

Mid-2026: Land and Housing in East Jerusalem – Situation Overview

## Analysis for Data Sheet: East Jerusalem 2026

[Link to 2026 data sheet](#)

### Highlights:

- Approximately one quarter (26%) of the existing housing units in Jerusalem serve the Palestinian population, which constitutes about 40% of the city's residents.
- The renewed land registration procedures (SOLT) in the city deepen the settlement enterprise and lead to a freeze in planning and construction for Palestinians. Only 1% of the land registered to date under the renewed SOLT process has been registered in the name of Palestinian owners.
- The year 2025 marked a low point: only about 640 housing units were approved for Palestinians in Jerusalem, compared to nearly 9,000 in the rest of the city—just 7% of all approved units.

### 1. Land: Land Settlement as a Mechanism of Dispossession

In 2018, the Government of Israel decided to renew land registration procedures in East Jerusalem after they had been frozen for approximately five decades, since 1967. This step poses a significant threat to Palestinian landowners in the city, as in practice it constitutes an additional tool for dispossessing Palestinian residents from their land. In other words, a process ostensibly promoted to reduce socio-economic gaps in East Jerusalem in fact serves as a lever for increasing discrimination against Palestinian residents and strengthening the settlement enterprise in East Jerusalem.

Since the renewal of SOLT, procedures have been initiated for approximately 9,000 dunams (about 12% of East Jerusalem). By the end of 2025, approximately 2,300 dunams (about 3% of East Jerusalem) had been fully settled and registered.

Of the 2,300 dunams where SOLT procedures were completed by the end of 2025:

- 82% of the area was registered in the name of the state and its various bodies—the Jewish National Fund (JNF), the Custodian of Absentee Property, the Development Authority, and others—or in the name of the Jerusalem Municipality. In other words, more than three-quarters of the land was registered under institutional ownership.

- 9% was registered incomplete (to unknown owners) with a management clause to the General Custodian. This will most likely lead to Jewish private or company ownership in the future.
- An additional 4% was registered in the name of Jewish owners, private individuals or commercial companies, most of which are linked to the settlement enterprise in the city.
- 4% were registered in the name of churches.
- **Only 1% was registered in the name of Palestinian owners—primarily one bloc, along with several isolated parcels.**

Most of the blocs, where registration has been completed to date, consist of undeveloped land on which new settlements are being planned. A minority of the blocs include existing Palestinian homes; ownership has generally not been registered in the name of the actual occupants, but rather in the name of state bodies or settlement-related entities, as noted above. This trend—effectively the taking of land from beneath people’s feet—is deeply alarming, particularly given that many of the blocs currently undergoing settlement procedures contain residential structures.

This data clearly indicates that the renewed SOLT procedures do not serve—and were not intended to serve—the Palestinian residents of the city, but rather to provide a bureaucratic tool for the appropriation of Palestinian land for the benefit of the state. The expropriation of land from Palestinian residents of Jerusalem leads to their dispossession and, in the long term, to their expulsion from the city.

## **2. Planning: Expansion of the Settlement Enterprise versus Freeze for Palestinians**

A cross-analysis of planning data and land registration data clearly shows that settlement procedures enable the acceleration of settlement construction in East Jerusalem, thereby deepening discrimination against the city’s Palestinian residents.

Land registration is the main tool in service of the expansion of the Israeli settlement enterprise in East Jerusalem. Eight **new** settlements are currently at various planning stages; they comprise close to 20,000 housing units, roughly half of which have already received final approval. These settlements are located in areas where land registration procedures have already been completed, and the land has been registered under state ownership and/or Jewish private ownership.

In recent years, planning (for Jewish populations) across the city has significantly accelerated, while the number of housing units approved for Palestinian residents of Jerusalem continues to decline.

In 2024, only about 2,000 housing units were approved in Palestinian neighborhoods, compared to approximately 15,700 in Jewish neighborhoods, including 5,700 beyond the

Green Line. Less than 15% of the approved units were intended to serve Palestinian residents, who constitute 40% of the population.

**2025 data** shows further deterioration, with an additional decline in the number of housing units approved for Palestinians: **only 640 housing units were approved, compared to 8,900 units approved for Jewish populations, including 2,500 beyond the Green Line. In other words, only about 7% of all approved housing units were intended for Palestinian residents.**

The primary reason why residential plans in East Jerusalem fail to obtain approval from planning authorities is linked to land ownership verification requirements, which were significantly tightened at the beginning of 2023. As a result, there has been a sharp decline in the number of plans meeting the threshold conditions for opening a planning file. Between 2018 and 2022, the annual average of plans meeting the threshold conditions stood at approximately 140; since then, it has dropped to around 40.

On unregulated and unregistered land—which constitutes approximately 70% of all land in the Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem—the annual average of plans meeting threshold conditions stood at about 100 between 2018 and 2022 but has since fallen to just 6. In 2023, not a single planning file was opened.

Following the freeze in planning for Palestinians in Jerusalem, actual construction has also slowed down. The few plans that are approved are almost impossible to implement due to the difficulties in issuing building permits. In the field of licensing, as in the field of planning, stricter procedures for proving ownership of land have come into effect in recent years as a pre-condition for opening permit files. All the while, home demolitions are on the rise, including self-demolitions, and the future of entire neighborhoods is under immediate threat.

**For further information see:**

- [Land Registration = Land Confiscation](#)
- [SOLT Monitoring Website](#)
- [From 100 to Zero](#)
- [Bimkom Website: East Jerusalem Page](#)