

# **Migration Policy in Israel toward non-Jews From Africa**

## **Introduction**

Immigration has expanded globally in the last decades and has a great impact on demography, culture, economy, and politics of a state. For obvious reasons, Western countries are the desired destination for immigration and thus, all industrial countries must deal with its consequences. Governments are required to deal with the immigration phenomenon on national and local levels, and must set and enforce policies toward illegal immigrants. Such policies developed by individual states are often concealed, and open discussion of the policy is rarely brought up. Unless there is public demand to disclose immigration laws and practices, governments will typically keep those under cover.

Immigration policy is divided into two major components. The first concerns the approved immigration policies adapted by the state; the second regards the entire realm of illegal immigration, including infiltrators, refugees, and asylum seekers. The terminology used by each society to describe illegal immigrants carries a great impact on the approach that will be adopted towards them, both by lawmakers and the general public.

Israel has dealt in the past with the issue of labor immigrants but the mass numbers of infiltrators from Africa in the last few years has put Israel in a delicate position. Israel has a complex attitude toward non-Jewish migrants from Africa. On the one hand, Israel has a unique trauma in its people's history, whose memory renders its people very aware of the asylum-seekers' experience of exile from their homelands and ready to invest effort in helping them. On the other hand, Israel legislated the Law of Return for all Jews and calls itself the Nation of the Jews. In doing so, Israel fears for its demographic structure and wants to make sure that the majority of the Israeli population will remain Jewish.

This dilemma was the focus of our interest, and the policy towards the immigrants from Africa is the central topic of the current research.

Our research question was formulated as follows: What is Israel's policy toward non-Jewish immigrants from Africa. Toward answering this question, we describe six approaches to immigration control policy. These include: Marxism, Realism, Liberalism, the "National Identity" approach, Domestic Politics, and Institutionalism. In the following, we touch upon each policy in turn.

For reasons detailed below, we assume that Israel will accord with the Realism, "National Identity", and Institutional approaches, whereas the Marxism, Liberalism, and Domestic Politics approaches will not play a significant role in Israel's immigration policy.

As the immigration policy is usually not open for public discourse, we decided to read the protocols of "The special Committee for Observing the Foreign Workers Issue" assuming that its structure, including coalition members and opposition members, will yield a fertile ground for confrontations of government officials and many others voicing criticism concerning the policy and allegations of non-policy approach. Using the response of the government representatives in the committee we expected to find fractions of Israel policy toward the non-Jewish immigrants from Africa in order to build the whole picture.

## **Immigration control policy**

There are five types of labor immigrants. The first type involves immigrants who come with the intention to get full citizenship in the hosting country. The second type includes workers who come each day for work and go back to their homeland country every night. The third type are workers who immigrate for a temporary period according to a formal contract. The fourth type includes illegal immigrants who infiltrate into a foreign country or immigrants whose visa has expired. The fifth type considers refugees who

look for asylum on humanitarian basis or reasons of family unity (Schnell 1999: 11).

Immigration control policy is a crucial element in determining immigration patterns. Meyer claims that immigration policy is often not well defined and policymakers often do not encourage attempts to openly debate the relative merits of various schools of thought on the subject (Meyer 2000: 1246). Meyer maps immigration policy into six approaches: Marxism, Realism, Liberalism, the "National Identity" approach, Domestic Politics and Institutionalism.

Marxism and Neo-Marxism approaches argue that economic factors and class-based political processes shape immigration policies. As such, the argument is that labor immigration is a structural part of capitalism and serves the capitalist ruling class (Meyer 2000: 1248). Hence, it can be expected that countries with dominant Marxist and Neo-Marxist approaches would encourage immigration in the long run. In the short run, governments halt or even reverse immigration during times of economic recession in order to prevent these recession from building into crises of capitalism (Meyer 2000: 1248).

The Realism and Neorealism approaches are based on the assumption that states are the principal or most important players and represent the key units of analysis. It also assumes that the state is an integrated unit, a rational actor and that national security issues are the most important ones on the international agenda (Meyer 2000: 1263). Security concerns and demographic inferiority vis-à-vis its Arab neighbors have contributed to Israel's encouragement of Jewish immigration (Meyer 2000: 1264). International relationship determines the policy of each country and distinguishes the countries that will hold encouraging policy or halting policy.

Liberalism and Neo-liberalism approaches presuppose that non-state actors, such as international organizations and multi-national corporations, are important actors in international relations and that economic and social issues are no less important than military ones (Meyer 2000: 1266). The Neoliberal institutionalist model argues that international institutions and

regimes can help overcome dilemmas of common interests and common aversions and facilitate collaboration and coordination between countries (Meyer 2000: 1266). Supranational organizations and international regimes were found as having little impact on immigration policies of individual countries.

The "National Identity" approach suggests that the unique history of each country, its conception of citizenship and nationality, as well as debates over national identity and social conflicts within it, shape its immigration policies. This approach builds upon sociological and psychological theories and concepts such as national identity, nation building, prejudice, alienation and social closure (Meyer 2000: 1251). The "National Identity" approach focuses on the unique history and traditions of each country and utilizes a historical approach. Hence, "National Identity" approach doesn't predict encouraging policy or withdrawing policy toward immigration as a rule. Each country has to be examined and according to its historical events and culture, the policy can be deduced. According to the "National Identity" approach, social conflict in a country should cause restrictions on immigration.

Domestic Politics models assume that the state serves as a neutral arena for societal interest, including interest groups and parties. Policymaking is the result of bargaining as well as of compromises between these interests, or sometimes it reflects the fact that one or more of these actors has succeeded in capturing the state (Meyer 2000: 1257). Organized interest or pressure groups try to force parties, legislation, and administrators to adopt specific policies. Again like the "National Identity" approach, the approach does not predict encouragement or withdrawal of specific policies toward immigration as a rule. Each country has to be examined and according to its interest groups and parties the policy can be deduced.

Institutionalism holds the perspective that focuses on the role of the state in shaping immigration policy. Many scholars argue that bureaucrats have substantially influenced immigration and refugee policies (Meyer 2000: 1261). The pure institutionalism approach argues that political institutions can be autonomous; and can form public policy according to the interests of the

state and remain unaffected by societal and interests group pressures. Some scholars describe the state as autonomous, acting according to its own interests. Others argue that various state agencies promote certain societal interests. Another question is whether the state is monolithic, united in the view of its interests. This question also relates to whether various bureaucratic agencies pursue their own or the state's agendas in what is known as the bureaucratic model.

Marxism and Neo-Marxism approaches regard the illegal immigrants and asylum seekers as worth taking risk for the employers who gain low wage workers. However, if this is the case, all modern capitalist countries should have the same encouraging policy towards immigration. Yet, we know this is not the case and there are differences between countries that cannot be explained by the Marxism and Neo-Marxism approaches. In addition, the Marxism and Neo-Marxism approaches are insufficient when attempting to explain refugee policies especially in cases when refugees, in addition to not contributing to economic growth, present an economic burden due to medical or welfare needs.

While Marxism and Neo-Marxism approaches can explain restrictions on labor migration during recession, the Realism approach cannot. Realism also cannot explain discrimination of one group over another as migrants caused by ethnicity. Security causes are also unable to explain differences in immigration policies between countries or differences within the same country.

The Liberalism and Neo-liberalism approaches, as we have noted above, have minimal explanatory power with regards to immigration policies of individual countries. While these approaches can be used in the case of the EU, in the case of Israel, which is a sole democratic state surrounded by non-democratic countries, these approaches add little to further the discussion.

The "National Identity" approach contributes to our understanding of immigration policies. State policies are not constructed in a vacuum, but rather are influenced, to some degree, by the history and traditional ways of thinking in each society. Major racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts within society can influence the attitude of various interest groups toward

immigration, as it may alter the demographic and political balance between the existing groups. Its main weakness is the inability to explain the fact that various countries have adopted similar immigration policies at the same time. The phenomenon of a "wave" reaction is known in various areas, such as in economic regimes or scientific research. In a progressive global world, narrowing our understanding of "National Identity" could miss important components in building a policy. In addition, changes in economic conditions or the volume of immigration are easier to identify than debates over national identity.

Domestic politics models avoid many of the difficulties of the Marxist approach by offering an explanation for policy on immigration among immigrant of different ethnicities. The main flaw of this approach is its case-study approach. Hence, it is unable to offer any generalization of immigration policy processes or build and identify the main element of specific immigration policies.

The Institutionalism approach places the state at the center and ignores any social pressures. Its core is its flow. Many evidences of social pressure which brought about changes in immigration policy are known and thus, ignoring such pressure casts doubt on the validity of this approach, although the bureaucratic model has proven to be true in many cases.

Castles with his 'citizenship regime' model proposes three archetypal national responses to immigration that derive from three different ways by which nation-states define membership. States that define themselves by ethnicity will have exclusionary immigration regimes. States based on political and cultural community will adopt an assimilation approach towards newcomers, while states defining themselves as multi-cultural societies (historically, settler states such as US and Canada) will be pluralist in regard to immigrants (Alexander 2007: 8).

Money, like Alexander who also finds the local policymaking essential, distinguishes between two kinds of immigration policy. A policy based on theory that looks at the interplay of economic and political interests and a

theory emphasizing the primacy of cultural values, that is, national traits and identity (Money 1999: 26-27).

## **Migration in Israel - milestones**

In its first years of existence, the concept of immigration to Israel was an insignificant factor in the Israeli economy. After the six-day war in 1967, in an attempt to prevent unrest in the territories (West Bank and Gaza) and in response to demand for construction and agricultural labor, the government sanctioned the entry of Palestinians day laborers on a commuter basis. In 1977 a one-time event happened during prime minister Begin's term. Around 70 refugees from Vietnam got special permission to move to Israel. Begin declared on this occasion: "The Israeli nation who knew oppressions and knows, maybe better than any other nation, the meaning of refugee, can't see the suffer of those miserable" (Ofri 2009: newspaper article). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, when this flow was disrupted by Palestinian strikes, Israeli relations, and security closures during the Intifada, the number of Palestinians employed in Israel remained high (around 100,000, down only by 20%). However, in 1993 security-related prohibitions were tightened considerably. Over the next two years the escalating scarcity of Palestinians labor was compensated almost precisely by increased quotas for "temporary" imported laborers, the largest contingents originating in Thailand and Romania (Shalev 2007: 141-142). In 2000, foreign workers held 16% of labor in the business sector in comparison to 5% in the OECD (Barenholtz 2008, 2). Accumulated experience in developed countries in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century raised the concern at the Israeli government, who thought that massive entry of foreign workers will damage the local employment and the wages of the low-level income workers and will increase the social inequality. Most research results on the influence of immigration into the US and Western Europe didn't succeed in proving such connection. Yet, it is a complex issue that is difficult to test and most developed countries tend to limit the entry of foreign workers. The Israeli government already determined in 1996 a policy to reduce the number of foreign workers who are employed legally and has reduced the number of permits. At the same time, however,

the number of foreign workers has increased and the reason for this was attributed to the expansion of illegal employment. In 2002 the Israeli government hardened its standards with regard to policy against legal foreign working immigrants, a policy termed: "Closed Skies". The policy has yielded its intended results and the number of foreign workers has declined from 247,000 in 2001 to 190,000 in 2003 (Barenholtz 2008, 4).

The "Closed Skies" policy did not succeed for long, and during the decade after its inception Israel still suffered from illegal immigration. In 2009, the Population Authority established a new unit in intention to replace the immigration police – "Oz" unit (Cohen 2009: newspaper article). The criticism against the activity of the new unit came from several directions, especially concerning the way the unit dealt with the immigrants' children (Kemp and Rajjman 2008: 203).

Origin Country	Stay in Israel
Eritrea	around 36,000
North Sudan	around 15,000
Ivory Coast	around 20,000
Others: China, Georgia, Ethiopia, Liberia, Moldova, Turkey and more	around 6,000
Total	59,000

Table 1: Infiltrators in Israel in 2012

The economic status of Israel and its geographic location have made it a preferred destination for refugees and asylum seekers from Africa. The southwest border of Israel is located on the only continental path between Africa and Europe. In 2008, the number of the infiltrators that came from Africa was 7580, which is around 600 infiltrators on average per month (Avineri, Orgad and Rubinstein 2009: 25). These numbers further increased and in 2010, 14,000 infiltrators have arrived (Protocol of The special Committee for Observing the Foreign Workers Issue 31.07.2011: 2). The government decided to build a fence along the southwest border, and reported In March 2014 that the infiltration has been completely halted (Prime Minister's Office site). Table 1 presents the distribution of the infiltrators

according to their origin country in 2012 as brought by the immigration office (Annual Report of the Immigration Office 2012).

## **Legislation background**

In 1954 the "Preventing Infiltration Law" was legislated. The context of the legislation was the Fedaiyun period – Palestinians terrorists who were activated by Arab states and were infiltrating mainly from the southern border of Israel. The definition of an infiltrator in the law is "a person who enters Israel without a permit or stays in Israel illegally". The law disregards the circumstances which brought the person into Israel (Zigler 2011). Israel also ratified the Refugees Treaty in 1954 and is committed to implement all the arrangements that are included in it. Still, the Treaty was not absorbed in the interior Israeli law (Zigler 2011).

In January 2012 the government applied for a correction (number 3) of the "Preventing Infiltration Law". The correction enabled detention of asylum seekers for a period of 3 years. In September 2012 the Supreme Court has ruled unanimously (special panel of 9 judges) that the correction is not constitutional and ordered to abolish it. In December 2013 the parliament legislated the 4<sup>th</sup> correction of the law. The new correction defines two essential arrangements: (a) A year detention for asylum seekers who entered Israel after the legislation of the correction. (b) Holding asylum seekers who entered Israel before the correction in Holot Facility for unlimited period of time. The Supreme Court has to judge proceeding appeal in the coming month (Zigler 2014).

## **Immigration control policy in Israel**

Israel policy is described by many as an unwritten policy. Its policy leaned on encouraging Jewish immigration and blocking non Jewish immigration (Kemp and Rajiman 2008: 189). Kondor (1997: 17) describes a policy of non-policy. He claims that non-policy happen occasionally in the case of immigration. This policy of non-policy includes deciding improvised decisions, which were at time contrary to each other and without pre-thinking

and without sufficient correlation. This kind of non-policy is determined, as usual, by the pressure being pressed on the government.

It seems that the Israeli policy is not fixed and is influenced by the different players in the public and political arena. The foreign workers were brought from the beginning as a temporary solution to the shortage in the availability of manpower with simple manual skills in special fields of work, as a result of the pressure of employers and their organizations (Nathanson and Achdut 1999: 13).

A good way to describe Israel's policy, will be using a quote of Prof. Ruth Gabison in a conference that was titled – "Israel Coping with Illegal immigration", 2013: "Israel is entitled and even is committed to consolidate a responsible consistent immigration policy. Israel is entitled to enforce it in firmness. But at the same time we must condemned decisively and to halt any exposure of incitement against immigrants and whoever is aiding them" (The conference summary page 58).

## **Research Question and Hypothesis**

The unwritten policy or the "non-policy" of Israel toward the non-Jewish immigrant from Africa has gained criticism from the Right and from the Left of the political map. Our belief is that "no policy is a policy". Sometimes no action has just as much effect as action. We assume that the government has a policy even if it seems that it doesn't. The policy might be concealed or hidden but it's there for the time being. We assume that the policy will appear out when the government will be confronted with the allegation of not having a policy at all. Hence, the research question is – what is the policy that Israel holds toward non Jewish immigrants, is it an open policy or a concealed policy. This research examines the government response to accusations of non-policy trying to find the non-written policy.

Concerning the approach that Israel adopts we had the following hypotheses: We assumed that Marxism and Neo-Marxism approaches will not be relevant to the case of infiltrators from Africa as those approaches mainly deal with the case of legal immigration and not infiltrators and asylum seekers

as in our case. In addition in capitalist countries it is expected to have an incline in the number of labor immigrants in the long term except restrictions on immigration during times of economic recessions. The period of this research has not suffered of recession so analyzing the policy using the Marxism approach will not suggest any restriction or involvement of the government.

Realism and Neorealism approaches seemed appropriate approaches to our research case as it assumes that the state is an integrated unit, a rational actor and that national security issues are the most important ones on the international agenda. Security takes a major part in Israel political arena. Security arguments are very often heard in Israel and the security budget constitutes a significant component. So, the assumption is to find security reasoning when responding to confrontation. Maybe in response to accusations of lack of policy the government will explain it by security constraints that delay the actions.

Liberalism and Neo-liberalism as we noted are assumed to be not relevant in the case of Israel.

The "National Identity" approach is assumed to be of major part in dealing with immigration on non-Jewish from Africa as the government is highly concerned about the demographic issue in Israel and especially worries about keeping the majority of Israel Jewish. The fact that Israel defines itself by ethnicity, will also contribute to exclusionary immigration regimes and hence will be brought up in its response for arguments against its non-policy.

We assume that in the case of non-Jewish immigration rather than Jewish immigration, the policy will be based on emphasizing the primacy of cultural values, that is, national traits and identity.

Domestic Politics models give the power of policy designing to interest groups and parties. In the case of non-Jewish immigrants from Africa there are neither interest groups nor parties that will represent their interests. Hence, it is assumed that such arguments will not appear while the government is confronted by no-policy confrontations.

As we noted, societal and interests group in the case of non-Jewish immigrants from Africa is irrelevant. Hence, we assumed that Institutionalism approach will take place in analyzing the policy of Israel as the state will be free to act according to its interest without being influence by those groups.

## **Method**

Openly declarations on immigration policy are hard to find. There is no forum or media that one can learn about the policy and the motives that play behind the scenes. As a result, we decided to read the protocols of "The special Committee for Observing the Foreign Workers Issue" (The Committee).

The special committee for observing the Foreign Workers issue was initiated at the 14<sup>th</sup> term of the Israeli parliament, i.e. 1998, and was designated to last a year. In the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> term of the Israeli parliament, the committee was erected again as the number of the foreign workers was extended substantially. The purpose was, at the time, dealing with the foreign workers, which back then was not a central issue in Israel's daily schedule (The Knesset site).

The Committee, as any other parliament committee, includes coalition members and opposition members. Hence, it is a fertile ground for confrontations of government officials and many other with criticism concerning its policy and allegations of non-policy approach.

The years that we conducted our research on are 2009-2012, as in these years the amount of immigration of infiltrators from Africa was the highest. The building of the fence was finished only in 2012 and hence, the years before the building of the fence were the most significant for our research in terms of criticism against the non-policy treatment of the government in our case.

We read 62 protocols in the relevant years (list is shown in the Appendix). The research was based on a qualitative method. We framed the arguments that were brought up during The Committee meetings and

examined the responses of the government's official representatives who attended The Committee.

We analyzed the various arguments that we found and the responses and mapped them into the approaches that were spread in the theory background chapter.

We concluded with some understanding of Israel policy or approach toward the non-Jewish immigration from Africa.

## Results

Scanning the protocols, we found three major issues that were discussed: foreign workers in the field of nursing, foreign workers in the field of construction and the issue of the African infiltrators. Obviously, we focused on the third issue.

Three main claims were brought up in The Committee concerning the African infiltrators: The prolonged search of Israeli governments for a third-party immigrant hosting countries, the process of verifying Refugee status and the constant converse about setting up the border fence with Egypt.

Below a few examples of the converse about finding a third party immigrant hosting countries:

The committee from 21.6.2010:

Dani Ayalon, Vice Foreign minister: "The solution does not lie with the Foreign Ministry. We cannot send them back to Eritrea according to UNCHR." (Page 15).

The committee from 22.11.2010:

Udi Shani, CEO of Defence Ministry: "We are checking several options to where we could deport them, this is a solution that could be executed." (Page 11).

Sigal Rozen, Civil rights association: "The foreign minister himself admitted he deported 701 asylum seekers back to Egypt, when we know they will deport them back to their countries or even worse. Israel is harshly violating the treaty it belongs to." (Page 35).

Below a few examples of the converse about the status of the infiltrators and the lack of mechanism to handle their requests and determine their status:

The committee from 21.7.2009:

Dov Hanin, opposition: "64% of the people arrested are asylum seekers from Sudan and Eritrea that according to the international law and the Israeli law are exempt from deportation" (Page 3).

Tziki Sela, Immigration authority: "These people are not refugees and we have to say it out loud. They came here after working in Egypt for ten years, they are labor immigrants" (Page 20).

The committee from 21.6.2010:

Yakob Katz, committee director: "Israel should decide how to deal with them, whether they are refugees or not. If only Israel would have decided how to deal with them..." (Page 10).

The committee from 5.7.2010:

Meir Shitrit, committee member: "Why don't the interior ministry's committee deals with their refugee requests? They should be working on it days and nights..." (Page 6).

The committee from 2.1.2012:

Rubi Rivlin, parliament speaker: "It's a mystery to me; on the one hand we don't recognize them as refugees and on the other hand we give them permit to travel. Once you do that, you authorize their being here, even if you don't determine their status. You help them staying here and protecting them by doing that." (Page 7).

Dov Hanin, opposition: "I think a mechanism of checking their requests needs to be initiated. If they are refugees then they have to be verified, if not, we have no obligation towards them." (Page 13).

## Below a few examples of checking the status of the border fence with Egypt.

The committee from 5.1.2011:

Yosi Edelstein, Director of foreigners department at the interior ministry, was asked about policy – the answer relates to demography: "The government needs to decide how to handle this whole issue of infiltrators in a very determined manner and therefore money was allocated to setting up the border fence with Egypt". (Page 14).

The committee from 22.12.2010:

Ilan Karov, Prime Minister Office: "The government decided on several issues; the first, the border fence. We are trying to accelerate its setting up". (Page 13).

The committee from 2.1.2012:

Dov Hanin, opposition: "I will begin my words from touching the border fence issue, it is Israel's right to put up a fence, it's a pity it wasn't there four years ago." (Page 9).

Handling with three main confronts toward its policy or non-policy has revealed a glance into the government policy.

As we expected Marxism and Neo-Marxism approaches did not take part in the response of the government concerning the issues that were brought up in The committee.

In contrast to our predictions concerning the Realism approach, we found very little security explanations about the government policy or non-policy. It was clear that the Eritrean's infiltrators are not to be sent back to Eritrea but we could hardly find security reasoning for the government approach. Explaining why the government does not enforce the employment restriction, the government gave internal security arguments based on police data although the evidences weren't convincing, showing in a way that the profile of the African's infiltrators is not violence in comparison to other Israeli groups (Gady Eshed, Protocol of The Committee 26.1.10 Page 14).

Surprisingly, we did find arguments showing Liberalism and Neo-liberalism approaches. The action of European countries, the Refugee Treaty and data from other countries examination of refugee status did play a role in the converse. The government representatives did not answer these arguments directly. At times the mass work dealing with all the requests were mentioned at times a simple ignoring and at times the border fence took over and replaced any other references.

Arguments using the "National Identity" approach were hardly heard. Among the few explicitly references of the demographic concern was Eli Yishay's, minister of the interior, who argued for keeping the Jewish majority in Israel even when it is not politically correct. In his own words: "In ten, fifteen, twenty years we might get a diploma from the UN, a very big and honorable diploma saying that the state of Israel kept all the rules above and beyond, kept the rules of democracy and the international treaties and did what no other state did and this is the reason it got the most honorable diploma in the world but committed suicide." (Protocol of The Committee 22.11.2011 Page 3). Yakob Katz, committee director also expressed his concern with the term – The demographic terror (Protocol of The Committee 5.1.2011 Page 14).

Similarly, and in contrast to our prediction that there are no interest groups who represent the non-Jewish immigrants from Africa and thus the Domestic Politics models will not be implemented in the government response arguments, the civil right associations took the place of such groups and

represented the immigrants' interests. Representatives of civil right associations confronted the government about the status examinations for refugee of the immigrants and concerning the deportation of them back to Egypt or other countries. The representatives of civil right associations rose arguments of comparison to other countries and arguments based on the Refugee Treaty. On the other hand, city Meyers of the cities where the infiltrators were concentrated were present at some of The Committee meetings representing their interests. The mayors of Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Arad and Eilat attended The committee and expressed their deep concerns. They described their frustration of not feeling any progress concerning the difficulties their cities dealing with. Yakob Katz, committee director advised them to demonstrate in front of the prime minister office and to stay there until the problem is solved (Protocol of The Committee 21.6.2010 Page 10).

Schnell conducted a research already in 1999 examining the foreign workers in south Tel Aviv-Jaffa mapping the Israeli position toward the foreign workers. It is hard to believe that the infiltrators arrived at south Tel Aviv-Jaffa by coincidence. It is quite certain that the government ignored the problem and the citizens' complaints until the situation became unbearable. Dov Chanin from the opposition referred to that problem in the meeting of the Committee in 21.7.2009: "We throw those people at the backyards and the backyards are not able to take care of them".

Although we thought that the lack of interest groups will enable the state to be free and act according to its interests, the bureaucratic model implies that various bureaucratic agencies pursue their own agendas within the Institutionalism approach was found along with confusion and blurry authority distribution. A very clear and depressing picture emerges when reading the protocols describing an absence of a united policy, a consistent policy which all involved ministries could follow. As one of the committee members expressed clearly: "There is no one dealing with this problem on a national-strategic level but each ministry is dealing with the issue by his own understanding and interests. I didn't hear a thing about a national project, there is no systematic work, minister A says one thing, minister B says the

other. There is no national program on how to really deal with this problem." (Orit Zuaretz, Protocol of The Committee 22.11.2010 Page 22).

Yakob Katz, the committee director in the meeting of The Committee in 23.5.2011 summarized it clearly: "Israel doesn't want those people and that's why it treats them like air. That's why all the requests are assuming that the state is practical or rationalistic... The state of Israel doesn't allocate money to solve the problem, doesn't determine a policy and doesn't set a person who will be in charge rather every office with its own responsibility is applying whatever it can. A body with ten heads is a monster even if all the heads are beautiful... The prime minister should decide that there is one person who deals with this problem and then we could have brought him here and ask him all the questions".

## **Conclusions**

Assessing the immigration policy approach Israel holds by using the protocols of The committee revealed some unexpected results worth noting. It appears that the government has exhausted the possibilities in putting efforts in finding a third-party immigrant hosting countries and also, in examining the requests of the refugee seekers.

Careful reading of the protocols may teach us about Israel's concealed policy – not getting aid from other parties and maybe because of that, deliberately ignoring the requests for refugee status in order to escape the need to fulfill the Refugee Treaty instructions.

The government's inability to find a third-party country to aid with the enormous flow of migrants from Africa is surprising. Such a solution is efficient and economical and it seems to have a little "price" to pay. Only in 2013 publication about Uganda being a third-party was published although the commissioner of the refugees in prime minister's office of Uganda denied the publication (Lior, Peper and Liss 2013: newspaper article).

Avoiding the search for a third-party country can reflect a broader attitude of the Israeli government. Maybe the Israeli government abstains from being assisted by other countries as a rule. Examining this issue in the State's dealings across multiple cases can be a suggestion for a future research.

Officials do describe cooperation with the Egyptian government, concerning the flow of migrants passing the border with Egypt, saying that, the need to build a fence does not imply on a significant foreign help in preventing the migrants from getting into Israel. The Egyptian government apparently does not enforce the law over the Bedouins that are trafficking the infiltrators into Israel, which Israel obviously can't do as it is taking place outside its borders.

Although we found few references containing the definition of Israel by ethnicity, its acts can reveal a deep concern for the demographic majority of its Jewish people, or else, Israel would not bother to invest 1.4 billion to keep its border with Egypt safe.

The aforementioned hesitations and unclear policies unfortunately carried a sad price. In May 2012 approximately thousand people from south Tel Aviv protested against the helplessness of the government concerning the infiltrators. Right after the speeches, some demonstrators confronted the police and broke windows of cars with African ethnic passengers (Brener and Feiler 2012, newspaper article). The signs that the demonstrators held were: "Yesterday it was my daughter, tomorrow it will be yours", "Sleeping with the enemy", "South Tel-Aviv - a refugee camp", "Infiltrators get out".

The residents of the neighborhood were talking about the fear walking in the streets of south Tel-Aviv, especially for the elders and women. One of the demonstrators who had been arrested told the journalist that if the wife of one of the parliament members was raped the problem would have been solved immediately.

Miri Regev, a parliament member, gave a speech defining the infiltrators as cancer in society and attacked the associations that provide aid for foreigners. She also assaulted the left wing activists who appealed earlier

this year to the Supreme Court in order to abolish the correction for "Preventing Infiltration Law". Her speech has won opposite demonstrations by her house.

No justification can be found for that kind of violence but sadly, it can be understood in the light of the non-policy of the government which was ruled for too long while a great flow of immigrants keeps coming and concentrating in a few areas with no treatment and clear future.

To summarize, we confirmed the Marxism and Neo-Marxism approaches as they did not take part in the government's response. We confirmed the 'National Identity' approach although, surprisingly, we found only few direct references of government officials using national identity arguments.

We refuted our Realism assumption presuming that security arguments will play an important role in the government's response and also found evidence for the Liberalism approach, contrary to our assumptions. We also found Domestic Politics approach. Despite the lack of interest groups of non-Jewish immigrants from Africa, the civil right association and the mayors of the relevant cities became the press groups. Finally, we found the government distributed within its offices, not able to produce one coherent policy yielding frustration and confusion.

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## Appendix

Date	Protocol Number
6.7.2009	7
21.7.2009	8
21.10.2009	9
3.11.2009	10
2.12.2009	11
28.12.2009	12
13.01.2010	13
26.01.2010	14
8.2.2010	15
10.2.2010	16
17.2.2010	17
2.3.2010	18
3.3.2010	19
8.3.2010 9:30	20
8.3.2010 11:00	23
16.3.2010	21
10.5.2010	24
17.5.2010	25
7.6.2010	26
21.6.2010	27
23.6.2010	28
30.6.2010	29
5.7.2010	30
13.10.2010	38
25.10.2010	31
8.11.2010	32
15.11.2010	33
22.11.2010	34
29.11.2010 9:00	35
29.11.2010 10:30	36
22.12.2010	39
29.12.2010	37
5.1.2011	50
10.1.2011	41
17.1.2011	40
19.01.2011	42
31.01.2011	43
3.2.2011	44
14.2.2011	45
21.2.2011	46
2.3.2011	47
7.3.2011	48
23.5.2011	49
25.5.2011	52
30.5.2011	53
13.6.2011	51
15.6.2011	54
3.7.2011	57
13.7.2011	59

19.7.2011	58
20.7.2011	56
31.7.2011	55
1.8.2011	61
2.8.2011	62
2.8.2011	
11.9.2011	80
22.9.2011	67
31.10.2011	63
7.11.2011	64
14.11.2011	72
28.11.2011	69
06.12.2011	70
2.1.2012	75