Jewish Immigration to Palestine in the Long 1920s:  
An Exploratory Examination

By

Jacob Metzer  
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Abstract

This paper provides an interim summary of a research effort aimed at filling some of the informational gaps that limited our ability to generate a detailed (quantitative) picture of Jewish immigration to Mandatory Palestine, particularly during the first decade of British rule. Concentrating on the long 1920s (1919-1932), a new micro data set containing rich demographic details and other pieces of information of about 45,000 individuals (covering more than 40 percent of all the registered immigrants of the period) was constructed from hitherto unutilized archival sources. This data set provided the necessary basis for the explorative documentation and analysis of the paper, which focuses on the demographic characteristics, labor market skills, and entry categories of the immigrants in an international comparative context. In doing so, the paper offers tentative answers to some of the questions concerning the nature of Palestine's Jewish immigration over the investigated period and its varying profiles between the early, the mid and the late 1920s, while pointing to still unresolved issues awaiting further research.

The Maurice Falk Institute for Economic Research in Israel  
Jerusalem, December 2007  •  Discussion Paper No. A07.06