
Public Housing in Israel: From Welfare State to Neoliberalism

Le logement public en Israël : de l'État providence au néolibéralisme

Ravit Hananel



Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/craup/4677>

DOI: 10.4000/craup.4677

ISSN: 2606-7498

Publisher

Ministère de la Culture

Electronic reference

Ravit Hananel, « Public Housing in Israel: From Welfare State to Neoliberalism », *Les Cahiers de la recherche architecturale urbaine et paysagère* [Online], 8 | 2020, Online since 05 November 2020, connection on 11 November 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/craup/4677> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/craup.4677>

This text was automatically generated on 11 November 2020.



Les Cahiers de la recherche architecturale, urbaine et paysagère sont mis à disposition selon les termes de la Licence Creative Commons Attribution - Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale - Pas de Modification 3.0 France.

Public Housing in Israel: From Welfare State to Neoliberalism

Le logement public en Israël : de l'État providence au néolibéralisme

Ravit Hananel

Introduction

- 1 Countries have long turned to public housing in their efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing. This typically consists of government-owned, low-cost rental apartments, intended for those who cannot afford to rent or buy in the private market¹.
- 2 Some scholars view the provision of housing, especially public housing, as a function of the welfare state that is just as important as the provision of social security, health, and education². Scholars also point out that public housing can have economic or national-territorial aims³. That is, it can be used to generate jobs and boost the economy, but can also serve to take control of a territory by moving residents there⁴.
- 3 Since public housing can have diverse objectives, it has many definitions⁵. These may focus on a variety of aspects: type of ownership, who builds the housing, rent level, financing or subsidies, and eligibility of potential renters. In Austria and Sweden, for example, everyone is eligible for public housing; however, in other countries, such as England, the Netherlands, and the United States, only those who cannot afford private-market housing are eligible. Tenants of public housing in most countries include similar groups: single parents (mostly mothers), pensioners, poor individuals and families, individuals with special needs, immigrants, and ethnic minorities⁶.
- 4 World War I and the economic crisis in the 1930s spurred the construction of public housing in parts of Europe and in the United States, but became a worldwide phenomenon only after World War II. Although public housing construction has continued to some extent in most countries, the segment of housing stock set aside for public housing has greatly decreased since the 1980, due to privatization, the sale of apartments to residents, and a deceleration of construction for those in need⁷.

- 5 After the 2007/8 global financial crisis, which was accompanied by a severe housing affordability crisis⁸, public housing reemerged in many countries, including France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and even in exceptionally neoliberal Hong Kong⁹.
- 6 This paper focuses on the development of public housing in Israel. Compared to other countries, Israel has seen the greatest changes in such housing over the last several decades, and is therefore an interesting case study¹⁰. In the 1950s-1960s, when Israel was considered a social democratic state with a progressive welfare policy, public housing was its major policy tool, constituting 60% of the state's total housing stock, for which most of the population was eligible. Throughout time, however, the government's attitude towards public housing changed. This was especially the case since the 1980s, when Israel's general political ideology changed from that of a social-democratic welfare state to that of a globalized capitalist state dominated by neoliberal rationalities, institutions, and practices¹¹. Its share of the country's total housing stock shrunk dramatically, earmarked for only 1.9% of the population, and relevant only for the country's poorest households¹². At the start of the new millennium, these trends intensified and the number of public housing units continued to decline, while the state tightened the criteria for those eligible for public housing. It is only since the last decade that there has been any positive change in the government's attitude towards public housing. Hananel¹³ summarizes the trajectory of public housing and argues that, over time, it changed "from central to marginal". The explanation of these changes and the current situation draws on reports by the government and public housing companies, existing academic literature, official statistics and media coverage.
- 7 Before analyzing these dramatic changes, however, I briefly present relevant definitions, eligibility criteria, and numbers.

Definitions, eligibility criteria, and numbers

- 8 The term "public housing" in Israel refers to the supply of apartments owned by the state and leased at a below-market price, mainly to those who cannot afford market prices¹⁴. Formally, these apartments are under the auspices of the Ministry of Construction and Housing (MoCH) and the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration (MoAI¹⁵), but they are managed by governmental housing companies:
- 9 - *Amidar*: a government-owned company, under the aegis of MoCH, manages about 72% of public housing throughout the country.
 - *Amigur*: controlled by the Jewish Agency¹⁶, manages about 20% of public housing, mainly for new immigrants, under the aegis of the MoAI.
 - *Shikun Upituah*: formerly a government company, now mainly manages old apartments, mostly in Judea and Samaria¹⁷ and Katzrin.
- 10 In addition to this, there also exist four corporations, which manage some 5,000 housing units and who belong jointly to the state and to the local government: Heled (Petah Tikva area), Halamish (Tel Aviv-Jaffa area), Prazot (Jerusalem area), and Shikmona (Haifa area)¹⁸.
- 11 The eligibility period and eligibility criteria for public-housing units must be divided into two periods: before and after receipt of the housing unit. Before receiving the units, applicants must meet rigorous criteria, partly because of the small supply of apartments. Prospective tenants must register and have their eligibility examined by

officials from the MoCH, other ministries, and a detective agency. Eligibility is continually checked, and is limited to people who have never owned a housing unit and whose income is below a certain level. Applicants must also meet additional criteria, including marital status, family size, children's ages, and health status. Once granted, eligibility is valid for four years. If no other housing is found during that time, the applicant must repeat the eligibility procedure¹⁹.

- 12 After tenants receive the apartment, their financial situation is not tested again, unless they seek to purchase their apartment or ask for a rental discount. This means that, once the eligible tenants have received a public-housing unit, they do not lose the right to live in that unit, even if they no longer meet the eligibility conditions. Their share of the rent, however, will probably increase. Tenants entitled to public housing can lose their eligibility if they own another apartment. However, it's only recent that the MoCH has begun to enforce this rule and to evict public-housing tenants who own an apartment²⁰.
- 13 Joining the list of eligible would-be tenants does not guarantee accommodation in a public-housing unit. In 2019, there were about 3,571 eligible households on the waiting list, about 32% of which had been waiting more than three years and about 10% of which had been waiting more than seven years. People who do not yet have a public housing unit wait longer than those who live in unsuitable units, the latter of which get moved first. The long waiting time causes some eligible households to drop off the list, opting to rent private housing units instead. Others drop off, or are dropped from the waiting list, even though their situation has not improved. One reason this may occur, for example, is because one of their children has surpassed certain age requirements.
- 14 The MoAI also has a waiting list that consists of 24,307 individuals. New immigrants who do not own an apartment have the right to public housing for 15 years from the date of immigration. Then they must regularly meet the criteria of the MoCH²¹.
- 15 In July 2019 there were 50,416 public-housing units in Israel (constituting 1.9% of the country's total housing units).²² About 60% are in the periphery (that is, the south and the north), including relatively peripheral towns such as Dimona, Nazareth Illit, Kiryat Gat, and Afula. The remainder are in poor neighborhoods in relatively central cities such as Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Ashdod, and Haifa²³.
- 16 During the 1960s, when the population numbered about 2,598,400, there were 206,000 public housing units—about 60% of the total housing stock in the country²⁴. Because of various schemes under which tenants were able to buy their apartments, and because the construction of public housing ceased, the number of public-housing units fell dramatically since that time. Although the population of Israel was 2.598 million in 1960 and 3.5 times that number in 2019 (9.136 million), the number of public-housing units dropped to one-quarter the total number in the 1960s.

Analysis: How Israel's public housing policy has changed

- 17 The changes in Israel's public-housing policy and current trends are best understood when considered in four periods: 1950s-1970s; 1980s-1990s; 2000-2013; 2014 to present. These divisions represent different approaches toward public-housing policy and tenants.

1950s-1970s: The period of mass immigration

- 18 Israel was founded in 1948 as a socialist state with a progressive welfare policy. It remained that way throughout the tenure of the Labor Party, which ended in 1977. During this period, Israel took responsibility for the well-being of its citizens. One major manifestation of this approach was its public-housing policy²⁵.
- 19 Soon after the state was founded, it had to contend with a wave of immigration that doubled the Jewish population in just three years (from 717,000 in October 1948 to 1.4 million in October 1951²⁶). Since housing this influx of immigrants was an urgent need, public housing was thus created to address this need and to populate peripheral areas, far from centers of population and culture²⁷.
- 20 Israel's first public housing was built in 1949, immediately after the end of its War of Independence, as a tool for achieving the goals of nation-building, territorial settlement, and immigrant absorption²⁸.
- 21 Israel's first strategic plan (1952) clearly stated the national-settlement and security role of the public-housing policy. Dozens of so-called development towns were thus established in peripheral areas to keep the Arab population from gaining control over land in Israel. The immigrants, most of which came from North Africa and Asia, were sent straight to the development towns²⁹.
- 22 More than half of all housing built during the first two decades of Israel's existence was for public housing. The builders included the housing branch of the Ministry of Labor as well as public housing companies, among them Shikun, Amidar, and Rassco, which were funded and supervised by the government³⁰. Amidar's website highlights the nation-building role of public housing by quoting the country's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion:
- Throughout [the state's] history the government of Israel has seen housing as a key tool for achieving the state's goals and also as a human need that the state is charged with satisfying for its citizens: first for the newcomers among them, the new immigrants, and later for the others³¹.
- 23 Whereas 70 % of the public-housing construction in the 1950s and 1960s was in development towns, private housing units built during this period were located primarily in the coastal region and in Jerusalem³², which is a pattern that still exists. Although today less than 1.9 % of Israel's housing units are for public housing, the percentage in the development towns is much higher: in 2012, they comprised nearly a quarter (23.4 %) of all housing units in Dimona, 18 % in Ofakim, and 16.9 % in Kiryat Shmona. In contrast, the percentage of public-housing units in central cities is far lower, even lower than the national average: 1.1% in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, 1.3 % in Holon, and less than 1 % in Rishon Lezion³³.
- 24 To meet the urgent demand for immigrant housing, the units built early on were constructed quickly and poorly, only gradually improving in quality over time³⁴. Although public housing was poorer in quality in terms of finish, infrastructure, and unit size than was privately built housing³⁵, building it was not cheap. Furthermore, transporting necessary materials, skilled workers, and new infrastructure to distant peripheral areas only increased the cost. Consequently, immigrants sent to development towns, who earned on average half the wages of workers in the country's center, paid more rent for lower-quality apartments³⁶. In this way, public housing

generated and reproduced class structure and widened the ethnic and economic gaps in Israeli society that still exist today³⁷.

- 25 The following two pictures shot in southern Israel, show the poor condition of Israeli public housing and are representative of public housing conditions elsewhere in the country.

Picture 1. Public housing units in the south of Israel



Photo by Amit Magal, YNET.

Picture 2. Public housing units in the south of Israel



Photo by Herzl Yosef, YNET.

- 26 Israel's public-housing policy served, and still serves, a national-Zionist role, playing a central part in the ethos of Israel as a welfare state, which provided minimal permanent housing to all citizens³⁸. "However, while the state assumed responsibility for finding housing solutions for its Jewish citizens", explains Efrat³⁹, "this responsibility was not etched in law and no formal standards were set to determine eligibility for public housing. This refraining from legal formalization of the citizens' housing rights is one of the factors that enabled the state to reduce to a minimum its activities for the allocation of housing resources to its Arab citizens". This is also the situation today (2020), and is evident in the negligible percentage of national minorities among public-housing tenants⁴⁰. Moreover, although public housing tenants are the most disadvantaged in society, only 15% of public-housing units are in the country's poorest municipalities (at the lowest levels, 1-4, on the socioeconomic scale). The reason is that the inhabitants in most such municipalities are members of national minorities (Bedouins, Arabs, Druze, and Circassians), who were not part of the policy's target population. This is in contrast to most Western countries, where national minorities and migrants are over-represented in public housing⁴¹.
- 27 As immigration declined throughout the 1970s, public-housing construction also dropped off to an estimated 30% of all building starts. In this period, the government switched from supporting housing construction (supply side) to offering financial incentives for housing ownership through subsidized mortgages (demand side)⁴².

1980s-1990s: Changes in the political economy regime

- 28 In the wake of the 1977 election that ousted the Labor Party, the 1980s saw Israel's political ideology change from that of a social-democratic welfare state to that of a globalized capitalist neoliberal state⁴³. Public companies were privatized, unions were weakened, fiscal austerity mechanisms were introduced, the welfare state was abandoned, and wealth was concentrated in the hands of a small group⁴⁴. These changes were reflected in the public-housing policy⁴⁵.
- 29 In the mid-1980s, the MoCH offered public-housing tenants, especially those in development towns, discounts of 48 % to 60 % to buy their units, depending on family size and location⁴⁶. This was the start of the privatization of the public-housing supply, which is a trend that has become even more pronounced.
- 30 In the early 1990s, another wave of immigration led to a contrary trend, whereby Israel expected one million immigrants from the former Soviet Union in the first year. The government thus built 61,730 public-housing units in 1991 alone, compared to just 3,490 units in 1989⁴⁷. The MoCH also decreased their sale of units to tenants⁴⁸.
- 31 It ended up taking a decade for 941,737 immigrants to arrive in Israel⁴⁹. Which is why, in the middle of the decade, the government stopped building new units and resumed privatizing public housing, after it transpired that the rate of immigration was lower than expected. In 1997, when the conservative Likud Party was elected, the government shifted even closer to privatization of public housing, handing over the management of this housing to private companies through tenders⁵⁰.
- 32 Meanwhile, the government neglected the maintenance of public-housing units, thus compounding the damage from wear and tear along with weather damage⁵¹. The annual

State Comptroller's Report repeatedly documented the poor, even life-threatening, conditions of most public housing⁵².

- 33 In 1998, two important laws pertaining to public housing were enacted. The first was the Public-Housing Tenants Rights Law, enacted in July 1998, making the state and housing companies responsible for the maintenance of public housing. Nevertheless, the State Comptroller's Report continued to document the poor repair of most of the country's housing⁵³.
- 34 Handing over the management of public housing to private companies angered some tenants and social-change movements, leading to the founding of the Public Housing Forum (PHF). This coalition of social organizations and tenants called on the government to allow public-housing tenants to buy their apartments. The combined efforts of the PHF and a group of members of Knesset (parliament) led to the enactment of the Public-Housing Law (Purchase Rights) in October 1998 (henceforth Public-Housing Law, 1998), despite government opposition. Its main aim was to provide discounts of up to 85 %, so that tenants could buy their apartments. At the surface, this aim was in line with the privatization of public housing, although the law's broader goal was to achieve intergenerational justice by enabling public housing tenants to own assets they could leave to their children⁵⁴. Income from the sales was to be used to build new public housing (Clause 10).

2000s-2013: Dramatic increase in housing costs and the social protest of 2011

- 35 The enactment of the Public Housing Law was a victory for public-housing tenants. Since the government opposed the law, however, it was immediately suspended for two years and then again every two years. Even so, some 37,500 apartments were sold between 1999 and August 2011⁵⁵, greatly reducing the public-housing stock. Nevertheless, the proceeds from these sales, totaling NIS 2.75 billions (~ USD 700 millions), were not used for construction of additional public housing⁵⁶.
- 36 As demand for public housing increased, decision makers tightened the already strict eligibility criteria. In this way, the government kept the waiting lists stable for years⁵⁷ and therefore saw no need to change the public-housing policy. Such housing's ownership and funding remained the same in structure and form and, until recently, Israel lagged far behind other countries in terms of involvement of the private sector and public-private partnerships. This situation continued up until the last decade.
- 37 The 2000s have come to be named Israel's "lost decade" of housing policy⁵⁸. This is due to heightened neoliberalism, which enabled market forces to decide housing-construction locations, quantity, price, target clientele, average apartment size, and construction standards. The most visible result of the government's do-nothing policy was a sharp rise in housing prices. Between 2007 and 2013, housing prices increased by more than 70 % in real terms, adjusting for changes in the Consumer Price Index⁵⁹). The skyrocketing cost of living, the great increase in housing costs, and the lack of affordable housing sparked the country's largest social protest ever, which occurred in the summer of 2011, where demonstrations and protests erupted throughout the country⁶⁰. The climax of the protests was a demonstration on September 3, 2011, which drew more than half a million people to Tel Aviv and sites around the country.

- 38 In 2015, the State Comptroller's Report devoted to the housing crisis showed that, from 2008 to 2013, the real price of housing, both new and second-hand, had gone up 55 % in the center of the country and 68 % in the periphery. This meant increased social inequality, especially between the center and the periphery⁶¹. A total of 70 % of the public-housing stock was in peripheral areas in the north and the south of the country, housing tenants in the three lowest deciles. The crisis was therefore more severe for public-housing tenants and those still waiting for public housing.
- 39 In the wake of the 2011 protests, the government decided on a series of steps to increase the supply of housing units and to lower their price⁶². These measures attacked the problem from various angles. One was the national government's "umbrella agreement" with local governments to quickly increase the supply of housing units. Other measures included establishing the National Housing Committee to speed up planning procedures, creating a government-owned company to build long-term rental housing, setting up the Urban Renewal Authority to address urban renewal development, both nationally and locally, as well as giving developers the right to build on publicly owned lands⁶³ in order to lower the price of housing units, as part of the Target Price and Resident's Price⁶⁴ programs. The intended beneficiaries were members of the middle class, however, because these measures enlarged the amount of "affordable" housing but ignored the needs of disadvantaged populations, among them public-housing tenants⁶⁵. In short, the social protests did not lead to any change in public-housing policy.
- 40 Despite the 2011 protests and the increasing demand for public housing, the government kept on selling public-housing units and increasing the eligibility criteria but did not build or buy additional units⁶⁶. By 2013, the waiting list had grown up to 2,620 households. Of these 2,110 had no housing and were certified eligible; the remainder were tenants who wanted to move to better units⁶⁷. The national average wait time was two years⁶⁸, but in more desirable cities, such as Jerusalem or Tel Aviv, it could go up to seven years; 350 households are wait-listed for a unit in those cities.
- 41 Because the affordability crisis became ever more severe, the public-housing waiting lists – despite the tighter eligibility criteria – increased by 23 %, from 2,150 in 2007 to 2,788 in 2015⁶⁹. Meanwhile, the government continued cutting its spending on housing in general and invested next to nothing in public housing⁷⁰.

2014-present: Signs of change

- 42 In 2014 the government and the housing companies finally realized that the situation could not continue. The change that occurred was thus partly the result of the dire situation and several major reports warning of the grave problems in public-housing policy. One such report was produced by the 2014 Committee to Fight Poverty in Israel (CFPI) and another was the State Comptroller's Report of 2014.
- 43 Submitted in June 2014, the CFPI's recommendations⁷¹ were largely devoted to public housing and its residents, who are among Israel's poorest inhabitants. These recommendations included a substantial increase in public-housing units, proposing that they make up at least 5% of the country's housing stock of ~2.4 millions apartments in 2014. According to the recommendations, public housing should have accounted for 120,000 public-housing units, that is, double the number that existed. To reach this level, the committee recommended buying 700–1,000 apartments each year

over a period of 15 years. It also recommended restricting the sale of housing to tenants and substantially increasing the MoCH budget for apartment renovation. Finally, the committee recommended creating uniform rules between the MoCH and the MoAI for the management of the public housing supply.

- 44 Published in May 2015, the State Comptroller's Report⁷² pointed to significant deficiencies in public-housing policy. The report points out that the MoCH had no long-term plan for helping wait-listed eligible households. Furthermore, it did not estimate the future needs of eligible households nor the characteristics of the apartments needed (such as the mix of size and location), and did not even include a budgetary forecast. The report also indicated that, although the wait for public housing had grown substantially, there were hundreds of vacant apartments, some of them left empty for years, but with no relevant policy or work plan in place to address the problem. Like the CFPI report, this report raised the need for clear and transparent criteria for the MoCH's and the MoAI's management of public housing.
- 45 As a first step toward addressing these problems, the government decided to implement the Public Housing Law in January, 2014, for the first time since it was enacted 15 years earlier. This occurred, however, only after the law was amended to allow the use of sale proceeds for rental assistance and the repair of existing housing. Social activists and politicians opposed the amendment, contending that using the money for rental assistance would soon exhaust the supply of apartments and result in increased prices for rents in the private sector⁷³. In fact, after the law's enactment, the public-housing stock reached a historic low of 58,879 units, while demand for apartments continued to rise⁷⁴.
- 46 In September 2014, the MoCH made the decision to buy 1,000 second-hand apartments, but only bought five. In March 2015, a national election gave rise to a new government, headed by the Likud, a conservative right-wing party similar to its predecessor, but with a different attitude toward public housing. The new Construction and Housing Minister, Yoav Galant, immediately announced a five-point plan for resolving the crisis.
- 47 The Five-Point Plan is largely based on the recommendations of the State Comptroller's Report and the report of the CFPI:⁷⁵
- 48 (1) *Earmarking for public housing 5% of the housing units that will be marketed as part of the Resident's Price scheme (Mekhir La-Mishtaken).*
- 49 (2) *Flexible criteria for the immediate occupancy of 500 vacant units.* As of 2015, there were 576 vacant units, most in peripheral districts.⁷⁶ To accommodate for the apartments, the MoCH agreed to flexible eligibility criteria for these empty apartments. Most apartments required major renovations, and a full budget for renovating all the apartments was established by the MoCH in 2015⁷⁷.
- 50 The third and fourth points concern urban renewal development. To increase the housing stock, the plan calls for promoting urban renewal projects of Amidar and Amigur.
- 51 (3) *Extensive urban renewal projects by Amidar in buildings where most units are public housing.* In January 2015, Amidar released its five-year plan for 2015-2020 stating that Amidar would promote urban renewal projects financed through the sale of some of the apartments to private individuals⁷⁸. Such projects exist throughout the country (including Kiryat Gat, Lod, Jerusalem, Haifa, Beit She'an, and Holon). Some projects involve demolition and rebuilding, and some, known as TAMA 38, involve the

renovation and expansion of the existing building, allowing for the additional construction to be sold and to thus cover the developer's costs. Under the various urban renewal schemes, 6,480 housing units are to be built instead of using the existing 908 units. Most of the apartments will be sold in the private market and some will be added to the public-housing stock, but the number of public-housing units to be added is not stated. For example, in a plan for the Gilo neighborhood in Jerusalem, 200 public-housing units are to be vacated and 1,000 new housing units are to be built instead. The plan has not yet been approved (Picture 3).

Picture 3. An illustration of the project in the Gilo neighborhood, Jerusalem



Source: Amidar's Five-Year Plan, 2015–2020, p. 6.

- 52 Another example is the plan for King Saul Street in Ramla, in which 2,000 new housing units are to replace 180 public housing units. This plan, too, has not yet been approved (Picture 4).

Picture 4. An illustration of the Project in King Saul St. in Ramla

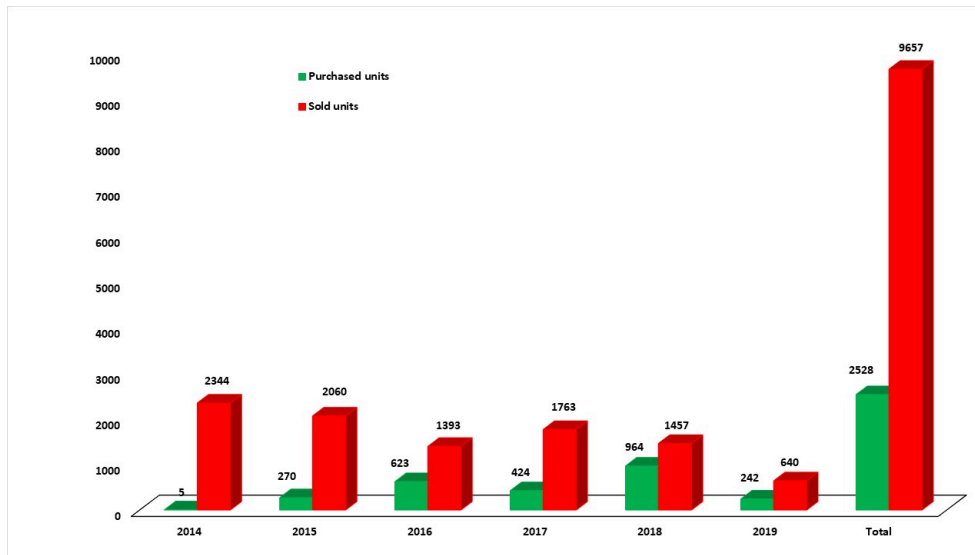


Source: Amidar's Five Year Plan 2015-2020 p.5.

- 53 (4) *Urban renewal projects by Amigur for the construction of 2,500 small apartments (up to 55 sq. m.) for eligible applicants;*
- 54 (5) *A substantial increase in the renovation of existing units.* According to Amidar's National Public Housing Program for 2015-2020, the company will establish an internal fund of NIS 80 million (USD 23.3 millions) to finance apartment renovations.
- 55 After years of neglect and apathy, the government thus seems to be assuming some responsibility for public housing and its occupants. According to the Five-Point Plan, most new housing units will result from urban renewal projects, administered by the Amidar and Amigur companies, whose aim is to generate profits.

The current situation

- 56 What is the current state of public housing in Israel five years after the approval of the Five-Point Plan? The analysis indicates a large gap between the promises and their fulfillment. First, we examine the total public-housing stock. As of December 2019, Israel's public-housing inventory had dropped 15 % from its previous low in 2014 – from 58,879 to 50,416 units.
- 57 To understand this large decline in the number of public-housing units, one must consider the number of units purchased by the state compared to the number of units that the state sold to tenants, as presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Number of public housing units purchased and sold by the state 2014-2019⁷⁹.

- 58 As we can see, from 2014 until November 2019 the number of units sold was 3.8 times the number purchased, but the data also shows a decline over the years in the number of units sold to tenants. Although the Five-Point Plan explicitly states that the government would purchase 5 % of the housing units that would be marketed as part of the Resident's Price program, by December 2019 only 173 housing units had been allocated for public housing. Furthermore, these units are not expected to be completed until 2022, whereas 205,930 housing units have already been sold under this program⁸⁰.
- 59 Nevertheless, recent acquisitions have had a positive impact on the national/geographic distribution of public housing. A comparison of the situation in 2015, as presented in Hananel⁸¹, to the situation in 2019 indicates a more balanced distribution between the center of the country and the peripheral regions, as evidenced by Table 1.

Table 1. Geographic distribution of public-housing units by district⁸².

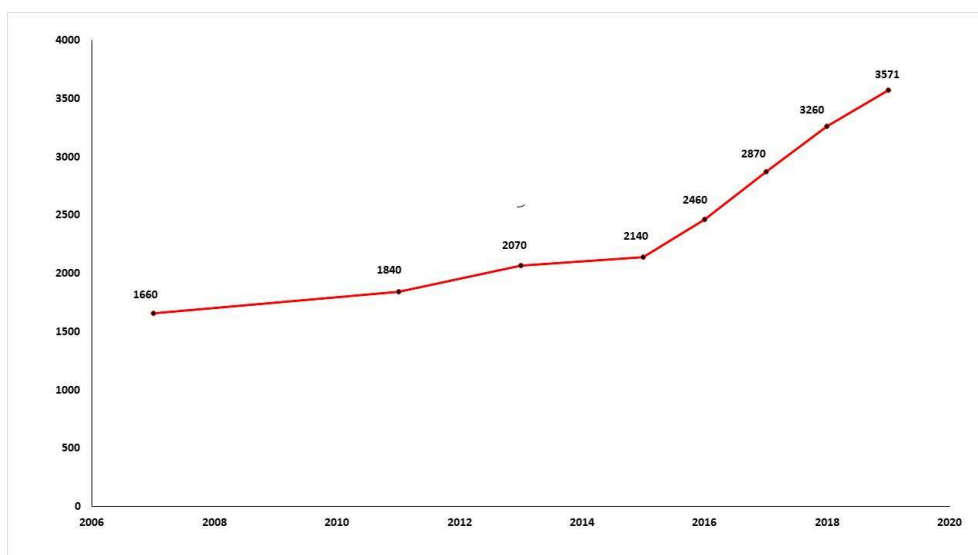
Geographic district	% of public-housing units in Israel 2015	% of public-housing units in Israel 2019	of population in Israel 2019
Jerusalem	6%	14.2%	17.4%
North	25%	18.6%	16.2%
Haifa	10.5%	16.7%	11.5%
Center	23.5%	28.6%	40.4%
South	34.5%	21.8%	14.5%
Total	100%		

- 60 As shown in Table 1, there is an increase in the share of public housing in central Israel, Jerusalem, and Haifa, along with a substantial decline in the periphery (the southern and northern districts), where most of the housing units have historically been

concentrated. These figures are not coincidental and indicate the MoCH's policy of purchasing public housing in high-demand areas and not only in the periphery, as explained by the director-general of the MoCH, Benny Dreyfus.

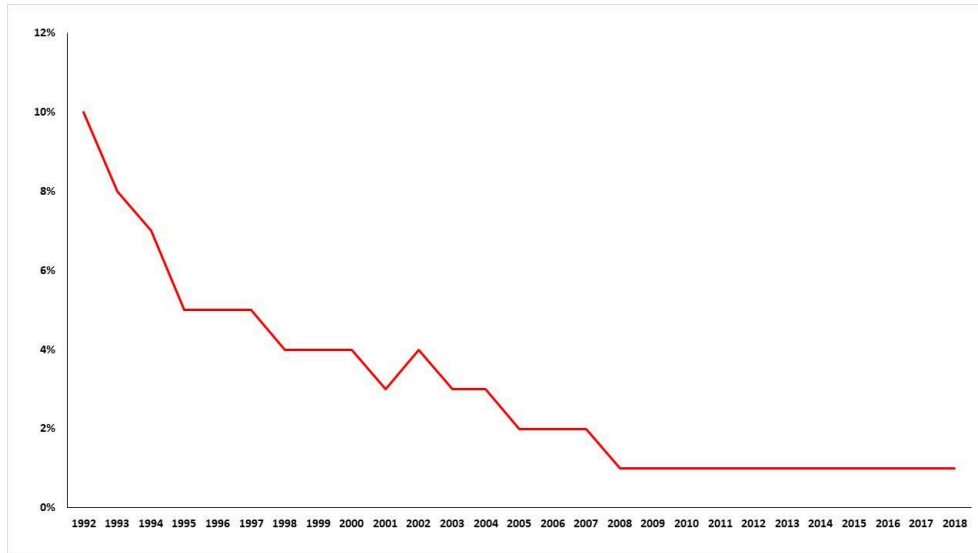
- 61 Another positive trend concerns the occupancy of vacant apartments, one of the components of the Five-Point Plan. Whereas in 2015 there were 576 empty units (see Table 1), today there are only 29 vacant apartments in the distant periphery (4 in Dimona, 25 in Yeroham). To make the housing habitable, the MoCH allocated a renovation budget of NIS 93.3 million (USD 27 millions), of which 1,666 apartments were renovated and occupied by Amidar and 544 by Amigur⁸³.
- 62 In January 2019, the Minister of Housing and Construction was replaced. The new minister brought disadvantaged populations, such as single mothers, street children, and women suffering from domestic violence, into the circle of eligibility for public housing. She also purchased public-housing units outside poverty areas in order to give tenants a real opportunity for change and hope, and increased the housing renovation budget to NIS 140 million (USD 40.6 million)⁸⁴. Consequently, in 2019 the MoCH allocated NIS 49 million (USD 14.2 millions) for the renovation of 2,280 public-housing units and NIS 28.4 million (USD 8.2 millions) for minor repairs in 8,000 units. In addition, another NIS 29 million (USD 8.4 millions) were allocated for extensions and accommodations in 772 apartments for people with disabilities⁸⁵.
- 63 Nevertheless, given the poor state of public housing in Israel, these allocations seem insufficient. As the number of available apartments has declined even further, the number of households on the waiting list has risen considerably. A new study by the Israel Knesset Research Center indicated that in May 2019, 4,483 eligible households were waiting for a public-housing unit (including those seeking to change their apartment). This number is more than twice the number (1,602) in 2007. The number of homeless households eligible through the MoCH increased by 115 %, from 1,660 in 2007 to 3,571 in 2019. In the last four years, since the Five-Point Plan was adopted, the number of homeless households on the waiting list has risen by almost 70 %, from 2,140 in 2015 to 3,571 in 2019, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Number of homeless households on the MoCH waiting list 2007–2019.

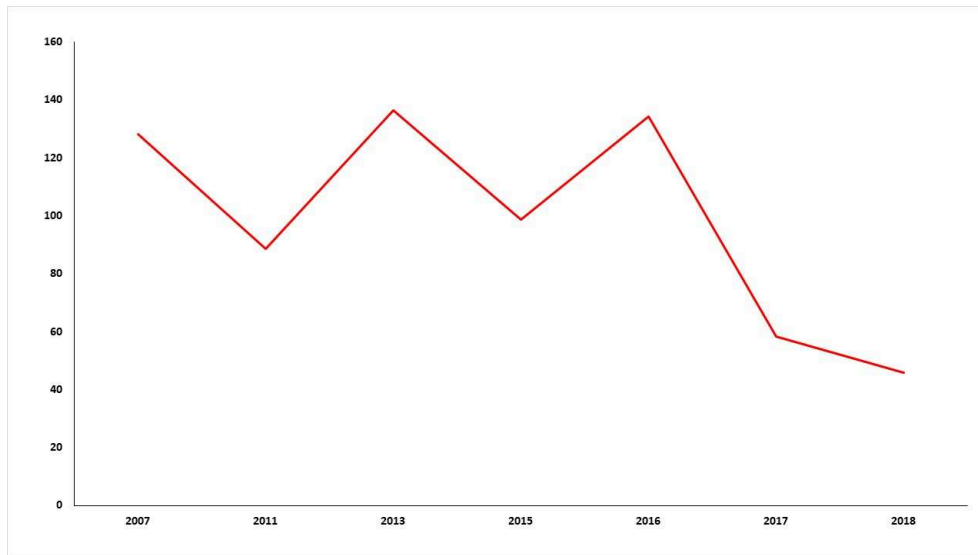


- 64 In addition, as of June 2018, there were 24,073 households on MoAI's waiting list, of whom 18,432 elderly.
- 65 An analysis of the public-housing budget's share of the MoCH budget did not show any clear trend, but that is probably because it includes revenue from the sale of public housing. During the years that many housing units were sold, investment in public housing therefore appears to have increased, although in practice there was no such investment. An examination of the MoCH budget's share of the state budget shows a clear trend of substantial decline over the years, as seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The MoCH budget's share of the state budget, 1992–2018⁸⁶.



- 66 As Figure 3 shows, in the early 1990s, the MoCH's share of the national budget was at its height – 10 % in 1992. Since then, that share has declined substantially, reaching just 1% in 2008 and in subsequent years, despite declarations by the government, ministers and the various new schemes. Furthermore, an analysis of state investment in public housing per eligible applicant reveals a substantial decline since 2007, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Expenditure on public housing per eligible applicant (constant prices of 2018)⁶⁷.

- 67 The main reason for this decline is that most of the increase in public-housing stock should occur through urban renewal projects, funded by private-sector investment, and not through state investment. Urban renewal projects are complex however, and can take decades to complete. Over the past five years, only a few of Amidar's planned 6,500 urban renewal units and Amigur's 2,500 public-housing units have been built. In addition, an attempt to calculate accurate numbers and an understanding of the status of the various Amidar and Amigur projects failed. What is known is that various urban renewal projects are taking place in the private sector and that these include a small number of public-housing units.
- 68 Examples of this can be found in the Home Project in Yahud (Picture 5) and the Tzamarot Project in Kiryat Ono (Picture 6), both of which are instances of demolition and rebuilding by a private developer. The demolished houses were similar to the old buildings seen in pictures, which were replaced by tall towers with a large number of housing units (a ratio of 4.5 new housing units to each old one). In recent years, when both demolition and rebuilding projects began, a small number (2-4) of units were earmarked for public housing. Prior to the demolition, however, these buildings probably had additional public-housing units, which were sold to tenants.

Picture 5. Old and new in Home Project, Yahud.



Photo by Yinnon Geva

Picture 6. Old and new in Tzamarot Project, Kiryat Ono.



Photo by Yinnon Geva

Discussion and conclusions

- 69 Israel's public housing policy has changed dramatically, first serving as a major tool for the absorption of a wave of immigrants and constituting about 60 % of the state's total housing stock in the 1960s, to becoming a minor policy that now accounts for less than 2 % of the total housing stock.
- 70 The state's attitude toward public housing and its tenants has also changed greatly. During its first three decades, Israel, as a welfare state, saw housing as an important area of government responsibility and therefore engaged in massive construction of public housing apartments, aimed at housing new immigrants. However, starting in the 1980s, largely because of the transition to a neoliberal political economy, the state gradually ceased public-housing construction and worked vigorously to privatize public housing, selling apartments to their tenants at substantial discounts.
- 71 An important turning point occurred in the late 1990s with the enactment of the Public Housing Law of 1998. The law allowed tenants to purchase their apartments at a significant discount, in many cases as much as 90 % of the unit's value. The proceeds from the sales were to be used for the construction and purchase of public-housing units. Although the law was not implemented until January 2014, some 40,000 public housing units were sold, the proceeds of which were not used to buy additional units or renovate existing ones. In this context, Israel followed a path similar to that of the British, which allowed privatization of public housing and its sale to its tenants⁸⁸.
- 72 A major criticism of the law concerns the lack of economic sustainability in increasing the public-housing stock using sale proceeds that constitute just one-tenth of the apartments' free-market value⁸⁹. However, the sale of public-housing units did lead to a reduction in gaps in capital distribution between deciles of households. According to Bar⁹⁰, such sales substantially increased the value of real estate capital in the lowest two deciles. Bar emphasizes the law's role in intergenerational justice, explaining that "the selling of public housing to tenants enables tenants to transfer capital to the next generation; moreover, it affects their standard of living."
- 73 Since 2014 there has been a change in the government's approach to public housing. Whereas previously the state only sold public-housing units, in 2014 it started buying new and second-hand public-housing units and even allocated additional funds for the renovation of existing units. Nevertheless, from 2014 to 2019 the number of public-housing units fell by 15 %, from 58,879 to 50,416, and the waiting list increased by 115 % (Figure 2). Although analyses of government investment in public housing appears to show an upward trend, its investment per eligible household has declined substantially in recent years, despite the MoCH's declarations (Figure 4).
- 74 This is because most of the increase in public-housing stock was supposed to occur through urban renewal projects by private developers, instead of through government involvement. Since urban renewal projects take a long time, only a few apartments have been added through this form, mainly through private projects, such as the Home project in Yahud, and Tzamarot project in Kiryat, despite Amidar's and Amigur's efforts over the past five years.
- 75 When public-housing tenants are housed in urban renewal projects in the free market, other problems must be addressed. Public housing is often associated with poverty and delinquency. Most public-housing units built in the twentieth century were in large

urban projects, which rapidly turned into slums and concentrations of poverty⁹¹. In Israel, public-housing units were built mainly in the peripheral areas, and today their tenants are the country's most disadvantaged (in the three lowest socioeconomic deciles). Many people do not want to live near public-housing units because they fear stigma, violence, and delinquency. Recently, the current director-general of the MoCH, Benny Dreyfus, noted that residents "often refuse to be neighbors of public-housing tenants...The stigma that poverty equals delinquency is firmly rooted in the public, and very difficult to deal with⁹²".

- 76 Public policy in general, and urban planning in particular, have tools to deal with these phenomena through urban diversity methods, which encourage heterogeneous neighborhoods that contain diversity in terms of society, age, housing, and socioeconomic status⁹³. This cannot happen, however, solely through the efforts of the private market. The state must also take responsibility and invest in the acquisition, construction, and renovation of public-housing units throughout the country. The state must also be active in creating heterogeneous neighborhoods and must not abandon public housing and its tenants to market forces. Public intervention is necessary to change the stigma of public housing and to enable public-housing tenants to escape the cycle of poverty and to live with dignity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- M. B. Aalbers, "Geographies of the financial crisis" *Area*, 41(1), 2009, pp. 34-42.
- M. Adelino, A. Schoar, & F. Severino, "Loan originations and defaults in the mortgage crisis: The role of the middle class", *The Review of Financial Studies*, 29(7), 2016, pp. 1635-1670.
- N. Alfasi & T. Fenster, "Between socio-spatial and urban justice: Rawls' principles of justice in the 2011 Israeli Protest Movement", *Planning Theory*, 13(4), 2014, pp. 407-427.
- S. Azary-Viesel & R. Hananel, "Internal migration and spatial dispersal; Changes in Israel's internal migration patterns in the new millennium", *Planning Theory & Practice*, 20, 2, 2019, pp. 182-202.
- I. Bar, 2015, *Estimating State Income from Estate Tax*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center [Hebrew].
- G. Benchetrit, *Housing Policy in Israel*, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2003 [Hebrew].
- G. Benchetrit, *A decade without a housing policy: How the government withdrew support for housing and the social protests of summer 2011* (Policy paper n°2014.03), Jerusalem, Israel, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2014.
- N. Bosso, "30 thousand families are waiting for public housing", *The Marker*, July 8, 2015, [on line] <http://www.themarker.com/realestate/1.2678411>, retrieved, December 12, 2016 [Hebrew].

- N. Bosso, "Historically low number of apartments in public housing", *The Marker*, July 19, 2015, [on line] <http://www.themarker.com/realestate/1.2489549>, retrieved December 12, 2016 [Hebrew].
- N. Bosso, "Time for a mental account: You too have a part in eliminating public housing", *Calcalist*, October 9, 2019, [on line] <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5603948,00.html> [Hebrew].
- N. Carmon, "Immigrants as carriers of urban regeneration: international evidence and an Israeli case study", *International Planning Studies*, 3, 2, 1998, pp. 207-225.
- N. Carmon, "Housing policy in Israel: Review, evaluation and lessons", *Israel Affairs*, 7, 4, 2001, pp. 181-208.
- I. Charney, "A 'supertanker' against bureaucracy in the wake of a housing crisis: Neoliberalizing planning in Netanyahu's Israel", *Antipode*, 49, 5, 2017, pp. 1223-1243.
- R. L. Chiu, "The transferability of Hong Kong's public housing policy", *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 10, 3, 2010, pp. 301-323.
- H. Darin-Drabkin, *Public Housing in Israel: Survey and Evaluation of Activities in Israel's First Decade (1948-1958)*, Tel-Aviv, Gadish, 1959 [Hebrew].
- A. Doron, "Welfare regime in Israel: Trends and their implications for social change", *Israeli Sociology*, 5, 2, 2003, pp. 417-434.
- A. Doron & R. Kramer, *The Welfare State in Israel*, Tel-Aviv, Israel, Am-Oved, 1992 [Hebrew].
- Z. Efrat, *The Object of Zionism: Architecture of Statehood in Israel, 1948-1973*, PhD dissertation, Princeton University, Ann Arbor, MI, ProQuest LLC, 2014.
- Z. Efrat, Z. *The Object of Zionism: The Architecture of Israel*, Spector Books, 2018.
- K. England, & K. Ward, *Neoliberalism: States, Networks, Peoples*, Malden, MA, Blackwell, 2007.
- S. Eshel & R. Hananel, "Centralization, neoliberalism, and housing policy: Central-local government relations and residential development in Israel", *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, 37, 2, 2019, pp. 1-19.
- S. S. Fainstein, "Cities and diversity: Should we want it? Can we plan for it"? *Urban Affairs Review*, 41, 1, 2005, pp. 3-19.
- E. Feitelson, "Shifting sands of planning in Israel", *Land Use Policy*, 79, 2018, pp. 695-706.
- R. Feivish, *Public Housing Apartment Sales*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2006 [Hebrew].
- I. Feldman, *Changes in Public Housing in Israel, 1998-2011*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2011 [Hebrew].
- I. Feldman, *The Implementation of the Public Housing (Tenants Rights) Law*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2012 [Hebrew].
- J. Gal, *Social Security in Israel*, Jerusalem, The Hebrew University Press, Magnes, 2004.
- A. Gazit, "Despite government efforts, the public housing pool is shrinking", *Calcalist*, January 16, 2020, [on line] <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5660982,00.html> [Hebrew].
- Y. Geva & G. Rosen, "The regeneration deal: Developers, homeowners and new competencies in the development process", *Geoforum*, 96, 2018, pp. 10-20.

- R. Hananel, "Distributive justice and regional planning: The politics of regional revenue-generating land uses in Israel", *International Planning Studies*, 14, 2, 2009, pp. 177-199.
- R. Hananel, "Can centralization, decentralization, and welfare go together? The case of Massachusetts's Affordable Housing Policy (Ch. 40B)", *Urban Studies*, 51, 12, 2014, pp. 2487-2502.
- R. Hananel, "The Land Narrative: Rethinking Israel's National Land Policy", *Land Use Policy*, 45, 2015, pp. 128-140.
- R. Hananel, "From central to marginal: The trajectory of Israel's public housing policy", 54, 11, 2017, pp. 2432-2447.
- R. Hananel, "Deserving and privileged: The social construction of the right to housing in Israel", *Israeli Affairs*, 24, 1, 2018, pp. 128-149.
- R. Hananel, S. Krefetz & A. Vatury, "Public housing matters: Public housing policy in Israel, the U.S. and Sweden", *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 2018, pp. 1-16.
- R. Hananel, "Public Housing, National Resilience, and Neoliberalism: Rethinking Israel's Public Housing Policy", *National Resilience, Politics and Society*, 1, 1, 2019, pp. 23-51.
- N. Houard, *Social Housing across Europe*, Paris, La Documentation Francaise, 2011.
- "Housing Europe Review: The nuts and bolts of European social housing system", *CECODHAS Housing Europe's Observatory*, Brussels, Belgium, 2012.
- R. Kallus & H. Law-Yone. "National home/personal home: Public housing and the shaping of national space in Israel", *European Planning Studies* 10, 6, 2002, pp. 765-779.
- J. Kemeny, "Comparative housing and welfare: Theorizing relationship", *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 16, 2001, pp. 53-70.
- N. Koprack, *Public Housing in Israel, Data and Eligibility Criteria*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2019. [Hebrew]
- P. Marcuse, "Housing policy and the myth of the benevolent state", *Social Policy*, January/February 1978, pp. 21-27.
- T. Margalit & N. Mualem, "Negotiating justice in urban redevelopment: Exploring the neighborhood council planning model", Venice, Italy, *AESOP Annual Conference*, 2019.
- I. Milrad, *Public Housing and The Five-Point Plan of MoCH*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2015 [Hebrew].
- J. Nitzan & S. Bichler, *The Global Political Economy of Israel*, London, Pluto Press, 2002.
- J. Peck, N. Theodore, & N. Brenner, "Neoliberal urbanism: Models, moments, mutations", *Review of International Affairs*, 28, 1, 2009, pp. 49-66.
- J. Peck & A. Tickell, "Neoliberalizing space", *Antipode*, 2002, pp. 380-404.
- O. Petersburg, "Within a decade: The number of people waiting for public housing has doubled", *YNET*, December 5, 2019, [on line] <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5637227,00.html>
- U. Ram, *The Globalization of Israel: McWorld in Tel Aviv, Jihad in Jerusalem*, New York, Routledge, 2008.
- R. Rolnik, "Late neoliberalism: The financialization of homeownership and housing rights", *IJURR*, 37, 3, 2013, pp. 1058-1066.
- K. Scanlon, C. Whitehead, & A. M. Fernandez, *Social Housing in Europe*, RICS Research, Oxford, Wiley Blackwell, 2014.

- S. Schipper, "Urban social movements and the struggle for affordable housing in the globalizing city of Tel-Aviv", *Environment and Planning A*, 47, 2015, pp. 521-536.
- A. Schwartz, *Housing Policy in the United States*, New York, Taylor and Francis, Routledge, 2014 (3rd edition).
- J. Sleifer, "Urban housing in the state", *Social Security*, 18-19, 1979, pp. 5-21 [Hebrew].
- E. Talen, "Zoning and diversity in historical perspective", *Journal of Planning History*, 11, 4, 2012, pp. 330-347.
- E. Tzfadia, "Public housing as control: Spatial policy of settling immigrants in Israeli development towns", *Housing Studies*, 21, 4, 2006, pp. 523-537.
- E. Werczberger, "The role of public housing in Israel: Effects of privatization", *Scandinavian Housing and Planning Research*, 12, 1995, pp. 93-108.
- C. Whitehead, "Social housing in England", in K. Scanlon, C. Whitehead, & A. M. Fernandez (eds.), *Social Housing in Europe*, RICS Research, Oxford, Wiley Blackwell, 2014, pp. 105-122.
- C. Whitehead C. & K. Scanlon, *Social Housing in Europe*, London, LSE London School of Economics and Political Science, 2007.
- O. Yiftachel, "Social control, urban planning and ethno-class relations: Mizrahi Jews in Israel's 'development towns'", *IJURR*, 24, 2, 2000, pp. 418-438.

NOTES

1. C. Whitehead & K. Scanlon, *Social Housing in Europe*. London, LSE London School of Economics and Political Science, 2007.
2. J. Kemeny, "Comparative housing and welfare: Theorizing relationship", *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 16, 2001, pp. 53-70.
3. P. Marcuse, "Housing policy and the myth of the benevolent state", *Social Policy*, January/February 1978, pp. 21-27; R. Kallus & H. Law-Yone, "National home/personal home: Public housing and the shaping of national space in Israel", *European Planning Studies*, 10(6), 2002, pp. 765-779.
4. R. Kallus & H. Law-Yone, "National home", 2002.
5. C. Whitehead & K. Scanlon, *Social Housing in Europe*, 2007, p. 5.
6. C. Whitehead & K. Scanlon, *Social Housing in Europe*, 2007, p. 6; K. Scanlon, C. Whitehead, & A. M. Fernandez, *Social Housing in Europe*, RICS Research. Oxford, Wiley Blackwell, 2014, pp. 12-20; N. Houard, *Social Housing across Europe* (La Documentation Française: Paris), 2011.
7. K. Scanlon et al., *Social Housing in Europe*, 2014.
8. M. B. Aalbers, "Geographies of the financial crisis", *Area*, 41(1), 2009, pp. 34-42; M. Adelino, A. Schoar, & F. Severino, "Loan originations and defaults in the mortgage crisis: The role of the middle class", *The Review of Financial Studies*, 29(7), 2016, pp. 1635-1670; R. Hananel, "Can centralization, decentralization, and welfare co together? The case of Massachusetts's Affordable Housing Policy (Ch. 40B)". *Urban Studies*, 51(12), 2014, pp. 2487-2502.
9. R. L. Chiu, "The transferability of Hong Kong's public housing policy", *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 10(3), 2010, pp. 301-323; Housing Europe Review, The nuts and bolts of European social housing systems, *CECODHAS Housing Europe's Observatory*, Brussels, Belgium, 2012.
10. R. Hananel, S. P. Krefetz, & A. Vatury, "Public housing matters: Public housing policy in Israel, the U.S. and Sweden", *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 2018, pp. 1-16.

11. S. Schipper, "Urban social movements and the struggle for affordable housing in the globalizing city of Tel-Aviv", *Environment and Planning A*, 47, 2015, pp. 521-536.
12. R. Hananel, "From central to marginal: The trajectory of Israel's public housing policy", *Urban Studies* 54(11), 2017, pp. 2432-2447; R. Hananel, "Deserving and privileged: The social construction of the right to housing in Israel", *Israeli Affairs*, 24(1), 2018, pp. 128-149; R. Hananel, Public Housing, National Resilience, and Neoliberalism: Rethinking Israel's Public Housing Policy, *National Resilience, Politics and Society*, 1(1), 2019, pp. 23-51.
13. R. Hananel, "From central to marginal", 2017.
14. N. Koprack, *Public Housing in Israel, Data and Eligibility Criteria*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2019. [Hebrew]
15. Aliyah is a term for the immigration of Jews to the Land of Israel.
16. The Jewish Agency for Israel, known as the Jewish Agency, is a worldwide Jewish organization founded in 1929. During the British Mandate, before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, it was the governing institution of the Jewish community in Israel. When the state was established, the roles of state administration were transferred to the Israeli government. Today the Jewish Agency, funded by Jews worldwide, works to encourage immigration, help new immigrants, and enhance the relationship with world Jewry. <https://www.jewishagency.org/il/>
17. Judea and Samaria are outside the Green Line, Israel's internationally recognized boundary.
18. I. Feldman, *Changes in Public Housing in Israel, 1998-2011*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2011. [Hebrew]
19. http://www.moch.gov.il/siyua_bedyur/shikun_tziburi/Pages/shikun_tziburi.aspx
20. N. Koprack, *Public Housing in Israel, Data and Eligibility Criteria*, 2019.
21. N. Koprack, *Public Housing in Israel, Data and Eligibility Criteria*, 2019.
22. MoCH press release (July 31, 2019). In July 2018 there was a total of 2,623,000 housing units in Israel. <https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/pages/default.aspx>
23. I. Milrad, *Public Housing and The Five-Point Plan of MoCH*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2015 [Hebrew].
24. N. Carmon, "Immigrants as carriers of urban regeneration: international evidence and an Israeli case study", *International Planning Studies*, 3(2), 1998, p. 183.
25. A. Doron, "Welfare regime in Israel; Trends and their implications for social change", *Israeli Sociology*, 5(2), 2003, pp. 417-434; A. Doron & R. Kramer, *The Welfare State in Israel*, Tel-Aviv, Am Oved, 1992 [Hebrew]; J. Gal, *Social Security in Israel*, Jerusalem, Israel, The Hebrew University Press, Magnes, 2004.
26. J. Sleifer, "Urban housing in the state", *Social Security*, 18-19, 1979, pp. 5-21. [Hebrew]
27. R. Kallus & H. Law-Yone, "National home", 2002.
28. J. Sleifer, "Urban housing in the state", 1979.
29. R. Hananel, "Distributive justice and regional planning", 2009; O. Yiftachel, "Social control, urban planning and ethno-class relations: Mizrahi Jews in Israel's 'development towns'", *IJURR*, 24(2), 2000, pp. 418-438; E. Tzfadia, "Public housing as control: Spatial policy of settling immigrants in Israeli development towns", *Housing Studies*, 21(4), 2006, pp. 523-537.
30. R. Feivish, *Public housing apartment sales*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2006. [Hebrew]
31. Amidar website: www.amidar.co.il (November 30, 2014). [Hebrew]
32. J. Sleifer, "Urban housing in the state", 1979.
33. R. Hananel, "From central to marginal", 2017.
34. J. Sleifer, "Urban housing in the state", 1979.
35. The average public-housing unit built between 1948 and 1958 had 1.6 rooms (in Israel the kitchen is not counted as a room) in an area of 35 sq. m.; privately built units had an average of 2.2 rooms in an area of 70 sq. m. See H. Darin-Drabkin, *Public Housing in Israel: Survey and Evaluation of Activities in Israel's First Decade (1948-1958)*, Tel-Aviv, Gadish, 1959, p. 25. [Hebrew]

36. H. Darin-Drabkin, *Public Housing in Israel*, 1959, p. 25.
37. R. Hananel, "From central to marginal", 2017.
38. Z. Efrat, *The Object of Zionism: The Architecture of Israel*, Leipzig, Germany, Spector Books, 2018.
39. Z. Efrat, *The Object of Zionism: Architecture of Statehood in Israel, 1948-1973* (PhD dissertation, Princeton University), Ann Arbor, MI, ProQuest LLC, 2014, p. 330.
40. Amidar units inhabited by minorities in 2015: Lod (163 of 1,096), Acre (222 of 1,069), Ramla (20 of 760).
41. C. Whitehead & K. Scanlon, *Social Housing in Europe*, 2007, p. 6; K. Scanlon et al., *Social Housing in Europe*, 2014, pp. 12-20.
42. I. Feldman, *Changes in Public Housing in Israel*, 2011.
43. A. Doron, "Welfare regime in Israel", 2003 A. Doron & R. Kramer, *The Welfare State in Israel*, 1992; S. Schipper, "Urban social movements", 2015.
44. J. Nitzan & S. Bichler, *The Global Political Economy of Israel*, London, Pluto Press, 2002; U. Ram, *The Globalization of Israel: McWorld in Tel-Aviv, Jihad in Jerusalem*, New York, Routledge, 2008.
45. Neoliberalism has spread in many countries where the economies are dominated by a free market, in a deregulated and privatized environment. K. England & K. Ward, *Neoliberalism: States, Networks, Peoples*, Malden, MA, Blackwell, 2007; J. Peck & A. Tickell, "Neoliberalizing space", *Antipode*, July 2002, pp. 380-404; J. Peck, N. Theodore, & N. Brenner, "Neoliberal urbanism: Models, moments, mutations", *Review of International Affairs*, 28(1), 2009, pp. 49-66; R. Rolnik, "Late neoliberalism: The financialization of homeownership and housing rights", *IJURR*, 37(3), 2013, pp. 1058-1066; see S. Schipper, "Urban social movements", 2015.
46. R. Feivish, *Public housing apartment sales*, 2006; I. Feldman, *Changes in Public Housing in Israel*, 2011.
47. G. Benchetrit, *Housing Policy in Israel*, Jerusalem, Israel, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2003. [Hebrew]
48. S. Schipper, "Urban social movements", 2015.
49. R. Hananel, "Distributive justice and regional planning", 2009.
50. Israel Government Decision No. 1543, January 29, 1997.
51. E. Werczberger, "The role of public housing in Israel: Effects of privatization", *Scandinavian Housing and Planning Research*, 12, 1995, pp. 93-108.
52. I. Feldman, *The Implementation of the Public Housing (Tenants Rights) Law*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2012. [Hebrew] In 1977, after the Likud (a right-wing party) won the election, it initiated urban renewal projects to help these neglected neighborhoods; N. Carmon, Carmon, N. Immigrants as carriers of urban regeneration: international evidence and an Israeli case study, *International Planning Studies*, 3(2), 1998, 207-225.
53. See Feldman, *The Implementation of the Public Housing (Tenants Rights) Law 2012*: In May 2010, the report stated that 65% of 865 randomly selected apartments were below standard in life-threatening ways.
54. Public Housing Bill (No. 2702), March 16, 1998, pp. 306-308.
55. Housing-unit sales under the various programs were: "My house," known as the Shitreet method (1999-2000), 3,800 units; "Buy your house" (2000-2004), 16,070 units; "My home is here" (2005-2010), 10,030 units; and "My own apartment" (2008-2010), 3,500 units. Some 4,100 units were sold in the free market; R. Feivish, *Public housing apartment sales*, 2006; Feldman, *Changes in Public Housing*, 2011.
56. I. Feldman, *Changes in Public Housing*, 2011.
57. I. Feldman, *Changes in Public Housing*, 2011.
58. G. Benchetrit, *A decade without a housing policy: The Israeli government's withdrawal from housing market and the social protests of 2011* (Policy paper no. 2014.03), Jerusalem, Israel, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2014.

59. Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Price Statistics Monthly, 2016 http://www.cbs.gov.il/www/price_new/a6_1_e.pdf (retrieved January 9, 2018).
60. N. Alfasi & T. Fenster, "Between socio-spatial and urban justice: Rawls' principles of justice in the 2011 Israeli Protest Movement", *Planning Theory*, 13(4), 2014, pp. 407-427; R. Hananel, "From central to marginal", 2017; N. Charney, A "supertanker" against bureaucracy in the wake of a housing crisis: Neoliberalizing planning in Netanyahu's Israel, *Antipode*, 49(5), 2017, pp. 1223-1243; S. Eshel & R. Hananel, "Centralization, neoliberalism, and housing policy: Central-local government relations and residential development in Israel", *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* 37(2), 2019, pp. 1-19.
61. Bank of Israel Annual Report, 2013, pp. 195-214.
62. S. Azary-Viesel & R. Hananel, "Internal migration and spatial dispersal; Changes in Israel's internal migration patterns in the new millennium", *Planning Theory & Practice*, 2019, 20(2), pp. 182-202; Y. Geva & G. Rosen, "The regeneration deal: Developers, homeowners and new competencies in the development process", *Geoforum*, 96, 2018, pp. 10-20; E. Feitelson, "Shifting sands of planning in Israel", *Land Use Policy*, 79, 2018, 695-706; T. Margalit & N. Mualem, "Negotiating justice in urban redevelopment: Exploring the neighborhood council planning model", *AESOP Annual Conference*, Venice, Italy, 2019.
63. In Israel 93% of the lands are nationally owned; R. Hananel, 2015, The Land Narrative: Rethinking Israel's National Land Policy, *Land Use Policy*, 45, 2015, 128-140.
64. In the Resident's Price program, the discounted housing units are marketed by means of a lottery among households that meet the government-set criteria.
65. S. Schipper, "Urban social movements", 2015.
66. R. Hananel, "From central to marginal", 2017.
67. http://www.moch.gov.il/meyda_statisti/siyua_bedyur/Pages/shikun_tsiburi.aspx (November 30, 2014).
68. I. Feldman, *Changes in Public Housing*, 2011.
69. N. Bosso, "30 thousand families are waiting for public housing", *The Marker*, July 8, 2015a. <http://www.themarker.com/realestate/1.2678411> (retrieved December 12, 2016) [Hebrew]
70. The budget of the Ministry of Construction and Housing too shrank during this period from 4.5% of the public budget (NIS 10.2 billion) in 2000 to only 1.7% in 2009. See G. Benchetrit, *A decade without a housing policy: The Israeli government's withdrawal from housing market and the social protests of 2011* (Policy paper no. 2014.03), Jerusalem, Israel, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2014.
71. Report of the Committee to Fight Poverty in Israel, Ministry of Social Affairs, June 2014, pp. 15-20.
72. State Comptroller Annual Report No. 65c for 2014, May 2015, MoCH, pp. 431-471. <https://www.mevaker.gov.il/he/Reports/Pages/290.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>
73. *Knesset Gazette* 25-27 November 2013, Vol. 7, Session 82.
74. N. Boss, "Historically low number of apartments in public housing", *The Marker*, July 19, 2015b. <http://www.themarker.com/realestate/1.2489549> (retrieved, December 12, 2016) [Hebrew]
75. Ministry of Construction and Housing, *Five-point plan to resolve the public housing crisis*. http://www.moch.gov.il/SiteCollectionDocuments/spokesman/spokesman_14072015.pdf (retrieved December 21, 2015)
76. The largest number of apartments was in Dimona (181), followed by Beersheba (79), Mitzpe Ramon (44), and Ofakim (48). A total of 421 vacant apartments in the Southern District, 140 in the Northern District, and 15 in the Haifa District; I. Milrad, *Public Housing and The Five-Point Plan of MoCH*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2015. [Hebrew]
77. I. Milrad, *Public Housing and The Five-Point Plan of MoCH*, 2015.
78. I. Milrad, *Public Housing and The Five-Point Plan of MoCH*, 2015.

79. Data regarding purchased units are based on N. Koprack, *Public Housing in Israel*, 2019; data regarding sold units are based on N. Bosso, "Time for a mental account: You too have a part in eliminating public housing", *Calcalist*, October 9, 2019. <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5603948,00.html>2019. [Hebrew]
80. N. Koprack, *Public Housing in Israel*, 2019.
81. R. Hananel, "From central to marginal", 2017.
82. The MoCH defines the distribution of the apartments throughout the country according to five regions, which differ from the official districts of the State of Israel: Jerusalem (which includes also the Judea and Samaria District), Haifa, the North, and Central (which also includes the Tel Aviv District); N. Koprack, *Public Housing in Israel*, 2019. Sources for percentage of population in Israel 2019: CBS, Statistical Abstract of Israel 2019, Table 2.15, Geographical distribution of the population by district, sub-district and religion. https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/publications/doclib/2019/2.shnatonpopulation/st02_15x.pdf. For percentage of public-housing units in Israel 2019, see Hananel, 2017, based on data received from the public-housing companies; for percentage of public-housing units in Israel 2015, see Koprack, 2019, pp. 8–9.
83. A. Gazit, "Despite government efforts, the public housing pool is shrinking", *Calcalist*, January 16, 2020. <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5660982,00.html> [Hebrew]
84. O. Petersburg, "Within a decade: The number of people waiting for public housing has doubled", *YNET*, December 5, 2019. <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5637227,00.html> [Hebrew]
85. A. Gazit, "Despite government efforts", 2020.
86. State budget, <https://mof.gov.il/AG/BudgetExecution/Pages/PublicaticountantGeneral.aspx>
87. The calculation is based on the MoCH budget divided by the number of eligible applicants waiting for public housing each year, constant prices of 2019.
88. C. Whitehead, "Social housing in England", in K. Scanlon, C. Whitehead, and A. M. Fernandez (eds.), *Social Housing in Europe*, RICS Research, Oxford, Wiley Blackwell, 2014, pp. 105-122.
89. N. Bosso, "Time for a mental account", 2019.
90. I. Bar, *Estimating State Income from Estate Tax*, Jerusalem, Israel, Knesset Information and Research Center, 2015, p. 5. [Hebrew]
91. A. Schwartz, *Housing Policy in the United States*, 3rd edition, New York, Taylor and Francis, Routledge, 2014, pp. 125-157; C. Whitehead & K. Scanlon, *Social Housing in Europe*, 2007, pp. 5-33.
92. N. Bosso, "Time for a mental account", 2019.
93. S. S. Fainstein, "Cities and diversity: Should we want it? Can we plan for it?" *Urban Affairs Review*, 41(1), 2005, pp. 3-19; E. Talen, "Zoning and diversity in historical perspective", *Journal of Planning History*, 11(4), 2012, pp. 330-347.

ABSTRACTS

This paper analyzes and explains the evolution of public housing in Israel. Compared to other countries, Israel's public housing has undergone massive change throughout the last few decades, and is therefore an interesting case study. In the 1950s and 1960s, public housing made up 60% of the state's total housing stock, and most of the population was eligible. Today, however, public housing is marginal in scope and earmarked for only 1.9% of the population,

most of which come from the poorest households. This study presents the explanation of these changes and the current state of public housing in Israel.

Cet article analyse et explique l'évolution du logement public en Israël. Comparé à d'autres pays, Israël a connu les plus grands changements dans ces logements au cours des dernières décennies et constitue donc une étude de cas intéressante. Alors que, dans les années 1950 et 1960, les logements sociaux représentaient 60% du parc total de logements de l'État, et la plupart de la population était éligible; aujourd'hui, les logements sociaux sont marginaux, réservés à seulement 1.9% de la population, principalement les ménages les plus pauvres. Cette étude présente l'explication de ces changements et de la situation actuelle du logement public en Israël.

INDEX

Mots-clés: Logement social, Israël, Néolibéralisme, État social

Keywords: Public Housing, Israel, Neoliberalism, Welfare State

AUTHOR

RAVIT HANANEL

Dr. Ravit Hananel is a faculty member and Head of the Urban Policy Laboratory, at the Department of Public Policy, Tel Aviv University. She holds a Master's degree in Political Science from Tel-Aviv University, and a Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Planning, from the Technion, Israel. She is an expert in land policy, land use (planning) policy and housing policy, especially for disadvantaged populations and public housing. Her research engages in spatial and urban studies, focuses on the relationship between decision-making in public spatial institutions and questions distributive justice and social equality. She is currently involved in two major projects. The first concerns internal migration, housing policy and socio-economic disparities, following a three-year research grant she received from the Israel Ministry of Science and Technology. The second concerns housing policy and urban diversity, following a five-year research grant she received from the Israel Science Foundation (ISF). Dr. Hananel's recent publications: with J. Berechman, "To Capitalize or Not to Capitalize: Public Housing Agencies vs. Urban Residents", *Urban Studies* 55 (1), 2018, pp. 2319-2336; with S. Eshel, "Centralization, Neoliberalism, and Housing Policy Central-local government relations and residential development in Israel", *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* 37(2), 2019, pp. 1-19 (papers with students); with S. Krefetz and A. Vatury, "Public Housing Matters: Public Housing Policy in Israel, the U.S. and Sweden", *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 2018, pp. 1-16; with H. Nachmani, "A Tale of Two Neighborhoods: Toward a New Typology of Land Rights", *Land Use Policy*, 80, 2018, pp. 233-245 (papers with students); with S. Azary-Viesel, "Internal Migration and Spatial Dispersal; Changes in Israel's Internal Migration Patterns in the New Millennium", *Planning Theory & Practice*, 20 (2), 2019, pp. 182-202 (papers with students).