

Summary

A Conditional Partnership

# Jews and Arabs



## Israel 2019

**Tamar Hermann**

Or Anabi / William Cubbison / Ella Heller / Fadi Omar



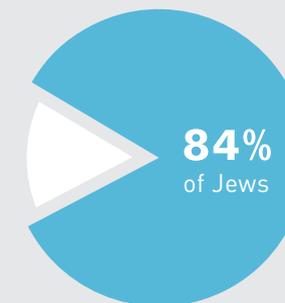
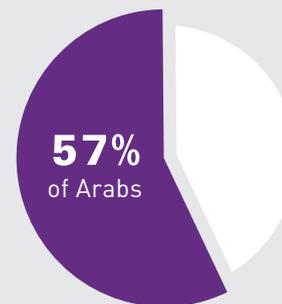
THE ISRAEL  
DEMOCRACY  
INSTITUTE

As in our previous study (2017), we found that the complex relationship between Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens plays out at three levels, which do not necessarily overlap: The state (government), society and the individual (interpersonal relations)

In our 2019 survey, we did not find dramatic changes in any of the three categories, compared with the 2017 findings. One possible insight we can glean from this data is that – contrary to the predictions of many – the Nation-State Law, passed in 2018, was not a critically negative turning point in the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Israel.

\* All references to 'Arabs' refer to Arab citizens of Israel, and all references to 'Jews' - to Jewish citizens.

## Sense of Belonging to Israeli Society



57% of Arab citizens report feeling that they are part of Israeli society, compared with 84% of Jewish citizens.

65% of Arabs, compared with 92% of Jews, say that they are proud to be Israelis

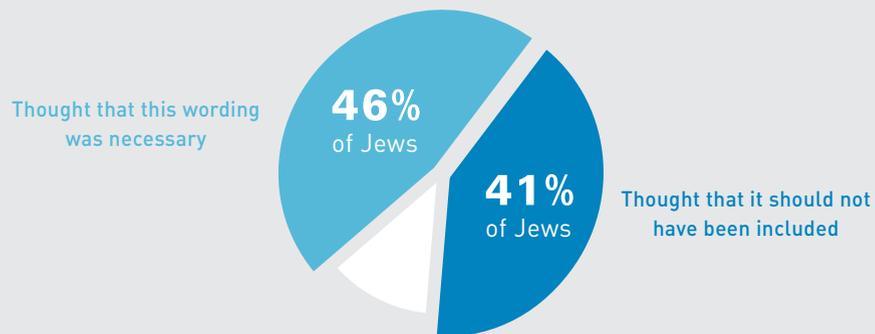


However, only 32% of Jewish citizens think that Israeli Arabs feel a sense of belonging to the general society.

The Jewish public underestimates the extent of the Arab community's sense of belonging to Israeli society.

## The Nation-State Law

The Jewish public is divided on the question of whether it was justified for the law to stipulate that only Jews have the right “to exercise national self-determination in the State of Israel,” despite the inherent difficulties this creates for Arabs who wish to see themselves as fully-fledged members of society.



## Primary Self-Identification

These findings have not changed significantly since 2017

### Jews

Jewish

33%

Israeli

31%

Religiosity (Ultra-Orthodox  
Religious / Traditional / Secular)

20%

Ethnic Background  
(Mizrahi / Ashkenazi)

10%

### Arabs

Arab

38%

Religion (Muslim /  
Christian / Druze)

36%

Palestinian

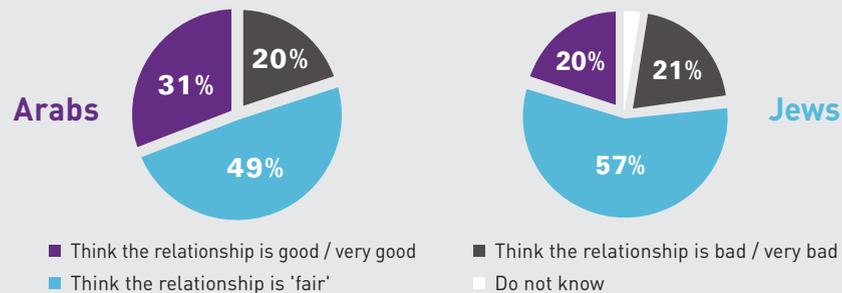
13%

Israeli

9.5%

## Jewish-Arab Relations

31% of Arabs think that relations are “good,” compared with only 20% of Jews who feel this way.



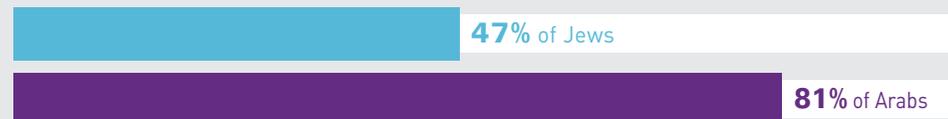
Think that the greatest source of tension in Israeli society is that between Jews and Arabs. Of the six possible options presented - these were the most frequently cited.



Most Jews think that Arab citizens should either serve in the military or volunteer for civil national service. Only about one third of Arabs agree with this idea.



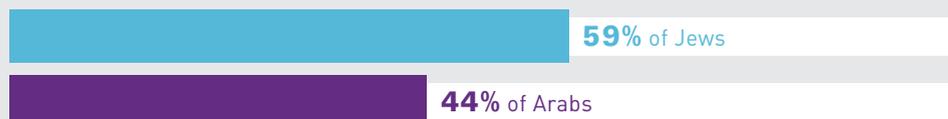
Think that the state has treated Arabs unfairly over the years.



A large majority of Arabs **reject** the suggestion that it is best for Jews and Arabs to live separately in Israel. By contrast, less than half of Jews oppose this idea.



Most Jews avoid entering Arab communities in Israel, while only few Arabs avoid entering Jewish cities and towns.

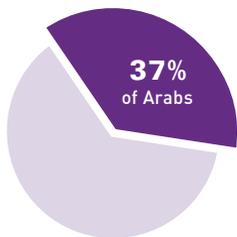


A majority of Jews support separate education systems for Jews and Arabs (as currently exists), compared with only a minority of Arabs.

## Political Arena

\*

Only 37% of Arab citizens agree that the current Arab Members of Knesset do a good job of representing their constituents.



71% of Jews

44% of Arabs

Most Jewish citizens believe that Israel is a “democracy for all of its citizens”; while a majority of Arab citizens do not believe that democracy extends to their community.

77% of Arabs

A large majority of Arab citizens do not believe that Israel should be defined as the nation-state of the Jewish people.

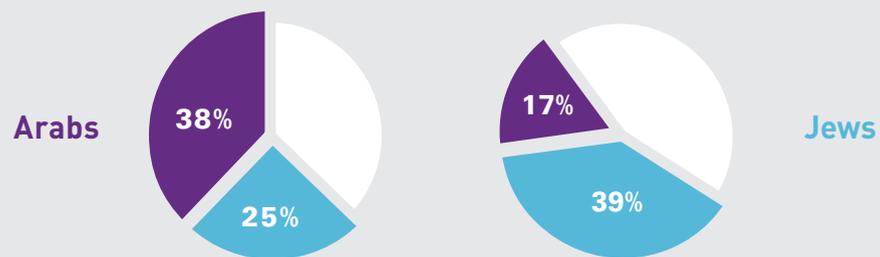
This is a 10% increase relative to an identical question in the 2017 survey.

24% of Jews

Only one quarter of Jews think that more Arabs should be appointed to senior governmental positions.

## Crime in the Arab Israeli Sector

The most common explanation among Jewish Israelis (39%) for the high level of crime in the Arab sector is that local Arab leadership does not cooperate enough with the police to prevent crime in their communities.

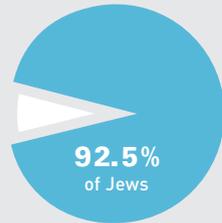
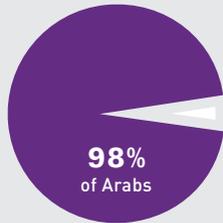


- The state does not invest enough resources to prevent crime in Arab society
- Arab leadership does not cooperate with the police to prevent crime in Arab society

The most common explanation among Arab Israelis for the high level of crime in the Arab sector is that the state and/or the police have not invested enough resources in prevention.

## Employment and Shared Workplaces

96% of Arab Israelis would welcome Jewish co-workers at work, and 81% of Jews feel the same way about their Arab counterparts.



Employed in a shared workplace report positive relationships between Arabs and Jews at work.

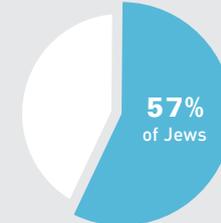
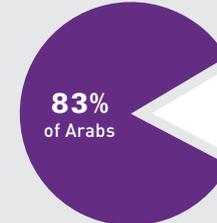
\*

A large majority of Arabs believe that Jews are always more likely to be hired or to be accepted to an educational institution than their Arab counterparts, even if the Arab candidates are more qualified.



## Cautious Optimism

64% of Jews would be happy to have Arabs as friends, and 58% would be happy to have them as neighbors. By contrast, 85% of Arabs would welcome Jewish friends and 89% would welcome Jewish neighbors.



Believe that most Arab citizens of Israel want to integrate into, and be full members of Israeli society.



85%

of both Jewish and Arab Israelis state that Israel is a good place to live.



**The Israel Democracy Institute (IDI)** is an independent center of research and action dedicated to strengthening the foundations of Israeli democracy. IDI works to bolster the values and institutions of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. A non-partisan think-and-do tank, the institute harnesses rigorous applied research to influence policy and public opinion. The institute partners with government, policy and decision makers, civil service and society, to improve the functioning of the government and its institutions, confront security threats while preserving civil liberties, and foster solidarity within Israeli society.

**A Conditional Partnership** is a periodic study that examines the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Israel. It examines this relationship on three levels - state, society, and interpersonal. Among the questions we asked were ones about individual's national identity, the state's treatment of the Arab minority, willingness to share resources and include the other in decision-making processes, and stereotypes each group has about the other.

**The Arab-Jewish Relations Program** seeks to promote multi-faceted civic partnership between Jews and Arabs based primarily upon the principle of equality. The purpose of its studies is to identify obstacles to equal partnership of this kind and identify factors that will nurture and promote it.

**The Guttman Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research** was established in its current form in 1998, when the Guttman Institute for Practical Social Research moved to the Israel Democracy Institute. The original institute was founded in 1949 by Professor Eliyahu (Louis) Guttman as a pioneering center for the research of public opinion and the promotion of a methodological approach to social studies. The goal of the Center is to harness data from its databases and public- opinion polls to enrich public discourse on issues of public policy.

This book is the product of collaboration between IDI's Arab-Jewish Relations Program and the Guttman Center for Policy Research.



**To order the full book:** [orders@idi.org.il](mailto:orders@idi.org.il)  
972.2.5300800



[www.idi.org.il](http://www.idi.org.il)

Cover design: Lotte design  
Graphic Design: Navi Katzman