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Huge salaries of Dimona nuclear researchers are state secrets too

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In the most secret workplace in the country, the Negev Nuclear Research Center in Dimona, there are senior researchers whose salaries - for now - are between NIS 60,000 and NIS 70,000 a month. How many? Interesting question, since their salaries are as classified as their work itself. So classified that even the Finance Ministry's budget director, Ilan Levin, has not been able to sneak a peek at their salary stubs.

The research center's spokeswoman will only say that the average salary of center employees is about half the amounts stated above.

That could change, after the ultimatum served by Levin to the Defense Ministry, which pays the workers' salaries. He said either he sees their payslips or the ministry won't bargain over their demands for a wage hike. Although the monthly salaries of the researchers are already - apparently - at least NIS 60,000, they are asking for more. They will be getting a special increase for military employers of between 5% and 18%, but they also want an additional 24.2% increase.

Why 24.2%? Because that's the wage hike awarded to university teachers a year ago, and since the research-level employees at Dimona also do research, they want the salary hike. If they do, some of them could be getting as much as NIS 100,000 a month.

Since these researchers are bound by a collective bargaining agreement, they also are protected against dismissal.

If you thought that these kinds of public-sector - that means, paid for by us the taxpayers - salaries could only happen when the military establishment is in the picture, you're wrong.

TheMarker has obtained payslips from two employees of Bar-Ilan University. One, a senior member of the law school faculty, showed a salary of NIS 127,000 for June and a cumulative salary of NIS 667,000 for the entire year. That averages out to NIS 55,000 a month. The other, who works for the university's fund-raising department, earns NIS 46,000 a month.

Dozens of university administrators make between NIS 40,000 and NIS 70,000 a month - more than either the prime minister or the president of the Supreme Court, and far beyond what is allowed for the private sector.

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