-quality spiritual instruction, in an educational environment that is markedly Haredi in character.

In addition to maintaining the Haredi lifestyle, respondents stress the need for high-caliber students, in both religious and general studies. They also see a need to ensure the quality of the students who are accepted to Haredi high-school yeshivas. In their view, scholastic excellence and high student caliber would likely increase potential demand for such institutions within Haredi society.

Respondents are aware of issues pertaining to the social composition of older Haredi high-school yeshivas, which have historically targeted children of middle and upper-middle class families especially from within the “modern” Lithuanian public. They point out the need for diversity in the institutions currently under development from both a socioeconomic and an ethnic point of view. Some respondents also called for creating Haredi high-school yeshivas catering to specific communities. Particular mention was made of the need for institutions serving Hasidic students.

The issue of tuition greatly preoccupies the respondents, who complain about the high tuition costs of older Haredi high-school yeshivas and identify it as a major obstacle to many families who might otherwise send their sons there. A few respondents suggest that the state provide financial support to Haredi high-school yeshivas, to assist parents with the high cost burden and enable tuition to be lowered; among the mechanisms they recommend are stipends and tuition reductions.

One respondent summarized the situation as follows:

In my opinion, 3 things are critical: A. The quality of the families sending to the yeshiva; B. Maintaining a full Haredi way of life (including dress); C. Tuition – no one is willing to pay more than double the cost of a regular yeshiva.

Respondents note their support for the idea of the Haredi high-school yeshiva and add words of encouragement:

*“I see it as a blessing. And I would be happy if it became part of the norm;”
“As many as possible of them [Haredi high-school yeshivas] should be established. There is such a huge thirst for it!” “It’s important that there be more of this kind of yeshiva and that, in general, there be more awareness of them;” “Don’t be afraid to move ahead at full speed;” “Well done!”*

2.3 The potential role of central government, local government, educational networks and other entities in promoting the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas

Establishing Haredi high-school yeshivas is a complex endeavor that entails cooperation between many different entities, both institutional and private. Relevant entities include: the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, local authorities, educational networks, philanthropic foundations and private developers. We discuss below the roles that each of these entities might play in promoting the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas.

Ministry of Education – The Ministry of Education should define the endeavor as a policy that it wishes to put into practice. This would encompass program implementation targets, including specific objectives regarding the number of students and number of institutions to be involved in this study track and an implementation timeframe. The Ministry should specify the degree of priority and scope of incentives to be offered to entities founding such yeshivas and the mechanisms for granting them; it should set guidelines for who can be the founding developer of such a yeshiva and the conditions for opening one; it should allocate resources necessary to manage these yeshivas and to build the actual school facilities. The Ministry should provide intensive guidance and supervision to assist all of these institutions during their establishment processes.

Ministry of Finance – The Ministry of Finance is the government ministry that should design and allocate the budget necessary for the current activity of Haredi high-school yeshivas, on the assumption that during an institution’s first years of

operation significant government subsidization will be required. The Ministry of Finance should also allocate for construction of classrooms and other built spaces for these yeshivas.

Local authority – The local authority’s role in the Israeli education system includes administrative responsibility for schools, awarding municipal grants, and responsibility for providing school physical infrastructures, including: allocating land for construction, planning and implementation of construction, and additional responsibilities in terms of security and transportation. The local authority plays a leading formal role in the submission of applications to open new schools within its area of jurisdiction. It is also influential in the process of obtaining a license to open a new institution. The local authority has influence for setting priorities for the construction of new schools within its boundaries. A local authority that participates in the establishment of a Haredi high-school yeshiva within its area of jurisdiction will lead the institution’s authorization process vis-à-vis the Ministry of Education, allocate land for the school’s construction, assist with rental costs throughout the construction period, advance the planning and construction process, and even participate in the yeshiva’s operating costs.

Educational networks – Israel has educational networks that operate large numbers of schools and have extensive experience in establishing and managing school systems. These networks include: ORT, Amal, Amit, the Society for the Advancement of Education, and others. The networks have extensive experience in working with the Education Ministry and deep familiarity with pedagogical, budgetary, and infrastructural issues. Some of them have already been involved in establishing Haredi high-school yeshivas and can serve as an organizational-educational platform for creating and managing new ones.

Private entrepreneurship – The Haredi education system has been driven primarily by private initiatives, a trend that spans across the age groups that it serves and the diversity of its institutions. Social-communal organizations and, in some cases, individuals, have seen a value in the creation of local educational institutions aligned with their religious outlook. All of the partners in the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas have to be open to the involvement of private parties; they may even work proactively to recruit them. These individuals and entities spring from within the community and manifest their dedication to it by

establishing Haredi high-school yeshivas that reflect their religious outlook and the community's specific character.

Philanthropy – Philanthropic foundations can contribute to the process of creating these kinds of institutions, both at the establishment stage and during ongoing operations. Foundations can propose partnerships with central and local government in the institutional establishment process, support developers and entrepreneurs during the construction phase, assist, along with the state, with the current-operations balance sheet during the institution's early years, and support the creation of the institution's residential infrastructure, which is not budgeted by the government.

2.4 An economic model for the Haredi high-school yeshiva

In this section of the study we present a mapping of institutional costs and income for a sample Haredi high-school yeshiva, based on an economic model. The aim is to estimate the operational funding gap that characterizes these institutions. First, a mapping was executed of the income sources available to new schools, as well as of the main expenditure items. The analysis was performed for both a non-residential and residential institution.

The data on which the model is founded were collected from similar institutions currently in operation, as reported by the relevant position holders and based on budgetary definitions in the Education Ministry call for proposals, which provides for a 25% supplement to the regular budget for Haredi schools oriented toward higher education. We also met with an education coordinator in the Finance Ministry's Budget Department, to discuss the issue of budgetary support for Haredi high-school yeshivas. The Finance Ministry understands the importance of encouraging the establishment of Haredi high schools and offers increased budgets to academically-oriented Haredi institutions, with the objective of drawing Haredim into the work force. The assumption on which the call for proposals is based is that the Haredi sector suffers from large gaps in the general studies sphere and that additional instructional hours are needed in order to reduce these gaps. We included the income from this increased funding when calculating the economic model. The model is also designed in a way that facilitates the assessment of both residential and non-residential institutions, making it possible

to determine where the funding gaps are larger and to arrive at an optimal model for Haredi high-school yeshivas.

The income structure is composed of the following sources: Ministry of Education – base budget; parental tuition payments; variable funding from local authorities. In addition to these sources, and as noted above, the Education Ministry has published a call for proposals with regard to budgeting Haredi schools oriented toward higher education. In our analysis of the economic model, we assessed the effect of this budgetary addition on the institution. Yet another funding source for registered residential institutions is the Administration of Rural Education, Residential Facilities and Youth Aliyah. The Administration funds the residential costs of each student, according to the parents' socioeconomic standing.

The expense structure is composed manpower (teacher) and administrator salaries. Residential institutions require additional personnel (counselors, house mothers) and entail expenditures on board (food), enrichment activities, security, and other general matters. It should be noted that the board expenditure is an exceedingly significant one, due to the extended school day during which all students receive three meals.

The economic model is based on the income sources and expenses set forth above, as well as additional assumptions relating to the operating model of similar institutions in existence today. Model assumptions are:

1. During the institution's first few years of operation, the mean number of students per class will be 20, with three ability groupings in the core subjects.
2. The institution will open in growth mode: in Year 1 a single Grade 9 class will be operated, in Year 2 two Grade 9 and 10 classes, and so on. In Year 4 the school will operate 4 classes, Grades 9-12.
3. The cost per weekly instructional hour is estimated by the education system as ranging from NIS 7,000-12,000, based on an Education Ministry calculation that encompasses teacher seniority, academic degrees and subjects taught. In the present study's model, the cost per weekly instructional hour is assumed to be NIS 7,300. This assumption is based on data gathered from similar institutions currently in operation. The cost per weekly instructional hour is relatively low in these institutions because it is still hard to find senior teachers with advanced degrees teaching secular subjects in the Haredi sector.

As more subject teachers with academic degrees are trained and enter the system, the cost per hour will rise. Table 2.11 presents the calculation's base data in terms of base hours and additional hours, as defined in the call for proposals.

**Table 2.11: Number of Hours and Ability Groups
Budgeted by the Ministry of Education**

Base hours	Number of hours	
Weekly hours per student	1.3	
Number of students per class	20	
	26	
Call-for-proposals addition per class	Number of hours	Number of ability groupings
Hebrew addition	1	3
English addition	2	3
Math addition	3	3
Total additional hours	18	
Guidance counselor	4.3	
Total budgeted weekly hours per class	48.3	

- The number of instructional hours per week at similar institutions exceeds the number of hours budgeted by the Ministry of Education. The model's assumption regarding the number of instructional hours is an average of 65 weekly instructional hours because in the lower grades, e.g. Grade 9, the number of hours per week is lower than in the higher grades. The gap between the number of hours paid for and the number of actual instructional hours is 16.7 hours per week per class.

An analysis of expenses and income for a class of 20 students, taking into account the basic funding allocated by the Education Ministry for classroom instruction only and the actual scope of instruction, shows a class deficit of NIS 284,000 and a NIS 14,000 per student. This gap is due to additional instructional hours that the institution provides to students and that are not

budgeted by the Ministry of Education. When we add to this calculation the budgetary addition per the call for proposals for diverse Haredi educational institutions, in whose framework each student in a Haredi institution is entitled to additional hours in math, Hebrew and English, as well as to additional administrative and guidance-counselor hours, this supplemental budget reduces the budgetary deficit per class in the instructional sphere to NIS 121,000, or NIS 6,000 per student.

The model is founded on assumptions regarding funding sources and the amount of income per student. For a non-residential institution the main funding sources are: the Ministry of Education, local authority, and parental payments (tuition). Local authorities have no set per-student payment obligation, meaning that this component varies from local authority to local authority. The assumption here is based on an average taken from data reported by similar institutions currently in operation. As noted above, residential institutions have an additional funding source – Residential Facilities and Youth Aliyah Section of the Administration of Rural Settlement Education at the Ministry of Education. The amount provided by this source is determined by the student’s socioeconomic status, and parents pay the remainder. For purposes of the model, with regard to residential institutions, we included parental payments in the amount given per student, without distinguishing between the sums transferred by the parents and those by the Administration. Table 2.12 presents the model’s income-source assumptions.

Table 2.12: Income per Student by Source of Income

Income source	Income per student
Ministry of Education	10,196
Local authority	4,390
Parental payments to the school	12,000
Total income per student per non-residential institution	26,587
Administration of Settlement Education, Residential Facilities and Youth Aliyah (including parental payments)	20,000
Total income per residential institution	34,587
Call for proposals addition per class	162,414

When formulating the economic model, assumptions were made regarding the expenses of non-residential and residential institutions. The main expenses include wages for principal, secretary and, at residential institutions, counselors and house mothers. Other general expenses include electricity, water and security.

Additional major expenses include per-student enrichment and board. Board encompasses the three meals per day given to all students, including students who do not live at the school, due to the extended school day. Table 2.13 presents the model’s assumptions regarding employee wages beyond the teacher instructional hours.

Table 2.13: Annual Employee Wages at a Haredi high-school yeshiva by Type of Employee

Type of Employee	Annual wage (NIS)
Principal	260,000
Yeshiva head	260,000
Administrator	75,000
House mother	90,000
Counselor	65,000

Table 2.14 presents the model assumptions for other expenses:

Table 2.14: Per-Student Expenses by Type of Other Expenses

Other expense	Expenses per student
Board	12,300
Enrichment	2,200

For the economic calculation we examined four options reflecting class budgetary deficit, using the model’s assumptions for an institution operating 4 classes: Table 2.15 presents the results for each option. The options are:

1. All students are residential students.
2. Two-thirds of the institution’s students are residential students.

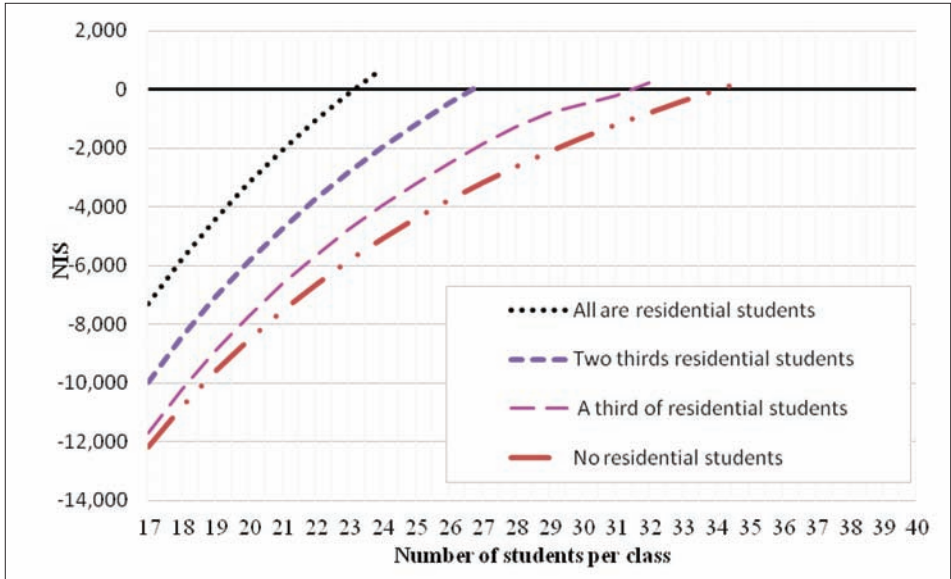
3. One-third of the institution’s students are residential students.
4. Non-residential institution only, no residential students.

Table 2.15: Deficit per Student, Class Deficit and Number of Students per Class, by Option

Option	Deficit per student (NIS)	Class deficit (NIS)	No. of students per balanced class
1. All students are residential students	-3,189	-63,778	24
2. Two-thirds of students are residential students	-5,856	-117,111	27
3. One-third of the students are residential pupils	-7,718	-154,352	32
4. Non-residential school only	-8,532	-170,633	35

Figure 2.1 shows the deficit per student, for each option.

Figure 2.1: Deficit per Student in NIS, by Proportion of Residential Students



The data in Table 2.15 and Figure 2.1 indicate that in Option 1, where all students are residential students, the model balances at 24 students per class. That is, if the class contains 24 students there is no budgetary deficit. In Option 2, where two-thirds of the students are residential, the model balances at 27 students per class. In Option 2, where one-third of the students are residential, the budget is balanced at 32 students per class, while in Option 4, a non-residential school, the budget is balanced with 35 students per class.

Based on the data regarding similar institutions currently in existence, it may be assumed that during the first few operating years of an institution of this kind, the number of students per class will be 20, and that two-thirds of the students in the institution will be residential. In this situation, and based on the model data, the budget deficit per student will be NIS 6 thousand, resulting in a deficit of NIS 117 thousand per class of 20 students. The class budget balances at 27 students.

In order to calculate the deficit for an institution of this kind during its early years, and to estimate the funding required, we assumed that during the institution's first year it will operate one class, Grade 9, with 20 students in the class. Each subsequent year another new class will be opened, and the number of students will grow at a rate of 2 students per newly-opened class; in Year 6 a second Grade 9 class will be opened, meaning that the school will operate 5 classes altogether. Likewise, an additional Grade 10 class will open in Year 7, i.e., the school will operate 6 classes that year. As noted above, the calculation presupposed that two-thirds of the school's students are residential students, as that is the representative situation in similar, currently-operating institutions. Table 2.16 presents the growth model for institutional student numbers:

**Table 2.16: Number of New Students and Number of Classes
in the 10-Year Program, by Year**

Year	No. of new students	No. of classes	Total no. of new students
1	20	1	20
2	22	2	42
3	24	3	66
4	26	4	92
5	28	4	100
6	44	5	122
7	50	6	148
8	53	7	175
9	57	8	204
10	60	8	220

Table 2.17 presents the deficit data for each of the first five years of the Haredi high-school yeshiva 10-Year Program:

**Table 2.17: Student Numbers and per-Student Deficit during the First
Eight Years of the 10-Year Program**

Year	Average no. students per class	No. of classes	Total no. of students	Deficit per student	Total deficit
1	20	1	20	-22,582	-451,648
2	21	2	42	-11,670	-490,144
3	22	3	66	-6,331	-417,874
4	23	4	92	-4,206	-386,957
5	25	4	100	-2,481	-248,130
6	24.4	5	122	-2,083	-254,126
7	24.7	6	148	-971	-143,679
8	25	7	175	55	9,680
					-2,382,878

As indicated by the data for a new institution, based on the assumptions noted in this chapter, the total deficit over the course of 7 years of operation comes to NIS 2.4 million.

Potential deficit-funding sources could emerge through policy change, a budgetary increase in the existing call for proposals for institutions of this type, or third-sector support.

Infrastructures

The construction cost of a school building is funded by the Ministry of Education but residential buildings require alternative funding sources. These buildings include: student dormitories, dining room and *beit midrash* (study hall). At present, the Ministry of Finance, in the framework of the call for proposals, allocates building lease budgets for new institutions only, the maximum yearly allocation amounting to NIS 150,000. This budgetary assistance is based on the assumption that planning and building a residential facility is a lengthy process that includes the time necessary to obtain needed authorizations; interim rental funding is therefore required. The budget allocated by the Finance Ministry covers a small portion of rental expenses; consequently, additional funding sources for this item need to be found.

A residential building includes rooms and public space. The area required is 75 sq m per student; the cost per sq m is NIS 6,000. A residential facility for 160 students (2/3 of the number of students at the yeshiva) would therefore amount to NIS 7.2 million. Dining room area is calculated at 1.5 sq m per student, including service areas, the cost being NIS 7,000 per sq m. This cost is higher due to the adjustments necessitated by dining hall standards. The cost of a dining room for 240 students amounts to NIS 2.5 million. A *beit midrash* requires a similar allocation of space to that of a dining room – 1.5 sq m per students. However, the cost per sq m is NIS 6,000. The total cost of building a *beit midrash* is NIS 2.1 million.

3: Objectives and Recommendations

After studying the overall Haredi education system, examining the existing yeshiva high schools in depth, analyzing the obstacles, the opportunities, and the expected demand, and analyzing the economic model, we would like to outline a proposal for advancing the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas and turning them into a normative educational alternative to the *yeshivot ketanot*. Within the framework of the proposal we wish to define realistic growth objectives for the Haredi high-school yeshivas for the 10-Year Program as well as milestones for implementing these objectives.

In the proposal we present the following subjects:

1. The recommended model for a Haredi high-school yeshiva: target population, educational profile, academic level, physical conditions, optimal school size, and rate of growth in the number of students.
2. Objectives of a 10-Year Program: number of students in Haredi high-school yeshivas, number of yeshivas, their location, and residential facility model.
3. Mapping partnerships and roles.
4. Defining milestones for implementation of the 10-Year Program: developing existing schools, establishing new ones and accompanying and supporting them.
5. The 10-Year Program's economic significance: cost of establishing and accompanying schools, financial sources, costs according to milestones.
6. Further recommendations: institutions for further education, monitoring and accompanying the schools, and evaluation.

3.1 Recommended model for Haredi high-school yeshivas

Target population

In order to establish the academically-oriented Haredi high-school yeshiva as a normative track in Haredi society, such a yeshiva must be geared to the mainstream of that society. These are established Israeli Haredi families in which the husband

is a graduate of the Haredi yeshiva world and the wife is a graduate of a Haredi girls' high school (seminary). This statement does not remove the important need to establish a fitting educational track for other groups in Haredi society that do not find their place in a *yeshiva ketana*. However, social acceptance of the academically-oriented Haredi high school yeshiva is conditional that a majority of its students come from Haredi mainstream.

Educational profile

The educational profile of the Haredi high-school yeshiva must be characterized by a high level of commitment to Haredi way of life, placing Torah study and religious belief as leading values, and maintaining a Haredi dress code as well as other social codes. The educational staff must be a model of commitment to Haredi way of life, religious belief and practice.

Academic level

- ◆ The Haredi high-school yeshiva must maintain a high scholastic level in religious studies in general and Talmudic studies in particular. At the end of their studies students will meet the accepted scholastic level of *yeshivot ketanot* so that they will be able to continue their studies in a *yeshiva gedola* if they so wish.
- ◆ The Haredi high-school yeshiva must have a high level of general studies. Students will complete their studies with eligibility for a full high-school matriculation diploma. The yeshiva will enable students to study for and take **advanced matriculation** examinations in English, mathematics and other subjects.
- ◆ An average of 65 weekly study hours will be allocated for a class.

Physical conditions

The Haredi high-school yeshiva's physical structure will consist of a school building according to the Ministry of Education's standard, a *Beit Midrash* (study hall) and a residential facility.

Preferable size

In order to facilitate scholastic variety and an economic base for the Haredi high-school yeshiva there must be at least two classes in each cohort, with an average of about 30 students per class. There will be at least eight classes and about 240 students.

Rate of growth of numbers of students

The growth objectives presented are realistic ones that take into account cultural change and the time necessary to achieve it, as well as the aspiration to establish the Haredi high-school yeshiva as a realistic and sustainable alternative. In the first year, a class in the Haredi high-school yeshiva will be opened for a minimum of 20 students. The number of students in each class will grow and in the fifth year the number of students in the yeshiva will be a minimum of 100 students in all classes, and an average of 25 students per class. In the sixth year a second class will open in the cohort and there will be five classes. In the tenth year there will be eight classes in the yeshiva comprising 216 students, an average of 27 per class.

3.2 Recommended objectives for the system

Numbers of students

Over the past decade, with the establishment of the new Haredi high-school yeshivas, the number of students who attend such yeshivas has grown from 562 to 1,343 students, some 336 students on average in each cohort. The present percentage of students who attend Haredi high-school yeshivas relative to those who study in *yeshivot ketanot* (9,000) is 3.7%. The expected growth in the number of students in the Haredi year group in the coming decade is about 30%.

Considering the growth in the past decade and the expected demand according to the study, a realistic objective for the overall number of students in the Haredi high-school yeshivas at the end of the 10-Year Program is about 1,000 students in each year group (including *kiruv* yeshivas and yeshivas for *ba'alei teshuva*). The total number of students in Haredi high-school yeshivas will be 4,000. The percentage of students in all Haredi high school yeshivas will be 8.5% of all students of high school age.

This study focuses on those Haredi high-school yeshivas which target mainstream Haredi society. Growth in the number of students in this kind of yeshiva will take place by extending the existing yeshivas and at the same time establishing new ones. The proposed objective for the number of students in the Haredi high-school yeshivas for Haredi mainstream at the end of the 10-Year Program is about 1,600 students.

The five existing Haredi high-school yeshivas, as presented above, are: Me'orot, Metivta, HaMidrasha HaChasidit, Chedvat HaTorah and Hachmey Lev. Today there are 300 students in these yeshivas (60 students on average in each yeshiva). The objective for the growth in the number of students in these five existing yeshivas by the end of the 10-Year Program is 220 students for each yeshiva and in total 1,100 students.

During the 10-Year Program four new Haredi high-school yeshivas will be gradually established and the number of their students at the end of the 10-Year Program will be about 500, an average of 120 students in each yeshiva.

Location of Haredi high-school yeshivas

The location of the new yeshivas and the permanent location for existing yeshivas that might need to change their location as a result of their growth and development will be chosen according to the following parameters:

1. **Proximity to a Haredi residential concentration** – in a mixed city the location will be in adjacent neighborhoods but not within Haredi residential areas. In a Haredi city in the center of the country, the location can be in an adjacent local authority. In a peripheral Haredi town the possibility of locating a Haredi high-school yeshiva within that town has to be examined specifically.
2. **Collaboration with the local authority** – this collaboration is essential for the process of establishing and developing a Haredi high-school yeshiva.
3. **Local community entrepreneur** – the location and field of activity of the local community entrepreneur will also influence the choice of a location.

Residential facility model

The proposed objective for the Haredi high-school yeshiva system is that about two-thirds of the students will live in residential facilities. This means that some of these school yeshivas will be non-residential or partly residential.

3.3 Partnerships and roles

In order to advance the expansion and establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas there must be collaboration between the following players: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, local authorities, educational networks, philanthropic foundations and local entrepreneurs. The fields of activity of each of these players are as follows:

Ministry of Finance:

- ◆ Increase the government budget with the aim of decreasing the operational deficit during the Haredi high-school yeshiva's development
- ◆ Build a budget for about 72 classrooms during the 10-Year Program (nine yeshivas, eight classes each)
- ◆ Allocate a designated budget to the Rural Education Administration for residential facilities in Haredi high-school yeshivas

Ministry of Education:

- ◆ Define the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas as a policy objective
- ◆ Issue a license to open new Haredi high-school yeshivas
- ◆ Recognize residential facilities of Haredi high-school yeshivas
- ◆ Establish teams to accompany and support existing and new Haredi high-school yeshivas

Local authorities:

- ◆ Allocate land to build schools, providing a temporary location for the yeshivas' activity until construction of the physical building
- ◆ Financial support for Haredi high-school yeshivas

Educational networks:

- ◆ Serve as an overall management and educational platform
- ◆ Take responsibility for choosing personnel and recruiting public and philanthropic resources
- ◆ Lead the establishment process in conjunction with the other partners: government ministries, local authorities, and philanthropic entities
- ◆ Identify educational entrepreneurs from within Haredi society
- ◆ It is recommended to rely on educational networks that have already established a Haredi high-school yeshiva: the Society for Advancement of Education, Ort and Amit.

Philanthropic foundations:

- ◆ Raise funds to balance the budgets for running yeshivas during their establishment
- ◆ Raise funds to build residential facilities and *Batei Midrash*

Community educational entrepreneurs:

- ◆ Educational entrepreneurs from within the Haredi community will be agents of change in Haredi society to recruit students and persuade parents
- ◆ These entrepreneurs will lead the yeshiva in its first years

Steering team

It is proposed to establish a joint steering team of all the relevant entities with the aim of advancing the program, and to:

- ◆ Remove obstacles
- ◆ Track the program's progress
- ◆ Update the objectives according to its development

3.4 Milestones for implementation

Years 1–2:

- ◆ Accompany and support the five existing Haredi high-school yeshivas in order to establish and expand them
- ◆ Locate potential places to establish new such yeshivas and suitable partners
- ◆ In the second year, establish a new Haredi high-school yeshiva

Years 3–4:

- ◆ Continue to accompany and support the existing and new Haredi high-school yeshivas
- ◆ In the fourth year, establish a second new Haredi high-school yeshiva

Years 5–6:

- ◆ Accompany and support the five existing Haredi high-school yeshivas and the two new such yeshivas
- ◆ In the sixth year, establish a third new Haredi high-school yeshiva

Years 7–8:

- ◆ Accompany and support the two new Haredi high-school yeshivas
- ◆ In the eighth year, establish a fourth Haredi high-school new yeshiva

Years 9–10:

- ◆ Accompany and support the four new Haredi high-school yeshivas that have been established

3.5 Economic significance

As noted above, we recommend developing the Haredi high-school yeshiva track by accompanying and supporting the existing five such yeshivas relevant to the target population of this study, and establishing four new ones.

Operating costs

The overall budget required for covering deficits in the five existing Haredi high-school yeshivas during the six years of the growth period until they break even is approximately NIS 9.5 million. Revenue from various sources has been calculated on the basis of the assumptions in Chapter 2.4 and it includes anticipated revenue from the various entities in 2016 prices and payment of tuition fees of no more than NIS 1,000 per month. Table 3.1 shows the assumptions on growth for the five existing Haredi high-school yeshivas and the extent of the deficit by years:

Table 3.1: Student Data and Deficits in the 10-Year Program of the Five Existing Haredi High-School Yeshivas, by Year

Year	Number of schools for support	Average no. of students per class	Number of classes	Total no. of students	Deficit per student	Total deficit per school	Total deficit for existing schools
1	5	21	3	63	-7,459	-469,934	-2,349,670
2	5	22	3	66	-4,542	-417,874	-2,089,370
3	5	23	4	92	-4,206	-386,957	-1,934,784
4	5	25	4	100	-2,481	-248,130	-1,240,651
5	5	24.4	5	122	-2,083	-254,126	-1,270,632
6	5	24.7	6	148	-971	-143,679	-718,395
7	5	25.0	7	175	55	9,680	48,402
							-9,555,100

According to the data, the budget deficit in the existing five yeshivas is expected to become balanced in the seventh year; in this year the revenue per student will be positive. At the same time we recommend gradually establishing four new Haredi high-school yeshivas. Table 3.2 shows the assumptions on growth for the new high-school yeshivas and the extent of the deficit by years.

Table 3.2: Number of new Haredi high-school yeshivas and annual deficit, by Year of the 10-Year Program

Year	Number of new yeshivas	Annual deficit
2	1	-451,648
3		-490,144
4	2	-869,522
5		-877,101
6	3	-1,117,652
7		-1,131,227
8	4	-1,261,331
9		-1,121,547
10		-809,683
Total cumulative deficit		-8,129,855

According to the data the budget required to finance the establishment of four new Haredi high-school yeshivas in the 10-Year Program is approximately NIS 8.1 million. Also, based on the assumptions of the economic model, after ten years, the number of students in the new schools that will be established will be approximately 490 students.

Possible sources of financing the deficit are to be examined. There is a possibility and possibly even willingness of the Ministry of Education to increase budget. Table 3.3 presents the extent of the deficit by year in the five existing Haredi high-school yeshivas on the assumption that the Ministry of Education's budget will be increased by 25%.

Table 3.3: Scope of the Deficit in the Five Existing Haredi High-School Yeshivas if the Ministry of Education Budget is Increased by 25%, by Year, in NIS

Year	No. of existing Haredi high-school yeshivas	No. of students per class	No. of classes	Total no. of students	Deficit per student NIS	Annual deficit per Haredi High-school yeshivas NIS	Total deficit of all existing Haredi high-school yeshivas NIS
1	5	21	3	63	-5,521	-347,842	-1,739,208
2	5	22	3	66	-6,193	-408,749	-2,043,745
3	5	23	4	92	-3,215	-295,782	-1,478,908
4	5	25	4	100	-2,242	-224,167	-1,120,834
5	5	24.4	5	122	-700	-85,340	-426,701
6	5	24.7	6	148	-342	-50,639	-253,194
Total cumulative deficit							-7,062,589

Increasing the Ministry of Education budget by 25% decreases the operational budget deficit of the five existing schools to about NIS 7 million, i.e., the extent of the support required is approximately NIS 2.5 million less. In addition, if there is an increased budget, an existing school will break even in the sixth year, i.e. a year earlier.

Table 3.4 below presents the extent of the deficits for establishing new Haredi high-school yeshivas over the 10-Year Program, on the assumption that the Ministry of Education budget is increased by 25%.

Table 3.4: Scope of the Deficit in the Five New Haredi High-School Yeshivas if the Ministry of Education Budget is Increased by 25%, by Year, in NIS

Year	Number of New Yeshivas	Total Deficit NIS			
1			6	3	-792,072
2	1	-410,950	7		-683,555
3		-408,749	8	4	-691,566
4	2	-706,732	9		-683,555
5		-632,916	10		-280,616
			Total cumulative deficit		-5,290,710

According to the data, after increasing the Ministry of Education budget by 25%, the extent of funding necessary to establish four new schools over the 10-Year Program is approximately NIS 5.3 million, i.e. the deficit is approximately NIS 2.8 million less.

Table 3.5 shows the total investment required to support the existing schools and establish new ones over ten years in accordance with the revenue from the Ministry of Education budget today and on the assumption of an increase of 25% in the budget.

Table 3.5: Students, schools, regular operational deficit, and deficit based on 25% growth in the budget of the Ministry of Education, by Year, in NIS

Year	Number of schools	Number of students	Operational deficit	
			Regular deficit NIS	Deficit based on growth of 25% in the Ministry of Education budget NIS
1	5	315	-2,349,670	-1,739,208
2	6	350	-2,541,018	-2,454,695
3	6	502	-2,424,928	-1,887,657
4	7	586	-2,110,173	-1,827,566
5	7	744	-2,147,733	-1,059,617
6	8	926	-1,836,047	-1,045,266
7	8	1,131	-1,082,826	-683,555
8	9	1,354	-1,261,331	-691,566
9	9	1,531	-1,121,547	-683,555
10	9	1,618	-809,683	-280,616
Total cumulative deficit			-17,684,955	-12,353,299

Infrastructure

Classrooms: The Ministry of Education will bear the cost of building 72 classrooms for the nine yeshivas.

Residential facilities: Of the existing yeshivas only three are residential. According to the 10-Year Program, construction of five residential facilities will be financed (three existing yeshivas and two new yeshivas that will be established in years 2 and 4 of the program) for 160 students each, and two partial residential facilities of 80 students each for two yeshivas (to be established in years 6 and 8 of the 10-Year Program). The overall cost of building residential facilities is NIS 43.2 million.

Dining rooms and *Batei Midrash*: Financing will be required to build a dining room and *Beit Midrash* for the five existing yeshivas and two yeshivas that will open in years 2 and 4 of the program. For the yeshivas that will open in years 6 and 8, a temporary solution will be found. The overall cost of building seven dining rooms and seven *Batei Midrash* is NIS 32.2 million.

3.6 Further recommendations

Continuing education

Students' parents are concerned about the issue of further education. Will the graduates of Haredi high-school yeshivas be able to continue their studies in *yeshivot gedolot*, like the regular course of study of graduates of the *yeshivot ketanot*? This requires a high level of Talmudic study together with a punctilious Haredi atmosphere. However, at a fairly early stage there may be a need to think of alternative institutions such as special *yeshivot gedolot* for graduates of Haredi high-school yeshivas or *Hesder* yeshivas for Haredi students in military service.

Research, accompanying the schools, and evaluation

The challenge of establishing Haredi high-school yeshivas requires considerable efforts, commitment, and substantial financial investment. There must be in place a system of research, guidance, and evaluation in order to assist the program leaders in examining the modes of action and degree of their success, and make necessary improvements during the implementation process.

3.7 Implementation Steps

In order to advance the 10-Year Program's implementation, the following steps are recommended:

Establish a steering committee

A joint steering committee that includes representatives from all relevant entities: philanthropic bodies, representatives from government and local councils, public representatives, and executing bodies in the field of education – to assist

in advancing the Program, work to remove obstacles, monitor the Program's progress and update objectives as the Program evolves.

Set up a central for implementation body

A central implementation body will guide development of existing yeshivas and establishment of new ones by activating entities experienced in the education system, headed by education networks interested in helping advance the 10-Year Program. It is advisable that this be an existing body highly experienced in the Israeli education system. The body must be chosen from among existing education networks with an interest in advancing Haredi high school education, e.g., The Society for Advancement of Education, ORT, AMIT and so forth, or other bodies active in the education system such as the Israeli Public Forum for Youth Villages and Residential Facilities, the Rashi Foundation, and the like.

Build a research, guidance, and evaluation apparatus

There are many obstacles to the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas; this challenge necessitates considerable efforts and commitment, and substantial financial investment. It is essential to build a research, guidance, and evaluation apparatus to assist the Program's central implementation body in assessing modes of operation, measuring its success, and making necessary improvements during the 10-year implementation stages.

We hope that this study will assist all interested parties in advancing the establishment of Haredi high-school yeshivas leading to increased Haredi participation in higher education and employment in Israel.

Appendix A

Questionnaire on Haredi High-School Yeshivas

Following a rising interest in such yeshivas this questionnaire is posted on the Internet in order to acquire an up-to-date view of current potential demand.

Please answer the following questions:

1. **What is your family status?** Married man Married women
 Divorced man Divorced women Single man Single Women.
2. **What is your age group?** 18-24 25-34 35 and above.
3. **Do have boys up to 12 years old?** Yes No
If "Yes" then how many? _____.
4. **Are you ready in principle to send your sons who do not want or ready to study in a *yeshiva ketana* to study in a Haredi high school yeshiva?**
 No (Move to Question no. 6) Yes Maybe.
5. **What are the reasons for your readiness to send a son to study in a Haredi High-school yeshiva?** To prepare the son for an honorable *parnasa*?
 Son's wish Other: (Please specify).
6. **Did someone in your extended family send a son to study in a Haredi high-school yeshiva?** Yes No.
7. **Did one of you neighbors send a son to study in a Haredi high-school yeshiva?** Yes No.
8. **Did one of you the friends of your son went to study in a Haredi high-school yeshiva?** Yes No.
9. **What is the maximum level of tuition fees beyond which it will become unaffordable?** 500 NIS 1,000 NIS 1,500 NIS 2,000 NIS.
10. **What is the name of the place you live in?** _____
11. **What is your ethnic-cultural affiliation?** _____

The following questions are intended to male respondents:

12. In which kind of *yeshiva gedola* have you studied? Lithuanian
 Sephardic Hasidic For ba'alei teshuva Other kind of yeshiva
 Did not study in a yeshiva gedola (Continue to Question No. 14) Studied
at a regular high school (Continue to Question No. 14).

13. What is the name of the yeshiva gedola? _____

14. What is your current employment? Full studies at kollel Partly
employed and partly studying at kollel Employed for a whole day and sets
a time for Torah studies.

15. Please describe the type of occupation: _____
(move to question no. 19)

The following questions are intended to female respondents:

16. In which seminary have you studied? _____

17. What is your current employment? _____

18. Please describe the type of occupation: _____

**19. Please write in remarks and suggestions you might have on the subject of
Haredi high school yeshivas:** _____

