

Biographies of Speakers for the Taub Center Conference on

Local Authorities and Central Government and the Dynamics of War: A Changing Landscape?

Conference Hosts



Mira Golan

Chief Financial, Human Resources and Marketing Officer, Taub Center. She is responsible for all areas of financial operations and human resources at the Center.

She has a long background in the medical device and healthcare industry in Israel and internationally. She has a great deal of experience with establishing global relationships, strategic partnerships and leading business development strategic processes. She is a licensed CPA, has a BA in economics and accounting from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and a Master of Science in management in information systems and innovation from the Polytechnic Institute of New York University. Mira is married to Shmulik and mother to Ilay and Lia.



Michal Ben-Dov

Chief Development Officer, Taub Center. She is responsible for cultivating new partnerships and expanding the Center's base of support.

Previously, she served as Chief Philanthropy Officer of the Tel Aviv Foundation, and prior to this she was Director of Strategic Partnerships at Joint ELKA and Joint Israel Unlimited. Before that, she was a co-founder of Camp USA, a non-profit organization facilitating opportunities for Israeli teens to attend Jewish summer camps in North America. She was actively involved with the Maccabi World Movement as the Director of the Junior Maccabiah at the 17th Games and served as an emissary of the Jewish Agency to the JCC Association in NY.

She is a graduate of the Mandel Leadership Institute (2013). Her final project dealt with the subject of Jewish nationhood and the connection between Israel and the larger Jewish worldwide community. She holds a BS in the history of the Jewish people from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and graduated with an MA cum laude in Jewish Studies from Tel Aviv University. She is a member of the Schusterman ROI community. Michal is a proud resident of Tel Aviv, where she lives with her sons Nadav and Gili.

Opening Remarks



Prof. Avi Weiss

President, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel; professor of economics, Bar-Ilan University. He holds a PhD in economics from the University of Chicago. He has been a senior faculty member at Bar-Ilan University since 1988 and served as chair of the Economics Department between 2005 and 2008. He specializes in applied economics with a focus on industrial organization, antitrust, labor economics, law and economics, and behavioral and experimental economics.

Prof. Weiss is the editor of the Israel Economic Association's journal, *The Economic Quarterly* and is an associate editor of *Economic Inquiry*. In the public domain, Prof. Weiss served as Chief Economist and Deputy Director of the Israel Antitrust Authority between 2003 and 2005, was a member of the Anti-Dumping Commission of the Ministry of Industry and Trade between 1999 and 2003, served as a member of the Subcommittee on the Cost of Living and Competition of the Trajtenberg Commission on Social and Economic Change, and acted as a consulting member of the Bachar Intra-Agency Committee for Reform of the Financial Sector. Today, he is the academic representative on the Appeals Committee for the Regulation of Prices of Goods and Services Law and a member of the Competition Task Force of Israel's Grand Strategy Forum. He has been a research fellow at the Institute of Labor Economics (IZA) in Germany since 2000. Throughout his academic career, he has published more than fifty articles in refereed journals and professional books.



Col. (Res.) Miri Eisin

Vice Chair, Taub Center Board for Governance and Administration. Miri served in the Israeli intelligence community and retired at the rank of full colonel in 2005. Over her twenty-year career in the military she served in diverse positions in the field, combat units, and research departments.

In the spring of 2002, she served as the Israeli Prime Minister's spokesperson for Operation Guardian of the Walls. She presented to the world press intelligence findings that connected the Palestinian Authority to terrorist organizations and the then head of the authority, Yasser Arafat, to terrorist agencies. During the Second Lebanon War, she was appointed as government spokesperson to the foreign press, and later, as an advisor to the prime minister on the foreign press.

She has continued to work in the fields of intelligence, security, and foreign relations through lectures, meetings, workshops, and tours. She is a lecturer at Reichman University and works extensively with organizations, among them, the Center for International Communication at Bar-Ilan University, the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, and the Taub Center. She is a board member of the Deborah Forum and Women in Foreign Policy and National Security. She holds a BA from Tel Aviv University in Middle Eastern Studies and Political Science, an MA from Haifa University in Security Studies, and is a graduate of the Israeli National Defense College. She is married and the mother of three.

Opening Lecture



Mordechai Cohen

Senior Fellow, The Institute for Israeli Thought (IIT); Chair, Shita Institute Advisory Committee.

He was Director General of the Ministry of Interior from January 2017 until July 2021. In this position, he oversaw the completion of an overall organizational change and together with administrators in the ministry, led other processes including a reform of the geographic committees for distributive justice, reducing the number of local authorities managed by an executive committee, a substantial increase in the budget of the ministry to advance weaker local authorities in the periphery, as well as reform in the business licensing authority. In addition

to this role, he served as chair of the National Planning and Building Council and Chair of the Infrastructure Planning and Development Administration.

In 2019, he was appointed by the Ministry of Interior to head the team for regional advancement and the decentralization of authority in favor of local authorities. In 2022, he was a recipient of the Bachar Fellowship from Elka-JDC. In the past, he served as head of the Northern Region, Deputy Director and Director in the area of education at the Rashi Foundation. He has a BA and MA in political science from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, as well as an MA in business administration from the University of Manchester.

First Session: The Relationship Between Central Government and Local Authorities in Israel



Nir Barak

Lecturer, Department of Politics and Government, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. His

research interests are philosophy and political theory, urban politics, and environmental politics. He received his PhD from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem for his research on social and political aspects of urban sustainability. Following this, he was a Fulbright postdoctoral fellow at Columbia University, and at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology. His current research focuses on the relationship between national citizenship and urban citizenship (city-zenship) in light of cities' rising power in national and global politics and growing demands for more political

autonomy vis-à-vis the state.



Rotem Yadlin

Mayor, Gezer Regional County, a dynamic community of 25 local authorities and 30,000 residents.

She holds a law degree from Tel Aviv University, is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School's mid-career master's program in public administration, and a graduate of the Maoz program in ethical public leadership. Previously, she served as CEO of "Access for All" facilitating higher education access for marginalized adults.

In 2015, she received the Israeli Bar Association's "Honoris Causa Award" for her commitment to reducing social gaps, and in 2023, she won the Rappaport Prize as Woman of the Year in the public sector.



Shlomo Dolberg

Director General, Federation of Local Authorities in Israel (FLAI) since May 2010. His responsibilities include the system that represents all local authorities in Israel before the government institutions, ministries, and the Knesset. In the past, he served as a manager at Lidar Real Estate LTD and at the Israeli Water Sector Administration of Local Authorities of the Ministry of Interior.

He is the Director on behalf of the Center for Local Authorities to the veterinary corporation in the Ministry of Health and the Nature and Parks Authority. In the past, he also served as the director on behalf of the local government at Dexia Bank and as the director and chairman of the Rom Training Fund for local government employees. He holds a master's degree in public administration and public policy from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



Shira Ohana

Director General, Hura Local Council. She was born and grew up in Yeruham. She deals daily with the relations between local authority and central government in Israel. She is the former CEO of Kav Hazinuk, and the former Vice President for Strategy and Organizational Development at the Edmond de Rothschild Partnerships. She has also assisted tens of local authority managers through the process of building their organizations and professional capital. In 2023, she was included in the Globes list of "40 under 40." She holds a master's degree in organizational consulting from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a bachelor's degree in history and Jewish philosophy from the Ofakim program for excellence of Tel Aviv University.



Anna Lerner-Zchut

Senior Director, Strategic Planning Unit, Ministry of the Interior. Previously, she headed the policy planning division of the Ministry of Health, where she worked from 2014. Her work there included health strategies in local authorities, and, during the COVID crisis, she spearheaded relations between the ministry and the local authorities. In addition, she was involved in preparedness and activities in the core areas of the health system including prevention and advancing health, early childhood health, and narrowing health gaps. She has a wealth of experience in the areas of human capital and resources, group dynamics and leadership.

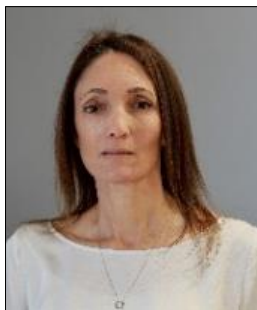
She holds a BA in psychology and international relations and an MA in public policy from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, as well as a certificate in mediation.

Second Session: Welfare During War



Nir Kaidar

Kaidar is Director General of the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel. Mr. Kaidar has a comprehensive and longstanding familiarity with Israeli and international health and welfare services. He has extensive experience in public service in leading strategic processes, research, formulating reforms, and leading innovative processes in government ministries. Since 2006, he has held a series of managerial positions in the Ministry of Health. From 2014 to 2019, he served as Senior Deputy Director General and Head of the Strategic and Economic Planning Administration at the Ministry of Health, and from 2019 he served as Senior Deputy Director General and Head of the Strategy, Economic Planning, Research and Regulation Administration at the Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs. Mr. Kaidar holds a BA in economics, philosophy, and public policy, and an MA in public policy, both from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Mr. Kaidar lives in Jerusalem, is married to Zohar, and is father to Beeri, Tamar, and Maayan.



Sharon Melamed

Director of Welfare, Social Services and Public Health, Tel Aviv-Yafo Local Authority. In her role, she deals with the social challenges facing the diverse and unique communities in the city. She is a partner in leading macro-public policies.

Over the years, she has filled a variety of roles, both treatment and administrative, with various populations. Among them, she worked in developing and implementing programs in various organizations, government offices, and with residents. In addition, she planned and developed information systems, organic learning, changes in work concepts, and the move to implementing result-oriented systematic professional interventions, with measurable results. She is a graduate of the Maoz program and member of the Maoz community.



Eti Kisos,

Deputy Director General, Social, Family and Personal Services Administration, Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs. Her department focuses on service to individuals, families, special populations, immigrants, and neighborhoods. She has held a variety of positions in social services in local authorities, as well as in the Haifa and Northern Districts of the Ministry of Welfare, including directing the district authority. In June 2023, she was appointed by the Minister of Welfare and Social Affairs, to head the committee to examine the area of adoption in Israel. She holds a BA and MA in social work and a second MA in business administration.



Tehila Revivo

Manager, Sha'ar HaNegev Regional Council, Resilience Center. She joined the regional council in 2006 and has held many positions in the council before this one which includes accompanying Kibbutz Nahal Oz and directing the Resilience Center. In her current position, she is responsible for support and assistance in coping with the consequences of the current security situation on the individual, family, and community levels, while meeting needs, developing models and tools that are appropriate for the changing reality.

She has a master's degree in social work with a focus on community and she is a certified clinician in family therapy. She lives in Kfar Maimon, is married, and the mother of five.



Sliman Al-Amour

Co-CEO, AJEEC-NISPED. He leads AJEEC's strategic plan, advances and develops community programs, and is a pioneer of work processes based on public trust and engagement. His involvement in AJEEC began 15 years ago as a project manager for a program that empowers youth in Bedouin localities in the Negev. Following that, he managed the Taliyah program (year of volunteering) and headed the volunteer tent at the organization. As part of his position, he also advances cooperation with local authority leadership, college and university deans, directors of social organizations, and government ministries.

He holds a master's degree in public administration and policy from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is a graduate of the Maoz Fellowship Program; a course for group facilitators run by Kay College and the Ministry of Education; Shatil's "Enabling Leadership" course; and, the "Window to Government" program. He is a resident of Kseifeh, married, and a father of five.

Third Session: Reconstruction and Development of the Gaza Border Area



Sigal Moran

Former Director, Bnei Shimon Regional Council and Director General, Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs. She came to the Negev during her military service and was a founding member of Kibbutz Shomria. She served in a number of positions in the kibbutz and then in the national kibbutz movement working with kibbutzim in the South. In 2000, she joined the Bnei Shimon Regional Council as the head of the strategic unit, and in 2009, she was elected Director of the Council – a position she held for a decade.

From the end of 2019 until mid-2021, she was the Executive Director of Branco-Weiss, an educational organization that focuses on youth-at-risk. In 2021, she was appointed by the then Minister of Welfare and Social Affairs, Meir Cohen, as Director General of the Ministry, and was also responsible for the Five-Year Plan for economic and social development of the Bedouin in the South. With the change of government, she left this position and led the strategic plan for assistance to Arab authorities on behalf of three large philanthropic foundations.

Upon the death of the regional council head, Ofir Libstein, on October 7, she was enlisted to assist the Sha'ar HaNegev Regional Council. She lives on Kibbutz Beit Kama, is married to Ronen, and mother to Raz and Noam.



Lior Niski

CEO, Sha'ar HaNegev Regional Council. He has a BA in politics and government, and history of the Jewish people, from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and an MA in political communication from Tel Aviv University. From 2010 to 2017, he was the strategic specialist for the Neot Hovav Industrial Council and worked to advance strategic projects to turn the industrial area into an environmentally responsible eco-industrial park. From 2017 until 2021, he headed the Switch Center for Training and Advancement of Employment, a project of the Harry Oscar Triguboff Institute in partnership with the Idan HaNegev Company – a program to advance employment in the Bedouin Community in the South.



Uri Pinto

CEO, Western Negev Regional Cluster, and a founder of the organization. The Cluster is an association of towns with a partnership of ten authorities in the Western Negev. It serves as a basis for strategic and applied cooperation. It offers the local authorities the benefits of economy of scale, widening supply and services to residents.

He is a social entrepreneur specializing in managing and developing social-economic projects based on multi-sector cooperation. He is founder and head of a joint social venture, “LeHaEz” (To Dare), and headed the “City in Change” project in Sderot and Yeruham, for the Zionut2000 Foundation. He is a graduate of the group facilitator program in the School of Social Work, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, as well as the Makom program and a fellow in the Maoz Network. He holds an MA in management and public policy and a BA in life sciences from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He lives in Meitar, is married, and the father of four.



Rebecca Caspi

Director General, The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), Israel, and Senior Vice President Israel and Global Jewry. In this capacity, she works to advance the worldwide agenda of the organization through contacts and joint projects with a wide-range of funders and international organizations. In addition, she leads and oversees the economic support for non-profits in Israel and advances the fight against antisemitism and the BDS movement.

Prior to joining JFNA, she worked for over 16 years at the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee where she earned the distinction of being the first woman ever appointed to JDC’s global executive management team. She serves on a variety of boards of Israeli organizations. She holds a BA in archaeology and ancient history from the University of Pennsylvania, an MA in Middle Eastern Studies from New York University, and an MBA from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She is married with three children and lives in Motza Illit.



Ido Zolti

Director, Welfare and Social Services Department, Sderot Local Authority. He has been a social worker since 2004. He has had many roles in the city of Sderot's Department of Welfare, and was also the Southern District Supervisor in the Ministry of Welfare and Social Services in the area of youth services as well as the Director in the Department of Welfare for Kiryat Ono. In his current position, he is responsible for the development of economic and physical resilience, community resilience, dealing with trauma and loss as well as personal, social, and family well-being.

Since the outbreak of the war, his position has expanded to reach the population in its entirety and specifically treatment and care of the wounded, bereaved families, as well as families of hostages, alongside developing work methods for those who have been evacuated, changes in policy, and uptake of rights. He is also dealing with the rehabilitation of the city and preparedness for the "day after."

He has an MA in social work, and is a graduate of courses in management, senior management, management of the entire population as well as many other professional advancement courses.