



## Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues

### Government Resolution 1834: A plan to reduce inequalities in Israel's seven mixed cities

December 2022

#### Introduction

In August 2022, the Israeli Government passed Government Resolution (GR) 1834 titled, “Urgent Plan to Narrow Gaps and Provide Supplementary Measures to Prevent Violence and Crime in the Mixed Cities.” This resolution was designed to strengthen the economic and social resilience of Israel’s seven traditional mixed cities.<sup>1</sup> Part of this mandate focuses on reducing inequalities and preventing crime and violence, which particularly impacts Arab residents.

GR 1834 allocates NIS 300 million (about \$89 million USD) to the “mixed cities” for the entire envisioned five-year plan—or roughly NIS 50 million for all seven cities per year. While GR 1834 has been criticized for its limited resources, it is also precedent-setting and notable for a number of reasons: 1) It includes the first definition of “mixed cities” in a government budget; 2) It is the first time Arab society in mixed cities is recognized and budgeted as a unique population with its own needs; 3) it takes a holistic, broad, and proactive approach to addressing these needs; 4) it is the first program to explicitly invest in shared life.

Thus far, only the first year of GR 1834 has been officially approved, with a total of NIS 46 million allocated across all seven cities. Implementation of this plan will help determine the development and proposals for subsequent years. It is thus crucial that this first year is successful, particularly due to the incoming government and its changes to national priorities.

#### Background

Prior to GR 1834, resolutions related to Israel’s Arab population only focused on Arab municipalities or the entirety of Arab society. Most of GR 550’s budgets (the government’s second five-year socio-economic plan for Arab society,<sup>2</sup> approved in 2021), are channeled through Arab local authorities. Therefore, only the budgets for Arab society at large (such as parts of employment and education budgets) were relevant to Arabs citizens living in mixed cities. In response, in section 28 of GR 550, the government directed the Economic Development Authority and the Prime Minister’s office to formulate a multi-year plan for mixed cities.

This decision to draft a plan specifically for mixed cities was, in part, a direct response to the [May 2021 events](#). These events were most severe in Israel’s most troubled and disadvantaged mixed cities (i.e. Lod, Ramle, Akko). This watershed moment raised awareness about the unique

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<sup>1</sup> For more details on mixed cities and relevant socio-economic data, please see IATF’s primer on Arab communities and Jewish-Arab relations in mixed cities from October, 2021:

<https://www.iataskforce.org/resources/view/2070>

<sup>2</sup> To learn more about GR 550, you can find IATF’s in-depth explainer here:

<https://www.iataskforce.org/resources/view/2074>

circumstances of Arab citizens and Jewish-Arab relations in these cities. Over the past decade, growing numbers of Jewish and Arab activists, civil society organizations, and members of local authorities have also been working to address these dynamics and bring them to the attention of national authorities.

GR 1834 includes the first ever government definition of mixed cities, which can be seen as a breakthrough in contending with the Arab populations in these municipalities. According to GR 1834, a mixed city is defined as a Jewish-majority city that has an Arab minority of more than 20% of the city’s residents or over 20,000 Arab residents. The seven cities that fit within this definition are: Lod, Acre, Ramle, Ma'alot-Tarshiha, Nof HaGalil, Haifa and Tel Aviv-Yafo. This decision also defines “Arab neighborhoods” of mixed cities as areas where at least 60% of residents are Arabs, and “mixed neighborhoods” as areas in mixed cities where 40-59% of residents are Arab.

In the future, this definition can serve as a basis for changing the policies of government ministries related to the promotion and development of services and solutions for the Arab population in mixed cities. The processes of defining mixed cities and creating legislation regarding mixed cities also lays a framework for future government legislation and budgets.

Arab residents in Israel’s mixed cities experience socioeconomic gaps with respect to their Jewish peers at similar rates to those characterizing Israel's Arab minority as a whole. These disparities are reflected in many areas of socioeconomic well-being: employment, housing, education, and accessibility to services. Recognizing these gaps, GR 1834 indicates that both Arab neighborhoods and mixed neighborhoods should benefit from additional tools and resources.

**What is in the Plan?**

The first year of GR 1834 allocates NIS 46 million (about \$13.45 million USD), or an average of a little less than NIS 7 million per city. Civil society leaders and experts have criticized the plan for not having nearly enough funds to tackle the immense challenges facing mixed cities or provide their Arab residents with real social mobility. Despite the lack of budgetary resources, GR 1834 is of strategic importance to the authorities, residents, and civil society organizations of the cities involved because it takes a broad and holistic approach to the needs of Arab residents, including issues of shared living and social cohesion. It is based on an in-depth study and backed-up by data, studies from research institutes, and collaborations with the local authorities and civil society organizations.

Funding Area	Budget (NIS millions)	Description
Employment	14	Dedicated programs to develop skills needed for the workplace, professional training, technical training, strengthening the knowledge of Hebrew and English and digital skills studies.
	1	Expansion of employment counseling services to help integrate Arab jobseekers from the mixed cities.
Childcare	Allocated from GR 550	Increase the number of day care centers that serve Arabs in mixed cities.
Youth	2	Expand and strengthen programs to promote social involvement of young people for the good of the community.
	Allocated form GR 550	The Ministry of Social Equality will promote post high school transition/gap year programs appropriate for Arabs youth and young adults residing in mixed cities.

		The Youth Authority will monitor, regulate, and report on the activity of the youth centers in mixed cities as well as on the accessibility of the listed services for Arab youth in mixed cities.
<b>Welfare</b>	6.8	Reinforce accessibility of welfare and the operation and expansion of preventive and therapeutic programs adapted to Arab society in mixed cities.
		Formulate tools for directors of social service departments to improve occupational diversity and representation of workers from Arab society in social service departments, focusing on the cities of Ramle and Lod.
		Increase the activity of community mediation and dialogue centers for conflict resolution. Develop community leadership and strengthen partnerships with stakeholders in the involved cities.
<b>Education for Shared Society</b>	5	Prepare a plan to strengthen shared values and experiences between Arab and Jewish students from mixed cities, through formal and informal education.
		Allocation of a budget to schools in mixed cities involved in activities to promote shared society among Arab and Jewish students.
		Form communities of teachers from Arab and Jewish schools in mixed cities to provide tools and guidance in the area of shared society.
		Establish a municipal forum, under the responsibility of the local authority, with the participation of educators in the municipal frameworks.
<b>Strengthening of shared society</b>	15	Implement programs to strengthen the fabric of shared society, increase cooperation, and strengthen the ties between Jews and Arabs.
<b>Culture and sports</b>	0.4	Strengthen cultural activities for Arab society in mixed cities
	0.4	Strengthen sports activities for Arab society in mixed cities
	25% discount in costs	For construction of sports facilities in 2023 as a benefit to the authorities for providing additional financing to the construction of sports facilities in Arab or mixed neighborhoods in mixed cities.
<b>Reduction and prevention of violence:</b> “The treatment of the phenomena of crime and violence in Arab society for the years 2022 – 2026”.	Allocated from GR549	Integrate “soft” tools for treatment and prevention of crime and violence, targeting the population of young Arabs who are not in a permanent employment framework, studies, or professional training.
		Combine enforcement activities and activities for treatment and prevention, from the fields of welfare, education, society and the community.
		Promote rehabilitation programs and the return of offenders to society and keep them away from criminal environments to prevent their deterioration into the world of crime.

		Dedicated police program for the cities of Ramle, Lod and Acre to invest resources with the aim of expanding direct measures to strengthen personal security, to reduce violence and crime in these cities by increasing police presence, training, and restoring the sense of personal security in those cities.
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**What is next for GR 1834?**

Structurally, GR 1834, is an amendment of GR 550. The amendment was not approved before the 24<sup>th</sup> Knesset dissolved, and new elections were held. Transitional governments do not have the authority to approve five-year resolutions. However, because of the urgency and gravity of the situation in mixed cities, the Ministry for Social Equality and the Authority for the Economic Development of the Arab Society did receive approval to fund the first year of the five-year plan at the current budget of NIS 46 million.

The fate of the remaining four years of the plan remains with the incoming government. Therefore, experts believe it is critical that the funding is effectively disbursed and utilized. While the implementation of GR 1834 beyond 2023 remains unclear, it created a new paradigm for national government work regarding mixed cities and established a model for policies moving forward.