

Abstract

This paper provides a descriptive summary of the integration process of the large exogenous wave of immigrants from the Former Soviet-Union (FSU) who arrived in Israel in 1989-91, and which we follow for almost two decades until 2009. We discuss the integration of these immigrants in both the labor and marriage markets for different age and education groups. We show that immigrants who came at the young ages of 15-18 behave like natives in the labor market but have patterns of marriage that are more similar to their source country. This surprising finding indicates an important role to cultural values in the marriage market that was feasible given the large size of immigration from the FSU relative to the local population. In addition, we document low remigration rates among these immigrants. All these indicators suggest that the large scale of this wave acted to create a relatively supportive environment for FSU immigrants in Israel, which enabled them to continue using the Russian language and to maintain cultural traditions.