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## **Report: Discrimination against Arab municipalities unchanged**

By [Jack Khoury](#), Haaretz Correspondent

A new report published over the weekend by Sikkuy, The Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality in Israel, says the welfare resources channeled by the state to Arab municipalities are smaller relative to those provided to Jewish municipalities.

The annual report compiled by attorney Ali Haider, co-executive director at Sikkuy, held a comparison between ten Arab municipalities and ten Jewish municipalities of identical population size and geographical structure.

According to the report the total welfare budget in 2004 in the ten Jewish municipalities was NIS 220.8 million while the Arab municipalities totaled only NIS 107.4 million.

The report also examined the implementation of government decisions on issues related to the Israeli Arab sector since 1999 and affirmative action for Arab citizens in civil service and government-owned enterprises.

The report states that despite government decisions to address poverty in the Arab sector, Arab citizens do not enjoy adequate affirmative action in any of the government agencies.

According to the report's data only 5.5 percent of civil servants are Arab citizens. Less than 1.5 percent of municipal workers are Arabs and under a single percent have been employed by government-owned enterprises.

Most government agencies have not recruited new Arab employees since 2004.

Attory Haider said "the government has a policy of neglect and disregard for the rights of Arab citizens, while a systematic and deliberate policy of discrimination is in place."

"This fact has caused a deterioration in all aspects of life [in the Arab sector]. The policy change required is profound and essential, and can only be implemented if the government holds an ongoing dialogue with leaders in the Arab public. Those leaders must be involved in the entire process of planning, policymaking and implementation," he said.