# Quality of Life in the Eastern Galilee

October 25, 2023

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מרכז ידע אזורי גליל מזרחי
REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE CENTER
EAST GALILEE

# Regional Knowledge Center - Eastern Galilee Cluster

## Vision

**Advancing Research and Empowering Change through Public Engagement.**
**At the Regional Knowledge Center - Eastern Galilee Cluster, we lead pioneering research initiatives focused on critical socio-demographic trends within the Eastern Galilee region, driven by active public participation. Our central mission is to enhance the quality of life in the Eastern Galilee by facilitating informed policy decisions grounded in locally relevant data.**

## Our Partners

The center stands as a collaborative effort, proudly supported by Tel-Hai College, the Eastern Galilee Cluster, the Ronald S. and Roadburg Foundation, and the Jewish Federations of Canada - UIA.

## Our Main Objective

Guiding National and Regional Policy Enhancement.

Our primary goal is to champion both national and regional policies that elevate the quality of life. We achieve this through data-driven work plans and government decisions.

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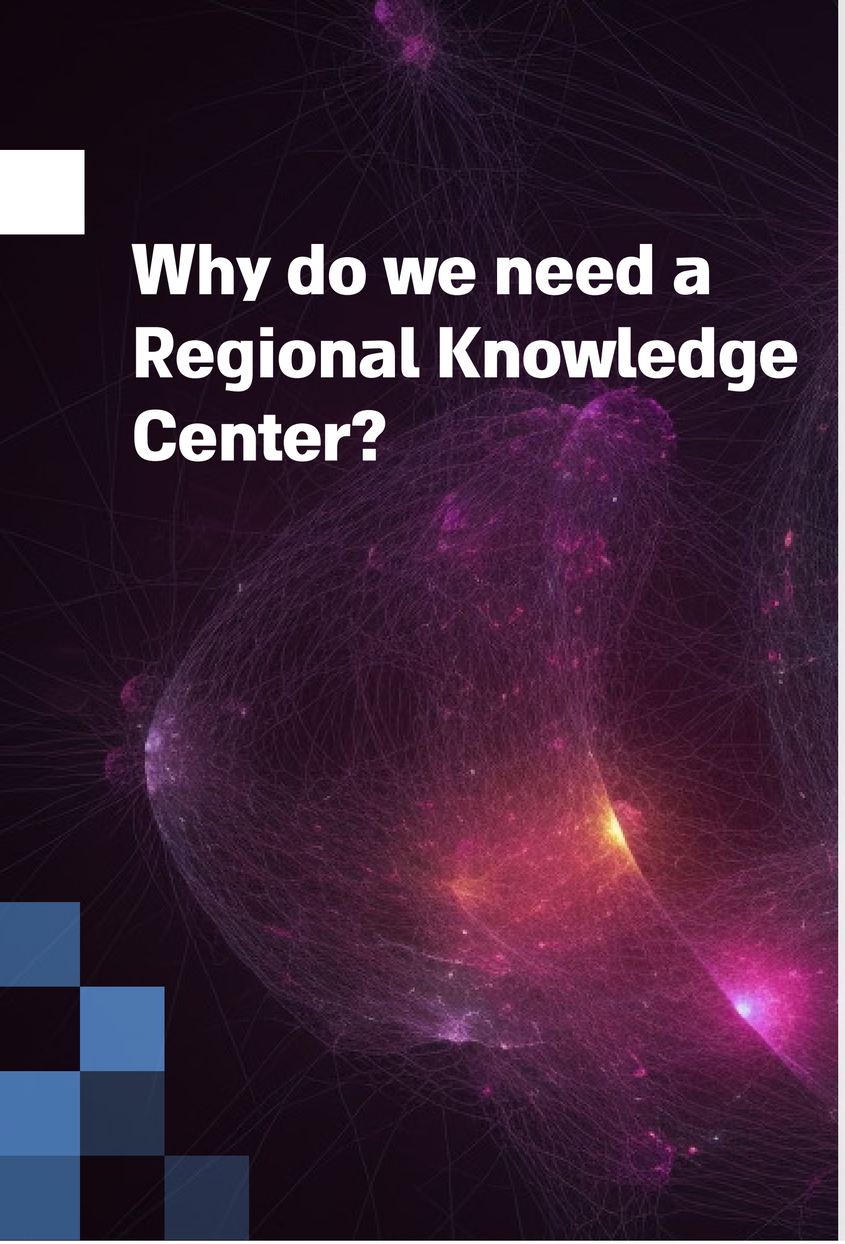
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# Key Activities

- **Quality of Life Assessment:** We meticulously measure the quality of life across the Eastern Galilee region and conduct comprehensive trend analyses across various domains.
- **Data Synthesis and Recommendations:** We harness the knowledge and data amassed to derive insightful conclusions and recommendations, assisting local authorities in crafting policies firmly rooted in data.
- **Research on Challenges and Needs:** We delve deep into the intricacies of regional challenges and requirements, providing a robust foundation for effective interventions.
- **Fostering Regional Identity:** We foster a regional approach, language, and identity by engaging the public and adopting collaborative governance methodologies. This process ensures that the community has a sense of ownership over changes.
- **Policy Advocacy:** We disseminate critical findings and policy recommendations stemming from our data collection efforts, contributing to informed decision making.

# Why do we need a Regional Knowledge Center?



- Eastern Galilee's data is included as part of the general northern region.

  The Eastern Galilee's socio-demographic diversity differs from the general northern region, and therefore so does its data.

- **Part of the data is not collected in our region.**
- **The data is not consistently updated or collected annually**; this makes it difficult to make decisions based on this data.
- Existing academic models used to collect information **do not fit the reality of the Eastern Galilee.**

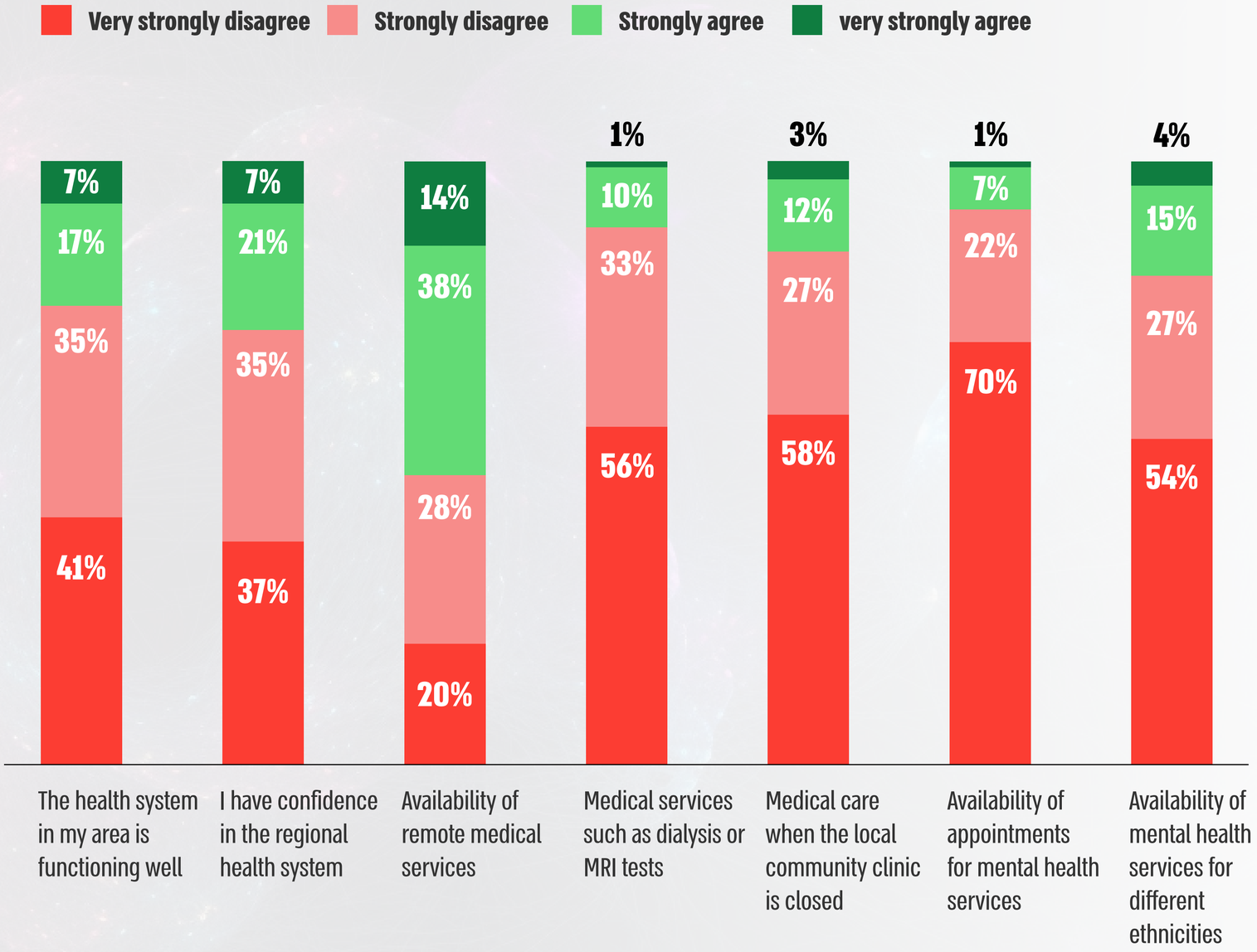
# Introduction to the quality-of-life data in the Eastern Galilee

## The findings are based on the following data:

- **22** focus groups
- **15** in-depth interviews
- questionnaire for residents - over **800** respondents in a representative sample of the cluster's councils
- Collecting data from the central council
- Analyzing CBS reports
- The review will include data from **four domains:** health, employment, transportation and infrastructure, and personal and social welfare
- Findings will be presented at 3 levels: **qualitative analysis** (focus groups and interviews), **quantitative analysis** (questionnaire results), and **administrative data analysis**

# Satisfaction with health services






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# HEALTH

## Qualitative Findings

The study revealed dissatisfaction with current health services, highlighting themes for improvement such as enhanced access to medical institutions, increased human resources, development of emergency services, improved service quality, and expanded mental health and preventive care.

## Quantitative Findings

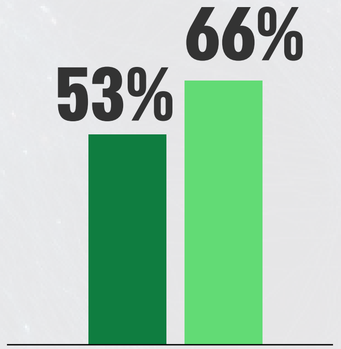
Similarly, low satisfaction was evident in the quality-of-life questionnaire. Notably, 76% of respondents believed that the regional health system functions at a low-to-very-low level, with 72% expressing low-to-very-low confidence in the system. Specific areas of low satisfaction included availability of CT scans (89%), medical care when local community clinic is closed (85%), appointments for specialist doctors (89%), availability of mental health services in the area (92%), and availability of mental health services for different ethnic groups (81%). A positive note was the satisfaction with telemedicine services, indicated by 52% of respondents.

# HEALTH

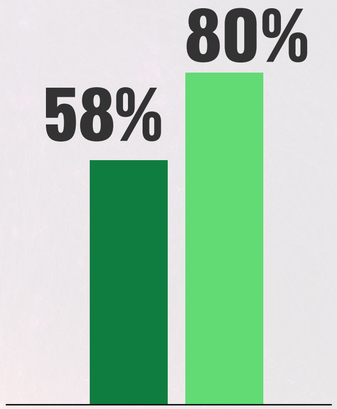
Eastern Galilee

All of Israel

**High satisfaction** from the Functioning of the health system in Israel




**High trust** in the Health system in Israel

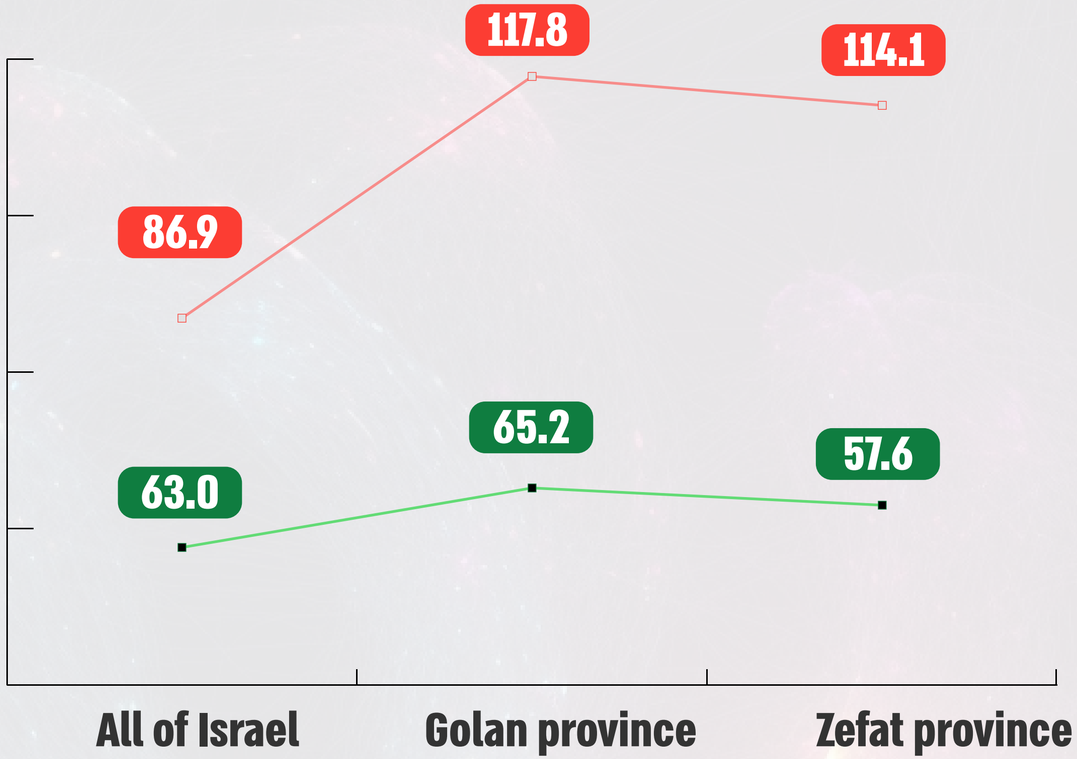



These statistics emphasize the dissatisfaction of Eastern Galilee respondents with the health system in their region compared to those in other areas.

# Administrative Data- Diabetes

Death rates per 100,000 residents aged 45 and over in Israel, Zefat and Golan provinces, 2015-2019

Incidence of diabetes per 1000 residents in 2017-2019




The administrative data show that the incidence of diabetes is similar to the national average, but the mortality from diabetes is higher than the national average in both the Golan and Zefat provinces. Data showing higher mortality in the Eastern Galilee than the national average were also measured for cancer and vascular diseases in the brain.


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# The story behind the numbers

The low degree of satisfaction with the health system in the Eastern Galilee region, as explained in the focus groups and the survey:

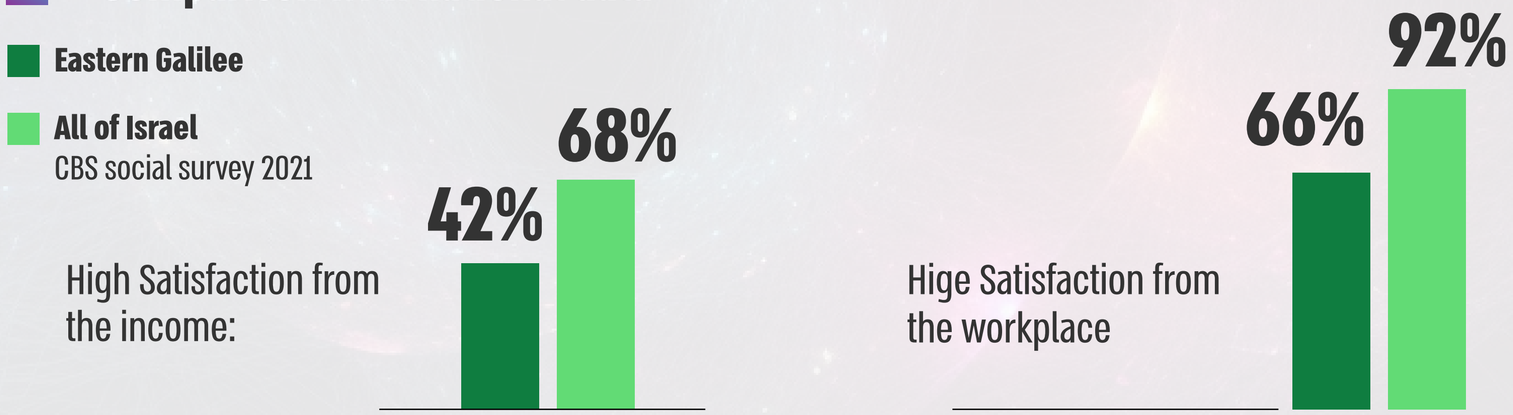
- Lack of availability of doctors in general and specialists in particular
- Long travel distances to hospitals and specialist clinics
- Outdated medical equipment
- Concerns about the quality and availability of emergency medical services

# EMPLOYMENT

- **Qualitative Findings:** The study underscored the need for diverse employment options, both part-time and full-time, to enhance opportunities for working closer to home. Additional themes included advocating for fair wages and increased job opportunities for individuals with higher education.

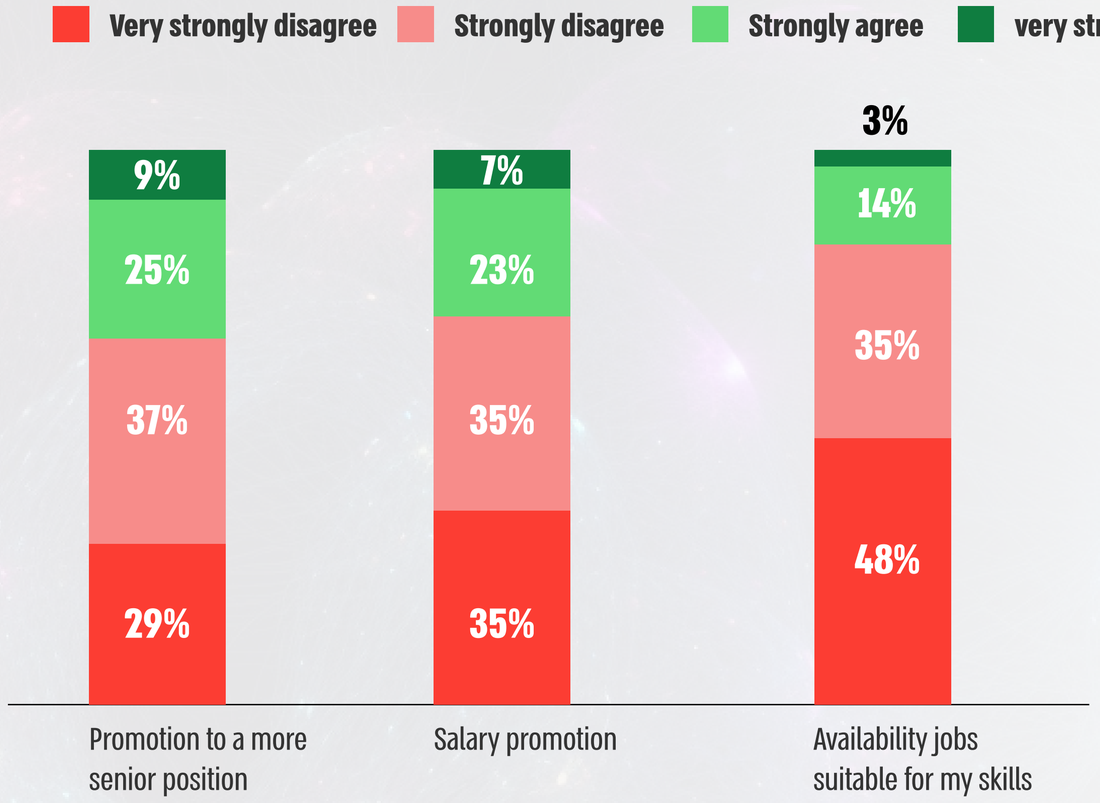
- **Quantitative Findings:** Among the respondents, 88% (706) are employed, with the majority (78%, 547) serving as wage-earners. Of those employed, 55% (391) work full-time, and 57% (449) reported earning above the minimum wage. Notably, 83% expressed that the availability of jobs matching their skills is low or very low.

- **Comparison with national data**




These findings show a significant gap between the Eastern Galilee respondents and those nation-wide.

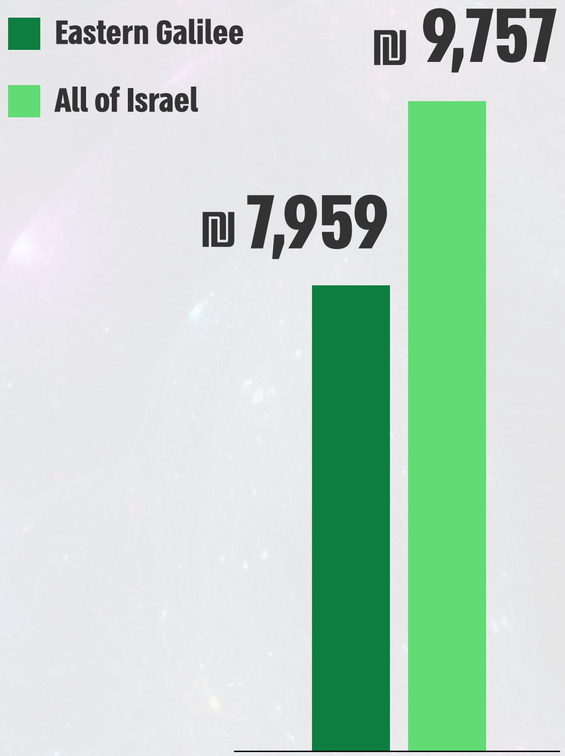
# EMPLOYMENT satisfaction




66% of Eastern Galilee respondents to the questionnaire stated that they had a very poor chance of being promoted to a more senior position. Nationwide, (CBS, 2020) 39% of respondents answered negatively to the prospect of promotion, highlighting a significant gap between Eastern Galilee respondents and those nation-wide.

62% of Eastern Galilee respondents said that the distance to their workplace was very burdensome vs. only 30% nationwide.

# EMPLOYMENT

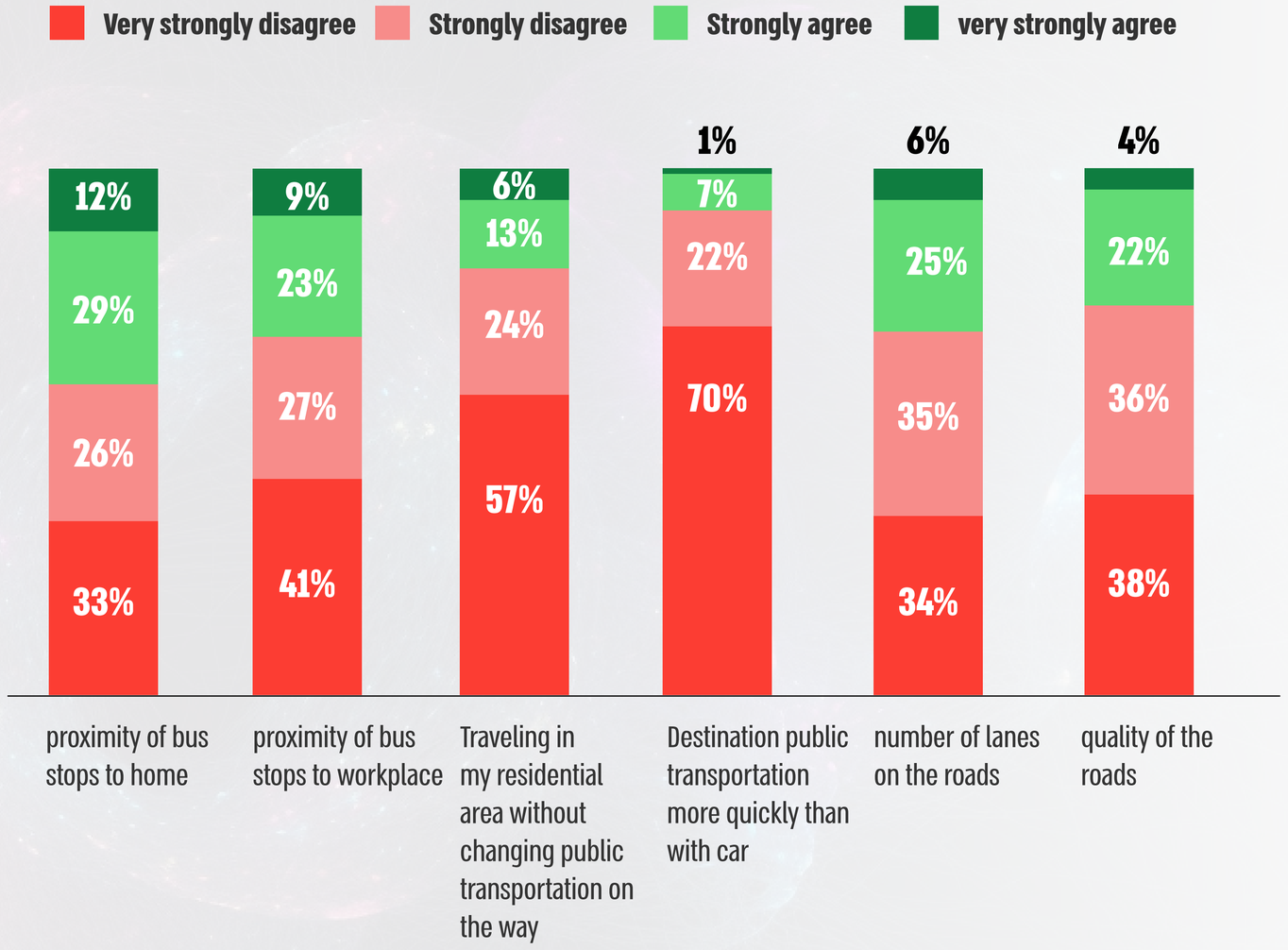



**Administrative data** - In 2019, the average salary in the Eastern Galilee region is 19% lower than the national average salary. Also, the percentage of wage earners earning minimum wage or less in the Eastern Galilee region was 45%; nationwide it was 39%.

# The story behind the findings

The Qualitative data revealing dissatisfaction with available employment options and the quantitative data indicating a perception of a low likelihood for wage increases (70%). 66% expressing scepticism about workplace promotions. We understand that figures like 57% earning above the minimum wage and satisfaction rates with the workplace (66%) and income (42%) and their comparison to the national date, do not tell the comprehensive picture.  A more in-depth understanding is necessary.

# Satisfaction with transportation and infrastructure





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# TRANSPORTATION

- **Qualitative** – There is a clear demand for improved frequency and accessibility of public transportation both locally and nationally.
- **Quantitative** – Strong dissatisfaction was expressed with the proximity of bus stops to home (59%) and to the workplace (68%). Most respondents (81%) expressed very low satisfaction due to the need for more than one bus when traveling to and from work. 92% could reach their destination with a car more quickly than with public transportation.

  Many of the Eastern Galilee respondents expressed poor satisfaction levels with the punctuality of the public transportation vehicles (56%), and with the frequency of bus lines in the area (82%), making it difficult for them to rely on public transport. They also noted very low satisfaction with the number of lanes on the roads (69%) and the quality of the roads (74%).

  As in the focus groups, most (88%) respondents to the questionnaire agreed to the importance of a train line in the Eastern Galilee, as well as shared taxis (59%) (less expensive than private taxis) and an airport (66%).
- **Administrative data** - Between 2012-2022 the number of motorized vehicles in Eastern Galilee increased by 54% vs. 44% in Israel in general. 63% of Eastern Galilee residents own at least one vehicle (vs. 69% nationwide) and 16% own two or more vehicles (vs. 24% nationwide) (CBS, 2021).

# The story behind the numbers

Dissatisfaction with public transportation requires the ownership of at least one vehicle, but in most cases getting to work, to medical treatments and even to places of entertainment require more than one vehicle per family (the vast majority of residents do not have more than one). At the same time the average salary in the area is lower than it is nationwide. We understand the daily difficulties experienced by many residents in region concerning employment opportunities, accessibility to medical services, etc.

The consequences may therefore be foregoing medical treatments, family tensions, giving up working days for access to medical treatments, difficulty in finding jobs and compromising on low-paid work.

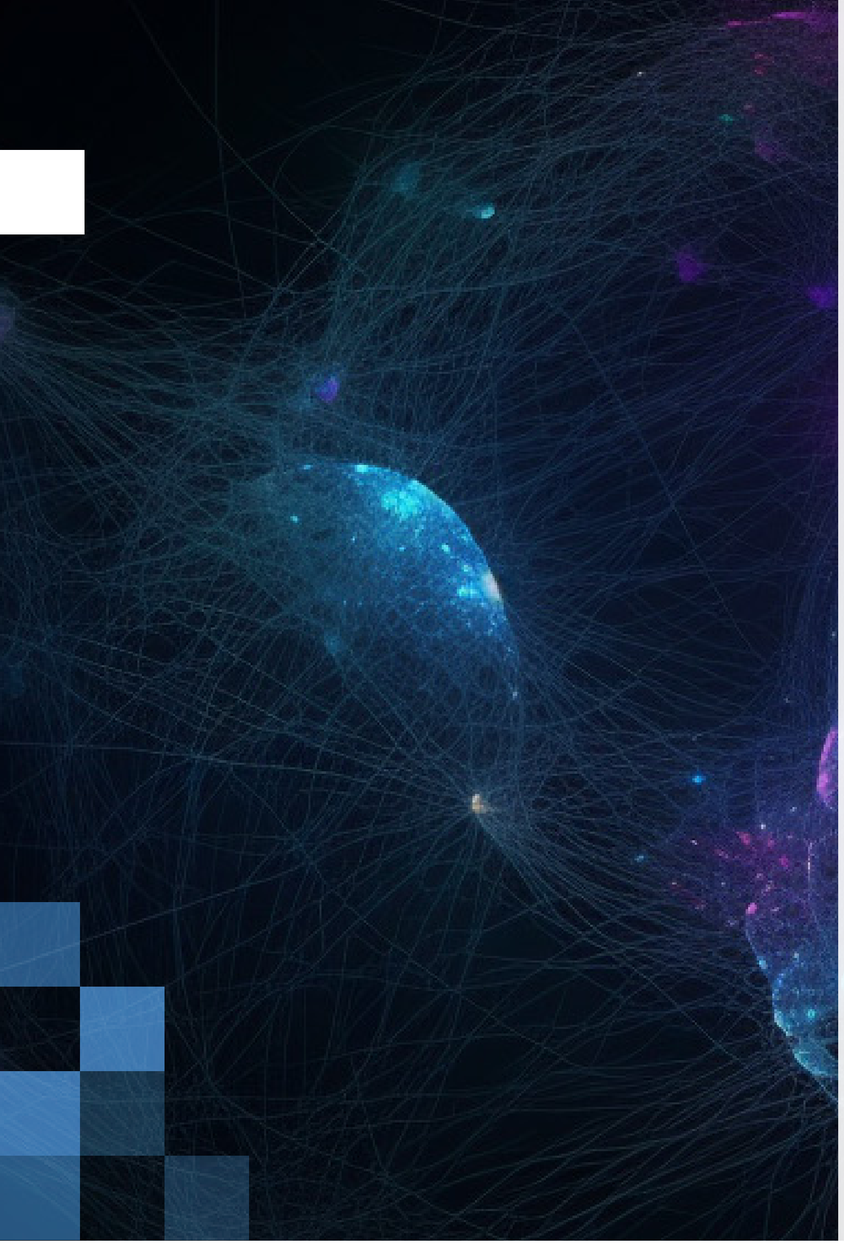
In addition, the findings express the difficulties of the residents who are required to use public transportation, when the bus stops are far from their home and workplace, when public transportation is infrequent, and when public transport timetables are erratic.

# SOCIAL AND PERSONAL WELFARE

- **Qualitative** – A central theme was the strong sense of community and mutual support. There is a need for social and community activities focused on special populations, as well as activities for different age groups.
- **Quantitative** –82% responded that social and community activities should be expanded in the Eastern Galilee region as well as the services for groups such as older adults.
- **Comparatively** – Most (79%) respondents very much agreed that in time of crisis, they can rely on people around them. This figure is low compared to the national average (93%). Also, the majority (83%) of respondents very much agreed that they are generally not lonely, a figure similar to the national average (79%).




Additional evidence to the sense of community: 48% of respondents volunteer in some public or private framework, while the national average is much lower (21%).



**The data regarding personal and social well-being are very positive and largely describe the feeling of social cohesion and solidarity:**

"...the sense of belonging and familiarity between the people, the communality, are the region's greatest value; this is what makes 'the difference' to people. This is why they come here, and often why they do not leave. Only this helps people overcome the challenges; it is the most important thing here in the region...."

**The proximity to nature and the ability to balance work and family were major factors contributing to well-being.**

However, it's important to note that even within the cluster, there were significant variations in these assessments. The ultra-Orthodox and Arab communities specifically emphasized the necessity for culturally-sensitive social services. Additionally, groups such as drug and alcohol users, the elderly, and single parents were identified as requiring more extensive services.

# Insights and Conclusions

## Work process

This study utilized a combination of qualitative (focus groups and in-depth interviews) and quantitative tools (questionnaire), which were culturally and linguistically accessible to the respondents who represented the diverse population of the region.

Our efforts included building relationships and trust with stakeholders in all sectors, and the use of existing platforms to meet residents.

# Insights and Conclusions

## Findings

Participants highlighted four levels of response necessary to address problems and enhance the quality of life: community/village, district, regional, and state levels. Emphasis was placed on the necessity for diverse and high-quality services that are culturally and ethnically appropriate for the region's population. Calls were made for improved physical and digital accessibility to a variety of services. Additionally, participants advocated for enhanced learning and cooperation between districts, facilitating the sharing of relevant information when one district possesses insights that may benefit another.

# Insights and Conclusions

## Findings

- **Employment:** There is a consensus among respondents that a broader range of jobs in various fields is essential, and they expect authorities to enhance livelihood opportunities in the area. Additionally, there is a call for an increase in the average salary in the region.
- **Health**: Improvement in access to medical institutions, an augmentation of health workers, enhancement of health service quality, the development of emergency services, and an expansion of mental health and preventive care services are crucial. Exploring personalized medicine and remote medicine is suggested as potential solutions to enhance health services in the geographical periphery.
- **Infrastructure:** The region requires better road infrastructure, improved public transportation, including train services, and an increased availability of housing for both rent and purchase.
- **Personal and Social Well-being**: While there is generally high satisfaction among most respondents, certain groups lack social-community services, indicating a need for targeted improvements in personal and social well-being.

At the Regional Knowledge Center - Eastern Galilee Cluster, we are committed tomaking a profound impact on the Eastern Galilee's socio-economic landscape by harnessing the power of knowledge and community involvement.
Together, we strive to build a brighter and more prosperous future for our region.
You can't improve what you don't measure.

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