

Israeli Sociological Society (registration no. 50016954)

Presidential statement, 17 February 2018

In response to the decision of the Government of the State of Israel and its subsequent approval by the Knesset, that received confirmation from the Council of Higher Education through its silence on the matter, the Israeli Sociological Society (ISS) reaffirms its declaration of refusing to hold any academic activities in Ariel University¹, in line with the ISS Board and General Assembly decisions of 2010-2011 on this matter².

Placing Ariel University, Herzog College, and Orot Israel College under the jurisdiction of the Council of Higher Education injures Israeli academia and society. It undermines the authority of the Council of Higher Education to act as a buffer against politicization of academia, science, and higher education in Israel; it drags academicians in higher education institutions in Israel into support of the occupation and of annexation initiatives; and, it invites an academic boycott from our worldwide colleagues because of such cooperation with scientific and academic activities in the occupied territories.

We reaffirm that because the Israeli Sociological Society is a professional and voluntary community, where membership is on personal rather than institutional basis, the ISS will continue to serve as professional home to sociologists who are faculty members or students in these institutions.

We regard such public declaration to be a part of our ethical responsibility as sociologists, to voice our opinion on events and processes in our society in Israel.

Prof. Gili S. Drori, President
Prof. Yagil Levi, Vice President

¹ Ariel University is located in the settlement city of Ariel, in the West Bank. In 2012 the Israeli Defense Forces' (IDF) regional commander charged with governance of the occupied territories approved the decision of the regional Council of Higher Education of Judea and Samaria to grant the college full university status. On 12 February 2018, the Knesset passed a bill applying Israeli law to academic institutions in the West Bank.

² The Board of ISS decreed in October 2010 that: "With the change of status of Ariel College into University Center in Ariel, the Israeli Sociological Society declares that it has no intention of holding conferences, workshop days, or educational assemblies in the University Center in Ariel. That said, since membership in the Israeli Sociological Society is voluntary and on a personal rather than institutional basis, faculty from the University Center in Ariel can be members of the Society." The declaration was approved by the ISS General Assembly in its 2011 meeting.