

**The Politics of Partial Privatization  
of Social Services in Israel:  
The Case of Housing for People  
with Intellectual Disabilities**

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While previously it was governmental bodies that directly provided many if not most social services in Israel, in the last decades this function has been allocated to private bodies. This process of "partial privatization" took place without any serious objection, as is well demonstrated by the case of housing for people with intellectual disabilities, a service in which the government's pivotal role as provider until the mid-1980s had significantly diminished ever since. The paper examines this case through the analytical framework of gradual processes of institutional change. Utilizing this theoretical perspective, the paper discusses the political conditions and mechanisms that allowed the supporters of partial privatization – the Budgets Division at the Ministry of Finance and the administration of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services – to lead a major policy change despite the objections of workers and residents' parents.

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