

# NORTHERN ISRAEL: STATUS REPORT

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March 2025



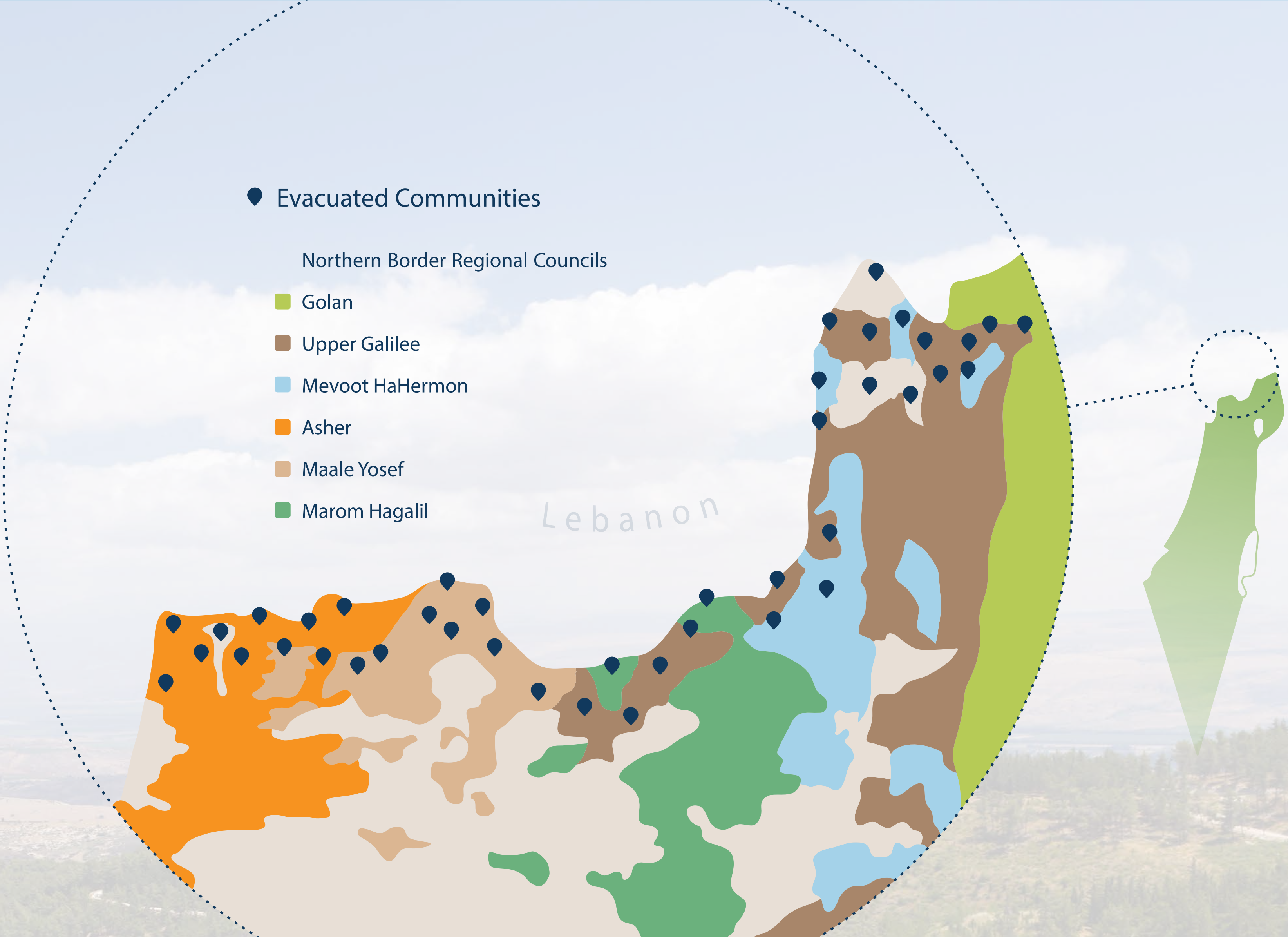


# Evacuation of northern residents

In November 2023, **some 68,500 people were evacuated from 43 northern border communities.**

As of February 2025, **only 17,700 of them (26%) came back.**

12,000 of those who haven't returned **are staying in hotels and 38,800 have found other housing.**



Upper Galilee regional council		
Dan	Misgav Am	Bar'am
Dafna	Manara	Tsiv'on
Hagoshrim	Yiftakh	Sasa
Snir	Malkiya	Ma'ayan Baruch
	Yir'on	Kfar Giladi

Mevoot HaHermon regional council	
Yuval	She'ar Yeshuv
Beit Hilel	Ramot Naftali
Margaliot	
Dishon	

Marom Hagalil regional council	
Avivim	
Dovev	

Maale Yosef regional council	
Matat	Even Menahem
Netua	Granot Ha'galil
Shtula	Ya'ara
Goren	Zar'it
	Shomera

Asher regional council	
Admit	Hanita
Eilon	Metsuba
Betset	Kfar Rosh HaNikra
Liman	Arab El Aramsha

Qiryat Shemona	
Shlomi	
Ghajar	
Metula	

# Going back home?

**By government decision, the return of the evacuees starts in March 2025**

- Grants to facilitate residents' return
- full-scale reopening of the education system

**Many northern residents are deliberating whether to go back**

- In a recent survey, about half of the residents said they were undecided.
- In June 2024, 28% said they did not intend to return.
- The factors that affect the decision are the sense of security and the opportunities in employment, education and health.
- Young adults and people with higher means are less likely to come back.

Many are  
debating  
**whether to  
return**



# Economic crisis

The economic situation of northern residents (whether or not they were evacuated) has worsened, but there are signs of improvement.

In September **2024**

- 70% of the evacuees reported a decrease in their income
- 32% were unemployed.

In January **2025**

- 49% said that their income went down following the war
- 44% had an overdrawn bank account

**49%**  
Report a  
decrease in  
income

**44%**  
Have an  
overdrawn  
account

#### Sources

survey by Tefen consulting firm, June 2024  
survey by Ma'agar Mochot research institute, Sept. 2024  
Israel Democracy institute, Feb. 2025

# Economic crisis

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When the war broke out,  
the rate of job seekers in the north  
doubled from 5% to 9%

— Despite gradual improvement,  
the unemployment rate in the war zone  
remained 49% higher than its pre-war level.

49%  
Increase in  
unemployment

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# Economic crisis: small businesses

## Small businesses in the north were hard hit

- 59,000 Israeli businesses closed in 2024, 40% higher than the annual average.
- 35% of the businesses that closed were in the north
- Northern businesses report significantly lower income:
  - 81% of the businesses in the eastern Galilee report a decrease in income, half of them a decrease of 65% or more.
  - 40% of the businesses in Kiryat Shmona recorded a turnover decrease of 50% or more; 30% more had a zero turnover.

## Insufficient government assistance

66% of the businesses received assistance, but 72% of them found it unsatisfactory.

**21,000**  
Businesses were  
closed

**81%**  
of the businesses  
have lower  
income

### Sources

Coface BDI  
Eastern Galilee Data Center, Aug. 2024



# Mental health crisis

**As in other parts of the country, the mental health of northern residents was negatively affected.**

- Post-traumatic symptoms were found among 18% of the respondents in March 2024, and 46% in November (the height of the war in the north).
- A third reported that the symptoms interfere with their daily functioning
- Between October 2023 and August 2024, the number of people diagnosed with depression and anxiety increased by 33%.
- Significant increase in the use of tranquilizers and in unhealthful behavior (smoking, drinking, less physical activity).

**46%**  
Have post-trauma symptoms

**33%**  
Increase in anxiety and depression

# Mental health crisis

## Impact of the war on children

- 62% of the parents report that their children's emotional wellbeing has been negatively affected
- 50% report a negative impact on children's social situation
- 38% report worsening of their children's behavior

**62%**  
Emotional  
situation  
affected

**50%**  
Social  
situation  
affected



# Mental health crisis

## Gap between the emotional distress and the available treatment

- 63% of the evacuees reported emotional difficulties; 65% of them did not receive any treatment.
- People from low socioeconomic background had less access to treatment.
- 54% of northern resident expressed a need for social-emotional support individually and as a community.

65%

Did not receive treatments

54%

Expressed need for emotional support

Less access to treatment for underprivileged populations

### Sources

Survey by Tefen consulting firm, June 2024  
Eastern Galilee Data Center, Nov. 2024  
Lobby 1701, July 2024  
State Comptroller's report, Feb. 2025



# Education crisis

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## Education is a high-priority issue for residents of the north

- Northern residents regard education as second only to personal security in importance.
- Parents express low satisfaction with their children's education, especially in high school.

## 16,670 students were evacuated in the north

- The students were scattered to dozens of municipalities
- Some studied in temporary educational settings, some in regular schools and some did not join any educational setting.
- Official figures are lacking.

16,700  
Evacuated  
students

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### Sources

Ministry of Education  
Keren Yedidut, Sep. 2024  
Eastern Galilee Data Center, Nov. 2024



# Education crisis

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**Regular studies were greatly disrupted, especially in high school**

- Partial operation of educational settings
- High turnover of education teams and frequent change of school
- Lack of a suitable environment and equipment for studying
- Attention difficulties and low drive

**11% of the parents report that their children are at high risk for dropping out of school**

**56%**  
find it difficult  
to focus on  
studying

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**11%**  
are at high risk  
of dropping out

#### Sources

Ministry of Education  
Keren Yedidut, Sep. 2024  
Eastern Galilee Data Center, Nov. 2024



# Recovery of the education system

## Reopening of the education system in the north presents big challenges

- More than 100 schools were physically damaged; the government has allocated ILS 200 million for repairs.
- Many schools need protected spaces to allow safe full-scale activity. The Home Front Command estimates that it will take two years to complete the work in 300 schools within 9-km distance from the border.
- In view of the shortage of teachers, it was decided to close temporary schools for the evacuees (official data is lacking).
- A system of social-emotional support for returning students is yet to be created.

**129**  
Schools were  
physically damaged

**300**  
Schools need  
protected spaces

Shortage of teachers and  
emotional support system

#### Sources

The Knesset, Dec. 2024

National Data Center, Nov. 2024



# Community resilience

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**Despite the uncertainty and distrust, residents remain strongly connected to the north.**

- A year ago, 82% of the evacuees said they fell lucky to live in the north.
- In a survey of young adults from Kiryat Shmona, 77% said they were proud to live in the city. However, 48% reported that their connection to the community has weakened due to the war.

## **Community resilience undermined**

- A study in February 2024 found a strong sense of belonging and connection to the community among northern residents, particularly those living in kibbutzim and Arab localities.
- There is no current data regarding the impact of the war on community resilience.

**48%**  
reported that  
their connection  
to the  
community  
has weakened

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### **Sources**

Shmuel Ne'eman Institute, March 2024  
Tel Hai Academic College  
Association of Community Centers and ERI, Feb. 2024

# Trust crisis

- Only 35% express trust in the country's political leadership
- 65% of the evacuees are dissatisfied with the housing solutions provided by the government
- Only 21% are in contact with their home municipality
- 71% did not receive any government assistance with employment since the evacuation
- 58% reported that the management of employment issues was poor or very poor

## In contrast, civil society enjoys a high level of trust:

- 70% of northern residents express trust in civil society initiatives

**35%**  
Express trust in  
state agencies

**70%**  
Express trust  
in civil society

#### Sources

January 2025 survey

Survey by Tefen consulting firm, June 2024

Survey by Ma'agar Mochot research institute, June 2024

Eastern Galilee Data Center, Nov. 2024



# Zoom In: Young adults

## Economic damage

- 44% of young adults report worsening of their economic situation.
- Shortage of job offers for young adults in the north causes them to consider looking for work elsewhere.

## Mental health damage

- In November 2024, 56% reported post-trauma symptoms.
- A third of young adults who remained in the north and half of the evacuees saw a mental health professional.

## Many of the evacuees may not come back

- Young adults began working or studying in the center of the country and enjoyed its wealth of opportunities.
- In June 2024, 62% of young adults from Kiryat Shmona said they were considering not coming back. In January 2025 there were 50% planning not to return and 36% more were undecided.

**44%**  
Felt worsening of  
their economic  
situation

**56%**  
Report  
post-trauma  
symptoms

### Sources

Eastern Galilee Data Center, Nov. 2024  
Tel Hai Academic College

# Zoom In: Arab Society

In general, Arab residents of the north were not evacuated during the war.

## Economic damage

- 64% of businesses in Arab municipalities suffered a loss of income.
- The rate of Arabs among unemployed residents increased at the start of the war.

## Mental health damage

- The rate of applications by Arabs for emotional support grew from 9% to 50% of all applications.

## Community resilience

- The level of community connection among Arabs in the north is higher than among Jews, as well as among Arabs in other regions.

**64%**  
Of businesses suffered loss of income

**50%**  
of all applications for emotional help

### Sources

National Data Center, Oct. 2024  
Galilee Resilience Centers press release, Sep. 2024  
Association of Community Centers and ERI, Feb. 2024



# SUMMARY AND INSIGHTS

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# Trust crisis

**Work on the report revealed a shortage of official, up-to-date and public data regarding the status of northern municipalities and their residents.**

## **Areas where this is most evident:**

- The Arab population and the relationships between Arabs and Jews in the north
- The impact of the war and the evacuation on young children
- Risk behavior among youth and young adults
- Welfare cases and families from a low socioeconomic background
- Morbidity and health issues beyond mental health
- Differences between the urban and rural population in cohesion and community resilience

**In addition, there is no segmentation of the data by regions and municipalities, which is essential for effective interventions.**





# General insights

## Multi-dimensional crisis

The recovery of the north is a complex challenge, which requires coping with major issues in different fields.

Consequently, recovery plans must be based on a holistic view and understanding of the links between the various dimensions of the crisis.

## The nationwide context

Part of the challenges are unique to the north, where the war had a direct and extended impact, while others are shared by the whole country (e.g. mental health effects).

Recovery plans should recognize where local challenges can be addressed in a nationwide context.



# General insights

## ● Social growth engines under threat

Young adults and people with high levels of education and income tend to be more ambivalent about returning to the north – and they are also the key to the region's future renewal and growth.

Successful recovery depends on keeping and enlarging these populations through opportunities in employment, education etc.

## ● Adapting solutions to target populations

There are groups in the north who have been living in social-economic distress for many years. Recovery plans must provide specific solutions to those who were underprivileged even before the war.





# General insights

## Rebuilding trust

The residents of the north have been deeply hurt by feelings of desertion, uncertain future and inadequate assistance by the state.

Recovery plans must take concrete steps to rebuild the trust between residents and the authorities.

## Long-term capacity building

The deep crisis in the north will leave its mark for years. It cannot be addressed with external, one-time investment, but requires building the capacity of communities and municipalities to facilitate an ongoing process of recovery and growth driven by local leadership.



# About the report and data sources

This is the summary of a more detailed report, which includes full references and discusses the main findings from the various sources by subject.

The report is based on gathering of data, reports and research studies that were carried out over the past year by research institutes, government agencies and civil society organizations, and which examined the situation in the northern region or among evacuated residents, with a cradle-to-career view.

The report gathered data which is openly accessible or was shared by its owners. It does not include raw data or additional analysis.

**Important notice:** The data presented in this report belongs to those who carried out the research and is under their responsibility.

We thank all the bodies that agreed to share their data with us:

