

# On the Differential Frequency of Western Migration to Israel

*Sergio DellaPergola*

(HEBREW UNIVERSITY)

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A common typological distinction in the study of migration contrasts “mass” migration movements with smaller and more selective “free” migrations.<sup>1</sup> The former are assumed to involve social groups in their entirety, or large numbers of migrants reacting similarly to unfavorable conditions at their places of origin. The latter, by contrast, involve relatively small, homogeneous and specialized groups, whose range of options and whose ability to adjust to factors affecting migration would appear to be somewhat greater. Although both types of migration may occur quite close to each other in time, from the same places of origin to the same places of destination—thus making difficult a clear-cut distinction between them—they seem nevertheless to involve different conceptual frameworks and to have different demographic, socio-economic and policy implications in the long run.

This paper focuses on some aspects of one of these relatively small and selective migration flows: the movement from free-emigration Western countries to Israel—a country which is not only open to free migration (aliyah) but actually strives to encourage it. Although this type of migration constitutes one of the major potential sources of Jewish population growth in Israel, comparatively little attention has been devoted in the past to clarifying its characteristics, determinants and implications. Thorough investigation of these matters is of central importance, especially in view of the recently renewed interest in estimates and projections concerning the size of the Jewish population in Israel and in the Diaspora. Furthermore, in view of the assumption that socio-demographic policies might be initiated—including policies affecting migration—with the aim of influencing the future size, composition and dynamics of Israel’s population, it appears that a detailed understanding of the factors that generated past Jewish migration

trends is essential if one wishes to gain informed insights on possible future developments. Although the relationship between the world Jewish population and Israel is essentially unique, some of the problems discussed and the hypotheses suggested here, are also applicable to other small, selective migration movements.

Israel's (and formerly Palestine's) past experience with immigration has typically been one of wave-like fluctuations. Such aliyah waves, originating in a variety of countries, were influenced not only by political and ideological determinants, but also by the varying accessibility of alternative destinations.<sup>2</sup> Taking into consideration the social structure of the Jewish Diaspora populations and the material conditions under which migration to Israel took place, it is possible to identify most migrating groups as belonging predominantly either to the "mass" migration or "free" migration category—though shifts from one to the other have occurred over time for some groups. Although the volume and geographical composition of aliyah waves have undergone periodic changes, the rate of Jewish immigration has been consistently higher from certain regions—especially the Asian Middle East, North Africa and the Balkans—than from others. Jewish communities in Western and Northern Europe, North and Latin America, South Africa and Oceania have exhibited comparatively low emigration propensities.<sup>3</sup>

In these regions—referred to hereafter as the Western countries—the Jews have enjoyed during the last century more favorable political and economic conditions, have been more integrated within the framework of the local society, and have had fewer feelings of immediate danger. In various periods, Western countries have drawn Jewish immigration from other countries, including Israel. Consequently, a sharp geographical polarization has developed within world Jewry: in 1975, 77 percent of diaspora Jews lived in Western countries, but only 9 percent of Israeli residents were of Western origin.

Immigrants from Western countries (as defined in Table 1)—in all, about 250,000—accounted for only 15 percent of all aliyah between 1948 and the end of 1980, though they have constituted a higher share of the total since the late 1960's. Examining recent aliyah trends one finds that soon after the war of June 1967 and its aftermath, a new immigration wave—the fourth since 1948—started, achieving momentum in 1969. For the purpose of our discussion, we shall focus here on two comparable eight-year periods (1961–68 and 1969–76), each including a migration peak (1963 and 1972) and a low (1967 and 1976, respectively). Western aliyah accounted for 13 percent of the total immigration for the first period, and 39 percent during the second. The yearly rate of migration for the total aggregate of Western countries increased from about 7 per 10,000 Jewish population in the countries of

origin in 1961–68, to 18 per 10,000 in 1969–76. These rates contrast with a worldwide total aliyah rate of 36–37 per 10,000 Jews in the Diaspora during both periods. These figures also indicate that immigration from non-Western countries could not respond as freely to the new political and economic situation in Israel: aliyah rates from non-Western countries actually declined from 115 per 10,000 in 1961–68 to 95 per 10,000 in 1969–76, and were essentially affected by whether and when governments allowed Jews to emigrate.

Within the context of the lower-than-average frequency of migration from the countries considered in Table 1 as a group, a remarkable range of variation can be observed. Aliyah was—with no exception—more frequent in 1969–76 than in 1961–68, ranging between less than 2 immigrants per 10,000 Jews (United States) and 59 per 10,000 (Uruguay) in the former period, and between 8 (United States) and 176 (Chile) in the latter. Comparing the changes in the rates of migration over the two periods, we find a pattern of considerable similarity (as indicated by a correlation coefficient of .72).

Apparently, the dynamics of Western migration to Israel was influenced over time by a highly consistent set of determinants, which dominated internal variation and overall levels of aliyah rates. These intensity differentials are of greatest importance in determining the overall volume of aliyah. Thus, for example, the combined aliyah rate of all non-European, English-speaking areas (North America, Southern Africa, Oceania) was 2 per 10,000 Jews in 1961–68, and 10 per 10,000 in 1969–76, while the combined rates of all Western European countries were 17 and 43, respectively, and those of Latin America were 37 and 63 per 10,000. Should the 1969–76 aliyah rate of English-speaking countries have been similar to that of Western Europe, immigration would have been larger by 170,000 persons, and should it have equalled that of Latin America, there would have been 270,000 more immigrants. On the other hand, should the 1969–76 aliyah rate of all Western countries have been as low as that of the United States, there would have been 65,000 fewer immigrants to Israel. What, then, stood behind these substantial differentials?

### THE CAUSAL STRUCTURE OF WESTERN ALIYAH

The study of aliyah must confront a number of central questions related to the changing volume of migration over time, its socio-demographic composition, and its absorption patterns in Israel. These questions cannot be answered without due consideration of the societal and personal determinants of migration to Israel, and of the selectivity

of immigrants as compared to members of the same Jewish communities who did not migrate, or preferred to emigrate to alternative destinations.<sup>4</sup> The examination of these topics should not only focus on the specific conditions of the Jews in the Diaspora and in Israel, but should also make reference to certain broader concepts, which emerge from the general study of human migrations.

Analytic understanding of emigration from countries which neither raise obstacles to the free emigration of their citizens, nor are particularly active in encouraging it, requires that research be focused on the monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits presumably associated with the decision to migrate.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the existing degree of relative satisfaction among potential migrants must be defined, together with a set of relationships between positive and negative factors—whether correctly or incorrectly perceived—in the places of origin and destination. The following chart summarizes the various possible effects of such factors on an individual's migration status.<sup>6</sup>

Type of factor affecting individual	Expected effect on individual's migration status following perception of factor operating:	
	At place of origin	At place of destination
Positive	Hold	Pull
Negative	Push	Repel

In other words, a distinction is suggested between factors encouraging, and factors acting as a disincentive to, migration. Such a distinction, though certainly relevant in the analysis of relatively infrequent migration (such as in the case of Western aliyah), is not always taken into account in the literature: while standard reference is made to the pull-push factors, the hold-repel forces have been less often investigated. Furthermore, as in other voluntary processes involving social and demographic change, decision-making connected to potential migration also depends on a number of intervening factors affecting the desirability and the feasibility of migration.<sup>7</sup> It can be expected that migration will actually occur only after given thresholds of migration desirability and feasibility will have been attained.<sup>8</sup> Such thresholds may shift over time. With regard to Western aliyah, changes probably occurred in connection with events such as the June 1967 war, which

opened a new chapter in the relationship between the Jewish people and Israel, and as a consequence of which the salience of Israel as an ideal place of domicile considerably increased in the perception of Diaspora Jewries. It can be assumed that among persons who already possessed some latent migration propensity, events of this sort can have a decisive effect on the actual decision to migrate.

In the specific case of Israel, conventional wisdom holds that immigration, particularly from Western countries, has responded essentially to ideological factors.<sup>9</sup> Aliyah thus seems to constitute a particular case of a more general situation in which geographical mobility, *prima facie*, is not exclusively or even essentially determined by economic factors, but rather results from the existence of certain religious, political or cultural values and norms. Such migrations at times seem to contradict the rules of conventional rational economic behavior, especially when they involve the move from a more to a less developed country, thus bringing about for the migrants the loss of some material benefits.

Other scholars have focused on a broader range of determinants, namely the periodic changes in the economic absorption potential of Israeli society, and changes in the migration policies of Israeli governments, over time.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, the volume of aliyah has been found to correlate strongly and positively with the main economic indicators in the receiving country. However, the relationship between migration and economic cycles is rather complex, and may not coincide with a one-way causation. In fact, it can be reasonably assumed that economic conditions in Israel not only stimulated but often responded to the changing volume of aliyah. It seems that after the 1967 Six Day War, changes in Israel, such as a rapidly expanding economy, growing differentiation for the labor market, and an improving technical infrastructure for immigrant absorption combined in attracting a larger volume of immigration.<sup>11</sup> Potential Jewish immigrants from Western countries may have been especially affected by such changes. There were, however, other factors at work that should not be ignored, such as an increasing salience of Jewish identity among Jews in the Diaspora. Moreover, the early 1970's witnessed serious political crises in various Western countries, including the violent overthrow of a number of regimes. Economic difficulties were partly due to the consequences for the West of the sharp increase in the price of energy sources that was connected, at least indirectly, with the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973.

Beyond these impressionistic notions, we shall not be able to assess the actual presence and relative weight of the various above mentioned factors in determining the peculiar characteristics of Western aliyah unless an attempt is made to organize them into a more systematic

framework. A more complete explanation of aliyah trends and differentials should consider three main sets of factors which generate a range of challenges and opportunities for Jews considering aliyah: (a) the different general political and socio-economic contexts of the countries from which migration originates; (b) the different demographic, socio-economic and ideological characteristics of the Jewish communities in each country; (c) the socio-economic and ideological characteristics of Israeli society.

One of the basic characteristics of the type of migration considered here is that it can be expected to be associated with a very peculiar and narrow "space awareness."<sup>12</sup> The choice of destination clearly implies a well-defined set of goals among migrants. At least some of these goals, and the benefits expected to be associated with their attainment, cannot be achieved in indifferent destinations, and can only be pursued in relation to a certain "ideal place." Migration to Israel, in fact, does not usually constitute one of many alternatives being equally considered by potential migrants; the typical alternative to aliyah for Jews in Western countries is non-migration. A sample survey of the Jewish population of South Africa (1974) shows that 22 percent of heads of households were considering emigration (though only 1.3 percent had definitely decided to leave). Israel was indicated as the preferred country of destination by 80 percent of all those who considered emigration, and by 74 percent of those more committed.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, in a sample study of Italian Jews in Israel (1975) it was found that only 16 percent of migrants had considered alternative destinations when leaving Italy.<sup>14</sup> Israel's dominant position in the migration-related space awareness of Western Jews is confirmed by the predominance of ideological determinants for migration. For example, the most frequent reason given by Italians in Israel for migration (to a multiple-answer question) was "the desire to live in a Jewish state" (76 percent). The least frequent was "economic reasons" (11 percent). Quite similar findings appear in studies of North American migrants to Israel<sup>15</sup> and of Israelis abroad, either considering a return to Israel or actually returning.<sup>16</sup>

The data available on Western immigrants from the longitudinal survey of immigrant absorption currently being carried out in Israel, and the analyses (based on the same source) of selected Western origin groups (such as North Americans or Latin Americans) point to a higher percentage of "religious" or "Zionist" immigrants than that currently existing among the Jewish populations of the respective countries of origin.<sup>17</sup> The desirability of migration to Israel, and perhaps also the feasibility of such a move, are perceived quite selectively in diaspora Jewish populations depending on demographic, socio-economic and

ideological factors. Jews migrating to Israel do not constitute a representative cross-section of the population in their communities of origin; and as a group they are structured differently from groups of Jews migrating to alternative destinations.<sup>18</sup>

When considering the Western Jewish diaspora cross-nationally, however, it should also be ascertained whether the same rules that govern migration selectivity within countries also operate between countries. Investigating individual as against aggregate social behavior requires somewhat different approaches and assumptions, although both analytic levels are ultimately interrelated. We mainly focus, here, on aggregative generalizations, assuming that exposure to similar environments tends to introduce a common basis into the possible range of individual responses.

Even within the general situation of freedom and affluence that characterizes Western Jewish communities, variations in economic development and political freedom may be expected to be significantly related to the degree of complexity in the occupational structure and in the socio-political institutions of the countries considered. These general aspects of a country's social structure, in turn, may affect the likelihood that occupational and social opportunities exist that are more or less congenial to the particular structural characteristics of Jewish populations, with their diffuse and higher-than-average educational attainment, their nearly total urbanization, and their concentration in a number of occupational branches in industry, trade and services.<sup>19</sup> Some very preliminary research actually suggests that Jewish populations in the Diaspora may be strongly attracted by places offering a combination of high average income, occupational diversification, modern technology and well-developed cultural services.<sup>20</sup> Where such greater opportunities are available, it can be expected that stronger societal hold will be experienced among members of the group: feelings of satisfaction with the present situation are likely to reduce the desire to migrate.

On a shorter term perspective, rapid changes in existing economic and political conditions—such as high rates of inflation or frequent manifestations of political violence, including violence against the group in question—may disrupt the framework on which previous evaluations of place satisfaction were based. Such society push may clearly be expected to increase the perceived need to migrate.

From the internal perspective of the Diaspora Jewish communities, a situation of relative societal openness—which we assume as more characteristic of Western than of other countries—may engender two contrasting processes. On the one hand, freedom and equality may be positively associated with the intensity of interaction between Jews

and members of other groups, leading to an increasing degree of cultural and structural similarity, and in the longer run to increasing frequencies of marital and identificational assimilation.<sup>21</sup> Assimilation, in turn, is presumedly associated with a decrease in the salience of particularistic values and norms, including those concerning ideal places of residence. On the other hand, freedom may stimulate socio-cultural groups, including Jewish minorities, to organize themselves voluntarily to achieve their preferred collective goals. It may be expected that the more a community is able to strengthen its self-supportive institutions—such as, for example, an independent educational network—the higher the likelihood that its members will internalize the group's norms and values, including, in the case of the Jews, those related to emigration to Israel.

The absolute size of a community, or its percentage relative to the general population of the community, may provide a further important indication of the influence and visibility of local Jewry, of the share of general power that it holds, and of its ability to offer opportunities for local community life as an alternative to the ideological forces that would lead to aliyah. The weight of Diaspora Jewish populations reflects a complex interplay of political, socio-economic and demographic forces.<sup>22</sup> Keeping in mind gravity theories of migration,<sup>23</sup> one may assume that the greater or denser a Jewish community, the stronger is its potential for holding the existing population, and also for attracting new Jewish migrants.

Turning now to the pull and repel factors related to the country of destination, the availability of levels of socio-economic reward compatible with the potential migrants' expectations can significantly affect the overall migration volume.<sup>24</sup> In the case of Israel, physical security as well as occupational absorption may be important components in this pull-repel complex. However, in the case of ideologically oriented migration, further attention should be devoted to factors affecting the level of place idealization among residents of the place itself. Changes in the cultural-ideological environment of the absorbing society may affect migration fluctuations over time.

When the focus is—as in our case—on migration differentials, two different groups of pull-repel factors should be discussed. At a greater generalization level stands the degree of appeal of the country of destination. An intriguing question is whether Israel's society projects only one image towards various other outside societies. It seems likely that local differences exist in the media presentation of Israel's image—in terms of its security problems, political regime, economic situation—which tend to affect the attitude of different Jewish communities in the Diaspora.



The differential impact of the receiving country on migration is probably easier to measure in terms of the absorption feedback of former immigrants from each country of origin. The experience of earlier immigrants can substantially affect the decision-making processes of those contemplating migration from the same country.<sup>25</sup> Perception from the outside of the degree of satisfaction prevailing among members of an origin group currently living in the country of destination seems likely to influence others in the country of origin. It can be assumed that differences will emerge in the degree of adaptation of various immigrant groups, due to their different occupational and cultural backgrounds. Absorption is a time-related process,<sup>26</sup> and consequently, the length of stay in the country appears to be a reasonable indicator of the degree of satisfaction among members of an immigrant group. Important components of the absorption process are the degree of efficiency and goodwill displayed by the absorptive system. Although the latter is supposed to treat all new immigrants equally, regardless of origin, some groups may be more favored than others. In the case of Israel, a high degree of communication exists with Western countries through family and other links, including rapidly expanding streams of tourism in both directions. Return migration, which is part of a larger stream of emigration from Israel, and which indicates that persons of the same origin group—presumably with similar backgrounds and characteristics—had to face difficulties that prevented their permanent settlement, seems most likely to deter further migration.

Finally, one should consider a set of factors related to financial or other costs of migration. Distance can (other things being equal) be considered a broad attrition factor in the propensity to migrate, because of transportation costs, and possibly also because of cultural, climatic and other environmental differences involved. In the context of migrations which, like aliyah, are subsidized by the governments of the countries of destination, however, migration costs should not be expected to play a very significant role in reducing the perceived feasibility of migration.

### DEFINITIONS, DATA AND METHOD

Having outlined the essential components of a conceptual framework for the analysis of variation in the rates of aliyah from Western countries, we should try to check its validity empirically. To do so we should translate each of the general concepts now defined into an appropriate quantitative variable. Comparing the values of each variable for each of the countries investigated here should provide an

**Table 1.** Yearly Rates of Migration to Israel from Western Countries per 10,000 Jewish Population, 1961–68 and 1969–76

Country	1961–1968	1969–1976
World, total	37	36
Western countries, total	7	18
Other countries, total	115	95
United Kingdom, Ireland	10	27
Scandinavia	23	68
Netherlands	31	61
Belgium, Luxembourg	23	48
France	24	50
Switzerland	31	62
Germany	38	55
Austria	33	59
Italy	31	58
Yugoslavia	14	23
Greece	41	92
United States	1	8
Canada	4	17
Mexico	14	43
Argentina	42	64
Brazil	25	39
Uruguay	59	97
Chile	41	176
Rest of Latin America	31	47
South Africa, Rhodesia	22	49
Australia, New Zealand	11	43

Sources: Immigrants, potential immigrants, and tourists settling in Israel: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics.

Jewish population size in the countries of origin: censuses, surveys, and population estimates, Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics, Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem. See also Table 2.

indication of the ability of our model to explain the observed differentials in aliyah rates, and to assess the relative weight of each variable in such an explanation.

Unfortunately, the quality and quantity of the relevant data available are uneven. Relatively copious and accurate data exist as to the general demographic and economic characteristics of Western societies. Fewer comparable indicators are available to throw light on their internal socio-political and cultural dynamics. Data on Jewish minorities the world over are far less numerous and standardized, notwithstanding the recent expansion of Jewish population studies.<sup>27</sup> Only in the case of a few variables is there complete coverage for the entire Western world—that is, for each of the twenty-one geographical units listed in Table 1. Data on characteristics of particular Western immigrant groups in Israel are available from a special processing of the

1961 Israeli census. Fewer data are available so far with the desired detail from the more recent—and for our purposes more interesting—1972 census. In certain cases, therefore, data operationalization will correspond only partially, or indirectly, to the needs of our model.

Such data constraints suggest that a first exploratory analysis of differential rates of Western migration to Israel (the dependent variable) be confined to a rather simplified version of the conceptual framework discussed above. The model tested consists of ten independent variables, divided into five categories of up to three variables each: (a) *general societal hold*: energy consumption per capita (an indicator of industrial and technological development); press freedom (an indicator of a country's political emancipation); (b) *general societal push*: consumer price increase; domestic violence (measured by indicators such as the number of deaths in internal political events); (c) *Jewish community structure*: the weight of the Jewish in the total population; the degree of Jewish assimilation; frequency of Jewish education; (d) *immigrant feedback*: the length of stay in Israel; return migration; (e) *migration costs*: the distance of each country from Israel. A synopsis of the variables used in the statistical analysis of migration rates from Western countries to Israel is given in Table 2.<sup>28</sup>

The multiple regression analysis discussed in the next section aims to test the strength and direction of relationships between Western migration rates to Israel and each independent variable, or category of variables. Since it may be argued that the quality of the data and their correspondence to the theoretical specifications of the model are better suited for measuring societal hold and push than other factors, an additional line of investigation will consider how much of the observed migration differentials can be explained solely by these factors. Consequently, in this analytic perspective the interest of other variables, including those related to Israel, is somewhat secondary.

In order to test our hypotheses empirically, we present in the next section a brief description of the characteristics of the independent variables, followed by a separate examination of the relationship of the dependent variable to each independent variable, and by an overall assessment of validity of the model and of its components.

## RESULTS

Means and standard deviations of each of the variables studied are reported in Table 3. The main changes over time refer to increases in the aliyah rate, energy consumption, assimilation and prices. Jewish population weight and the length of stay in Israel were relatively stable. (Other variables could not be compared over time.)

Interrelationships among independent variables are reported in Table 4. The data points to a pattern of overall consistency over time in the correlations between factors relating to general societal hold and push, and Jewish community structure in the countries of origin. Energy consumption and press freedom, both of which represent societal hold factors, are strongly and positively correlated. High correlation coefficients also appear within the societal push category between price increase and domestic violence in the countries of origin. The relationship between general hold and push factors is generally negative. With regard to the variables related to the structure of Jewish communities in the Diaspora, a clear negative link exists between the frequency of assimilation, on the one hand, and the weight of Jewish population and the frequency of Jewish education on the other. Jewish population weight, in turn, is directly correlated with the general societal hold factors.

Turning now to the variables related to the country of destination, a strongly negative relationship appears between the length of stay in Israel and the frequency of return migration. The attractive power of a given diaspora on Jewish migrants is indicated by the fact that Jewish population weight is negatively correlated with the length of stay in Israel among former immigrants from that country, and is positively correlated with the frequency of return migration among the same origin group. All these relationships confirm previously discussed hypotheses and the results of previous research.

These findings do not indicate the direction of causal relationships between variables; but only the sign (positive or negative) and the robustness of such relations. The very high correlation coefficients emerging in Table 4 suggest that some of the variables we defined above as independent are in fact dependent on further variables. This calls for additional caution in assessing the role of single variables in determining differential rates of Western migration to Israel, as in general, the interpretation of findings from multivariate analysis is on safer ground when it focuses on the larger categories of variables, rather than on single variables.

Analytic relationships between independent variables and the dependent variable are shown in Table 5. Looking first at the consistency over time of the sign of relationships, six correlation coefficients and eight standardized regression coefficients, out of ten, pointed in the same direction in both periods examined. The two measures, however, were in disagreement for four variables in the former period, and for six in the latter. The relationship of the dependent variable to several independent variables therefore may be intrinsically different from what it appears to be. (Correlation coefficients describe the relationship between a given independent variable and (in our case) aliyah

**Table 2. Variables Used in Multiple Regression Analysis of Migration Rates from Western Countries to Israel, 1961-68 and 1969-76**

Variable name	Description	Years Considered		Source
		First Period	Second Period	
<i>Dependent variable</i>				
Migration rate	Yearly rate of migration to Israel (incl. new immigrants, potential immigrants, and tourists settling) per 10,000 Jewish population in the countries of origin	1961-68	1969-76	a, b
<i>Independent variables</i>				
<i>A. General societal hold</i>				
Energy consumption	Energy consumption pro capite (equivalent of coal kgs.)	1965	1972	c
Press freedom	Index of press freedom, ratings given by judges-experts (range 0-4)	1965	1965	d
<i>B. General societal push</i>				
Price increase	Logarithm of percentage increase in consumer price index	1961-66	1969-74	c
Domestic violence	Logarithm of number of deaths from domestic violence	1963-67		d
	Index (range 0-100) based on detailed chronologies of events such as: deaths from domestic violence, violent overthrow of governments, interventions of armed forces in internal affairs		1969-76	e
<i>C. Jewish community structure</i>				
Jewish population weight	Jews per 1,000 population of country	1961	1972	b, c

Assimilation	Percent of non-Jews among immigrants to Israel from country: this indicator displays a correlation coefficient of .8 with percent mixed marriages (for the countries with available data on the latter subject)	1948-68 1960	1969-76 1967	a f
Jewish education	Percent Jewish children aged 6-17 receiving any kind of Jewish education			
<i>D. Immigrants absorption feedback</i>				
Length of stay	Median length of stay (years) among persons born in given country and living in Israel	1961	1972	g
Return migration	Percent "missing" among persons born in given country when comparing 1961 and 1972 Israeli censuses, after taking into account new immigrants and estimates of mortality	1961-72	1961-72	g
<i>E. Migration cost</i>				
Distance	Distance of given country from Israel (measured in conventional units of 25 kms.)	—	—	

Sources:

- (a) Central Bureau of Statistics, *Immigration to Israel 1948-1972*, Part I and II, Special Series, Nos. 416 and 489; *Immigration to Israel*, yearly publication; and unpublished data provided through the courtesy of the Central Bureau of Statistics.
- (b) Figures of Jewish population size in individual countries according to censuses, surveys, population estimates, Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics, The Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem.
- (c) United Nations, Statistical Office, *Statistical Yearbook*.
- (d) Taylor, C. L., and M. C. Hudson, *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, Second Edition. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972.
- (e) Stebbins, R. P., and A. Amoia. *The World This Year. Supplement to the Political Handbook and Atlas of the World*. New York: Simon and Schuster for Council on Foreign Relations, 1971, 1972, 1973; Banks, A. S., editor, *Political Handbook of the World*. Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, Center for Social Analysis of the State University of New York at Binghamton. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975, 1976-7, 1978.
- (f) Engelman, U. Z. *Jewish Education in the Diaspora: Preliminary Report*. Jerusalem: World Conference of Jewish Organizations, 1962; Duskin, A. editor, *Jewish Education in the Diaspora*. Jerusalem: The World Zionist Organization, 1971.
- (g) Israel, Central Bureau of Statistics, *Population and Housing Census, 1961*, Vol. 22; *Census of Population and Housing, 1972*, Vol. 10; and unpublished data provided through the courtesy of the Central Bureau of Statistics.

**Table 3.** Means and Standard Deviations of Variables,<sup>a</sup> 1961–68 and 1969–76

Variables	1961–1968		1969–1976	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Migration rate	25.98 <sup>b</sup>	14.12	56.43 <sup>b</sup>	34.88
Energy consumption	3,080.43	2,324.62	4,023.19	3,027.39
Press freedom	2.03	0.81	2.03	0.81
Price increase	3.56	1.29	4.36	1.31
Domestic violence <sup>c</sup>	1.86	2.04	43.10	29.39
Jewish population weight	5.64	6.66	6.07	7.18
Assimilation	0.57	0.79	4.82	4.79
Jewish education	41.91	20.91	40.42	18.33
Length of stay	11.00	5.54	12.96	10.42
Return migration	260.58	213.13	260.58	213.13
Distance	330.00	204.76	330.00	204.76

(a) N = 21. Measurement units for each variable are specified in Table 2.

(b) Unweighted means. Weighted means in Table 1 were 6.8 and 18.1, respectively.

(c) Data are not strictly comparable for the two periods of time. See Table 2 for further explanations.

rates, while incorporating the indirect effects on migration of additional variables. Standardized regression coefficients reflect the “net” effect of a single independent variable on aliyah rates, after controlling for the effects of the other variables.) Two examples of a “hidden” positive relationship between an independent variable and aliyah rates—despite the negative “apparent” relationship indicated by correlation coefficients—are offered by press freedom and Jewish education. Taken by themselves, these two factors (proxies for societal liberalism and Jewish identity, respectively) tend toward a positive impact on aliyah rates.

Economic hold, represented in the model by energy consumption in the countries of origin, shows up as the strongest single explanatory factor of variation in Western aliyah rates in 1961–68, while economic push—as indicated by inflation in the countries of origin—was the strongest factor in 1969–76. An alternative variable partially tested, and then rejected in the course of this study—the ratio of Israeli price increase to price increase in the country of origin—resulted in a substantially weaker correlate of both migration to, and return migration from, Israel than inflation rates in the countries of origin alone.

Standardized regression coefficients for other independent variables mostly behaved according to expectations. After controlling for all other variables, positive effects on migration to Israel were exerted by price increase, Jewish education, domestic violence and press freedom in the countries of origin, and by the length of stay in Israel of

Table 4. Zero-order Correlation between Independent Variables,<sup>a</sup> 1961-68 and 1969-76

Variables	Societal Hold		Societal Push		Jewish Community		Migration Feedback		Cost	
	Energy consumption	Press freedom	Price increase	Domestic violence	population weight	Assimilation	Jewish education	Length of stay		Return migration
<i>1961-1968</i>										
Energy consumption	1.000									
Press freedom	.593 <sup>c</sup>	1.000								
Price increase	-.473 <sup>b</sup>	-.328	1.000							
Domestic violence	-.061	-.377 <sup>b</sup>	.037	1.000						
Jewish population weight	.591 <sup>c</sup>	.236	.160	.282	1.000					
Assimilation	-.110	-.398 <sup>b</sup>	-.002	-.231	-.296	1.000				
Jewish education	.245	.229	-.550 <sup>c</sup>	.194	-.143	-.268	1.000			
Length of stay	.088	.158	-.458 <sup>b</sup>	-.457 <sup>b</sup>	-.350	.281	.308	1.000		
Return migration	.381 <sup>b</sup>	.036	-.131	.524 <sup>c</sup>	.468 <sup>b</sup>	-.331	.174	-.574 <sup>c</sup>	1.000	
Distance	.055	-.019	.420 <sup>b</sup>	.493 <sup>b</sup>	.438 <sup>b</sup>	-.478 <sup>b</sup>	.088	-.691 <sup>c</sup>	.421 <sup>b</sup>	1.000
<i>1969-1976</i>										
Energy consumption	1.000									
Press freedom	.609 <sup>c</sup>	1.000								
Price increase	-.482 <sup>b</sup>	-.393 <sup>b</sup>	1.000							
Domestic violence	-.444 <sup>b</sup>	-.471 <sup>b</sup>	.679 <sup>c</sup>	1.000						
Jewish population weight	.592 <sup>c</sup>	.274	.006	.103	1.000					
Assimilation	.090	.264	-.247	-.446 <sup>b</sup>	-.426 <sup>b</sup>	1.000				
Jewish education	.094	.304	-.271	-.168	-.037	-.263	1.000			
Length of stay	-.124	-.084	-.302	-.073	-.523 <sup>c</sup>	.533 <sup>c</sup>	-.055	1.000		
Return migration	.345	.036	.099	.014	.505 <sup>c</sup>	-.458 <sup>b</sup>	.311	-.652 <sup>c</sup>	1.000	
Distance	.005	.019	.451 <sup>b</sup>	.316	.418 <sup>b</sup>	-.617 <sup>c</sup>	.247	-.741 <sup>c</sup>	.421 <sup>b</sup>	1.000

<sup>a</sup>N = 21

<sup>b</sup>Significant at .05 level

<sup>c</sup>Significant at .01 level



**Table 5.** Zero-order Correlation Coefficients and Standardized Multiple Regression (Beta) Coefficients between Migration Rates from Western Countries to Israel and Independent Variables<sup>a</sup>

Variables	1961–1968		1969–1976	
	Correlation coefficients	Beta coefficients	Correlation coefficients	Beta coefficients
Energy consumption	-.665 <sup>c</sup>	-.804 <sup>c</sup>	-.482 <sup>b</sup>	.063
Press freedom	-.089	.255	-.148	.340
Price increase	.500 <sup>c</sup>	.398	.789 <sup>c</sup>	.998 <sup>c</sup>
Domestic violence	-.180	.022	.528 <sup>c</sup>	.168
Jewish population weight	-.231	.359	-.300	-.314
Assimilation	-.205	-.332 <sup>b</sup>	.041	-.042
Jewish education	-.201	.138	-.124	.131
Length of stay	.141	.164	.047	.015
Return migration	-.531 <sup>c</sup>	-.264	.340	-.047
Distance	-.093	-.326	.100	-.293

<sup>a</sup>N = 21

<sup>b</sup>Significant at .05 level

<sup>c</sup>Significant at .01 level

former immigrants. Negative effects on aliyah resulted from assimilation, return migration and distance. On the other hand, standardized regression coefficients for energy consumption and Jewish population weight, as they relate to aliyah rates, displayed a certain instability. (Such intriguing findings suggest that the reality of the situation is far more complex than can be encapsulated in this type of schematic model.) With the important exception of assimilation in 1961–68, none of these other variables, however, exerted statistically significant effects on aliyah rates.

Alternative analyses, not presented here, did show that demographic factors such as the age structure of diaspora Jewish populations may assist in explaining variation in Western aliyah rates. Migration rates were weakly positive in correlation with the population's percentage of aged persons, and weakly negative in correlation with the percentage of younger adults. Such variables were excluded from the final analysis in order to retain a number of countries for which such data were not available.

In order to ascertain the relative importance of each main category of variables in determining the variations in Western aliyah rates, three different multiple regression procedures were run (see Table 6): (a) each category was inserted alone to see how much of the variance it could explain on its own; (b) each category was removed, one at a time, while all the others were retained in the model, in order to see how large a change in the variance explained would result from that

omission; (c) all five categories were retained in a stepwise regression. The general explanatory power of the model is high: after adjustment for degrees of freedom, about 72 percent of Western aliyah rate variations are statistically explained by the ten independent variables examined here. The same value of determination coefficient (71.5 and 71.6 percent respectively) was obtained for the two periods of time for which the model was tested, although this involved a different internal balance amongst the variables. However, the relatively small number of countries examined and the relatively high number of variables indicate the need for caution in interpreting the high explanatory power of our model.

On the whole, referring back to our earlier discussion, general societal factors of hold and push in the countries of origin seem to produce much stronger effects on aliyah rates than the factors related to Jewish community structure and to immigrant absorption feedback. The last column of Table 6 shows that societal hold alone (two variables: energy consumption and press freedom) accounted for 68 percent of the explained variance in Western aliyah rates in 1961–68; while societal push alone (two variables: price increase and domestic violence) accounted for 52 percent of the explained variance in 1969–76, with societal hold contributing a further 31 percent. However the second column in Table 6 shows that, usually, when one category of variables is omitted, very little of the model's explanatory power is lost, because of the high correlation existing between general societal and Jewish variables. A remarkable exception appears in the 1969–76 data: when omitting societal push variables, the model loses more than half of its capacity to explain variation in Western migration rates to Israel.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The main thrust of this study is that to understand free Jewish migration one has to assess not only the determinants of individual migrant selectivity—which in the case of aliyah is known to have a strong ideological bias—but also the causes of fluctuation in the migration from different countries. Since Jewish communities in the Diaspora have very different population sizes, the total number of immigrants to Israel depends on the combination of these weights with the variable propensities to emigrate from each country.

During the period studied here, significant changes occurred in the total volume of Western aliyah. On the average, migration rates in 1969–76 were about three times higher than in 1961–68. Such a change

**Table 6.** Contribution of Each Category of Independent Variables in Explaining Variation in Migration Rates from Western Countries to Israel, 1961–68 and 1969–76

Category of independent variables	Change in R <sup>2</sup>			Percent of explained variance
	Category inserted alone	Category removed, all other categories retained	All-inclusive stepwise regression <sup>a</sup>	
<i>1961–1968</i>				
General societal hold	.585	.107	.585	68
Jewish community structure	.258	.112	.081	9
General societal push	.290	.043	.047	6
Immigrants absorption feedback	.322	.067	.121	14
Migration cost	.009	.022	.024	3
Total R <sup>2</sup>			.858	100
R <sup>2</sup> adjusted for degrees of freedom			.715	
F			6.035 <sup>b</sup>	
Regression standard error			7.53	
<i>1969–1976</i>				
General societal hold	.266	.053	.266	31
Jewish community structure	.129	.042	.103	12
General societal push	.622	.514	.450	52
Immigrants absorption feedback	.169	.001	.018	2
Migration cost	.010	.020	.021	3
Total R <sup>2</sup>			.858	100
R <sup>2</sup> adjusted for degrees of freedom			.716	
F			6.057 <sup>b</sup>	
Regression standard error			18.57	

<sup>a</sup>Categories were hierarchically inserted in the equation, in the same order in which they are listed in this table.

<sup>b</sup>Significant at .01 level

has generally been explained by the renewed interest for Diaspora Jews of the state of Israel, and by the economic growth in Israel in the wake of the June 1967 war. However, due weight must also be given to the fact that during the early 1970's many countries—including a number of Western countries—were facing serious economic and political problems.

The variation in rates of aliyah from Western, free-emigration countries was studied in this paper through a multiple regression technique. Selected hypotheses were explored over two consecutive periods of time, and a statistical interpretation was found for most of the observed differentials. However, significant statistical relationships emerged for very few of the single correlates of the aliyah rates. General societal

hold and push factors in the countries of origin contributed most of the explanation for the observed migration differentials. More frequent migration was highly associated with both long term factors, such as relatively lower levels of economic development, modernization and political emancipation; and short term factors, such as higher levels of economic and political instability. Structural—mainly cultural—factors in the Jewish communities of origin, and factors relating to the process of absorption in Israel of earlier immigrants from the same countries, had a relatively minor impact on the frequency of Western aliyah. Distance from Israel had a very minor effect.

The different balance of explanatory factors in the two periods examined here suggests that elements of economic and political stress may substantially affect Western migration to Israel—which would otherwise be depressed by hold factors in the countries of origin—although Jews in Western countries are less likely to be exposed to such unfavorable societal circumstances than Jews in Eastern Europe or in Moslem countries. In other words, the findings of this study support the popular assumption that full “fleshpots” do deter free aliyah. Moreover, the fact that research focusing essentially on factors operating in the countries of origin succeeds in illuminating important aspects of migration propensities has its own policy implications. Indeed, one possible conclusion is that Western aliyah is so responsive to general societal conditions in the countries of origin that factors operating in Israel do not appear to play a very significant role. Provided that these findings are confirmed by further, more systematic research, they suggest that the geographical composition—and implicitly, the volume—of Western migration to Israel may be largely determined by factors lying beyond the control of the Jewish polity—either in the state of Israel or in the Diaspora Jewish communities.

These facts notwithstanding, there seems to be no justification for rushing to the conclusion that more aliyah from the West will only be induced by a substantial deterioration in the socio-political environment of the Jewish communities there. The intrinsic relationship between the frequency of Jewish education in the Diaspora, or the frequency of assimilation, and aliyah rates suggests that it would be in the best interest of Israel to encourage efforts to strengthen the Jewish content and character of the Diaspora communities. Such efforts, if successful, could lead to a rise in aliyah, provided that additional factors conducive to migration materialize. It also appears, perhaps indirectly, that an environment of societal freedom and openness is advantageous to aliyah, other things being equal.

The question of the general effects on aliyah of changes in Israeli society was examined here only very marginally. It can be legitimately

argued that such factors do influence the total volume of aliyah, and perhaps its geographical composition as well. But, as has already been pointed out, an examination of the factors acting chiefly outside Israel provided a self-contained interpretation of Western aliyah rate differentials.

A broader issue for discussion is how to interpret aliyah, and more generally, free ideological migration, in the framework of allegedly homogenizing global modernization processes, which, according to some theories, lead irrevocably from particularistic to universalistic attitudes and behavior.<sup>29</sup> Migration that enhances the particularism of an ethno-religious group may seem anachronistic in the framework of a broad conception of the modernization process. Our exploratory analysis indicates that such a contradiction is more apparent than real. It is true that most migrants to Israel would not move unless ideological factors were at work. Ideology, however, is in most cases a necessary but not sufficient factor for migration. Aliyah is thus quite congruent with the experience of general migration movements in which socio-economic variables act as prominent determinants.

Our findings suggest, more generally, that free migration, though largely inspired by "the relation of man to his higher aspirations,"<sup>30</sup> may more often occur under the influence of factors similar to those which would tend to generate other, quantitatively larger, types of migration. Free migration tends to draw from relatively small, selected and at times even elitist social strata. This upward selectivity with regard to the internal stratification of each country of origin contrasts with a downward selectivity with regard to each country's socio-economic and political status, free migration gaining momentum in those countries which offer less attractive prospects.

In summarizing the results of this research, its preliminary and exploratory nature should be unequivocally stressed. The data upon which we have relied have many limitations, which should ideally be removed in further attempts of this kind; furthermore, time coverage should be considerably extended, and an effort should be made to tie the explanatory variables more directly to periodic changes in the overall frequency of Western aliyah. Repeated verifications of our experiment are necessary before it can be ascertained with some certainty that consistent determinant patterns affect the variation of aliyah rates, and make them partially predictable.

A further warning relates to certain recent trends which have some bearing on the very concept of migration. Nowadays one may observe an increasing spread of bi-local (or higher order) residential patterns among Jews (and non-Jews) in Western countries—and to some extent also among Israelis living in the West. Such circular movements aim at

fulfilling complementary economic and non-economic needs that cannot be satisfied in one place only. Quite a few Western immigrants (*olim*) and especially potential immigrants<sup>31</sup> (*olim bekhoah*) may have intended to reside in Israel only for limited periods of time—for purposes of study, perhaps—before returning to their countries of origin. Again, other people keep a home in Israel, and make great efforts to pay frequent visits to the country but nevertheless never formally immigrate. To the extent that observed migration lacks a lifetime commitment, its analysis too can only lead to provisional conclusions.

On the other hand, the approach presented in this paper seems justifiable when considering that the migration of Jews from Western countries and their absorption into Israeli society are extremely complex social processes, which need to be dealt with on the basis of systematic research. It would appear, by contrast, that the prediction of expected or potential aliyah has relied more often on evaluations based on feelings of hope or fear. Clearly, combined use of comprehensive theoretical frameworks and of more sophisticated instruments of statistical inference may help in attempts to monitor and also to predict the volume of aliyah in current and future years, especially with regard to countries which permit free emigration.

### Notes

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31. "Potential immigrants" as used here follows the terminology of Israel government offices and denotes a person who is entitled under the Law of Return to an immigrant visa or an immigrant certificate, and who intends to stay in Israel for more than three months.