

## **Policy Practice in Action: Social Workers and Parliamentary Committees**

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Policy practice has enjoyed growing interest in social work discourse in recent years. However, only limited numbers of studies have actually examined the involvement of social workers in social policy formulation processes. The current study seeks to enhance our understanding of the involvement of social workers in policy practice. It does so by examining social workers' involvement in one of the main arenas in which social policy processes occur – Knesset committees. More specifically, the study aim is to answer these specific questions: What is the level of participation of social workers in the deliberations of parliamentary committees? In the meetings of which parliamentary committees did social workers tend to participate? In which types of discussions did the social workers participate? What were the topics of these meetings? What were the socio-demographic characteristics and the affiliation of the social workers who participated in parliamentary committee meetings? How frequent was the participation of social workers in parliamentary committee meetings? The study concentrates on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Knessets, between the years 1999-2006, and consists of a quantitative content analysis of all the minutes of parliamentary committees in which at least one social worker appeared on the list of participants. The findings showed that 667 social workers participated in 1,013 parliamentary meetings of around 20 different committees. In some of them the proportion of participation was of one third or more. These findings suggest that social workers take an active role in the meetings parliamentary committees in Israel.

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