Legislative elites and public policies in Israel: Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee (1949-2021)

Élites parlamentarias y políticas públicas en Israel: Comité de Asuntos Exteriores y Defensa (1949-2021)

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Abstract

The relationship between legislative elites and Defense Affairs is an infra-analyzed dimension in the scientific literature. Due to the relevance of the legislative power in democratic systems, parliamentary committees are key actors in the process of civil-military relations. In the case of Israel, Knesset is a core element in the national politics, being Defense and Foreign Affairs two main action lines of all the different governments. Since the professional profiles can be a relevant input for the political process, this article develops a deep study about them. The research analyzes quantitatively the evolution of the socio-demographic and professional profiles of representatives in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee of the Knesset (1949-2021). From the biographical data available in the profiles of the webpage, this article analyzes (1) demographic and formative characteristics of representatives, (2) evolution of profiles in different time frames and (3) analyze the relation between the evolution of the State of Israel and the political profiles. The results show a preeminence of representatives from urban areas, with high-education degrees being adult males. This article presents future research that will allow to develop comparative studies with other States, as well as to analyze deeper the relationships between legislative and executive power in National Defense Affairs.

Keywords

Profiles, representatives, defense, Israel, civil-military relations, foreign policy, elites, parties.

Resumen

Las élites parlamentarias y su relación con los asuntos de Defensa es una dimensión poco analizada en la literatura académica. Debido a la importancia del poder legislativo en los sistemas democráticos, las Comisiones parlamentarias se configuran como un actor clave en las relaciones civiles-militares de los sistemas políticos parlamentarios. En el caso de Israel, la Knesset constituye un actor central en la política nacional, siendo la Defensa y las Relaciones Exteriores una de las líneas centrales de acción de todos sus gobiernos. Debido a que los perfiles de los representantes pueden ser un input relevante para el proceso político, este artículo desarrolla un análisis en profundidad de los mismos. La investigación analiza cuantitativamente la evolución de los perfiles sociodemográficos y profesionales de los diputados en la Comisión de Defensa y Exteriores de Israel (1949-2021). A partir de los datos biográficos de los representantes, este artículo analiza (1) las características demográficas y formativas de los diputados, (2) la evolución de los perfiles en tramos temporales y (3) analizar la relación entre la evolución del Estado de Israel sobre los perfiles. Los resultados reflejan una preeminencia de los perfiles originarios de zonas urbanas, con estudios superiores y varones de mediana edad. Este artículo presenta futuras líneas de investigación que pueden permitir la conducción de investigaciones comparadas con otros Estados, así como profundizar en el estudio de las relaciones entre poder legislativo y ejecutivo en cuestiones como la Defensa Nacional.

Palabras clave

Perfiles, representantes, defensa, Israel, relaciones civiles-militares, política exterior, élites, partidos.

Introduction

The legislative political elites are pivotal in political systems, due to their relevance for creating policies, configuring governments and legislative production. Their relevance increases when it comes to fragmented and proportional systems such as Israel, where consensus with the opposition party, also with other parties, is necessary to form governments. In addition to partisan fragmentation, security, defense, and foreign policies are central to governing. This centrality leads to increasing the relevance of the way in which interactions between political and military decision-makers take place in the so-called civil-military relations.

Regarding civil-military relations, Israel is also an atypical case study. Some authors point to the absence of civil-military relations due to the centra-

lity of Defense in politics (Ben-Eliezer, 1997), while others have justified their claims by the presence of the military in political decision-making processes (Kobi, 2007) or the high autonomy degree of military decision-makers from politics (Kuperman, 2005). However, more sociological perspectives have based their arguments on the centrality of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and argue that for extracting political elites, the decision makers behave and legislate in defense as military (Etzioni-Halevy, 1993). This argument provides a motivation to analyze the profiles of the members of the Committee on Defense and Foreign Affairs as a sample for analysis.

This research aims to analyze the main characteristics of the profiles of legislative elites in Israel, as well as to study their evolution since the beginning of the State of Israel. To this end, this article focuses on analyzing the profiles of the members of the Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee of the Knesset between 1949 and 2021. The selected Commission is responsible for matters related to the military administration, its personnel and budget, the military industry and, ultimately, all matters in the field of national defense. This analysis is interesting because it constitutes an actor in the process of civil-military relations in Israel (Huntington, 1957; Janowitz, 1960; Posen, 1984). The analysis does not seek to validate theoretical models such as agglutination (Putnam, 1976) or independence (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995), depending on whether or not these are seen in the profiles of citizens. Since this is a sectoral analysis, it is an opportunity to assess the relationship between a specific subject such as defense and the profiles of the Members responsible for its control and processing.

The paper makes a theoretical approach to study political elites linking them with civil and military relations in Israel. The second heading establishes a methodological articulation based on the quantitative analysis of the main variables that make up the profiles of Members. The discussion of results reflects the sociodemographic characteristics of the parliamentarians, delving into the training and extraction dimension of the deputies, as well as their professional activity. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are presented, explaining the future lines of research that can take place from the collected data.

The Professionalization of Legislative Elites

The political elite is one of the most complex and controversial concepts to define (Etzioni-Halevy, 1993; Uriarte, 1997), because it is theoretically

based on the existence of two population strata, one of a select character that governs and another lacking decision-making capacity (Pareto, 1980). This elite is considered to be a minority that influences the direction of political life after having been granted this capacity with more or less will by the majority (Mosca, 1984). Theoretical and conceptual debates have been around whether this group is cohesive and possesses effective power (Mosca, 1939; Mills, 1978), or whether it is fragmented into multiple elites in continuous competition (Uriarte, 1997), reaching approaches such as intra-elite power conflicts (Dahl, 1961) or procedural democracy itself (Schumpeter, 1983).

The composition of the elites is conditioned by the social and political context to which they belong. While in some countries factors such as religious or ethnic affiliation prevail, in others it is linked to cultural, economic, political or even military affiliation (Maman, 1997). Under democratic systems, the latter sector is often excluded from the political elite when considering its subordination to political power (Uriarte, 1997). Despite this, some of its higher strata do consider themselves part of the bureaucratic elite, depending on their inclusion in the strategy of identifying them and the established selection criteria (Mills, 1978; Putnam, 1976). The elite studies carried out by Putnam (1976), pointed out the possibility of establishing a positional analysis, taking formal institutions as a reference of power relations. Another perspective adopted by the author focused on the reputational approach, on informal relationships to detect who really holds the decision-making power and the subjective elements that condition the political process. In relation to the latter, a third strategy is proposed based on the identification of decision-making processes, introducing itself into the black box of the system to study political feedback (Easton, 1953).

For decades, research on Western democratic systems has mentioned the existence of a simultaneous professionalization and bureaucratization process of political activity (Panebianco, 1990), which has not only implied an operational and organizational rationalization of the parties but has contributed to conceiving political activity as a profession (Uriarte, 1997). In addition to introducing changes in the quality of political activity, it has generated a cultural transformation that has negatively affected society, increasing disaffection levels and provoking its support for populist parties that often question the parameters of the democratic system (Férnandez-García and García-Luengo, 2018).

At the discursive and electoral level, it is seen how these new parties instrumentalized the professional and formative credentials of their components for electoral purposes (Domínguez Benavente, 2017). This fact has contributed to conceive the origin of private or academic sectors as a qualified credential to the electorate (Delgado, 1997). In the Spanish case, it was evident in the beginning of emerging parties such as Podemos or Ciudadanos, where some of its components came from the business or university environment (Domínguez Benavente, 2017). What was originally proposed as an alternative to the "old politics", with the institutionalization of the parties, ended up being diluted and adapted to the prevailing dynamics, which has reinforced approaches regarding the independence of the elites from the society to which they belong (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995).

As for the theoretical-political level, the deputies are not only responsible actors of the legislative management, but they represent the popular will of the society to which they belong. As noted by Pitkin (1967), representation has a descriptive dimension, where deputies must have a formative or socio-demographic correspondence with their representatives. On the other hand, it has a symbolic dimension, based on the emotional links between both sectors, being equivalent to effective leadership. Finally, it highlights the substantive dimension, according to which the representation analysis is highlighted, depending on whether it acts in the self-interest or in the interests of third parties. Regarding the proposed dimensions, there has been a progressive reduction of the descriptive dimension, in which voters do not consider that the representatives come from the same social environment or have an equivalent training level (Domínguez Benavente, 2017).

Civil-military relations in Israel

One of the challenges of democratic governance is the exercise of civilian control in defense matters, while providing legitimate needs of the military (Michael, 2007). This exercise of political power over the military has been extensively studied in civil-military relations, especially relevant for understanding the dynamic forces of cooperation and conflict (Albright, 1980). This conception of separation between spheres is only applied in Western countries, since during the twentieth century it was not present either in the USSR, nor in socialist countries, nor in states that had achieved independence after colonialism (Albright, 1980; Valenzuela, 1985; Welch, 1985).

In some studies in which the military plays a central role in the political system, reference is made to praetorianism. When this possibility is analyzed, the paradigm of civil-military relations is not taken into account, although it is mentioned that as military forces are professionalized, there is usually a lower tendency to praetorianism (Huntington, 1953). These changes in organizational style give the armed forces a civilian character that reduces the chances of an internal coup (Janowitz, 1957; 1960). This conception is opposite to praetorianism, since the type of political culture and the roles assumed by the military improve the democracy levels and reduce praetorianist tendencies (Finer, 1962). In military regimes, however, cooperation between civilians and the military is necessary for the military to maintain power (Finer, 1982; Maniruzzman, 1987; Nordlinger, 1977; Zagorski, 1988). Other authors also refer to "civilian militarism", which is not exclusively associated with the military, but that some sectors of the political elite may have a tendency to promote militarism in society (Vagts, 1959; Ben-Eliezer, 1997).

This separation of military and political power is not present in Israel (Ben-Eliezer, 1997). It is an exception to civil-military relations, since in many occasions the military is present in political decision-making, positioning itself far beyond the limits stipulated by military doctrine (Kobi, 2007). This is not a recent phenomenon, but since the creation of the State, the interaction between levels is permeable, being common that senior officers enter politics after graduating, hindering their location in the political arena. Likewise, the relations between political and military power have been profoundly conditioned by the personal nature of its components. Analyzing the model of civil-military relations in Israel, there was a tendency for Ben Gurion to give independence to the Chief of Staff for operational procedures, just as Dayan rejected the need to bring the entire cabinet together for planning, giving priority to the element of surprise and syncretism (Kuperman, 2005).

Unlike other countries, the Army in Israel is considered not only an organization for the defense of the country but a socialization space for the formation of the citizen spirit (Lomsky-Feder and Sasson-Levy, 2018). Despite the economic and political challenges, it remains being the central institution that socially defines citizens in Israel. Armed forces can bring people from different ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds together in a common cause, and in a collaborative spirit, providing an environment in which to break down communal barriers, as the contact hypothesis would suggest. Whether through socialization or intense contact, the military can alter the vi-

sions of future leaders who then use their positions of power and influence to spread their revised vision of nation-building. The three mechanisms suggest that, under certain conditions, military service leads subjects to reconsider their identity, their commitments and the definition of their political community, taking them according to their personal experiences (Krebs, 2004).

It is a powerful socialization agent because it is often a total institution, which alienates the individual from society, against the information to which subjects are exposed; monitors their behavior; and offers material rewards to guide them toward the desired behavior. These total institutions are houses for people to change. The effects of socialization can be intense in the military case because subjects enter their impressionable years, and the definition of the nation would seem to be the kind of symbolic attitude that some have pointed out as stable throughout their lives (Krebs, 2004). Proponents of the socialization mechanism conclude that the military can bring the beliefs of its members regarding the limits of the national community according to the rules of the institution. These staff policies implicitly declare certain attitudes and behaviors acceptable, and those are reinforced by explicit expressions and informal practices (Krebs, 2004).

Materials and methods

This research makes an analysis based on methodological models used for studying Spanish cases (Coller, 2008; Coller and Santana, 2009; Sánchez-Herrera, 2004), non-European (Cobertt and Wood, 2013), and in comparative perspective between different countries of southern Europe (*Kakepaki et al.,* 2018). The analysis is based on a double database generated with information from the Knesset website. The first set of data collects individual information to analyze the overall composition of the commission over the whole time period (n=849). The second set of data allows to study the evolution in time by legislature (n=850).

Lacking some biographical and professional data, open sources available online have been used for some issues relating both to age and places of study. In those cases where no information was found, the data were classified as "Not on file" to avoid biased data entry based on investigator assumptions. Once the database was formed, it was operationalized into general categories to carry out analyzes related to professional profiles. The research

analyzes sociodemographic characteristics (gender, age, aliyah, regions of origin, geographic environment in Israel and District in Israel), educational profiles (educational level, training centers and branches of knowledge, military service), professional (professional activity not related to politics) and organizational (number of legislatures, number of legislatures present in the defense commission).

Table 1
Data Organization

Sociodemographic	Gender Age of entry into the Commission Aliyah Region of origin (those who have made Aliyah) Origin (born in Israel) Birth district (born in Israel)
Training	Level of studies
	Training Center
	Specialization
	Military service
Professional	Professional Sector
	Activity not linked to policy
Organizational	Number of Knesset legislatures
	Legislatures in the Commission

The main categories of analysis are oriented to articulate the headings of analysis. Demographic data are sex (male/female), age of incorporation (age brackets calculated by the difference between the year of discharge and the date of birth), whether they have performed the Aliyah or not, as well as their regions. For those born in Israel, they have been classified according to the district of origin. These characteristics are intended to see the predominant profiles, as well as to check if there has been a variation in them, or if there is a continuity. The training data are particularly interesting, since the level of studies (BA University, MA University, PhD, primary studies, religious studies or secondary studies) is analyzed. Training centers have been classified according to their nature (Israeli universities, foreign universities,

foreign Yeshivas, Israeli Yeshivas or specialized centers). Seeking to determine the professional experience of the deputies, only those data related to the experience prior to entering politics have been selected to determine the relationship of their experience with a subject as sectoral as Defense. The observations have been grouped according to their professional area, disaggregated according to the specific employment developed by the Member. At organizational level, the number of legislatures and whether or not they remain in the Commission are reflected to determine the continuity degree of the Member in the Commission.

Results

Political parties play a central role in Israel's political system, concentrating effective power in various areas (Akzin, 1955, Gutmann, 1977; Galnoor, 1982; Arian, 1985). These institutions currently provide parliamentary representation of the will of the society, but have traditionally provided social services to the population (Etzioni, 1962) and at have been at the same time agents of social mobilization (Yishai, 1991). However, as in other case studies, there is a traditional isolation of the political elite (Elon, 1971). This analysis reflects the characteristics of a sectoral committee of the Knesset, deepening on the profiles of the members by analyzing both the stability of the committee, as well as the personal and professional characteristics of the members who make it up.

Stability in the composition of the Commission

One of the first dimensions analyzed has been the permanence degree in the Committee of Defense and Foreign Affairs. Data have been cross-referenced regarding the legislatures that have been Members along with the legislatures that have remained in the Commission as representatives. Most Members were representatives during one parliamentary term (26.6%), two (21.9%) or three (22%). For those who have been representatives for more than four legislatures, the total data percentage is gradually reduced. Among this distribution, we can see how those who have been four (14.3%), five (7.8%), six (4.9%) are reduced to reach those who have remained eight legislatures (0.9%).

Table 2

Legislatures in committee

		Legislatures in committee							
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Legislatures as deputy	1	10.5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2	3.2%	5.8%	-	-	-	-	-	-
	3	3.7%	4.6%	2.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	4	4.0%	3.4%	4.8%	1.8%	-	-	-	-
	5	1.6%	2.9%	5.1%	4.2%	0.6%	-	-	-
	6	1.4%	2.8%	3.2%	3.5%	1.8%	-	-	-
	7	1.1%	1.3%	1.8%	0.9%	3.1%	2.1%	0.8%	-
	8	0.2%	0.7%	3.1%	2.5%	0.6%	-	0.8%	-
	9	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%	0.9%	-	1.4%	-	0.9%
	10	0.5%	-	0.4%	-	1.2%	-	-	-
	11	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%	-	-	-	-	-
	12	-	-	-	-	-	0.7%	-	-
	13	0.1%	-	-	0.5%	0.5%	-	-	-
	14	-	-	-	-	-	0.7%	-	-

The stability of the commission could only be verified at the inter-commission level, due to a lack of the dates of discharge of the components of each of them. It is interesting to note how the percentage of those who have been Members on one occasion and have been assigned as representatives on the Defense Committee is particularly low out of the total number of Members (10.5%). Most Members remained between four (14%) and six (12.7%). It implies a high stability in the composition of inter-committees, with a large majority of the members remaining between three and seven legislatures (61%). It is particularly striking to note the high number of Members in the Knesset, as the sectoral analysis shows that, out of a total of 24 legislatures, 17.5% have remained between 7 and 14 legislatures.

Sociodemographic dimensions

The socio-demographic dimension is particularly relevant in this case, as the State of Israel has played a role in providing refuge to Jewish populations around the world as one of its core collective values (Yishai, 1991). Despite this, it can be seen how the political scene has been composed mainly by European men, with a smaller presence of Sephardic, Miraji and Muslims Arab (Brichta, 2001). At the same time, the issue of gender representation is an element that marks a division between progressive and traditionalist, who have had different perspectives regarding the role of women in the political area.

Gender

The gender gap is evident in most of the Knesset throughout its legislature (Shapira *et al.,* 2016). There was a higher presence of women between 1949 and 1959 compared to other Western countries, but a drastic reduction after that. Regarding women's participation, it was seen how women were more present in committees such as Education and Culture or Work and Welfare, being their presence much less usual in Foreign Affairs and Defense (Yishai, 1997; Shapira *et al*., 2016). Data on the total composition of the Commission show a higher presence of men (90.6%) compared to women (9.4%).

Figure 1
Time course - Composition by gender
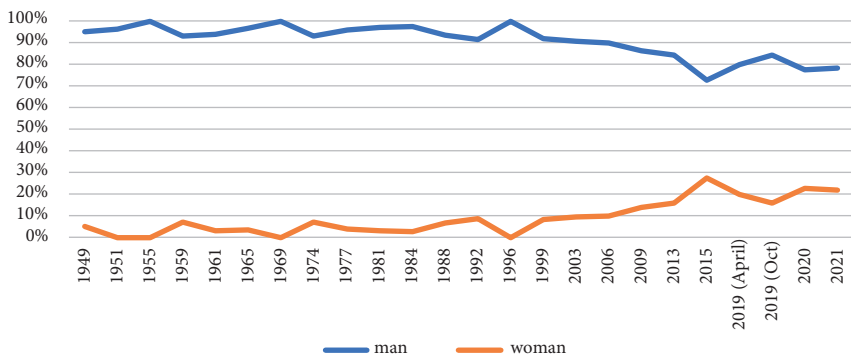
The evolution over time shows how there is a gender gap in the composition of the Knesset Commission, with women making up less than 30% of

the legislature for the most part. Previous analysis showed that the Knesset peak for women was 22.5% in 2013. In the case of the Defense Commission, the maximum point is 2015, when more women are incorporated. The figure shows a progressive increase in the participation of women in the Commission, slowly increasing since the 1999 legislature. It is interesting to analyze the composition in relation to the total composition of the Knesset, where there is a presence similar to that reflected in the sectoral analysis carried out (Shapira *et al.,* 2016). Despite this, there is a substantial difference between the presence of men, between 1949 and 1999 it was always more than 90%, gradually decreasing to 70%.

Age

Another interesting socio-demographic dimension is the age gap in which the Commission is accessed. This variable was calculated from the date of birth and the year of composition, being grouped in groups of ten years. The minimum age for single profiles has been 23 years, with the highest age being 82. The majority age gap was 43-52 (31.7%) and 53-62 (35.9%), being lower but homogeneous in the adjacent gap of 33-42 (15.1%) and 63-72 (14.5%) and much more minority the presence of deputies of 23-32 (1.4%) and 73-82 (1.2%). The distribution of data is symmetrical, with the central values of the scale being more represented, and to a lesser extent as it approaches the two extremes. The analysis in temporal gap allows to observe how there is a reduced presence of the oldest and the youngest during 1949-2021, at the same time that there are greater oscillations in the rest of values.

Aliyah

The composition of Israeli society is observed in the Defense Commission. A very similar distribution can be seen between those born in Israel (53%) and those who emigrated from foreign countries (47%). The graphical distribution representation of the temporal sections shows how more than 50% of the Commission was composed of Israelis who had practiced *Aliyah* until 1977. The trend has reversed since 1984 with those born in Israel surpassing those born abroad. Israel's status as a migrant-receiving State means that during the first three decades of its existence as a political entity, there will be a greater presence of foreign-born deputies, and this presence will be gradually reduced. It is interesting, since it is a recently conformed coun-

try that allows to observe the progressive incorporation of native born in the country in its political elites.

Figure 2
Aliyah Temporary gap
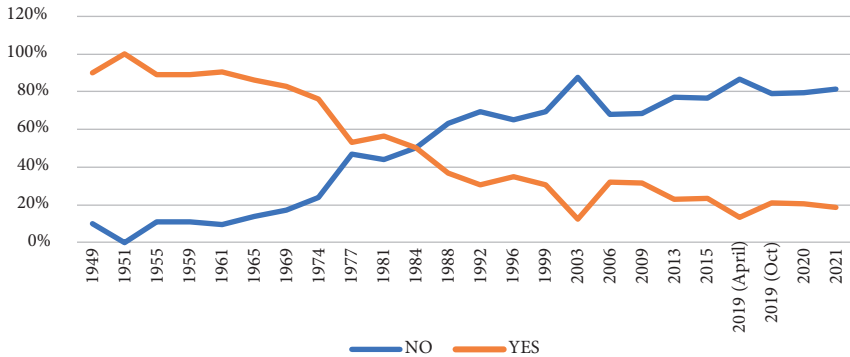
Countries of origin

Most countries of origin brought the data together into regional categories, with Eastern Europe dominating (27.9%), and the rest being much more minority regions. The analysis by country of origin shows the predominance of Polish (11.5%), Russians (6.6%) and Ukrainians (5.8%). Out of the Western European countries (3.4%), Germans stand out (2.5%), the rest being very minority. On the other hand, there is a significant presence of North Africans (5.3%), with Morocco being the main country (4.8%). Israelis emigrating from Middle Eastern countries amount to 4.9%, with Iraq (3.3%) and Syria (0.6%), Yemen (0.6%), Iran (0.4%) and Egypt (0.4%) being the main countries. The remaining regions have a minority distribution between Africa (0.4%), America (1.3%), Central Asia (1.2%) and South Africa (0.6%).

The analysis in temporal sections shows a preeminence of the members born in Europe, being more than 50% until 1974. The distribution percentage of members born in the Maghreb or the Middle East has been below 20%, with the peak in 2006. There is a reversible trend when comparing Israeli-born and emigrants, showing how the number of deputies born in Israel exceeds those born abroad. Analyzing gender in relation to geogra-

phical origin, the tables show that most women in the Defense Commission were born in Israel (63.7%), compared to foreigners (36.2%). For men, a homogeneous distribution can be seen between those born in Israel (52%) and those emigrating in the Aliyah (48%).

Environment and district

Among those born in Israel, there is a gap between rural (7.5%) and urban (43.8%), similar to the population distribution in Israel, with a majority of the population concentrated in the areas of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. The analysis in temporal gaps shows more presence of deputies from urban Israeli areas, being the continuous and incremental number as more Israeli-born are integrated into the Knesset. The rural environment is less representative, increasing to 30% in the Knesset 21 (April, 2019) but then decreasing again. District-level data indicate that deputies born in Tel Aviv (15.1%) and Jerusalem (12.6%) prevail over other districts, with less deputies from the North (6.4%), Center (9.2%) or Haifa (5.2%). For their part, there are small percentages of those from the South (2.5%) and Judea-Samaria (0.2%). The data on the place of birth of deputies oscillate to a greater extent than in other socio-demographic variables. There are more deputies born in Jerusalem from 1988 to 1999, with a preeminence of those born in Tel Aviv between 2003 and 2020. At the same time, it is interesting to analyze the evolution of the Central district, which increased between 2013 and 2019, as well as in the current Knesset the main city of origin has been Jerusalem, surpassing Tel Aviv.

Training dimensions

The formative dimension offers interesting results with differences and similarities with other research on political elites. This section analyzes how Israeli deputies have mostly studied higher education in Israeli universities, and most come from law, business and education. The last section of the analysis shows how the military training profiles of Members have evolved over time.

Figure 3
Timeframes — #Environment
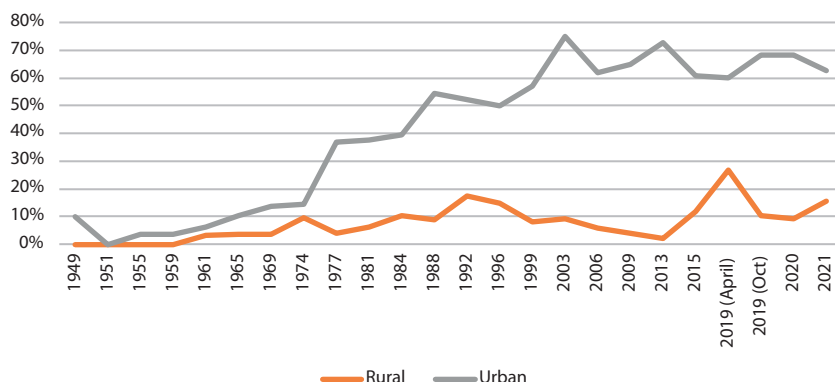
Level of training

The study of the formative dimension of parliamentarians was divided into two variables. On the one hand, the first level of education available to parliamentarians was analyzed and, on the other hand, the second highest level of education they had received. The first approximation to the total profiles showed a preeminence of the higher studies in the commission. Most notable were those with BA (48.2%) and Master's degrees (23.6%), with distributions much higher than those with secondary (11.1%) or primary (0.8%) studies, as well as those with religious studies (9.4%) or specific professional degrees (3.3%). When the second educational level was analyzed, the results showed that 37% of the deputies had a second level of education, including those with a second BA (19.3%) and those with a PhD (14.1%), with other levels of education being in the minority, such as specific degrees (2.2%), technical studies (0.5%), musical studies (0.8%) or MA studies (0.6%).

The time analysis provides a view of the evolution of the degrees. It is seen how those with BA studies remain above 40% from 1949 to 2009, being exceeded between 2009 and 2021 by those who had an MA, reaching nearly 70% in 2019. There is a constant but minority presence of those with religious studies during all the legislatures, as well as those with secondary studies, being in all cases always below the threshold of 20%. On the other hand, analyzing

the second degrees, the percentages oscillate more than in the previous case. There is an irregular evolution in the presence of PhD, being the legislatures of 1961, 1996 and 2009 those with the highest number of deputies with a doctorate. Likewise, it is seen the progressive increase of those who study a second BA, being the maximum point 2019, when exceeding 50% of that commission.

Training centers

The members of the Knesset Defense Commission have studied in both foreign and Israeli centers. The analysis of the first training centers shows a preeminence of graduates from Israeli universities (53.4%), followed by those who have studied at foreign universities (21.8%). As is the case with the educational level, the other studies represent a lower percentage, highlighting the study in Israeli yeshivas (5.3%), in foreign yeshivas (1.4%) and in specialized centers (1.5%). Looking at the total data, the percentage of deputies who have completed second studies shows that they have completed their studies in Israeli universities (22%), followed by foreign universities (12.5%), being minority those who have studied in specialized centers (0.4%) or in foreign Yeshivas (0.6%).

The analysis of the temporal sections shows there is a preeminence of those who have studied in foreign universities between 1949 and 1969 (between 30 and 50%). Studying at foreign universities is declining in favor of those who have studied at Israeli universities, accounting for a 40-70% distribution from 1969 to 2021. There are two significant increases in those graduated by foreign universities, one in 1992 and the next in 2019. Regarding the second degree, there has been a progressive increase in those pursuing their second degree at Israeli universities, which since 1981 has exceeded those pursuing their studies abroad. Analyzing the time, the educational level of parliamentarians increases substantially in April 2019. The highest number of graduates with MA (67.7%) and with a second BA (47.4%). On the other hand, the number of Phd reduces and there is a slight increase in those who have completed their first studies abroad and their second studies in Israel.

Professional sectors

The analysis of the professional sectors prior to entering politics shows particularly interesting results. There are two levels, the first of which has homogeneous sectors such as educational personnel (18.6%), the business sector

(16.4%), legal professionals (14.8%) and national security (14.3%). Senior government officials occupy an intermediate position (10.8%), followed by the second level, which brings together data with a lower distribution percentage. These include unskilled workers (6.7%), especially present at the beginning of the construction of the State of Israel. They are followed by political staff (5.4%), such as advisers or public managers. Engineers (3.7%), health workers (1.2%), religious professions (2.7%) are also a minority and a significant number of 'Not stated' (5.4%) are assigned to this category due to lack of information.

Military units where military service is performed

Not all profiles of parliamentarians presented complete information regarding military service. Some of them specified medical exemptions, while others provided little information on medical exemptions, indicating only the employment or branch in which they were assigned. However, others provided more detailed information regarding their military experience. Given the differences in civil-military relations in Israel and the IDF being a center of extraction for political elites (Cohen and Cohen, 2020), it is relevant to know where they performed their military service. The data obtained show the importance of paramilitary organizations during the period of the British Mandate of Palestine, with the Haganah and other groups such as Irgun and Leji being central to the formation of the State. The temporal sections show an incremental presence between 1949 and 1974 of former members of the Haganah, with 1974 being the time of more presence (60%), which gradually decreases until it disappears, as was the case with geographical origin, where the European *olim* were progressively replaced by Israelis. In the case of the units, Haganah is replaced by the Infantry Brigades, which evolves from 1965 to 2019, reaching this year its peak in 50% of components.

Conclusions

This research contributes to the study of civil-military relations in Israel, analyzing the profiles of those Knesset representatives responsible for government control over defense. Knowing their profiles allows establishing a first approach to this phenomenon to understand how a type of profile can condition the actions they develop. The results obtained in this research allow to identify the main features of the components of the Defense and Foreign

Affairs Committee of the Knesset. The analysis of the results shows similar characteristics in other research. The data show a low retention of Members in the Commission, extending to no more than two terms.

Regarding socio-demographic profiles, there is a marked gender gap between 1949 and 2021, and there is no large presence of women in this committee. Similarly, the origins of parliamentarians are in line with the evolution of the State of Israel, being from other countries, while this trend reverses from 1980s. With regard to the countries of origin, there is a preeminence of Central Europe as a region over other areas such as North Africa, the Middle East or Asia. Similarly, those born in Israel come mostly from the country's two main cities, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. The remaining districts are under-represented in this sectoral analysis, which is consistent with other studies indicating that political elites often come from major cities. As for training, a high percentage of Members have higher education, both at the level of Degree, Master or even PhD. The majority of degrees have been obtained at Israeli universities, despite the fact that they had initially studied in foreign institutions.

The research presents limitations due to access to information especially in relation to military service, as well as the social and geographical origins of those deputies born in Israel. Nevertheless, the results obtained facilitate future research on safety studies. It is interesting to understand the training and professional profiles of parliamentarians to analyze the dynamics between the legislative power and the government, as well as the control, consultation or proposal procedures that are activated. This future line would allow to appreciate correlations between the parliamentary profile and its way of dealing with political actions in the parliamentary arena. In addition, it would be interesting to conduct comparative analyzes with political elites from other countries where Defense is a central element, or who have high levels of threat perception that can be a conditioning factor for the profiles of parliamentary representatives.

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