

## **The Challenge of Regulating Personal Social Services in Israel**

*Lihl Lahat<sup>1</sup> and Gal Talit<sup>2</sup>*

In recent years, the field of personal social services has undergone a process of change. A major aspect of this process has been the shift to provision of personal social services by non-governmental organizations, especially from the voluntary sector. This has required modification of the way governments operate in this arena. They are now responsible mainly for designing policy and standards, and for funding and monitoring the provision of services. As a result, regulation has become a central issue in the academic discourse and in the practice. In this research, we explored the trends in regulation of the personal social services in Israel, focusing on two services: community residences and hostels for people with intellectual disabilities, and after-school welfare-education programs for children and youth at risk. We interviewed 30 individuals at different levels of the hierarchy: service providers, social workers of the local authority, inspectors, and senior civil servants in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services. We also analyzed different documents on the subject. The findings revealed that in the realm of personal social services there is a need to upgrade and expand regulatory policy in order to support government actions and the delivery of such services.

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