Pre-ELECTIONS SURVEY - PRESS RELEASE

Exclusive Pre-Elections survey by the Guttman Center at the Israel Democracy Institute:

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25% base their choice on the party's positions on socioeconomic issues
and 18% on who heads the party; 27% do not trust the integrity of the Knesset elections**

March 5, 2019 – A special pre-election survey by the Guttman Center at **the Israel Democracy Institute** reveals that half of Israeli voters find it harder than in the past to decide whom to vote for, in particular among those who defined themselves as the center; 25% base their choice on socioeconomic issues; and 26% of Jewish Israelis and 34% of Arab Israelis do not trust the integrity of the Knesset elections.

Main Findings:

Elections - Undecided Votes: 50% of Israelis across the board are having a hard time deciding who to vote for because of the many changes to the political party map. Among Jewish voters the difficulty is especially pronounced with potential voters for center-right parties Kulanu (76%) and Gesher (headed by Orly Levy-Abekasis) (68%), and the far-right parties of Jewish Home (Bayit Yehudi) and the Jewish Power (Otzma Yehudit) (73%) running with them on a joint list. 45% of Arab voters also said that they were having greater difficulty deciding in this election than they have in the past.

What are voters' main considerations? 25% of Israelis said their vote would be decided by the parties' positions on socioeconomic issues and 18% of voters said they will decide according to who heads the party. 16.5% said that they consider the parties' positions on foreign and defense issues, while only 10% base their choice on the quality of the parties' list of Knesset candidates. A mere 6.5% of Israeli voters plan on including an evaluation of the parties' activities in the outgoing Knesset in their decision-making process.

What do Israelis THINK will influence people's vote? 30% of the public thinks that security questions and 22% think that it will be the high cost of living. Prime Minister Netanyahu's legal investigations came in third and only 19% of Israelis think that they will influence the votes.

The **disparity between the two perceptions** can be explained through the phenomenon known in the literature as pluralistic ignorance - which emerges when the situation is one thing but its perception among the public is another because of a lack of awareness of the actual situation. Thus, when the same interviewees ask themselves "What, in your opinion, is the main issue that will influence how Israelis vote in the upcoming Knesset elections?" they do not, paradoxically, deduce the public's overall attitude from their own case but instead repeat the mantra that they hear and read from various experts in the media.

Integrity of the elections – 26% of Jewish Israelis and 34% of Arab Israelis do not trust the integrity of the Knesset elections and do not think that the results will accurately reflect the public's vote.

Will it make a difference? Almost half of Israelis think that the next government's main policies will remain unchanged regardless of which parties form the coalition. 46% think that foreign and defense policies and 46.5% think that socioeconomic policies will remain unchanged.

Which government will deal more effectively with Trump's peace plan? – 35% of Jewish Israelis think that a Netanyahu-led right-wing government will better represent the national interest and 18% prefer a center-right government headed by Netanyahu on this issue. On the other hand, 21% of the Arab Israelis believe that a center-left government headed by Gantz will better represent the national interest. No matter their party preference, only 18% of Israelis (17% Jews and 27% Arabs) think that US President Donald Trump's future peace plan has a chance of succeeding once presented.