

# Supplymania: The impact of the 2011 social protest on Israel's housing policy

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## ABSTRACT

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Do social protests affect government housing-related decisions? If so, in what way? To answer this question this study examines the influence of Israel's 2011 social protest on the government's housing policy, using an empirical cumulative-aggregative analysis of housing-related decisions over the past two decades. Using JavaScript code to locate selected keywords, we extracted thousands of decisions from the Israeli parliament's cloud, from which we filtered (manually and electronically) approximately 740 relevant housing-related decisions for analysis. The study examines these decisions quantitatively and qualitatively through descriptive statistics and textual policy analysis.

The research findings shows that the 2011 social protest definitely affected Israel's housing policy, because it prompted the government to engage in housing. Whereas before the protest Israel's housing policy was largely static, after the protest the government started making frequent housing-related decisions. The study further shows that the vast majority of the post-protest housing-related government decisions had one main goal: to increase the housing supply for sale (homeownership) as quickly, and on as large a scale, as possible. This means that the various housing policies launched following the protest mainly helped the middle class and individual investors, ignoring disadvantaged populations that could not afford a housing unit at market price.

Considering that a numerical target of new housing units to be produced has been the key guiding principle, it can be concluded that since the beginning of the 2000s there has been no clear national housing policy in Israel. As a result, the socio-spatial disparities that already exist between different areas within Israeli cities and between the center of the country and the periphery are expected to widen, which will further exacerbate the housing crisis, particularly for disadvantaged and minority groups.

**Keywords:** housing policy; social protest; Israel

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