

The Israeli

Democracy

Index

2011

Tamar Hermann

Nir Atmor, Karmit Haber, Ella Heller
Dror Walter, Raphael Ventura, Yuval Lebel



THE ISRAEL
DEMOCRACY
INSTITUTE

Translators: Karen Gold, Zvi Ofer
Editor (English): Sharon Assaf
Editors (Hebrew): Anat Bernstein, Tamar Shaked
Field work: Dahaf Research Institute, Dr. Mina Zemach, Director
Statistical analysis: Dror Walter, Ashira Menashe
Design and typesetting: Stephanie and Ruti Design
Cover design: Tartakover Design, Tal Harda

ISBN 978-965-519-101-1

No portion of this book may be reproduced, copied, photographed, recorded, translated, stored in a database, broadcasted, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, optic, mechanical, or otherwise. Commercial use in any form of the material contained in this book without the express written permission of the publisher is strictly forbidden.

Copyright © 2011 by The Israel Democracy Institute (R.A.)
Printed in Israel

To order books and policy papers published by the Israel Democracy Institute, please contact the IDI Press at:

Tel.: 1-800-20-2222, (972)-2-530-0800; Fax: (972)-2-530-0867

email: orders@idi.org.il

Website: www.idi.org.il

The Israel Democracy Institute Press, P.O.B. 4482, Jerusalem 91044

All issues of the Israeli Democracy Index, policy papers, and a pre-selected chapter from all books published by the IDI can be downloaded free of charge from our website: www.idi.org.il

The Israel Democracy Institute is an independent, non-partisan body on the seam of academia and politics. The Institute plans policy and devises reforms for government and public administration agencies, and for the institutions of democracy.

In its plans and endeavors, the Institute strives to support the institutions of Israel's developing democracy and consolidate its values. The Institute's serious research work is followed up by practical recommendations, seeking to improve governance in Israel and foster a long-term vision for a stable democratic regime adapted to the structure, the values, and the norms of Israeli society. The Institute aspires to further public discourse in Israel on the issues placed on the national agenda, to promote structural, political, and economic reforms, to serve as a consulting body to decision-makers and the broad public, to provide information and present comparative research.

The Guttman Center was established in its present form in 1998, when the Guttman Institute for Applied Social Research became part of the Israel Democracy Institute. Professor Louis Guttman founded the original Institute in 1949 as a pioneering center for the study of public opinion and the advancement of social science methodology. The goal of the Guttman Center is to enrich public discourse on issues of public policy through the information retrieved from the Center's databases and through public opinion surveys conducted by the Center.

The Israeli Democracy Index is a public opinion poll project conducted by the Guttman Center. Since 2003, an extensive survey has been conducted annually on a representative sample of Israel's adult population (1,200 participants). Each survey presents an estimate of the quality of Israeli democracy for that year. On the whole, the project aims at assessing trends in Israeli public opinion regarding realization of democratic values and the performance of government systems and elected officials. Analysis of its results may contribute to public discussion of the status of democracy in Israel and create a cumulative empirical database to intensify discourse concerning such issues.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	11	
Insights and Major Findings	12	
Introduction	27	
Part One: The Israeli Democracy Index 2011		
Chapter 1	The Political System: Its Nature, Structure, and Functioning	37
	Summary	88
Chapter 2	The Citizen and Democratic Politics	92
	Summary	128
Chapter 3	The Citizen and Israeli Society	131
	Summary	158
Part Two: The Israeli Democracy Index 2011 Findings Compared with Previous Years		
	Introduction	163
Chapter 1	The Political System: Its Nature, Structure, and Functioning	163
Chapter 2	The Citizen and Democratic Politics	181
Chapter 3	The Citizen and Israeli Society	195
	Summary of Part Two	198
Part Three: Israel 2011: An International Comparison		
Chapter 1	The Indicators	203
Chapter 2	Israel Compared with Other Countries	209
Chapter 3	Israel 2011 Compared with Israel 2010	213
Chapter 4	Breakdown of Findings	215
	Summary of Part Three	234
Appendices		
Appendix 1	Israeli Democracy Survey 2011: Distribution of Responses	237
Appendix 2	Israeli Democracy Survey 2011 Compared with Previous Israeli Democracy Surveys	269
Appendix 3	Socio-demographic Characteristics of (Total) Sample	290
Appendix 4	Distribution of Variables (Self-defined)	292
Appendix 5	Grading the Public's Political Knowledge	296
Israeli Democracy Index 2011 Staff	300	

List of Figures

Part One

Figure 1	Assessment of Israel's overall situation (total sample)	37
Figure 2	Assessment of Israel's overall situation (Jewish sample; by political orientation)	40
Figure 3	Opinion of forms of government (Jewish sample; by length of residence in Israel)	43
Figure 4	Which component is more important to you personally in the term "Jewish and democratic" state? (Jewish sample)	53
Figure 5	Which component is more important to you personally in the term "Jewish and democratic" state? (Jewish sample; by religiosity)	55
Figure 6	Preference in case of conflict between democracy and Halakha (Jewish religious law) (Jewish sample; by religiosity)	58
Figure 7	Importance of religious rulings by rabbis on controversial political issues (Jewish sample; by religiosity)	61
Figure 8	Is Israel democratic to a suitable degree, too democratic, or not democratic enough? (total sample)	62
Figure 9	Satisfaction with (a) functioning of Israeli democracy; (b) government handling of state problems (total sample)	66
Figure 10	Is the government doing enough these days to explain its decisions to us? (total sample)	68
Figure 11	Level of trust in government spokespersons (total sample)	69
Figure 12	There are no real differences between the political parties in Israel (total sample)	73
Figure 13	Trust in institutions and public officials (by nationality)	77
Figure 14	Trust in institutions and public officials (Jewish sample; by religiosity)	79
Figure 15	Desirable goals for the country (total sample)	83
Figure 16	Desirable goals for the country (by nationality)	84

Figure 17	To what extent are you and your friends able to influence government policy? (by nationality)	92
Figure 18	Politicians do not tend to consider citizens' opinions (by nationality)	94
Figure 19	Overall, most members of the Knesset work hard and are doing a good job (total sample)	95
Figure 20	Interest in politics (total sample, by subgroup)	100
Figure 21	Primary source of information about political developments (total sample; by nationality)	103
Figure 22	Importance of various influences in forming political opinions (by nationality)	106
Figure 23	Involvement in political parties (by nationality)	110
Figure 24	Full equality of rights for Arabs (by religiosity)	114
Figure 25	Freedom of expression for all, regardless of their views (total sample; by age)	115
Figure 26	Expression of political opinions by university lecturers (Jewish sample)	118
Figure 27	State oversight of university course content (Jewish sample; by religiosity)	120
Figure 28	Necessity of Jewish majority on matters crucial to the state (Jewish sample)	123
Figure 29	Willingness to accept a woman, ultra-Orthodox, or Arab prime minister (Jewish sample; by religiosity)	126
Figure 30	Pride in being Israeli (total sample; by subgroup)	132
Figure 31	Feeling part of the State of Israel and its problems (Jewish sample; by political orientation)	135
Figure 32	Desire to live in Israel in the long term (by nationality)	136
Figure 33	Solidarity of Israeli society as a whole (by nationality)	138
Figure 34	Solidarity of Israeli Jewish society (by nationality)	139
Figure 35	Do you consider the following people to be part of Israeli society? (by nationality)	142

Figure 36	Do you consider the following people to be part of Israeli society? (Jewish sample; by religiosity)	145
Figure 37	Degree of agreement with the claim that there is a “State of Tel Aviv” (total sample)	148
Figure 38	People who aren’t Jewish have no chance of succeeding in life in Israel today (by nationality)	152
Figure 39	Israelis are having a hard time today with jobs and housing because of the foreign workers (by nationality)	154
Figure 40	Young people’s chances of establishing themselves professionally compared with their parents’ generation (by nationality)	156

Part Two

Figure 41	Assesment of Israel’s overall situation (total sample)	164
Figure 42	Democracy is the best form of government (total sample)	165
Figure 43	Strong leader vs. government of experts (total sample)	166
Figure 44	Which component is more important to you personally in the term “Jewish and democratic” state? (Jewish sample)	167
Figure 45	Rabbinic rulings on controversial political issues (Jewish sample)	168
Figure 46	Is Israel today democratic to a suitable degree, too democratic, or not democratic enough? (total sample)	169
Figure 47	Satisfaction with the functioning of Israeli democracy (total sample)	170
Figure 48	Government’s handling of state problems (total sample)	171
Figure 49	Is the government doing enough these days to explain its decisions to us? (total sample)	172
Figure 50	Balance of power among Knesset factions as a reflection of public opinion (total sample)	173
Figure 51	Competition between Israel’s political parties strengthens democracy (total sample)	174
Figure 52	There are no real differences between the political parties in Israel today (total sample)	175
Figure 53	Trust in the Supreme Court, State Attorney’s Office, Attorney General, and State Comptroller (total sample)	176

Figure 54	Trust in the Knesset, government, and political parties (total sample)	177
Figure 55	Trust in the army (IDF) and the police (total sample)	178
Figure 56	Trust in the Chief Rabbinate (total sample)	179
Figure 57	Trust in the media (total sample)	179
Figure 58	Trust in the prime minister and the president (total sample)	180
Figure 59	To what extent are you and your friends able to influence government policy? (total sample)	181
Figure 60	Politicians do not tend to consider citizens' opinions (total sample)	182
Figure 61	Politicians look out more for their own interests than for those of the people who elected them (total sample)	183
Figure 62	To reach the top in Israeli politics, you have to be corrupt (total sample)	184
Figure 63	Interest in politics (total sample)	185
Figure 64	How much do you talk with friends and family about political issues? (total sample)	186
Figure 65	Involvement in political parties (total sample)	187
Figure 66	If someone close to you—a friend or family member—were considering going into politics, how would you advise him or her? (total sample)	188
Figure 67	Freedom of expression for all, regardless of views (total sample)	189
Figure 68	Speakers should be prohibited from harshly criticizing the State of Israel in public (total sample)	190
Figure 69	Equal rights for all and equal rights for Arab citizens of the state (total sample)	191
Figure 70	It is never justified to use violence to achieve political ends (total sample)	192
Figure 71	Decisions crucial to the state on matters of peace and security should be made by a Jewish majority (Jewish sample)	193
Figure 72	Arab citizens of Israel are discriminated against, compared with Jewish citizens (total sample)	194

Figure 73	Pride in being Israeli (total sample)	195
Figure 74	Feeling part of the State of Israel and its problems (total sample)	196
Figure 75	Desire to live in Israel in the long term (total sample)	197

Part Three

Figure 76	Structure of the Democracy Index	206
Figure 77	Israel's ranking in major democracy indicators – 2011	210
Figure 78	Political corruption: An international comparison	216
Figure 79	Functioning of government: An international comparison	217
Figure 80	Electoral process and pluralism: An international comparison	219
Figure 81	Political participation: An international comparison	220
Figure 82	Democratic political culture: An international comparison	222
Figure 83	Gender inequality: An international comparison	224
Figure 84	Economic freedom: An international comparison	226
Figure 85	Freedom of the press: An international comparison	228
Figure 86	Civil liberties: An international comparison	230
Figure 87	Freedom of religion: An international comparison	231
Figure 88	Religious tensions: An international comparison	232
Figure 89	Ethnic/nationality/language tensions: An international comparison	233

Acknowledgments

A wide-ranging project such as the Democracy Index is always the result of extensive collaboration over and above the people whose names appear on the finished product and who are responsible for its content. A number of individuals and institutions play a role—be it in preliminary research (in this case, preparing the questionnaire), field work, data analysis, writing, editing, translation, graphic design, or publishing. Others contribute by marketing the project to the media and the public. Accordingly, this is the place to thank all those who were involved in some way in producing the Israeli Democracy Index 2011 but who are not members of the project staff or are not cited by name.

We wish to thank Dr. Pazit Ben-Nun-Bloom, Dr. Kalman Neuman, Adv. Amir Fuchs, and Natalie Peker, who helped with advice on drawing up the questionnaire; to Shlomo Daskal, who took on the task of translating it into Arabic, and Natalie Peker, who translated it into Russian. Our thanks go to the staff of the IDI Press for helping to produce this work, and to the members of the Communications and Marketing Department for bringing the Index to the knowledge of the Israeli public and government institutions. We are also grateful to Dr. Arye Carmon, Prof. Mordechai Kremnitzer, and Prof. Yedidia Stern for their assistance in formulating the concept of this year's Index. Special thanks are due as well to Dr. Mina Zemach for her important contribution to improving the questionnaire and carrying out the survey. And of course, we extend our thanks to the 1,200 unnamed interviewees, from all levels and sectors of Israeli society who devoted their valuable time—without compensation—to answering the many questions in our survey. Without them, this project could not have taken place.

Tamar Hermann
September 2011

Insights and Major Findings

The Israeli Democracy Index Survey 2011, like those of preceding years, seeks to provide a detailed and up-to-date picture of Israeli public opinion—of the population as a whole and its various subgroups—regarding preferred form of government, functioning of the political system, performance and behavior of elected officials and key democratic values in principle and in practice. The report is divided into three main parts: the 2011 findings, a comparison of this year’s findings with those of previous surveys, and a comparison of the state of Israeli democracy with that of other countries, based on various indexes compiled by expert foreign institutions.

Overall trends

Generally speaking, the “name of the game” this year is stability (some might say “stagnation”), as reflected not only in many of the opinions on various issues presented below, but also in Israel’s status according to international indexes (none of which displayed a change for the worse this year). This statistical stability seemingly contradicts the rather powerful feelings recently expressed both in the media and in the words and writings of Israeli public/political figures and intellectuals concerned about the state of Israeli democracy and the extent of the Israeli population’s commitment to it. In fact, however, there is no genuine contradiction here, as such a longitudinal survey project, by nature, does not address or reflect one-time events, however worrisome they may be. Such a survey reflects only general trends in public opinion. As indicated, the present survey shows that a decisive majority of these trends have remained the same, while the remainder has changed—some for the better and some for the worse.

Democratic and anti-democratic thinking

Taking all the above into consideration, the analyses attempted to identify representations of democratic and anti-democratic thinking and performance, pointing out those issues that may potentially worsen and those requiring our utmost attention to ensure that democratic values and practices are instilled, even by means of enforcement at times. Also identified were population

groups whose current positions cry out for reinforcement of the democratic ethos. At the same time, the report's analyses seek to provide a thorough examination of common conceptions regarding positions taken by the population or its subgroups on relevant issues such as support of a "strong leader" or intense hatred of foreign workers—conceptions that, as we will see, were not fully substantiated empirically. These analyses are also intended to uncover and factually prove the existence of other assumed conceptions, such as the unwillingness of Israel's Jewish population to accord equal civil and social status to Arab citizens or the unwillingness of the majority of Israel's Arab population to disassociate itself unequivocally from the use of violence to achieve political objectives.

The 2011 Index data show that there were no significant changes in public opinion regarding Israel's definition as a Jewish and democratic state. The most common preference among the Jewish population, in which a slight rise was noted, calls for retaining the dual "Jewish-democratic" emphasis; the "Jewish" aspect takes second place, with the "democratic" aspect trailing far behind. Analysis of responses to the open question in this year's survey shows that emphasis on the Jewish aspect is perceived by the overall Jewish population primarily in its nationalistic sense and only thereafter in its religious sense. There is some marginal interpretation of the Jewish aspect in terms of justice and tolerance toward minorities, as well as pluralism, mainly among the secular sector. From the response to the open question regarding the meaning of the democratic aspect, it appears that among the Jewish population it is defined in terms of freedom. Only a small segment of the Jewish population, again mostly secular respondents, interpret it in terms of maintaining human and civil rights and protecting minorities. By contrast, among the Arab population, the most common interpretation of the democratic aspect is protection of minorities and human/civil rights.

A "Jewish and democratic" state

Preferred form of government

A government of elected representatives is the most favored form of government in Israel today, followed by direct democracy where major issues are decided by referendum. A government of non-elected experts ranks third. Lowest on the scale of preferences, supported by a minority, is the strong leader who is not subject to the constraints of elections and democratic processes. In other words, in this respect, Israel is currently playing in the democratic league. Incidentally, it may well be that the (recent) lively public discussion regarding the yearning for a strong leader aroused public awareness of the dangers of such a system, yielding the results we received. The same may be true regarding the attitude toward foreign workers and especially toward their children who grew up in Israel. By contrast, as shown below, discourse concerning the Rabbis' Letter (forbidding the sale or rental of property to Arabs) and other manifestations of anti-Arab sentiment did not exactly swing the pendulum to the democratic side.

The quality of Israeli democracy

The public gives Israel's democratic performance only a passing grade or slightly lower (the most common position expressed by the overall population is that Israel is not democratic enough—a position even taken by groups that themselves maintain highly undemocratic and exclusivist views toward others). At the same time, conceptions regarding the performance of the present government and elected officials are at an all-time low, with a majority of respondents believing that the government is handling the problems of the state poorly. A majority of each subgroup believes that Knesset members do not put in the hard work demanded and expected of people in their position. Moreover, politicians in general are largely depicted as inattentive to their constituents and concerned only for their own narrow interests. Many people have a very low opinion of elected officials' integrity as well; it is commonly believed that one must be corrupt to reach the top in Israeli politics. This is also the case concerning honesty in the sense of keeping promises to voters. This year, as in previous years, we found that the overall population and all subgroups thereof expressed very powerful feelings that the ordinary citizen has no way to influence political decisions—this despite the very high level of interest and involvement in politics (compared with that of citizens of other democracies throughout

the world). Opinions were clearly positive regarding the extent to which the Knesset represents the various public sectors, which will likely pose difficulties for those aiming to change the electoral system. Opinions were clearly opposite regarding the extent to which political parties represent the opinions of their constituents. In this and other issues, the parties are revealed to be among the least—if not the least—respected bodies in Israeli politics. There thus appears to be little to no likelihood of rehabilitating the parties' status in the foreseeable future.

Nevertheless, the extent of public trust in state institutions and decision makers (as registered in the survey in March 2011) is markedly higher than in recent years, apparently because of the past year's relative economic stability and low incidence of terror activity. Still, the ranking of trustworthiness remains as in previous years, with the major democratic institutions—the government, Knesset and parties—at the bottom of the scale. This situation is, of course, most undesirable from a democratic point of view. In this context, it is interesting to note that there are only minor differences in the average level of trust expressed by the various subgroups, rendering it difficult to identify significant pockets of either mistrust or marked trust. It is apparent, however, that each political camp—right, center and left—considers some institutions especially trustworthy and others entirely untrustworthy.

Another insight derived from the data shows that the common fear about the disintegration of the Israeli collective is apparently exaggerated at this stage. The findings indicate that the Israeli population (including a small majority of Arab citizens) is very proud to be Israeli and that the Jews—and to a certain extent the Arabs as well—feel a sense of belonging to the state and its problems. Furthermore, there is apparently little desire to emigrate to other countries: Most Israeli citizens want to remain in Israel despite the difficulties of life in the country. The findings also show that despite clear differences on other important issues, especially in responses to questions directly or indirectly concerning the desired and actual status of the Arab minority, the distribution of public opinion is largely similar for both Jewish and Arab

Public trust in state institutions

Collective identity

citizens. For example, both groups believe, nearly to the same extent, that the government is not doing enough to explain its decisions to citizens; most Arabs (like most Jews) are not satisfied with government performance and believe that there are no real differences among the major political parties. They also concur that foreign workers living in Israel for many years should not be considered “Israelis,” but their children should. The family emerges as the chief agent of political socialization. All these findings seem to show that despite intense differences of opinion, Arabs and Jews are not two entities alienated from one another that only live under one roof from lack of choice, but rather have many features in common. This is also true regarding the different age groups. For example, contrary to popular opinion, we found that young adults, both Jews and Arabs, are interested in politics to much the same extent as the intermediate and older age groups.

Similarly, no profound differences were found among secular, traditional and Orthodox Jews regarding numerous issues. By contrast, the ultra-Orthodox sector emerges clearly as one that maintains conceptions distinct from those of the other three. Further evidence of common ground are the intersecting views of the political camps within the Jewish population (right, center and left), some of which are highly problematic from a democratic point of view, such as the widespread willingness of all camps to exclude Arabs from decisions crucial to the state—not only those concerning foreign affairs and security but also on issues having to do with the economy and governance.

To reiterate, although it is impossible to ignore the intense differences in the positions of the various subgroups comprising the population of Israel, it would be incorrect nonetheless to say that contemporary Israeli society is “falling apart.” The members of this society are apparently bound together by strong ties—not all of them beneficial in democratic terms—rather than flimsy threads, as is often maintained.

All the above does not mean that Israeli democracy is flourishing or that there are no real differences, some of them deep and painful, among the subgroups of Israel’s population, nor does it mandate ceasing efforts to bridge the groups or halting the struggle against trends that are anti-democratic or threaten the stability of Israeli democracy.

[Detailed analysis
of the 2011 survey
findings](#)

- 1. Commitment to democracy in principle and in practice** – This year, as in previous years, we found very broad discrepancies between commitment in principle to democratic values and willingness to apply them in practice. Thus, for example, while the principle of freedom of expression is strongly supported on the theoretical level, a majority of the Jewish population does not tend to accord this right to speakers who harshly criticize the state in public. Moreover, most Jews believe that university lecturers should not be allowed to express political opinions and that the state should oversee the content of academic courses.
- 2. The standing of Israeli Arabs in Israeli society** – The data show that at present the Arab population feels discriminated against to a great extent, while a majority of the Jewish population rejects the allegation of discrimination. This is a significant finding, as many Jewish citizens back in the early 2000s accepted this claim of discrimination against Arabs. Similarly, most of the Arab population believes that non-Jews have less chance of succeeding in Israel than do Jews, a claim rejected outright by most of the Jewish population, who also support exclusion of the Arab public from decisions crucial to the state concerning foreign affairs and security and to a lesser extent also in matters of economy and governance. As if this were not enough, a third of Israel's Jewish population does not consider Arab citizens of Israel to be Israelis and even opposes full civil equality for them. In addition, large majorities of all subgroups of the Jewish population report that they would be very troubled by the election of an Arab prime minister. These findings clearly demand attention and cast a shadow on Israeli democracy.

The Arab population believes that achievement of peace and improvement of relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel are the primary goals that the state should be striving for, while the Jewish population notes entirely different goals: narrowing socioeconomic gaps and reinforcing the military capability of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the Arab population's forecast for the future—such as the pessimistic view by which young people today are less likely to achieve professional and economic integration compared with their parents' generation—is the opposite of

the future foreseen by the Jewish population. As a rule, the most common position held by Jewish citizens is that young people have better opportunities than their parents did (although the younger generation is less optimistic regarding this issue). The simultaneous existence of a majority that paints a positive picture of its future and a minority that paints its future in gloomy colors is a bad recipe for inter-communal integration. It is interesting to note that, in general, Arab citizens are more satisfied with politicians and more closely affiliated with the parties they vote for than are their Jewish counterparts.

3. The attitudes of young adults – We found that young adults typically display less respect for and less trust in state institutions—including the IDF and military service, as well as public officials—than do older persons. Moreover, their expectations of the leadership, moral and otherwise, are lower than those of the older groups. According to their self-reported political activity, young adults are only slightly less interested in politics than are older persons, although they discuss politics to a far lesser extent. Their political knowledge, too, generally falls short of that of intermediate and older age groups. The Internet is their chief source of information, more so than among older adults, although it remains only a secondary source compared with television, for example. Results are ambiguous regarding their upholding of democratic principles, but it is clear that young adults are less supportive of unconditional freedom of expression and full equal rights for Arab citizens of Israel. In general, young adults show more respect for religious functionaries and consider them a more important source of political authority than do the older age groups. Nevertheless, breaking down the responses of the young adults in the Jewish population reveals beyond any doubt that there are most profound differences between the ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox young adult group on the one hand and the traditional and secular young adult group on the other. Foremost among these differences is the very strong emphasis that the former group places on defining Israel as a “Jewish state” compared with preference for the dual definition of “Jewish and democratic” among the latter group. This finding is particularly significant in light of the demographic growth of the ultra-Orthodox

and Orthodox sectors in the Jewish population. The status of rabbis is dominant for the ultra-Orthodox/Orthodox group but marginal for the traditional/secular group. In this context, it is interesting to note the high esteem accorded the clergy by young Arab adults. Jewish young adults belonging to the ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox sectors are far more willing to exclude Arab citizens of Israel from crucial decision making and civil equality and are far more confrontational toward and critical of the state, politicians and government agencies than are their traditional and secular peers.

4. New variables in the Israeli Democracy Index 2011: Self-definition at the center or the margins of society; level of political awareness – We analyzed many of the survey questions according to two new variables: Interviewees' self-location at the center or the margins of Israeli society and level of political knowledge, as reflected in a series of questions posed in this survey (Appendix 5). These two variables were shown to have marked explanatory capability. From the data in this year's survey (Appendix 4) and previous surveys that examined the issue (2008, 2010), self-location at the center or the margins is not what many of us would deduce according to our intuition—or perhaps our prejudices: The figures show that most Israelis—Jews and Arabs, men and women, more and less educated, religious and secular, lower and higher income levels—locate themselves at or near the center of Israeli society. Only a minority situates itself far or very far from the center, i.e., at the margins. It may be that Israeli society maintains a rather high degree of intimacy, or perhaps it is a polycentric society in which everyone has a perceived “center of society” of his or her own. One way or another, the empirical data suggest that most of Israel's population does not suffer acute social alienation. As stated, self-location is a good predictor of individual political attitudes and emotions: An analysis of the survey questions shows that those who place themselves at the center expressed opinions on many issues that differ considerably from those of people who place themselves at the margins. For example, those at the center are less critical than those at the margins when asked about the functioning of the political system, politicians' attentiveness, and integrity and equal opportunity

in the country, leading us to conclude that self-location at the margins is indeed correlated with greater alienation from and criticism of the system. In parallel, those who place themselves at or near the center are willing to exclude others from decision making and to defend existing structures and processes and the central narrative of Israel (which apparently serve their own interests) more than those who see themselves at the margins of society. The data show that those on the margins are willing to be more accepting of others, so long as these “others” do not threaten them economically, particularly regarding jobs and housing (e.g., foreign workers).

Political knowledge was more closely correlated with the predictable variables of education, income and the like, and was found to be slightly less instructive compared with self-location in society and self-described affiliation with one political camp or another. Even in this case, however, there are significant differences between those who possess vast political knowledge and those whose knowledge is more limited. As a rule, the more politically knowledgeable display greater awareness of the problems of political performance, greater support for the basic values of democracy and greater receptivity to inclusion of minorities in the democratic political arena.

5. Ethnic origins and the “Russian factor” – Another interesting finding concerning variables is the growing evidence that “classical” distinguishing variables in the literature of political sociology or in the Israeli experience are playing less and less of a central role in the interpretation of opinions on the topics discussed here. Ethnic origin variables, for example, have practically no statistically significant influence on the issues that we examined. The “Russian factor” also seems to be fading as a result of the natural demographic process, which consists primarily of a decline in numbers among the oldest immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (FSU) who arrived in Israel after 1990 and the debut in the political arena of FSU-born young people; the latter have already undergone political socialization in Israel and consequently resemble long-time Jewish residents of the country who were either born in Israel or arrived here before 1990.

6. The impact of religious identity – Although as said before, the religious sub-groups are of one mind on various topics, in this year's survey, perhaps even more than in previous years, self-defined religiosity (ultra-Orthodox, Orthodox, traditional and secular) definitely proves to be a distinguishing variable on certain issues. The ultra-Orthodox are shown to be the group least satisfied with political institutions and processes, and may even be defined as a “politically peevish group.” Effectively, the ultra-Orthodox see Israel as a country that is not democratic enough, perhaps because they perceive democracy primarily as a form of government that is supposed to protect their sectoral rights. They also emerge as the group that most excludes all “others” and is least committed to civil equality. Their tolerance of freedom of expression is also the lowest—a somewhat paradoxical finding, as it would be logical for a minority group that harshly criticizes the state to give top priority among its self-interests to protection of freedom of expression. Regarding definition of the State of Israel, the ultra-Orthodox clearly prefer the “Jewish state” aspect and ascribe only marginal significance to the “democratic” one. All ultra-Orthodox agree that in the case of a conflict between the principles of democracy and the tenets of halakha (Jewish religious law), the latter will always take precedence.

In general, the Orthodox group emerges as more satisfied than the other three groups regarding numerous aspects of the political system's performance. It also displays a more supportive attitude towards politicians and parties (although, as indicated, the young-adult Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox are highly critical). Furthermore, like the ultra-Orthodox group, the Orthodox group is very willing to exclude minorities—particularly the Arab minority—from involvement in political processes and barely willing to include other minorities in the Israeli collective. The same is true regarding the upholding of the principle of freedom of expression, reluctance to acknowledge discrimination against Israeli Arabs, and acceptance of the claim that non-Jews have a harder time succeeding in Israel today. In this case as well, emphasis on the Jewish aspect of the definition of the State of Israel is more common than dual emphasis (“Jewish and democratic”) or emphasis on the democratic aspect.

The traditional group vacillates between the Orthodox and secular groups, depending on the issue under consideration. Its similarity to the secular group is evident primarily in questions of religion and state and less so regarding attitude towards minorities and human and civil rights. The secular group displays greater discomfort with the political system, especially with the performance of elected officials. In general, it appears to be less proud of being Israeli than the Orthodox group and in certain respects also less proud than the traditional group. Moreover, it feels slightly less “connected” to the current political ethos than those groups, although it too feels a sense of belonging to the state and its problems. Secular Jews also object the most strongly to involvement of religion and religious officials in political processes, and are unwilling to accept their authority to issue political rulings. Furthermore, this group is the only one to claim that in case of a conflict between the principles of democracy and the tenets of Jewish religious law, democracy will always take precedence. Nevertheless, the secular group, too, displays only limited tolerance: It is less willing than any other group to accept an ultra-Orthodox Jew as prime minister, for example. The secular group is the most committed, in theory and in practice, to the values of freedom of expression and civil equality and is more willing than other groups to accept the minorities that live in Israel.

7. The impact of political affiliation – Much has been said about the lessening of ideological differences among the right, center and left, but it emerges nonetheless that self-affiliation with one of these camps is clearly a distinguishing variable in the contemporary Israeli political context. That is, self-location along the right-left political continuum signifies a rather distinct set of opinions: Those who place themselves on the right are—and this is a generalization, of course—less critical of the present government and political officials, less receptive to involvement of the Israeli Arab public in the political arena, less aware of core democratic values—especially freedom of speech and criticism—and even less willing to apply them in practice. People situating themselves in the right-wing camp display less trust in various judicial institutions, ranging from the Supreme Court to the State Attorney’s Office, as well as the media. Their

willingness to accept the involvement of people with religious authority in political processes is relatively higher than that of other groups, apparently because of the substantial presence of ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox Jews in this political camp. Like the left and unlike the center (the largest of all political camps today), the right, which is the second-largest political camp among the Jewish population of Israel, places greater emphasis on ideological considerations and is primarily concerned with foreign affairs and security and only thereafter with social and economic matters.

The center lives up to its name: It is situated in the middle between right and left and resembles one side in its views on certain matters and the opposite side in its views on others. In terms of its level of religiosity, the center primarily parallels the traditional and secular groups. Insofar as guiding principles are concerned, it appears that the center, unlike the right and left, is less ideological and more pragmatic. Socioeconomic issues head its priorities and determine the goals it considers most important.

The data show that the left-wing camp, the smallest in Israel today, is the most critical of and the least satisfied with government performance and the political system. The overlap between it and the secular group is high, including unwillingness to emphasize and accept Jewish-religious aspects of the Israeli ethos and to allow rabbis and other clergy to participate in the political process. Of all the political camps, the left is the most highly aware of universal abstract democratic values and the most willing to practice them. Especially prominent is their willingness in principle to accept the Arab minority and other non-Jewish minorities (e.g., foreign workers) on an egalitarian basis. Nevertheless, it is impossible to ignore the small majority on the left that upholds excluding Arab citizens from decision making crucial to the state concerning foreign affairs and security, with a large minority supporting their exclusion from decisions concerning the economy and society as well. A majority of left-wingers would also be troubled by an Arab prime minister. As the left has distanced itself from the center of the political arena over the past few years, its members apparently feel less comfortable being Israelis, although they

do not feel more alienated than others from the state and its problems.

8. The “State of Tel Aviv” vs. the State of Israel – This time, we attempted to determine whether a new schism is beginning to form in Israeli society between the “State of Tel Aviv” and the rest of the country. So far, there is still no definitive proof of such a division. Public opinion is divided on the question of whether this “State of Tel Aviv” really exists as an entity that is alienated from the rest of the country and whose residents are none too happy about carrying out their civic obligations—as some people love to claim. To date, there is also no consensus among Israelis as to whether people born in Tel Aviv have a greater chance of success in life than those born and raised elsewhere in Israel.

9. Perceptions of foreign workers – Some small comfort may be drawn from the fact that despite this year’s raging demonstrations against foreign workers, most Israelis have not internalized the notion that their own difficulty in finding housing and jobs in Israel today is because of these foreign workers. It turns out that only a minority believes that foreign workers are the reason that Israelis are now experiencing difficulty finding suitable jobs or reasonably-priced housing. Moreover, the majority considers children of foreign workers to be Israelis.

Comparative findings

A comparison of the 2011 survey findings with those of previous years indicates the following:

1. The steady rise over the past few years in the size of the minority that perceives Israel's overall situation in a positive light did not continue this year. Essentially, there was some decline in the percentage of respondents who believe that the overall situation is quite good or very good.
2. Perhaps as a consequence of this year's vehement discussions of issues concerning democracy, there was a rise in the majority that believes that democracy is the best form of government and a decline in the percentage of those who believe that the best system is a strong leader who does not have to take democratic procedures into account.
3. In comparison with previous years, there was a small rise in the percentage of people emphasizing the democratic aspect in the definition of the State of Israel this year, although the largest group still prefers the Jewish and democratic combination. A smaller percentage favors the Jewish aspect in particular.
4. This year, unlike the past few years, a small majority attested to being satisfied with the functioning of Israeli democracy. By contrast, a large majority (as in the past) is dissatisfied with the government's handling of state problems. Nevertheless, there was a significant rise in the extent of public trust in state institutions and key officials.
5. Although a majority still feels it cannot influence government policy, the percentage of people who do believe they can do so rose slightly this year compared with previous years. It is still too soon to determine whether this phenomenon is a trend or a measurement error.
6. This year, more respondents than in previous years reported that they take a great interest in politics and that they speak about political topics with their friends and relatives. There was also an increase in the minority of respondents declaring that if someone close to them were thinking about entering politics, they would advise in favor of it.

7. This year, there was a decline in the percentage of Jews who do not support full equality of rights for Arab citizens of Israel, although a third still opposes such equality.
8. Opposition to the use of violence to achieve political ends continued to decline this year, although a majority of the Arab population still does not reject such violence.
9. This year's percentage of persons who feel they are part of the country and its problems continued the trend of recovery observed in previous years.
10. Israel ranks at or near the middle of the scale on most international democracy indexes, standing out positively for its place on the Political Participation Index and negatively for its place on the Electoral Process and Pluralism Index, Civil Rights Index, Freedom of Religion Index and especially the Religious Fractionalization Index.
11. In general, Israel's scores on most international indexes have remained the same or improved slightly relative to those of previous years.

Introduction

Since 2003, the Guttman Center has conducted an annual survey of public opinion as part of the Israeli Democracy Index project. This comprehensive poll explores the views of the Israeli public on structural and procedural aspects of Israeli democracy and on questions of society and identity that lie at the heart of the public discourse in Israel today. The work that you have before you presents and analyzes the findings of this survey. To better assess the state of Israeli democracy, the report also includes, as is our custom, a comparison of the findings from 2011 with those from previous years; in addition, it ranks Israel on a scale of international indicators relative to 27 other countries, some of them chosen by virtue of their membership in the family of democratic nations (which like any family, has its more successful and less successful members) and others by virtue of their geographic proximity to Israel, since no state operates in a geopolitical vacuum.

The sheer amount of data collected was enormous. So that the report would not swell to gigantic proportions, we therefore decided to focus on what we consider the most important findings. For reasons of space and time, the analyses herein are not exhaustive, but they can shed light on the points and aspects that are the most significant, in our view, and the most essential to the work of the Israel Democracy Institute as a whole. However, since we consider this material to be in the public domain, and since the Guttman Center maintains a policy of transparency, those who are interested in performing additional analyses and drawing their own conclusions can download the question file (in Word format) and the raw data (in SPSS) from the Guttman Center site: www.idi.org.il/GuttmanCenter/Pages/guttman_main.aspx. Those who are unable to conduct statistical analyses by themselves but are interested in specific analyses of the processed data are invited to contact us to order them in accordance with the procedure detailed on the site.

The following is some basic information regarding the survey and the analyses that we conducted:

The survey questionnaire was prepared at the Guttman Center early in the calendar year specifically for the Israeli Democracy

The questionnaire

Index 2011. The questionnaire (which appears in its entirety in Appendix 1) comprised 131 questions. Approximately one half of these were asked in past years (for a multi-year comparison, see Appendix 2), while the remainder are questions that were composed especially for this survey.

Data collection

The data were collected by the Dahaf Institute, headed by Dr. Mina Zemach, during March 2011. The questionnaire was translated beforehand into Russian and Arabic, and the interviews took place in Hebrew (879), Russian (141), and Arabic (180), in accordance with the mother tongue of the interviewee. The interviewers in Russian and Arabic were native speakers of the language.

The sample

The study population was a representative national sample of adult citizens of Israel aged 18 and over, with a total of 1,200 interviewees. The sampling error for a sample of this size is 2.8%. (For the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample, see Appendix 3.)

Structure of the report

The report is divided into three main sections:

In **Part One**, the findings of the 2011 survey are analyzed with reference to three primary topics: (1) the nature and quality of the political system and of government performance; (2) citizens and democratic politics; and (3) citizens' perception of Israeli society in all its aspects.

In **Part Two**, the recurring questions, which were also included in the 2011 survey, are presented and analyzed, comparing them with the findings of previous years in an effort to follow trends of stability and change since the survey's inception in 2003 as part of the Israeli Democracy Index project.

Part Three presents Israel's ranking relative to 27 other countries in 12 international democracy indexes as well as its current standing compared with its position in the same indexes in previous years.

At the end of each part is a summary of the data discussed in that section.

There are countless ways to analyze survey data. The decision of what to concentrate on is affected primarily by the viewpoint of the researcher as to which factors influence, or are likely to influence, public opinion in Israel on political issues. Thus, some researchers focus on “objective” variables, for example income, while others place greater emphasis on “subjective” variables such as self-defined identity. For this year’s Index, we chose to highlight the following variables:

Which criteria did we use to analyze the data (or: What are the independent variables)?

Nationality: In our estimation, whether the interviewee belongs to the Jewish majority or the Arab minority is of prime importance;¹ thus all questions were analyzed on the basis of this variable.²

Another important variable, in our opinion and based on past findings, is (self-reported) **religiosity**. As demonstrated by numerous surveys, the citizen’s definition of himself as secular, traditional, Orthodox, or ultra-Orthodox is highly significant in terms of his views on politics in general and the democratic regime in particular. For this reason, we also treated this as an associated variable throughout the analysis. The breakdown of data by religiosity was carried out only with respect to the Jewish population, since the “secular/ultra-Orthodox” scale has been shown to be invalid for the Arab population.

Since we believe that the future of Israeli democracy rests with its young citizens and their opinions, we also selected **age** as a primary variable, based on a division into three age groups: 18–34 (young adults); 35–54 (intermediate age group); and 55+ (older adults).

- 1 Certain questions, due to their particular relevance, were posed only to the Jewish sample.
- 2 Since the Arab sample was relatively small (in accordance with the proportion of the Arab public in Israel’s total population), we did not break it down in our analysis into subgroups based on demographic, social, or political variables, unlike our treatment of the total sample or the Jewish sample. Such an analysis, had we performed one, would have divided the Arab sample into groups too small to allow us to draw statistically valid conclusions. It should also be noted that this year, we encountered unprecedented difficulties with cooperation on the part of the Arab interviewees. A very high percentage of them were unwilling to participate in this survey, and many of those who consented to take part dropped out in the course of the questionnaire.

Another variable that we utilized frequently in the analysis was **self-reported political orientation** of the respondents (left, right or center). Much has been written in past years on how these concepts have lost much of their “bite,”³ but even if (as we will see below) the ideological differences among these political camps are not always clear-cut—especially as reflected in the platforms of their “swing parties”—self-affiliation with any of them creates three groups that are distinct from one another on many issues. It should be noted that division of the respondents by political camp has been found to be relevant only to the Jewish population; hence our analyses based on this division relate only to the Jewish sample. Political orientation was measured using a 7-point scale, as follows: 1 + 2 = right; 3 + 4 + 5 = center; 6 + 7 = left.⁴

Previous Democracy Indexes, as well as other studies, have emphasized the differences between long-time (Jewish) residents of Israel and immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (FSU), with long-time residents defined as those either born in the country or who immigrated before 1990. We will be devoting only scant attention to this factor, since the key observations regarding the differences between the two groups have already been presented in the past. Moreover, based on the data from this survey and other recent polls, the so-called “Russian sector” is apparently undergoing a shift in attitude, becoming more similar in its views to the general Jewish public in Israel. This is apparently the result of demographic changes in the immigrant population (the death of many of the older members of this group, and the aging of those who immigrated to Israel during their childhood or young adult years and experienced their political socialization here). In other words, the “Russian factor” does not play a prominent role in several of the issues that we studied; we will therefore be referring to length of residence in Israel only when the differences arising from it are significant. The same applies

3 See for example the discussion of the distribution on the right-left continuum in Israeli politics following the 2009 elections in the introduction to Asher Arian and Michal Shamir, eds., *The Elections in Israel – 2009* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2011), pp. 10-15.

4 For the full distribution of responses to this question, see Appendix 4 below (p. 292).

also to the variable of **sex**.⁵ It should likewise be noted that this report does not include analysis on the basis of ethnic origin, since this factor too is gradually losing its explanatory validity, if only because the proportion of individuals without a clear ethnic identity is constantly on the rise due to the increase in inter-ethnic marriages.

Instead, we decided this time to examine two new background factors: one, **self-location at the center or the margins of Israeli society**; and two, **level of political knowledge**. We considered both these factors to be pertinent and interesting, and in fact they were tied to the interviewees' responses in quite a number of the topics that we investigated.

Location of self at center or margins of Israeli society: In recent years, there has been much talk in Israel about the distinction—and even incompatibility—between the center and the periphery of the country, and not strictly in the geographical sense. Accordingly, we posed a question in the survey that was intended to examine the interviewees' subjective sense of their place at the center or the margins of Israeli society.⁶ We made the assumption—largely substantiated by the figures below—that the political opinions of those who locate themselves at the center of society would be different from the views of those who situate themselves at its margins. The question was originally divided into four categories, but for purposes of analysis these were compiled into two: those who feel at or near the center of Israeli society (categories 1 + 2), and those who feel distant from the center or at the very fringes of society (categories 3 + 4). Additional information on this variable and associated social and political factors appears in Appendix 4.

5 In recent years, it has become standard practice to treat the word “gender” as synonymous with “sex,” but this is a common error: The word “sex” describes the biological state of being a man or a woman, whereas the term “gender” relates to the social manifestation of that status. The breakdown of data in this survey is therefore on the basis of the sex of the interviewees and not their gender.

6 See the distribution of responses to this question in Appendix 1, question no. 26.

Political knowledge: It is often said that the general public lacks information and opinions on many topics, and that its political views are not grounded on awareness of the facts. Indeed, studies conducted in many countries, including developed Western states,⁷ have generally revealed a low level of political knowledge among interviewees. In an effort to verify these claims with regard to the Israeli public, and to examine firsthand the connection between political awareness and opinions, we included in this survey five questions testing political knowledge.⁸ The questions were relatively simple, but not easier than those posed in other countries, which in many instances yielded a rather bleak picture. As can be seen from the distribution of the knowledge scores in Appendix 5,⁹ the Israeli public, on the whole, is quite familiar with the political facts. We calculated the political knowledge score of each interviewee, with the lowest score given to those who had 0 correct answers and the highest to those with 5 correct answers. We grouped the scores into three levels of political knowledge: limited (those who had 0, 1 or 2 correct answers); moderate (3 or 4 correct answers); and high (those with 5 correct answers).

Navigating the Index

To make it easier to navigate the report and maintain an unbroken line of discussion, and so as not to burden the reader with too many comparative and other statistics, two types of references were included this time alongside the text: The first indicates the question number in the survey presented in Appendix 1, with the page number where the distribution of responses to that question is presented in full; and the second relates only to the questions that are repeated each year, and notes the appropriate page number in Appendix 2, which compares the data for this question over the years. Thus the references in the text appear as follows:

7 Michael X. Delli Carpini and Scott Keeter, *What Americans Know About Politics and Why It Matters* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996); Henry Milner, *The Internet Generation: Engaged Citizens or Political Dropouts?* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2010).

8 Questions 52–56 in Appendix 1 (below).

9 See Appendix 5 (below).

To begin our analysis of the survey's findings, we chose a question about the public's view of Israel's overall situation today.

In the Appendices themselves, there is a reference alongside each question to the page in the text where that question is discussed.

A methodological note: In previous reports, the distribution of responses was presented only for those who responded to the question. The "don't knows" and "refuse to answer" were omitted, and the percentages were recalculated without those figures. This year, however, it was decided to present the full distribution of responses, including those who indicated that they did not know or refused to answer, since we believe that the percentage of "don't knows" and "refuse to answers" is information that has value in and of itself. In comparisons with the past in Appendix 2 (the recurring questions), we presented the earlier figures according to this year's method; however, as a result of the change in the method of presentation, there may be slight differences in the distribution of responses as presented in the past and as shown in the present report.

And finally, the Israeli Democracy Index was compiled this year for the first time without its founding father, Prof. Asher Arian, who passed away in 2010. The 2011 Democracy Index is dedicated to his memory.

Question 1

[Appendix 1, p. 237](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 269](#)

Part One:
The Israeli Democracy Index 2011



Chapter 1: The Political System Its Nature, Structure, and Functioning

To begin our analysis of the survey's findings, we chose a question about the public's view of Israel's overall situation today. It seems that the level of satisfaction with the present state of affairs can best be characterized as fair: In the total sample, the highest percentage of respondents (41%) chose "so-so" as their response, while the remainder were divided almost evenly between those who feel that the overall situation is good (27.8%) and those who see it as bad (29.7%).

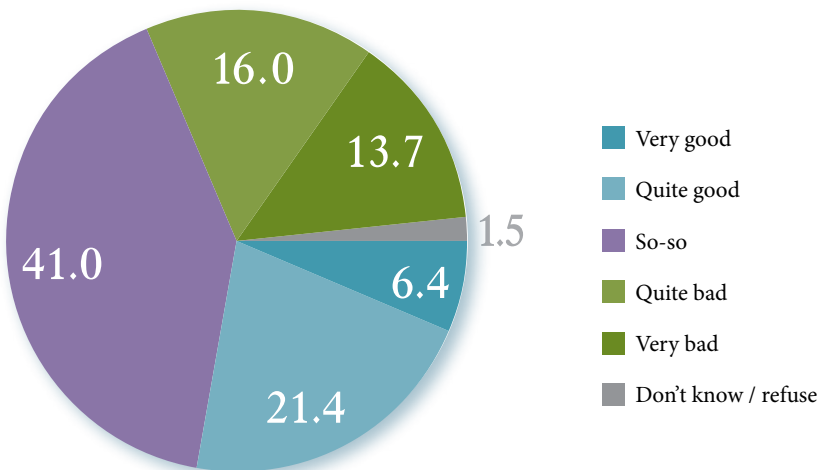
Israel's overall situation

Question 1

Appendix 1, p. 237

Appendix 2, p. 269

Figure 1: Assessment of Israel's overall situation
(total sample; percent)



A breakdown of the figures by nationality shows a clear difference between the Jewish and Arab populations that is "masked" by merging them into one sample: Whereas the most frequent response among the Jewish interviewees when asked to assess Israel's situation was the option of "so-so," the most common response in the Arab sample was "bad." Moreover, this negative assessment was much more frequent among the Arab respondents than among the Jews: 45.6% versus 26.9% (respectively).

According to our findings, age does not play an important role in the view of Israel's overall situation. That is, there is no significant statistical difference in the level of satisfaction with the country's general state of affairs among young people, the intermediate age group, and older adults.

In the Jewish sample, self-defined religiosity emerged as an influential but not systematic variable. In other words, there are significant differences between groups, but a higher or lower level of religiosity does not necessarily influence the findings in one direction. Thus, the ultra-Orthodox respondents express the lowest satisfaction with Israel's situation (32.3% define it as bad), whereas Orthodox Jews express the highest level of satisfaction, with 46.5% defining the situation as good. Secular and traditional Jews fall in between these two extremes. As we will see below, this pattern tends to repeat itself: When it comes to various aspects of the political system, the ultra-Orthodox respondents display a lower level of satisfaction than do the other groups, while the Orthodox show a higher one.

Breaking down the responses to this question by self-location at or near the center of Israeli society as opposed to at its margins showed a strong correlation between this variable and the assessment of Israel's overall situation: Those who locate themselves at the center of society more frequently offer a positive or middle-of-the-road appraisal than do those who see themselves as being at the margins of society. The latter, more than the other group, tend to judge Israel's situation unfavorably. Here too, we see a systematic, and expected, pattern that recurs frequently in other parts of the analysis.

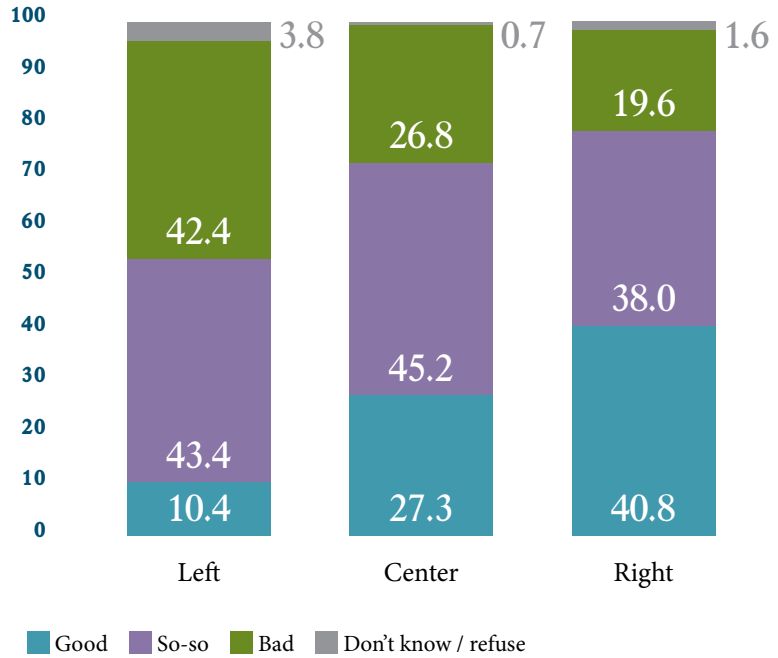
Table 1 (percent)

Assessment of Israel's overall situation	Good	So-So	Bad
Self-location at center of society	31.7	41.7	25.6
Self-location at margins of society	19.9	37.3	40.7

When the responses to the question are broken down by political knowledge, the positive assessment of the country's situation increases in proportion to the respondent's political knowledgeability: Among those with limited political knowledge, only 20.2% define the situation as "good," compared with 29.6% and 34.9% (respectively) of those with a moderate or high level of knowledge.

But the breakdown of the findings by political orientation (on the right, center, or left) was found to be highly significant: Of those who define themselves as leftist, only 10.4% characterize Israel's overall situation today as good, while for those at the center or right of the political spectrum, the corresponding figures are 27.3% and 40.8% (respectively). At the same time, the share of those who describe Israel's situation today as bad is 19.6% on the right, 26.8% in the center, and 42.4% on the left. This pattern is frequently repeated elsewhere in the analysis: a negative assessment of Israel's situation and of government performance by the left, and a more positive assessment in the center and on the right. The potential political impact of this state of affairs should be viewed in light of the relative proportions of interviewees who identify with a particular political camp. Thus, the percentage who label themselves as centrist is the highest (58.8%), followed by those on the right (25%), with the left-wing camp far behind (10.5%). The remainder did not know or refused to identify themselves politically (Appendix 4).

Figure 2: Assessment of Israel’s overall situation (Jewish sample; by political orientation; percent)



Democracy as the best form of government

As the survey reveals, Israel’s population (like that of many other countries) shows an unequivocal preference in principle for the democratic system of government. An overwhelming majority (81.8%) state that they view democracy as the best form of government. Only 6.7% of the respondents are opposed to democracy, while the remainder do not have a definite opinion. Since we are speaking of a decisive majority, most of the socio-demographic and socio-political variables did not play a role here. Nonetheless, certain inter-group differences do exist. Consequently, although democracy is seen by the majority (at all levels of political knowledge) as the best system of government, substantial gaps were found in the size of this majority, with the preference for democracy rising in tandem with greater political knowledge: of those with limited political knowledge, 64.9%

prefer democracy; moderate political knowledge, 86.4%; and high political knowledge, 89.6%. Political orientation was also shown to be significant in terms of support in principle for democracy: On the left, support for democracy as the best form of government is somewhat higher than that in the center, and substantially higher than on the right.

Table 2 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Agree with the statement that democracy is the best form of government	90.5	87.0	69.8

Taken by itself, however, the above consensus does not offer a complete picture of the type of government favored by the public. We therefore presented the interviewees with four forms of government and asked whether each of these in turn was a good or bad form of government for Israel. The majority, as shown below, defined the two “normative” democratic systems—government by elected representatives, and direct democracy—as “very good.” Government by elected representatives, the accepted model in liberal democracies, was defined as a good system by the largest plurality of respondents (82.9%). A sizeable majority also supported direct democracy in which crucial issues are decided by referendum (66.5%). By contrast, government by experts as opposed to elected representatives was defined as the best system by half of the respondents (53.2%), while the patently undemocratic system of a strong leader who does not need to take elections and the Knesset into account was defined as the best form of government by only a minority of the total respondents (32.4%). Hence, in this regard, Israel stands firmly on the side of democracy.

Nonetheless, there are certain warning signs that cannot be ignored. In the Arab sample, the percentage who define a strong leader who is not bound by the constraints of elections or the Knesset as a good form of government for Israel is slightly greater than those who shy away from such an approach (48.9% as opposed to 43.3%, respectively). In the Jewish sample as well, a not insignificant number of respondents favor this system. Here

Question 19.3

Appendix 1, p. 248

Appendix 2, p. 270

Preferred form of government

Questions 18.1-18.4

Appendix 1, p. 246

Appendix 2, p. 270

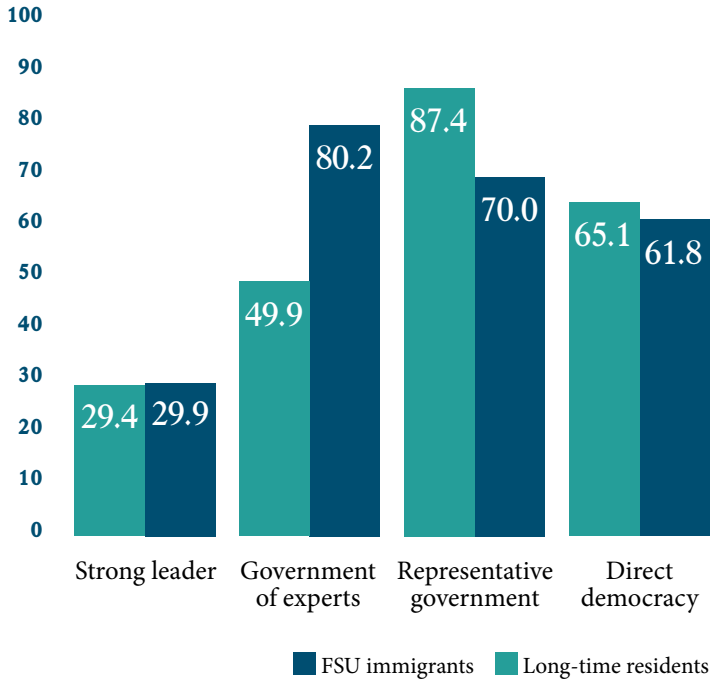
too, the Jewish public reveals sizeable differences in accordance with political orientation: On the right, 36.4% define a strong leader as a good form of government, compared with 29% in the center and 20.8% on the left.

Breaking down the Jewish sample by religiosity also indicates different preferences: Of the four categories, secular Jews are the least in favor of a strong leader (26.1%), while the traditional group is the one with the strongest preference for this system (35.3%) and the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox respondents fall somewhere between these two poles. Breaking down the total sample by age, however, does not yield a substantial difference between groups on this question; in other words, contrary to popular opinion, young adults do not show a greater preference for a strong leader than do the intermediate or older age groups. The same holds true with respect to respondents' self-location at the center or the margins of Israeli society: the difference between these two categories is not statistically significant.

In the past, it should be noted, the proportion of FSU immigrants who favored a strong leader as the best form of government was greater than those who held this view among long-time Jewish residents.¹⁰ But in this year's survey, the distribution of opinions between the two groups on this question was quite similar, thereby reinforcing the claim that the immigrants' views are drawing closer to those of the general Jewish population. Yet the immigrant respondents still support government by non-elected experts (which is problematic from a democratic point of view) to a much greater extent than do long-time Jewish residents, and are less in favor than the latter of direct democracy or government by elected representatives—the two normative democratic systems.

10 See for example Asher Arian, Michael Philippov, and Anna Knafelman, *The 2009 Israeli Democracy Index: Twenty Years of Immigration from the Soviet Union* (Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 2009), p. 59.

Figure 3: Opinion of forms of government (very good and somewhat good; Jewish sample; by length of residence in Israel; percent)



As for a government made up of experts in their fields rather than elected representatives, perhaps due to their affinity for the Hobbesian ethos of professional expertise, it is actually the traditional and secular groups that support this system to a greater extent than do the ultra-Orthodox and the Orthodox (59.8% and 53.6% as opposed to 50.6% and 46.5%, respectively). Those who situate themselves at the margins of Israeli society are more strongly in favor of a government of non-elected experts than those who locate themselves at the center of society (56.4% compared with 41.1%, respectively). We did not find significant differences in the extent of support for government by experts based on political orientation (left, center or right) or level of political knowledge. On the other hand, the survey findings indicate that the system of direct democracy is much more popular on the right than on

the left, presumably due to differences between the camps in their perception of the public's support for their views and the chances that direct democracy would allow them to influence matters in their direction.

Table 3 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Define direct democracy as the best form of government	52.9	66.4	73.4

A Jewish and a democratic state

Israel is of course defined as a Jewish and democratic state—a combination that it not without problems in a state that is home to a sizeable national majority that finds it difficult to accept the Jewish aspect of the definition of the state and a majority that is unwilling to renounce or compromise on the centrality of this element. Much has been written in recent years on the differences of opinion concerning the “real” and the “ideal” nature of Israel in the eyes of its citizens and of outside observers. The tension between these polar opposites is well known: At one end are those who would like Israel to become a Jewish theocracy run according to halakha (Jewish religious law), making it possible, in their view, to fully realize the country's national-religious character; and at the opposite extreme are those who wish to see Israel become a state of all its citizens and who feel that the Jewish dimension should be negated in order to express the country's democratic character to the fullest. No less familiar is the debate between those who see Israel today as a Jewish ethnic democracy¹¹—and thus a member of the family of nations that are considered democratic despite the fact that they identify openly with the national ethos of the majority—and those who view it as an ethnocracy,¹² that is, a state whose “democraticness” is questionable since it elevates

11 For a discussion of the topic, including criticisms of this approach, see Sammy Smooha, “Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State: Nature of the State and the Regime,” in *Trends in Israeli Society*, ed. Ephraim Yaar and Zeev Shavit (Tel Aviv: Open University, 2001), pp. 240–244 (in Hebrew).

12 Oren Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

the national ethos of the majority and tramples the national ethos of its minority groups.

To gain a deeper understanding of the Israeli public's perceptions of the terms "democratic state" and "Jewish state," the interviewees in this year's Democracy Survey were asked to express in their own words the meaning of both these concepts for them (in the form of two open-ended questions). The first question was worded as follows: "Israel is defined as a democratic state. Different people attach different meanings to the term 'democracy.' What do you think is the most important characteristic of a democratic regime?" The definitions offered were gathered into eight categories, each focused on, or reflecting, a different perception of democracy: (1) mechanisms and institutions (for example, elections and parliament); (2) equality; (3) justice; (4) freedom; (5) pluralism and concern for minorities; (6) human and civil rights; (7) sovereignty of the people, responsiveness of government; (8) anti-democratic attitudes and negative concepts of democracy. The relative frequency of each of these categories in the interviewees' responses is presented in the table below, in descending order:

Questions 3-4
Appendix 1, p. 238

Table 4 (percent)

Categories	Frequency of response
Freedom	49.8
Mechanisms and institutions	17.0
Sovereignty of the people, responsiveness of government	10.8
Equality	10.6
Pluralism and concern for minorities	6.4
Negative concepts of democracy, and anti-democratic attitudes	3.4
Human and civil rights	1.5
Justice	0.6

The figures indicate that in Israel today the most common interpretation of the concept of democracy relates to freedom. By contrast, the category of pluralism and concern for minorities, and that of human and civil rights—two basic ethical cornerstones of liberal democracy—trail far behind. In other words, democracy is interpreted primarily as freedom from constraints, and not as a moral or ethical obligation that is liable to restrict citizens' freedom of action, to one extent or another, so as to allow others to enjoy the rights and freedom that they deserve. Moreover, one cannot ignore the fact that 3.4% of the respondents attributed negative connotations to the term democracy or offered responses that reflected blatantly anti-democratic positions (e.g., “freedom is not an optimal situation,” “there is too much democracy,” “anarchy”).

We sought to examine whether there is a difference in the meaning attached by different social and political subgroups to the term “democratic state.” To do so, we cross-tabulated the eight categories with various demographic and political variables as well as with the importance attributed by the interviewees to the democratic aspect of the definition of the state as Jewish and democratic (see p. 53 below for a discussion of this question) and with their satisfaction with Israeli democracy in general.

Breaking down the responses by nationality, we see that among the Jewish interviewees the highest percentage emphasized the element of freedom, and far below it, the aspects of mechanisms/institutions, and sovereignty of the people/responsiveness of government. A majority of the Arab respondents also highlighted the concept of freedom, but as a group they tended to emphasize more strongly than the Jews the aspects of equality and concern for minorities, and to place less emphasis on the sovereignty of the people and responsiveness of government.

If we break down the responses by length of residence in Israel, we find that the emphasis on freedom is greater among FSU immigrants than it is among long-time Jewish residents. However, the immigrants tended less than the long-time residents to ascribe to the term democracy a connotation of sovereignty of the people, or to relate it directly to democratic mechanisms and institutions. They also placed less importance on the aspect of equality and

pluralism and on safeguarding minority rights. The immigrants, slightly more than the long-time residents, tended as well to attach a negative or anti-democratic meaning to the term democracy (5.8% of FSU immigrants as opposed to 3.3% of long-time Jewish residents and only 2.4% of the Arab sample).

Table 5 (percent)

Interpretations of concept of “democracy”	Arab sample	FSU immigrants	Long-time Jewish residents
Freedom	59.7	66.0	46.2
Mechanisms and institutions	10.5	11.7	18.7
Sovereignty of the people, and government responsiveness	0.8	5.8	13.0
Equality	12.1	7.8	10.7
Pluralism and concern for minorities	8.9	1.0	6.7
Negative concept of democracy, and anti-democratic attitudes	2.4	5.8	3.3
Human and civil rights	2.4	1.0	1.4
Justice	3.2	1.0	0.1

Analyzing the data on the basis of age produced some interesting findings. In all of the groups, democracy was most frequently associated with freedom. But although the most common choice among young adults was the element of freedom, the emphasis in this group is weaker than that among the intermediate and older age groups (only 42.9% as opposed to 51% and 52.4%, respectively). On the other hand, the young adults tended to emphasize the aspects of pluralism and concern for minorities to a greater extent than did the older and intermediate age groups. The latter—more than the younger and older age groups—focused on the element of democratic institutions and mechanisms.

Table 6 (percent)

	Freedom	Mechanisms and institutions	Sovereignty of the people, and government responsiveness	Equality	Pluralism and concern for minorities	Negative concept of democracy, and anti-democratic attitudes	Human and civil rights	Justice
18-34	42.9	16.4	11.8	14.3	10.1	2.5	0.8	1.3
35-54	51.0	20.4	9.7	7.1	5.6	4.4	1.5	0.3
55+	52.4	15.2	10.8	11.3	5.1	3.0	1.8	0.5

The variable of education proved to be especially significant on this question, and as such, is worthy of consideration here. We found a certain degree of difference in the survey between those who had an academic degree and those who did not. Those with a degree tended to attribute greater importance to the elements of pluralism, rights, and sovereignty of the people/government responsiveness. They also ascribed negative connotations to the term democracy to a much lesser extent than did those without an academic degree (2.6% compared with 5.4%, respectively). In other words, it would appear that academic education deepens the understanding of the meaning of democracy, taking it from the intuitive level to the philosophical, institutional, and legal plane, thereby modulating anti-democratic attitudes.

Table 7 (percent)

Academic degree	Freedom	Mechanisms and institutions	Sovereignty of the people, and government responsiveness	Equality	Pluralism and concern for minorities	Negative concept of democracy, and anti-democratic attitudes	Human and civil rights	Justice
Yes	43.9	18.3	13.0	10.4	8.6	2.6	2.6	0.7
No	54.5	15.3	7.6	9.6	6.1	5.4	0.6	1.0

An analysis of the Jewish sample by political camp shows that the interviewees on the right tend more than those at the center or left of the continuum to offer interpretations centered on the institutions and mechanisms of democracy; likewise, they display anti-democratic attitudes and negative perceptions of democracy

to a greater extent (7.1% on the right, as opposed to 2.6% in the center and 2.1% on the left). Respondents who located themselves in the center of the political map—more than those on the right or left—highlighted the aspect of freedom, while those on the left were more likely to view the term “democracy” as encompassing the concepts of equality and human/civil rights

Table 8 (percent)

	Freedom	Mechanisms and institutions	Sovereignty of the people, and government responsiveness	Equality	Pluralism and concern for minorities	Negative concept of democracy, and anti- democratic attitudes	Human and civil rights	Justice
Right	41.5	24.1	10.4	8.5	7.1	7.1	0.5	0.9
Center	53.2	16.3	12.2	8.7	5.6	2.6	1.3	0.0
Left	34.0	17.0	13.8	21.3	7.4	2.1	4.3	0.0

We performed an additional analysis to examine whether the self-reported religiosity of the interviewees has any bearing on the meanings they attach to the term “democracy.” And in fact, a correlation was found:

Table 9 (percent)

	Freedom	Mechanisms and institutions	Sovereignty of the people, and government responsiveness	Equality	Pluralism and concern for minorities	Negative concept of democracy, and anti- democratic attitudes	Human and civil rights	Justice
Secular	48.6	19.4	10.9	11.5	5.0	2.2	2.0	0.4
Traditional	52.7	14.2	11.9	9.6	5.0	5.8	0.8	0.0
Orthodox	45.3	22.1	17.4	5.8	5.8	3.5	0.0	0.0
Ultra- Orthodox	36.1	16.9	15.7	10.8	14.5	4.8	1.2	0.0

As shown in Table 9, the element underscored most frequently by all the groups was that of freedom, but this response was much less prevalent among the ultra-Orthodox than among the others.

The ultra-Orthodox frequently expressed anti-democratic views (although less so than the traditional respondents); yet at the same time—for obvious reasons—they emphasized pluralism and concern for minorities to a greater extent than did the other groups. Secular interviewees were apt to attribute somewhat greater meaning than other groups to the elements of equality and human/civil rights, whereas Orthodox respondents placed greater emphasis on mechanisms/institutions and on sovereignty of the people/government responsiveness.

To better comprehend the set of concepts associated with the term “Jewish state,” we also asked the Jewish interviewees the following open-ended question: “Israel is defined as a Jewish state. Different people attach different meanings to the term ‘Jewish state.’ What do you think is the most important characteristic of a Jewish state?”¹³ After encoding, the responses were compiled into four categories; (1) Jewishness as a national marker; (2) Jewishness as a religious marker; (e) Jewishness as a marker of democracy and tolerance; (4) Jewishness as a negative marker.

The two categories that appeared most frequently in the interviewees’ responses were Jewishness as a national marker (over 50% of the responses) and as a religious marker (some 37%). Roughly 9% of the responses fell under the category of Jewishness as a marker of democracy and tolerance, and only 1.1% fit the category of Jewishness as a negative marker.

Table 10 (percent)

Jewishness as a national marker	52.5
Jewishness as a religious marker	37.2
Jewishness as a marker of democracy and tolerance	9.2
Jewishness as a negative marker	1.1

¹³ This question was not posed to the Arab interviewees after it became clear, at an early stage of the survey, that it aroused resistance to continuing the interview. This reaction calls for future study.

In examining how various groups in the Jewish population relate to the term “Jewish state,” three variables were found to correlate significantly with the respondents’ definitions: self-defined religiosity, self-location on the left-right political continuum, and age.

A majority of the secular and traditional respondents ascribed a largely national connotation to the term “Jewish state,” whereas the bulk of the Orthodox respondents, and even more so the ultra-Orthodox, attached religious meaning to the term. More than any other group, the secular respondents related the term “Jewish state” to democracy and tolerance; yet, not surprisingly, they also tended to assign a more negative connotation than other groups to the Jewish component.

Table 11 (percent)

	Jewishness as a national marker	Jewishness as a religious marker	Jewishness as a marker of democracy and tolerance	Jewishness as a negative marker
Secular	63.8	22.9	11.2	2.1
Traditional	56.4	36.1	7.1	0.4
Orthodox	35.2	57.1	7.7	0.0
Ultra-Orthodox	6.9	87.4	5.7	0.0

A distribution of the findings by self-defined location on the left-right axis indicates that in all groups, the most common designation of Jewishness is as a national marker. At the same time, respondents on the left tended less than the center and the right to ascribe a religious connotation to the term “Jewish state” (24.1% as opposed to 36.7% and 42.9%, respectively). The left-wing respondents, more than the other two groups, also related to the term as a marker of democracy and tolerance, or attached negative connotations to it. Interestingly, those on the right interpret the term “Jewish state” in a national sense to a lesser extent than do the other two camps; at the same time they are more inclined to accord it religious meaning, presumably because there is a marked congruence between rightist beliefs and religiosity.

Table 12 (percent)

	Jewishness as a national marker	Jewishness as a religious marker	Jewishness as a marker of democracy and tolerance	Jewishness as a negative marker
Right	48.7	42.9	8.5	0.0
Center	53.8	36.7	8.7	0.8
Left	54.2	24.1	16.9	4.8

The responses to this question were further broken down by age, according to the three age groups cited above. A notable finding is that young people, more than the older age groups, tend to see the term “Jewish state” as a patently religious marker. Here too, the explanation lies in the high degree of congruence in Israel today between the younger age group and Orthodox/ultra-Orthodox religious orientation (see discussion in Appendix 4). The older adults, by contrast, view the term “Jewish state” as a national marker to a greater extent than do the two younger groups while also exhibiting a higher degree of negativity toward the term. The intermediate age group—more than the younger or older respondents—considers the term a marker of democracy and tolerance.

Table 13 (percent)

	Jewishness as a national marker	Jewishness as a religious marker	Jewishness as a marker of democracy and tolerance	Jewishness as a negative marker
18-34	38.9	53.2	7.4	0.5
35-54	52.7	34.1	13.3	0.0
55+	59.1	31.6	7.1	2.3

To summarize, we found that the majority of the Israeli public, taken as a whole, ascribe relatively similar meanings to the term “democratic state,” with emphasis on the element of freedom. By contrast, among the Jewish public specifically, the emphasis is on

the national aspect—although the ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox, on the one hand, and the traditional and secular, on the other, are not of one mind as to whether the term “Jewish state” refers to religion or nationality. What stands out is that only a minority attach a connotation of democracy and tolerance to the term.

As in previous years, we sought to examine the relative weight of the Jewish and democratic components in the definition of the state, and to test whether the Jewish majority feels “comfortable” with the accepted definition of Israel as a “Jewish and democratic state.” Accordingly, we posed the following question: “Israel is defined as both a Jewish and a democratic state. Which part of this definition is more important to you personally?”¹⁴ In the Jewish sample as a whole, the most frequent response (46.1%) was that both components of the definition are of equal importance, but this of course does not point to a majority who prefer this option. In second place (with 29.5%) is the response that the “Jewish state” is the more important element, while the “democratic state” aspect occupies third place (22.9%).

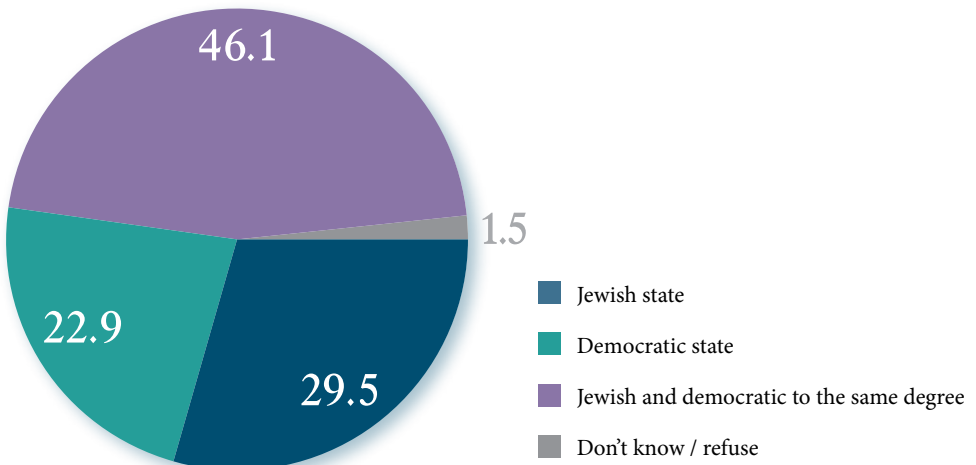
Defining Israel: A Jewish or a democratic state?

Question 5

Appendix 1, p. 238

Appendix 2, p. 271

Figure 4: Which component is more important to you personally in the term “Jewish and democratic state”? (Jewish sample; percent)



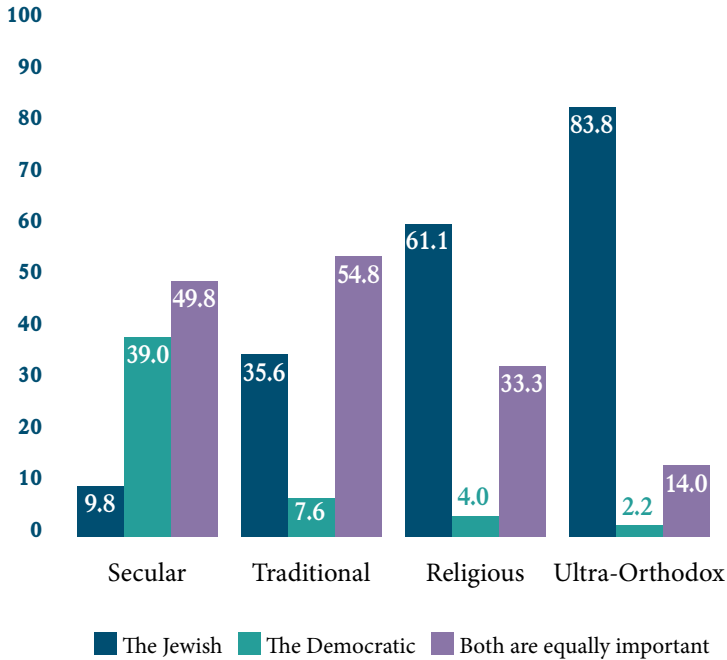
14 This question was posed only to the Jewish interviewees.

A breakdown of the responses by age shows that the proportion of those in the youngest age group (18-34) who give precedence to the Jewish aspect clearly exceeds that of the other groups (45.2%, as contrasted with 27.9% for the intermediate age group, and 23.1% for the older adults). This finding is consistent with other surveys conducted recently, which have found that the younger Jewish age groups display more national, and even nationalist, leanings in comparison with the older groups.¹⁵ Yet, as shown in other studies, there are tremendous differences within the younger age group between those who define themselves as Orthodox or ultra-Orthodox, of whom a sizeable majority chose the Jewish component of the definition (79.3%), and traditional or secular young adults, the overwhelming majority of whom chose the combined Jewish-democratic option (81.3%).

On the assumption that responses to this question were affected by the religious factor not only in the younger age group but in the Jewish public as a whole, we broke down the answers based on this variable. And indeed, the findings point to dramatic differences: Among the ultra-Orthodox, there is a decisive majority today who attach greater importance to the Jewish component than the democratic one in the definition of the state. In the Orthodox subgroup as well, there is a majority—albeit a smaller one—who share this view. By contrast, the most frequent (though not majority) preference among the secular respondents is for the dual definition, followed by the democratic component. The traditional respondents, like the secular, give equal importance to both aspects of the definition, but their second preference is for the Jewish component. In other words, when the responses are broken down by religiosity, there is no group today in the Jewish population whose first preference is the democratic element in the definition of Israel as a “Jewish and democratic” state.

¹⁵ See for example the findings from the survey of Israeli youth entitled *All of the Above: Identity Paradoxes of Young People in Israel, The 3rd Youth Study of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung – Changes in National, Societal and Personal Attitudes* (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and Macro Center for Political Economics, 2011) at www.macro.org.il/lib/File/YouthStudy/SurveyResults..pdf (in Hebrew). (All websites referred to in the 2011 Democracy Index were last retrieved in May 2011.)

Figure 5: Which component is more important to you personally in the term “Jewish and democratic state”? (Jewish sample; by religiosity; percent)*



* With the “don’t know / refuse” responses, the total in each group comes to 100%.

A breakdown of the responses by political orientation also revealed huge differences: Not surprisingly, a majority on the right favor the Jewish component, while on the left the majority choose the democratic element. Only in the center do a majority feel that both aspects carry equal importance.

Table 14 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Jewish component is most important	7.6	23.4	54.5
Democratic component is most important	50.9	23.5	7.5
Both components are equally important	39.6	52.0	37.3

A positive correlation was found between political knowledge and preference for the democratic aspect, although the most frequent choice at all levels of political knowledge was for the dual definition of Israel as a “Jewish and democratic” state.

Table 15 (percent)

	Limited political knowledge	Moderate political knowledge	High political knowledge
Jewish component is most important	36.5	27.4	24.2
Democratic component is most important	19.9	23.6	28.8
Both components are equally important	42.2	47.4	46.0

Democratic principles or Jewish law?

This year, we went a step beyond the theoretical preference for the Jewish or the democratic aspect of the definition of the state, posing the follow question: In the event of a conflict between democracy and Halakha (Jewish religious law), should preference be given to upholding democratic principles or to observing the tenets of Jewish law?¹⁶ Nearly one half of the respondents (49.7%) said that democratic principles should be upheld in all

¹⁶ This question as well was asked only of the Jewish interviewees.

cases; roughly one quarter (26.5%) felt that it depended on the circumstances; and 21% said that preference should be given in all instances to the precepts of Jewish law. Stated otherwise, although the prevailing opinion today (still?) supports the primacy of democratic principles, nonetheless roughly one fifth of Israeli Jewish citizens attach greater authority to halakhic principles in the event of a conflict between the two value systems, while another quarter favor an ad hoc decision.

Breaking down the responses by age indicates once again that, on the whole, in cases of conflict between democracy and Halakha, the young adult group—to a much greater extent than the intermediate and older age groups—favors Jewish religious law over democratic principles (young adults – 41.2%; intermediate group – 22%; older adults – 10.3%). However, as shown in the table below, there is a vast difference between the young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox respondents, on the one hand, and the young traditional and secular respondents, on the other.

Table 16 (percent)

	Young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox Jews	Young traditional and secular Jews
In cases of conflict, preference should be given to democratic principles	1.2	50.7
In cases of conflict, preference should be given to tenets of Halakha	85.4	16.4
Depends on circumstances	11.0	32.9

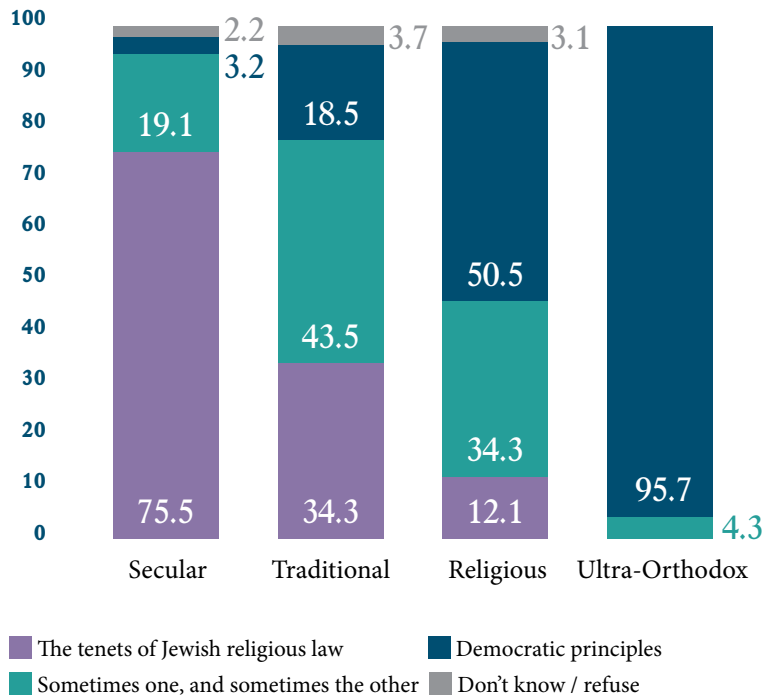
We also broke down the responses to this question by self-reported religiosity (Figure 6). According to our findings, only in the secular group is there a large majority who feel that in the event of a conflict, democratic principles should always take precedence over Halakha. In the ultra-Orthodox group, there is unanimous support for the supremacy of halakha, whereas the Orthodox public is divided: Slightly more than half take a position similar to that of the ultra-Orthodox, while the remainder are split

Question 32

Appendix 1, p. 257

between one third who support considering each case individually and a small minority who feel that democratic principles should always be paramount. The traditional group, more than the others, prefers to examine each case on its own merits.

Figure 6: Preference in case of conflict between democracy and Halakha (Jewish religious law) (Jewish sample; by religiosity; percent)



A breakdown of the responses by political orientation shows unequivocally that among those who identify with the right, the prevailing position is in favor of deciding on the basis of halakha in the event of conflicting values. The presence of Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews in this political camp obviously has a decisive effect here. By contrast, among those who locate themselves in the political center, and even more so the left, there is a clear majority who prefer deciding on the basis of democratic principles.

Table 17 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
In cases of conflict, preference should be given to democratic principles	77.4	54.9	29.0
In cases of conflict, preference should be given to tenets of halakha	15.1	14.2	42.4
Depends on circumstances	6.6	28.0	14.2

We then approached the same question from a different starting point. In the eyes of many, the rabbis represent halakhic authority. The question is whether this authority also carries over into the political realm. Accordingly, we asked: “Do you feel it is appropriate for rabbis to issue religious rulings on controversial political issues?”¹⁷ In the Jewish sample as a whole, a large majority (69.8% feel that it is not appropriate, as compared with roughly one fifth (21.8%) who feel that it is appropriate.

Once again, age turned out to be an influential factor: The younger age group stood out in its support of rabbinic rulings on controversial political issues (young adults – 44.3%; intermediate age group – 23.8%; older adults – 9.4%). But here too, a breakdown of the younger age group by level of religiosity raised substantial differences: Young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox Jews see the rabbis also as a source of political authority who can issue rulings in times of controversy, in stark contrast to young traditional and secular Jews.

Table 18 (percent)

	Young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox Jews	Young traditional and secular Jews
It is appropriate for rabbis to issue religious rulings on controversial political issues	81.8	22.1

Rabbis as a source of authority in cases of political controversy

Question 33

[Appendix 1, p. 257](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 272](#)

17 This question was asked exclusively of the Jewish interviewees.

This difference on the basis of religiosity is corroborated by the findings for the Jewish sample as a whole, regardless of age: When we broke down the responses to this question by self-reported religiosity, we found, as expected, that a large majority (86%) of ultra-Orthodox respondents see rabbinic rulings on political matters as legitimate, when there are issues in dispute. As opposed to this, the Orthodox group is divided between 48.5% who see rabbinic rulings as appropriate in cases of controversy, and 38.4%, who consider them to be inappropriate. A sizeable majority of traditional and secular respondents feel that it is not appropriate for rabbis to issue religious rulings on controversial political issues (70% and 87.8%, respectively).

Breaking down the responses by political camp showed that while there is not a majority on the right who feel that rabbinic rulings on controversial political issues are appropriate, their percentage is much higher than that of the center or the left (41.6% on the right, as opposed to 15.9% in the center and 10.4% on the left).

We decided to move from the theoretical to the personal level, examining the attitude of the interviewee as an individual toward rabbis who issue religious rulings on political issues. We therefore posed the question: “Would a religious ruling issued by rabbis on a controversial political issue be of personal importance to you?” In the Jewish sample as a whole, approximately one quarter (25.4%) of the respondents reported that, in their view, rabbinic rulings on political issues would be very important or quite important whereas the majority (70.5%) said that such rulings would hold little or no importance for them.¹⁸

Question 34

Appendix 1, p. 257

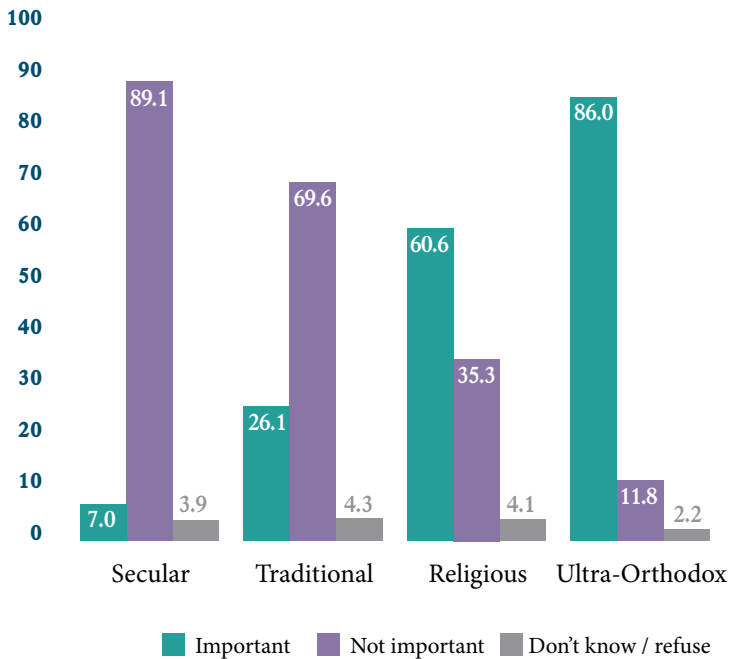
On this question as well, young adults—more than the other age groups—stated that rabbinic rulings on controversial political issues would be very significant in their eyes (young adults – 55.6%; intermediate age group – 30%; older adults – 12.1%).

Yet here too the position of the young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox respondents is fundamentally different from that of their traditional and secular peers: 81.6% of the young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox said that such a religious ruling would be very important or quite important to them personally, while only 25% of young traditional and secular respondents shared this view.

¹⁸ This question too was directed solely at the Jewish interviewees.

We broke down the responses to this question further, by self-reported religiosity of all Jewish respondents. As expected, we found that the importance of rabbinic rulings on political matters is very strong among the ultra-Orthodox, and to a somewhat lesser extent among the Orthodox, while in the traditional group, and more so the secular, their impact is weak.

Figure 7: Importance of religious rulings by rabbis on controversial political issues (Jewish sample; by religiosity; percent)



Political views play the same role here as in the theoretical question, only to a greater degree. The proportion of those who define themselves as right-wing, and who state that rabbinic rulings on controversial political issues would be very important to them personally, is much greater than that among respondents at the center or left of the political spectrum: 47.1%, 18.7%, and 15.1%, respectively.

Political knowledge was also found to influence the responses: Among those with limited political knowledge, 37.5% said that rabbinic rulings would hold great importance for them; this is in contrast to 25.9% of those with moderate political awareness and 16.2% of those who ranked high in political knowledge.

How democratic is Israel?

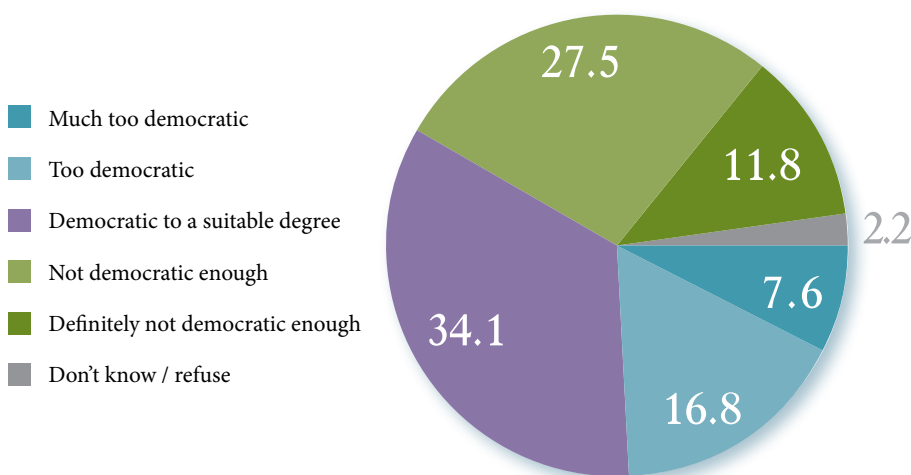
For several years now, the Democracy Surveys have examined the public's assessment of the level of democracy in Israel—is it the right amount, too much, or not enough. This year as well, we found that opinions on this question are divided, and there is no broad-based consensus one way or the other: In the total sample, the most frequent response today (39.3%) is that Israel is not democratic enough. A very similar share of respondents (34.1%) feel that Israel is democratic to a suitable degree, while 24.4% hold that it is too democratic. Stated otherwise, a majority of 63.5% are of the opinion that Israel is not suitably democratic (either too democratic or not democratic enough). The percentage who believe it is not democratic enough is greater than the percentage of those who feel it is too democratic.

Question 8

Appendix 1, p. 240

Appendix 2, p. 272

Figure 8: Is Israel democratic to a suitable degree, too democratic, or not democratic enough? (total sample; percent)



As for differences based on nationality, here as well combining the Jewish and Arab respondents into one sample population obscures the fundamental differences between these two groups in their assessment of Israel's level of democracy. Only a minority of the Jewish respondents (35.1%) feel that Israel is not democratic enough as opposed to a majority (63.3%) of the Arab interviewees.

Age was found to exert only a moderate influence on the results: The share of young adults who feel that Israel is not democratic enough (42.5%) is somewhat higher than those who share this view in the intermediate and older age groups (40.9% and 36%, respectively). But if we look at the Jewish sample alone, there is a considerable gap between the young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox respondents, on the one hand, and their traditional and secular counterparts, on the other: While a small majority of the ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox respondents in the younger age group hold that Israel is not democratic enough, the largest share of the young traditional and secular interviewees believe that Israel is democratic to a suitable degree. There is reason to assume that this unflattering assessment of Israel's democracy on the part of young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox interviewees stems from the high level of friction between these groups and the police (in the case of the ultra-Orthodox) and between them and the army and security forces (in the case of the religious-Zionist youth, in the context of the evacuation of settlements and the settlers' retaliatory campaign).

Table 19 (percent)

	Young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox Jews	Young traditional and secular Jews
Israel is not democratic enough	41.5	32.9
Israel is democratic to a suitable degree	30.5	44.3
Israel is too democratic	24.4	21.5

A breakdown of the responses by religiosity shows that within the Jewish sample, only among the ultra-Orthodox is there a majority (51.7%) who feel that Israel is not democratic enough. Moreover, this population has the smallest share of those who hold that Israel is democratic to a suitable degree.

Not surprisingly, those who locate themselves at the margins of Israeli society feel that Israeli democracy is lacking, to a much greater extent than do those who see themselves at its center: A majority (54%) of the former group hold that Israel is not democratic enough, as opposed to only a minority (32.5%) of the latter.

Political orientation was found to be a crucial variable in assessing the level of Israeli democracy: A majority on the left feel that Israel is not democratic enough, in obvious contrast to the center and the right, whose views on this point are not far apart. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the most frequent response among centrists is that Israel is democratic to a suitable degree, whereas on the right the prevailing opinion is that Israel is too democratic.

Table 20 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Israel is not democratic enough	60.1	32.0	28.2
Israel is democratic to a suitable degree	24.2	39.9	32.2
Israel is too democratic	9.4	25.6	38.0

**And how are
Israel's democracy
and government
performing?**

Moving on from definitions and descriptions to an assessment of actual performance, we posed the question: "In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the functioning of Israeli democracy?"

As shown in Figure 9 (below), the assessment of the total sample tends slightly toward the positive: 52.3% state that they are satisfied, while 45.4% express dissatisfaction. Here too, we found a clear difference based on nationality: Among Arab respondents, a majority (53.3%) are not satisfied with the functioning of Israeli

democracy, a figure that clearly exceeds the share of dissatisfied respondents among the Jewish interviewees (44%), presumably because (as few would dispute) Israel is “more democratic” for Jews than it is for Arabs. At the same time, it should be noted that in both sectors, the difference between the satisfied and the dissatisfied group is not all that dramatic; hence, taking an overview, we are speaking of an almost equal division between the two groups in both populations—the Jewish and the Arab.

Looking at the variable of age, in the sample as a whole the majority of young adults (52.5%) are dissatisfied with the functioning of Israeli democracy, whereas in the two older groups the proportion of dissatisfied respondents is lower, though certainly not negligible (intermediate – 44.3%; older – 42.1%).

Again, apparently due to the frequent clashes with representatives of government in the form of the security forces, ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox young adults are less satisfied with the functioning of Israeli democracy than are their traditional and secular peers (63.3% versus 41.4%, respectively). This is reflected only partly in the breakdown of the total Jewish sample by religiosity. Here, we find once again that the ultra-Orthodox are the least satisfied group; some two thirds of them (65.6%) responded that they are dissatisfied with the functioning of Israeli democracy, as opposed to 42.5% of the Orthodox respondents, 40.6% of the traditional, and 42.7% of the secular.

Extent of political knowledge was not found to affect the level of satisfaction with the functioning of Israeli democracy—unlike political orientation, which was shown to be highly relevant in this context. The findings indicate differences between the political camps, with those in the center more satisfied than those on either the right or left. Further, a majority of some sort in both the center and right-wing camps define themselves as satisfied with the functioning of Israeli democracy, while only a minority on the left feel similarly.

Question 6

[Appendix 1, p. 238](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 273](#)

Table 21 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Satisfied with functioning of Israeli democracy	40.6	58.5	51.5

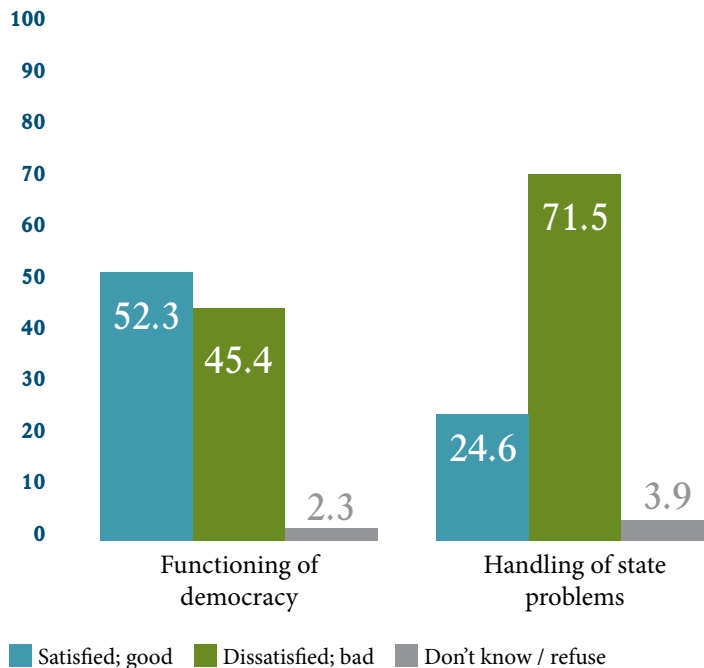
In contrast to the question on the functioning of Israeli democracy, when we touched on the issue of government performance (that is, the way the government is handling the various problems of the state), there was a noticeable tilt toward the negative, with a decisive majority of the total sample (71.5%) assessing the government's handling of state affairs as poor.

Question 2

[Appendix 1, p. 237](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 275](#)

Figure 9: Satisfaction with: (a) functioning of Israeli democracy; (b) government's handling of state problems (total sample; percent)



On this point, the patterns among both Arab and Jewish respondents are very similar: A majority of both groups are not satisfied with the government's handling of state problems, although we can safely assume that the sources of their dissatisfaction only partially coincide, as is evident from the discussion later in the text on the key objectives of each of these groups.

Breaking down the Jewish sample by religiosity indicates that the Orthodox respondents are the most satisfied with the government's handling of the problems of the state, although we are still speaking of a minority, since here too, as in all the religious subgroups, the majority are not satisfied with the government's performance. The ultra-Orthodox and traditional fall somewhere in the middle, while the secular respondents are the least satisfied of all.

Table 22 (percent)

	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
Satisfied with government's handling of state problems	15.5	30.0	39.9	25.9

A breakdown of the responses based on self-described location in society reveals that, as we might expect, those who locate themselves at the margins are less satisfied with the government's handling of state problems: 76% of this group do not think that the government is doing a good job of handling the problems of the state, as opposed to 70.1% among those who see themselves at the center of society. Breaking down the figures by political camp brings out much sharper distinctions: Although the majority at all points on the political spectrum are critical of the government's performance, predictably enough the left emerges as particularly disapproving.

Table 23 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Satisfied with government's handling of state problems	9.4	22.0	35.1

Accountability

The findings on dissatisfaction with government performance are apparently related to the responses on two other questions: Is the government doing enough to explain its decisions to us, and how much trust does the public place in government spokespersons.

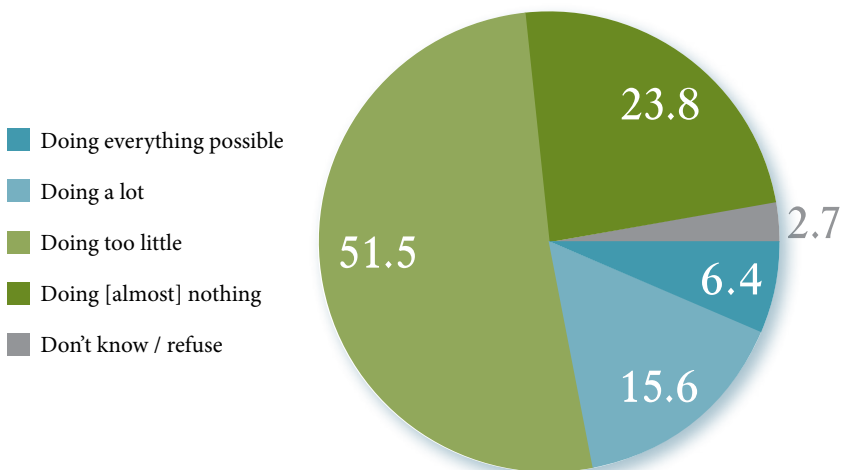
In the realm of informing the public, the government appears to have failed abysmally: Over three quarters (75.3%) of the total sample responded that the government is not doing enough to explain its actions. In other words, regardless of the quality or content of the decisions made by the government, the prevailing sense among the interviewees is that “we’re not being spoken to.” This finding points to a very worrisome estrangement between the decision-making echelon and the voting public. On this point, there were only negligible differences between groups based on various ways of breaking down the data (for example, between Jews and Arabs); what this means is that we are speaking of an overall feeling of dissatisfaction with the leadership’s inattentiveness to the public, in the sense of explaining why it acts as it does. Undoubtedly, in terms of accountability, the distribution of responses for this question indicates a serious problem in the functioning of Israeli democracy.

Question 15

Appendix 1, p. 245

Appendix 2, p. 274

Figure 10: Is the government doing enough these days to explain its decisions to us? (total sample; percent)



Not surprisingly, despite the overall consensus, the harsh feelings are not split evenly across all political camps: True, there is a majority on the right as well who are dissatisfied with the government’s explanations, but the size of this majority is much greater among the center and the right.

Table 24 (percent)

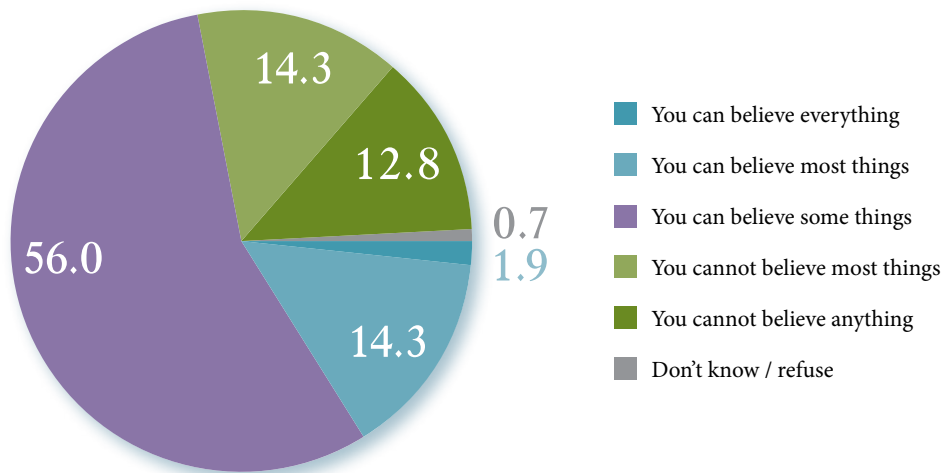
	Left	Center	Right
Government is not doing enough to explain its decisions to the public	87.7	77.7	64.3

We found further that the public exhibits a sense of suspicion (some would call it healthy democratic skepticism) regarding the explanations that the government does provide through its various spokespersons. Thus, a majority (56%) of the total sample state that it is possible to believe some of the things that government spokespersons say, as opposed to 16.2% who feel that they can believe all or most of what is said, and 27.1% who hold that they cannot believe most, or any, of the things that spokespersons say.

Trust in government spokespersons

Question 16
Appendix 1, p. 245

Figure 11: Level of trust in government spokespersons (total sample; percent)



A very interesting finding is that on this topic as well, the differences between Arabs and Jews are negligible; that is, both the majority and the minority groups exhibit similar levels of mistrust in statements made by the government. A breakdown of the figures by age shows that there are no real differences between the groups; however, the findings for (Jewish) young adults show once again that this is not a uniform group: a higher share of Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox young people (37.8%) think that it is virtually or totally impossible to trust what the government says, as compared with 25.7% of traditional and secular youth. In the total Jewish sample, differences were also found when the data were broken down by religiosity. The ultra-Orthodox are the group that trusts the government the least: 38.7% of them say that they cannot believe most or all of what the government says. Next in line are the secular respondents, 29.6% of whom share this view, as opposed to 20.2% of the traditional group and 19.2% of the Orthodox.

As we might imagine, among those who locate themselves at the margins of Israeli society the percentage who feel that government spokespersons cannot be believed is greater than it is among those who situate themselves at the center—37% in contrast to 22.8%, respectively.

Breaking down the findings by political camp produced the expected result: Although the majority in all three political camps feel that it is possible to believe only some of what government spokespersons say, those on the left display a greater degree of skepticism toward the government than do the center or the right (42.5%, 22.7%, and 24.7%, respectively). On the other hand, it was somewhat surprising to discover that political knowledge was found to be unrelated to the degree of trust in what government spokespersons tell the public.

How representative is the Knesset?

Question 9

Appendix 1, p. 240

Appendix 2, p. 274

When respondents were asked to what extent the balance of power among Knesset factions reflects the distribution of opinions in the general public, a majority (59.3%) indicated that Israel's parliamentary representation is consistent with the distribution of public opinion. Such a position will likely make it difficult for anyone trying to bring about fundamental change in the electoral system, which is purely proportional, federal, and party-list based, and is one of the most representative in the world.

In this regard, there is a similar distribution of opinion in both the Arab and Jewish populations, as well as in the various age groups. However, it is interesting to observe that the ultra-Orthodox, who in the view of many Israelis are actually over-represented in Israel's parliament, believe to a greater extent than the other three groups (Orthodox, traditional, and secular) that the balance of power in the Knesset is a very poor reflection of the distribution of public opinion: 32.3% of the ultra-Orthodox respondents take this view, as compared with 25.3% of the Orthodox, 30% of the traditional, and 22.7% of the secular. This lack of satisfaction is in keeping with other figures presented above, which mark the ultra-Orthodox as a “politically peevish” group.

Breaking down the responses on the basis of self-defined location at the center or the margins of Israeli society reveals that those who see themselves as being on the social periphery feel—certainly to a greater extent than those who place themselves at the center—that the composition of the Knesset is not a faithful representation of the entire population (37.3% as opposed to 22.3%, respectively). This, despite the fact that the majority in both groups is satisfied with the representativeness of the parliamentary factions.

An interesting finding that attests to the public's satisfaction with its representation arises from a breakdown of the responses to this question by political orientation: It seems that in all three camps, the majority are satisfied with the representativeness of the Knesset. Those who identify with the center expressed the highest degree of satisfaction, perhaps because the members of this camp feel that they are represented by more than one of the major parties.

Table 25 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Balance of power in the Knesset reflects the distribution of public opinion	58.5	64.2	61.4

How representative are the parties?

Question 19.8

Appendix 1, p. 248

We posed a similar question with regard to the political parties, namely, to what extent do they reflect public opinion in Israel. In this case, we obtained the opposite result: Only one third of the interviewees in the total sample (33.1%) hold that the parties in fact represent the views of the public. Among the Arab respondents, the proportion who feel that the parties adequately reflect the distribution of public opinion is slightly higher, at 39.5% (as opposed to 31.9% of the Jewish respondents). Taken together with other data from this year's survey (for example, the question concerning trust in the political parties, below), these figures demonstrate the lowly status of Israel's political parties today.

Due to the broad negative consensus on this issue, the variables of age, self-location in society, and level of political knowledge did not have a significant effect on opinions regarding the representativeness of the parties. By contrast, breaking down the responses by religiosity does reveal some differences: The Orthodox respondents, once again, appear to be the group most satisfied with the extent to which the parties reflect public opinion: 41.5%, as compared with 36.4% of the ultra-Orthodox, 33.6% of the traditional, and only 29.5% of the secular respondents. A breakdown of responses by political orientation shows that in all camps, only a minority feel that the parties adequately reflect the views of the public, with the smallest minority on the left.

Table 26 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Political parties in Israel reflect the views of the public	26.4	32.1	38.8

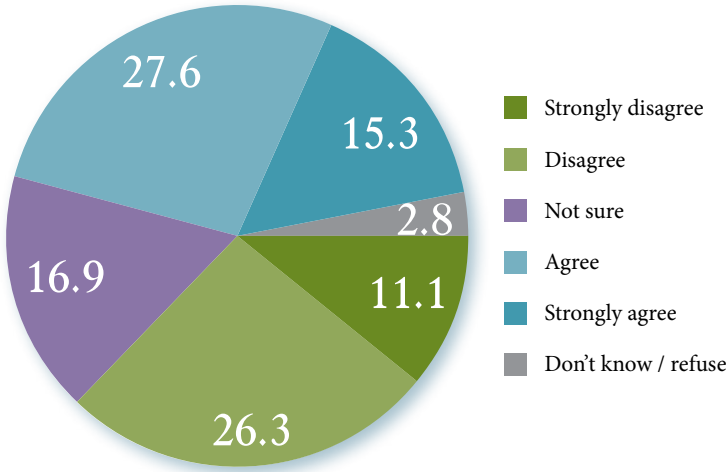
As for differentiation between the parties, meaning to what extent they offer or represent distinct political agendas, opinions are divided, with a certain tendency to hold that the differences between them are not substantial: 42.9% of the total sample agree with the statement that there are no real differences between the political parties in Israel, while 37.4% disagree and the remainder (19.7%) have no opinion on the subject.

Question 19.6

Appendix 1, p. 248

Appendix 2, p. 275

Figure 12: There are no real differences between the political parties in Israel today (total sample; percent)



Breaking down the responses to this question by nationality, we find that here too, there is virtually no difference between Jews and Arabs, and between those who place themselves at the center of Israeli society or at its margins. By contrast, age was found to be a distinguishing variable: Young adults are less in agreement with the statement that there are no real differences between the political parties than are the intermediate and older age groups, perhaps because the more mature respondents have experienced periods when the ideological competition between parties dominated the political arena and are hence more disappointed with the current situation in which there is a noticeable blurring of the distinctions between the parties, in particular the major parties of the Israeli political system—the Likud, Kadima, and Labor.

A breakdown of the data by religiosity shows that the Orthodox agree less than the other groups with the statement that there are no real differences between the parties: only 33.4% of this group support this view, as opposed to 47.9% of the traditional respondents, 41.9% of the ultra-Orthodox, and 41.4% of the secular. This is consistent with findings that we presented earlier whereby those who define themselves as Orthodox, at least as a group, appear to be more satisfied with the political system.

If the responses to the question on differentiation between the parties are broken down by political orientation, it emerges that the respondents on the left are the least inclined to agree with the statement about the lack of differences between parties, after which come the right and finally the centrists, who voice the strongest agreement with this statement.

Table 27 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
There are no real differences between the parties today	37.9	43.7	40.0

Not surprisingly, those with the highest level political knowledge feel more strongly than those with moderate or limited political knowledge that there are differences between the parties: 41.1%, as opposed to 37.2% and 30.7%, respectively.

**Importance of
competition
between parties**

Notwithstanding the fact that the political parties are held in very low esteem, the majority (53.3%) still believe that competition between the parties strengthens democracy (51.4% among the Jews, and 64.4% among the Arabs, when broken down by nationality). Age and self-location in society were not found to have an effect on the responses. Those with limited political knowledge agree less than those with moderate or high levels of knowledge that competition between Israel's political parties contributes to a stronger democracy.

Question 19.7

Appendix 1, p. 248

Appendix 2, p. 275

Table 28 (percent)

	Limited political knowledge	Moderate political knowledge	High political knowledge
Competition between parties contributes to democracy	41.2	58.0	55.6

Breaking down the responses by religiosity shows a certain difference between the groups: the ultra-Orthodox are the only religious group in which there is not a majority who agree with

the statement on the democratic value of inter-party competition (ultra-Orthodox – 36.6%; Orthodox – 50.2%; traditional – 56.5%; secular – 50.2%).

A breakdown of the responses by political orientation indicates that while a majority on the left and center of the political map believe that competition between parties strengthens democracy (53.8% and 54.6%, respectively), in the right-wing camp a minority, albeit a sizeable one (48.5%), agree with this statement and a small majority disagree or are unsure. Political knowledge had the expected effect on responses to this question.

Here we come to the question of trust in officials and institutions, which we examine every year. The major finding is that this year saw a rise in public trust in almost every institution and official, although the ranking remained virtually unchanged. And despite the rise, the level of trust in the principal institutions of democracy—the political parties, the Knesset, and the government—is still far from satisfactory.

Trust in officials and institutions

Questions 11.1-11.14
Appendix 1, p. 241
Appendix 2, p. 276

Table 29 (percent)

Institution/public official	Trust to a large extent and to some extent (in brackets: trust to a large extent alone)
Political parties	35.6 (3.7)
Chief Rabbinate (Jews) / Clergy (Arabs)	48.2 (24.4)
Prime minister	49.6 (16.3)
The government	51.0 (9.9)
Knesset	51.6 (8.3)
Media	51.8 (14.4)
Police	56.1 (17.9)
State Attorney's Office	61.1 (23.3)
Attorney-General	64.1 (29.5)



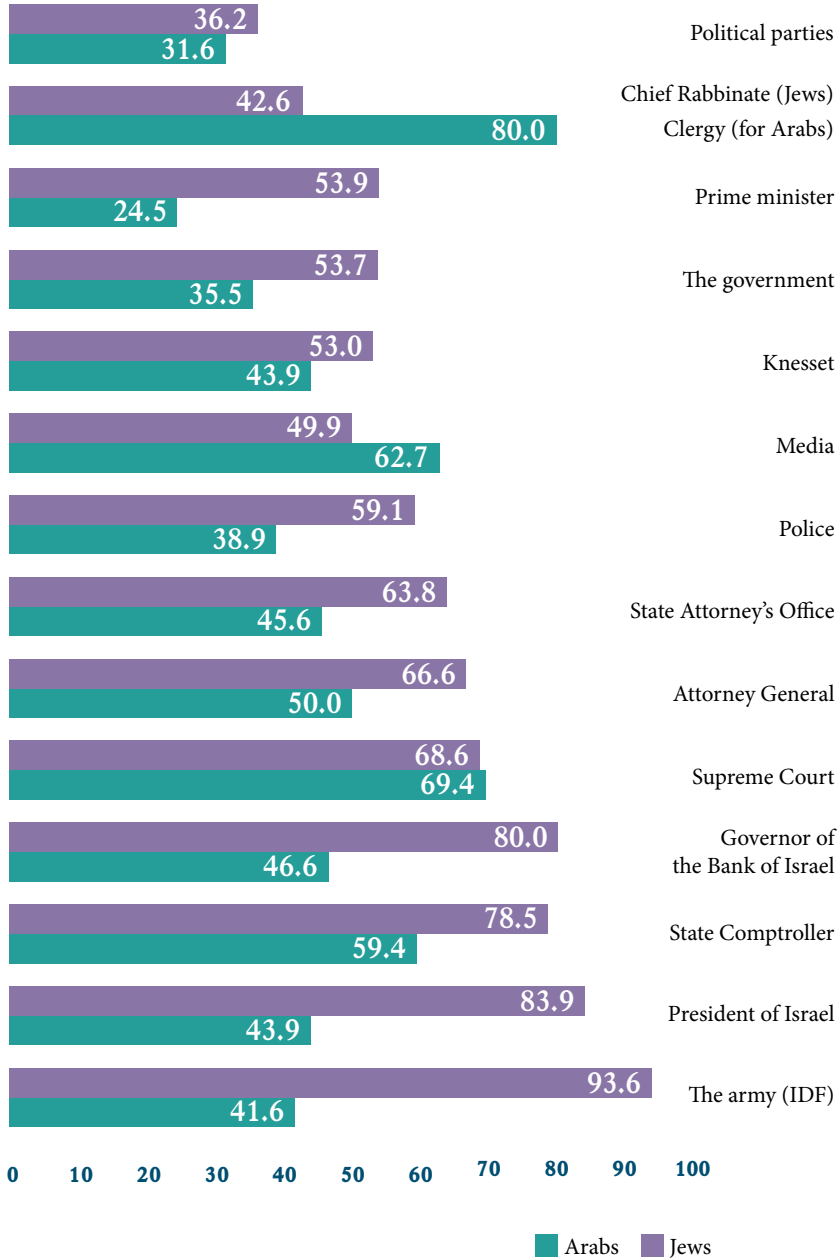
Institution/public official	Trust to a large extent and to some extent (in brackets: trust to a large extent alone)
Supreme Court	68.7 (41.4)
Governor of Bank of Israel	75.0 (47.5)
State Comptroller	75.7 (47.0)
President of Israel	77.8 (56.0)
The army (IDF)	85.8 (68.8)

As these figures indicate, in the sample as a whole the key democratic institutions—the political parties, the government, and the Knesset—rank among the lowest in terms of trusted institutions (along with the Chief Rabbinate). As in the past, the IDF is the institution that enjoys the highest degree of trust, followed by the Supreme Court (trailing far behind). The State Attorney’s Office and the police fall somewhere in the middle, while the media—the only body we studied that is not a state institution—is trusted by roughly half the public, though only a small minority state that they trust it “to a large extent.”

When we ranked public officials by degree of trust, the president of the state once again topped the list, followed closely by the State Comptroller and the governor of the Bank of Israel. The Attorney General was situated in the middle, while the prime minister was ranked at the bottom of the list.

Predictably enough, if we break down the degree of trust in officials and institutions by nationality (Jews and Arabs), we find significant differences. With the exception of clergy and the media—in which the Arab respondents place a great deal of trust (to a larger extent than do the Jews)—and the Supreme Court, which both groups trust to a similar extent, all of the institutions and officials listed are trusted to a lesser degree by the Arabs than by the Jews.

Figure 13: Trust in institutions and public officials (to a large extent and to some extent; by nationality; percent)

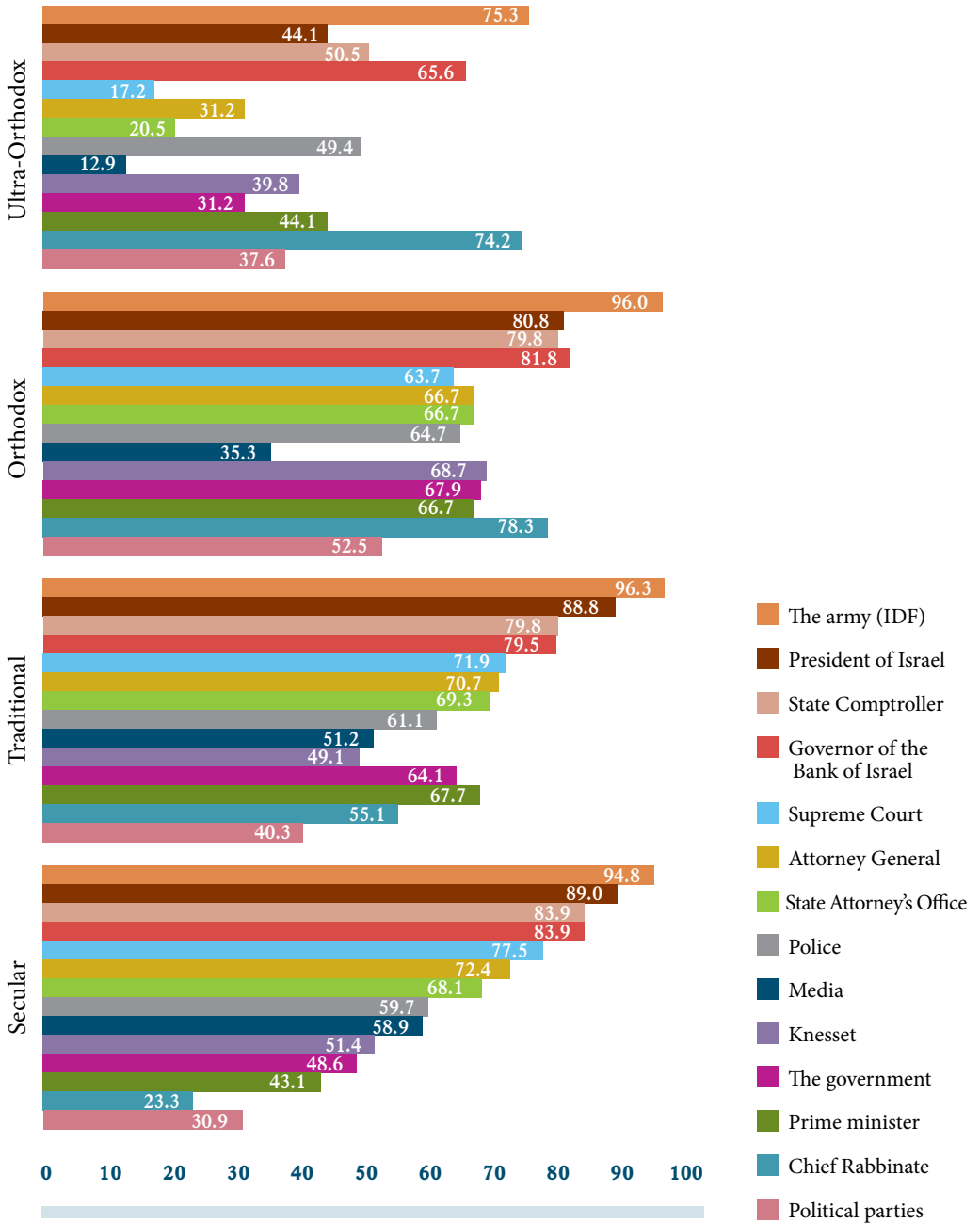


A breakdown of the responses by self-location in society (at the center or margins) produced an unequivocal finding that appeared with rare consistency throughout the detailed set of survey questions: With regard to each of the institutions and officials cited, those who located themselves on the margins of society, without exception, displayed a noticeably lower level of trust than did those who saw themselves at the center! Another interesting finding is that despite the overall high degree of trust in the IDF, the younger the respondent the lower the level of trust expressed in the army: only three quarters of the young adults surveyed have faith in the army (74.6%), as opposed to 84.8% in the intermediate age group and 93.2% in the older group.

These findings are in keeping with the tendency of young people (as noted above) to relate to the army as less “sacred” in comparison with their elders; likewise, they fit the trend (reflected in the average rankings in Table 32, below) whereby young adults generally place less faith in government institutions and officials than do the older age groups. An interesting finding, which is in line with what we know about extremist activity among Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Zionist youth, is that although the differences in the overall attitude toward the IDF between Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews, as one group, and their traditional and secular peers, as another, are not statistically significant, the proportion of those who do not express trust in the army is nonetheless higher among the former group than among the latter (16.1% versus 10%, respectively).

A breakdown of the figures on trust by religiosity for Jewish respondents of all ages points to differences between the groups: The level of trust of the ultra-Orthodox respondents in all institutions or officials included in the survey is definitely lower than that of the three other groups. It should be noted that the degree of trust in the three major democratic institutions—the parties, the Knesset, and the government—on the part of the secular respondents is actually significantly lower than that of the traditional group and—with the exception of the political parties—the Orthodox group as well.

Figure 14: Trust in institutions and public officials (to a large extent and to some extent; Jewish sample; by religiosity; percent)



We also broke down the findings on the subject of trust based on the (Jewish) respondents' self-reported political orientation (right, left or center). An examination of the data by political camp showed that each group has "its" institutions that it trusts more than others.

Table 30 (percent)
Level of trust (To a large extent and to some extent)

	Left	Center	Right
Political parties	28.9	35.8	44.3
Prime minister	30.9	54.9	64.3
Media	70.1	54.1	32.6
State Attorney's Office	72.9	70.6	49.8
Supreme Court	85.0	75.9	50.2
Police	65.4	62.6	52.2
President of Israel	90.6	87.3	75.3
Knesset	44.9	56.9	52.9
The army (IDF)	87.8	95.1	93.7
The government	33.6	55.8	60.4
Chief Rabbinate	33.6	55.8	60.4
Attorney-General	77.6	73.0	56.1
State Comptroller	86.9	83.0	71.7
Governor of Bank of Israel	82.2	84.9	76.5

Table 31 lists the institutions and officials that each political camp trusts more than others. It appears that the right places more faith in political institutions of a party nature; the left, in legal institutions of various types; and the center, in "non-political" institutions, such as the IDF, the Bank of Israel, and the Knesset.

Table 31 (In descending order of trust)

Right	Prime minister, the government, Chief Rabbinate, political parties
Left	President of Israel, State Comptroller, Supreme Court, Attorney-General, State Attorney's Office, the media, the police
Center	IDF, Governor of Bank of Israel, the Knesset

Breaking down the responses to this question on the basis of political knowledge raised substantial differences: Those who were better informed politically expressed a greater degree of trust in the State Attorney's Office, the Supreme Court, the Attorney-General, the governor of the Bank of Israel, and the president of the state than did those with moderate or limited political knowledge. By contrast, those who were less aware politically expressed greater trust in the Chief Rabbinate.

To obtain an overview of the differences—or alternatively, the similarities—in the overall degree of trust of various subgroups in Israeli society, we calculated an average “trust score” for each group, as follows:

Table 32 (averages)

Total sample	2.8
Sex	
Female	2.7
Male	2.8
Nationality	
Jews	2.8
Arabs	2.5
Age	
18–34 (young)	2.6
35–54 (intermediate)	2.8
55+ (older)	2.9

Self-location in Israeli society	
Center	2.9
Margins	2.5
Political orientation (Jews only)	
Right	2.7
Center	2.8
Left	2.6
Self-reported religiosity (Jews only)	
Secular	2.8
Traditional	2.9
Orthodox	2.9
Ultra-Orthodox	2.3

On the face of it, this might appear to be a “boring” table in that the differences between the findings are small; however, the similarities between scores are highly significant in the context of the deeper debate on the cleavages in Israeli society. The figures demonstrate that on average—at least with regard to degree of trust in the government—there are no great differences between groups in the Israeli public. In fact, though the ranking extends over four categories (from “do not trust at all” to “trust to a large extent”), none of the groups has an average (mean) score lower than 2.3 or higher than 2.9; in other words, they all cluster around the middle, with most showing a slight tendency toward a favorable rating. The ultra-Orthodox are the group with the lowest degree of trust (2.3). Slightly above them are the Arab respondents and those who locate themselves at the margins of society (2.5). The average level of trust is the highest (at 2.9) among older adults, traditional Jews, and those who locate themselves at the center of society.

In light of these averages and of the previous discussion, it would be correct to state that in general the Israeli public feels some skepticism toward its key institutions and officials, but there is no basis for the claim of a profound sense of estrangement today from the state establishment and its highest echelon—in contrast to the picture that is often painted by the media.



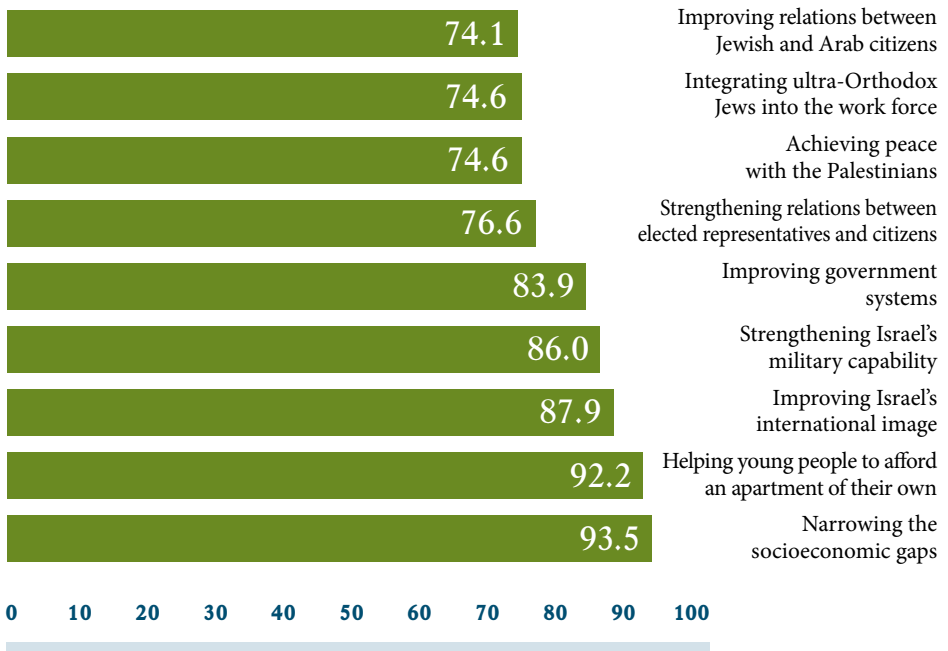
Among the major factors that determine the level of public trust in the state's institutions and decision makers is the degree of compatibility between the goals that the government sets for itself and strives to accomplish and those that the public considers important and appropriate. We therefore examined what the country's goals should be, in the eyes of the public.

Goals of the state

Questions 30.1-30.9

Appendix 1, p. 254

Figure 15: Desirable goals for the country
(very important and quite important; total sample;
percent)

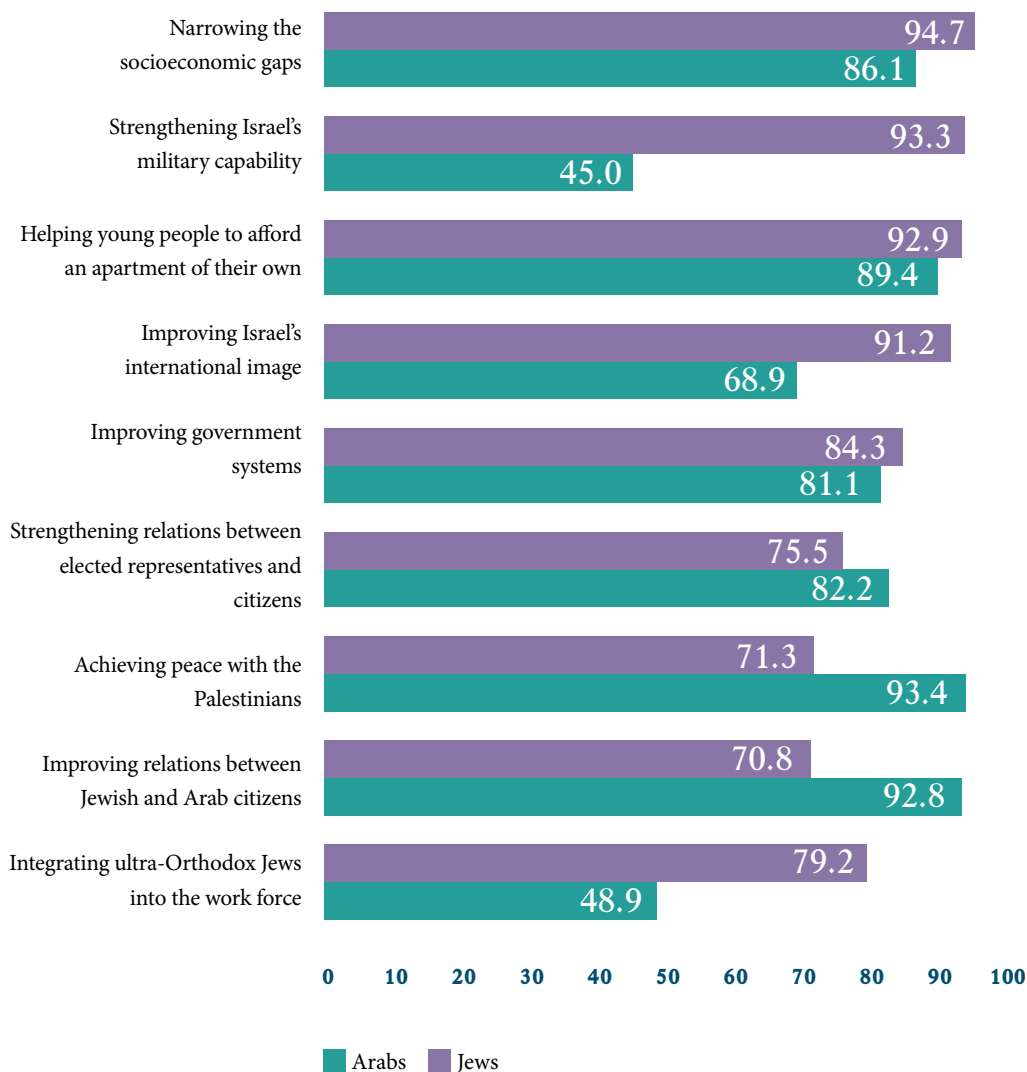


As shown in the figure above, the highest levels of importance (in the total sample) were registered—separately—for reducing socioeconomic gaps and helping young people to afford an apartment. Goals defined as less important were improving relations between Jews and Arabs, achieving peace with the Palestinians, and integrating ultra-Orthodox Jews into the work force.

However, a breakdown of the responses on this topic by nationality reveals significant differences in the priorities of Jews and Arabs that are blurred when relating to the sample as a whole: While

the goals of reducing gaps and strengthening Israel's army were each ranked very high in importance by the Jewish respondents, two different goals scored the highest (separately) among Arab respondents: achieving peace between Israel and the Palestinians, and improving Jewish-Arab relations in Israel.

Figure 16: Desirable goals for the country (very important and quite important; by nationality; percent)



When asked to rank the goals on the list and to select the most important one for the state, the largest group among the Jewish respondents chose reducing socioeconomic gaps (24.9%), while the second largest chose strengthening the army's military might (23.9%). By contrast, the largest share among the Arab respondents ranked the goal of achieving peace between Israel and the Palestinians in first place (35.6%), followed by improving relations between Jewish and Arab citizens in Israel (31.7%). The deepest cleavage between Jews and Arabs is in their attitude toward strengthening the IDF's military capability: When ranking all the objectives on the list, only 1.7% of the Arab respondents assigned this the highest importance, as contrasted with the aforementioned figure of 23.9% among the Jews.

Breaking down the responses by religiosity demonstrates that the ultra-Orthodox consider strengthening the army much less important than do the other three Jewish groups: only 7.5% of the ultra-Orthodox feel that this should be the most important objective of the government, as opposed to 23.8% of the Orthodox respondents, 30.4% of the traditional, and 22.5% of the secular. Presumably due to the severe housing shortage in this sector, the most important goal in the eyes of the ultra-Orthodox is helping young couples to afford an apartment of their own; 32.8% of them ranked this goal at the top of the list, in contrast to 10.1% of the Orthodox interviewees, 11.2% of the traditional, and 8.6% of the secular. Although they might have been expected to have a special interest in the integration of their sector into the work force, only 10.8% gave it top priority (in truth, the other three religious groups were even less concerned with this issue: 3% of the Orthodox, 1.3% of the traditional, and 2.2% of the secular). In other words, while the goal of integration in the work place is more important to the ultra-Orthodox than it is to the other groups in the Jewish sample, their primary concern is still state assistance with housing for young couples.

Breaking down the results by age, we find that there are two areas where young adults differ clearly with the older age groups in the prioritizing of goals: In part like the ultra-Orthodox (and it should be recalled that there is a relatively high representation of self-defined ultra-Orthodox in the youngest age group), the young respondents place greater emphasis on state assistance with

Question 31

Appendix 1, p. 256

housing—a subject particularly relevant to this age group—and less on strengthening military might, since the IDF, as stated, is perceived by them as less “sacred” than it is by the older age groups.

Table 33 (percent)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
Most important goal is strengthening Israel's military might	11.7	18.8	27.0
Most important goal is helping young people to afford an apartment of their own	18.1	10.3	8.8

Somewhat surprisingly, since we might have expected that perceived proximity (or distance) from the center of Israeli society would affect the priorities of the interviewees, a breakdown of responses by self-location along the center-periphery continuum did not yield significant differences. By contrast, a breakdown by political camp brought out real differences that indicate a huge gap in priorities within the Jewish population. On both the right and the left, security appears to be the dominant concern, whereas the center is more preoccupied with domestic matters.

Table 34 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Most important goal	Achieving peace with the Palestinians (31.1)	Reducing socioeconomic gaps (28.5)	Strengthening the army (31)
Least important goal	Integrating ultra-Orthodox Jews into the work force (0)	Strengthening ties between elected representatives and citizens (1)	Improving relations between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel (0.8)

In other words, the right attaches prime importance to strengthening Israel's military capabilities, while the left assigns the highest priority to achieving peace. Presumably since both these camps see the external threat as the greatest danger facing Israel, they each placed what they consider to be the most effective response at the top of the list. At the same time, the center is more concerned with domestic socioeconomic issues, and places greater emphasis on reducing the disparities in Israeli society.

Summary

- In this chapter, we examined the public's positions on several topics: Israel's overall situation; the desired form of government for the country; the nature of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state; the quality of Israeli democracy; the functioning of Israeli democracy in general, and government performance in particular; accountability of public officials; representativeness of the Knesset and the political parties; importance of competition between parties; the level of trust in officials, key government bodies, and democratic institutions; and Israel's most important objectives.
- Among the public as a whole, 41% are moderately satisfied with the country's situation, as opposed to 27.8% who consider it good, and 29.7%, who perceive it as bad. The assessment is more positive among the Jewish sample (as opposed to the Arab respondents); among right-wingers (as compared with the self-defined center or left); among those who locate themselves at the center of Israeli society (as contrasted with its margins); and among those with a high level of political knowledge (as opposed to moderate or limited awareness). The ultra-Orthodox see Israel's overall situation as worse than do the secular, traditional, and Orthodox respondents.
- A majority of the Israeli public consider democracy to be the best form of government (81.8%). On the other hand, among Jews who locate themselves on the political right, and among Arab respondents as well, there are sizeable groups who prefer other forms of government, for example "a strong leader."
- Only a minority (32.4%) of the total sample this year define a strong leader as a good form of government for the state; roughly one half prefer a government comprised of experts as opposed to elected representatives; about two thirds hold that direct democracy in the form of public referendums is the best system; and an overwhelming majority (82.9%) favor a democratic government with elected representatives.
- In the open-ended questions, we asked what meaning respondents ascribed to the term "democracy." It emerged that the most common interpretation was freedom, followed

far behind (in descending order) by: democratic mechanisms and institutions; sovereignty of the people, and government responsiveness; equality; pluralism; and concern for minorities. At the bottom of the list were justice and human/civil rights. Next in line after freedom, the Arab respondents highlighted equality and concern for minorities.

- An additional open-ended question, posed to the Jewish sample only, addressed interpretations of the term “Jewish state.” It was found that the adjective “Jewish” is perceived first and foremost as a national marker, next as a religious marker, and finally—on the margins only—as a symbol of democracy and tolerance. Breaking down the data by religiosity shows a difference between the secular and traditional respondents (who give primacy to the national aspect) and the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox respondents (most of whom in fact place the highest importance on the religious aspect).
- As for the definition of Israel as a “Jewish and democratic” state, in the Jewish sample (only) the largest share (46.1%) accord equal weight to both elements, while 29.5% attach greater importance to the Jewish aspect, and only 22% favor the democratic one. A breakdown of the data by age reveals a clear preference for the Jewish component among young adults as opposed to the two older age groups. This is also the case for the Orthodox/ultra-Orthodox group as compared with the secular/traditional one.
- In cases of conflict between democratic principles and Jewish religious law, roughly one half (49.7%) of the Jewish public would give priority to democratic principles, 21% would favor the tenets of halakha, and 26.5% hold that they cannot make a categorical decision either way and that each case should be decided according to circumstances.
- While a majority of the entire Jewish sample (69.8%) feel that it is not appropriate for rabbis to issue religious rulings on controversial political issues, there is a large majority among the ultra-Orthodox who hold that such rulings would be appropriate; the Orthodox respondents, on the other hand, are divided in their opinions. As for the right, there is much greater support for the position that such rulings are appropriate than there is at the left or center of the political spectrum.

- > In the public as a whole, there is a lack of agreement as to how democratic Israel is: True, the most frequent position (39.3%) is that Israel is not democratic enough, but a very similar proportion (34.1%) feel that it is democratic to a suitable degree while 24.2% hold that it is too democratic. Among the Arab respondents, there is a clear majority (63.3%) who feel that Israel is not democratic enough. Likewise, there is a majority who feel similarly among those who locate themselves at the margins of Israeli society as well as those who identify politically with the left.
- > When it comes to assessing the functioning of Israeli democracy, the public is divided: a slight majority take a favorable view, though we found clusters of dissatisfaction among young people, the ultra-Orthodox, and Arab respondents. By contrast, there is a sizeable majority (71.5%) in the population as a whole and in all the subgroups who are dissatisfied with the government's handling of state problems. The same held true when we asked about the extent to which the government explains its policies to the public: Three quarters responded that it is not doing enough in this area—a finding that indicates a worrisome estrangement between the decision-making echelon and the voters. As for the level of trust in government spokespersons, the most frequent response was one of skepticism (56% feel that it is possible to believe only some of what they say).
- > A plurality of respondents (59.3%) feel that the present configuration of factions in the Knesset reflects the distribution of public opinion. On the other hand, only a minority (33.1%) hold that the political parties adequately reflect the views of the voters.
- > This year's survey shows a certain upsurge in public trust in all the political institutions. As in past years, the IDF enjoys the highest degree of trust, and the political parties, the lowest. When Israel's public officials are ranked by level of trust, the president of the state earns the top position while the prime minister is at the bottom of the list. The improved levels of trust shows that while the public is skeptical vis-à-vis key officials and institutions, for the moment at least this does not translate

into profound estrangement from the political establishment and its senior officials.

- Looking to the future, the Jewish population places the narrowing of socioeconomic gaps and the strengthening of Israel's military might at the top of its agenda of national priorities. Trailing far behind are such goals as improving relations between Jewish and Arab citizens, achieving peace with the Palestinians, and integrating the ultra-Orthodox into the work force. The Arab respondents attach the greatest importance to achieving peace and improving relations between Jews and Arab citizens of the state, and much more limited significance to strengthening the IDF's military capacity.

Chapter 2: The Citizen and Democratic Politics

Citizens' ability to influence policy

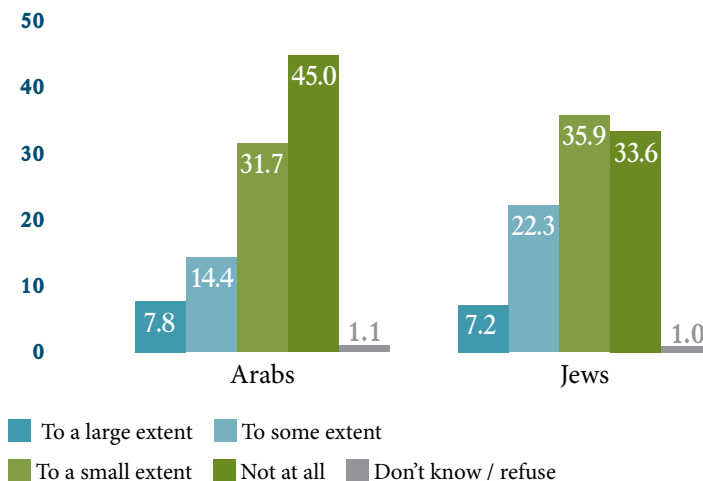
One of the cornerstones of democratic politics is the real—or at least perceived—ability of citizens to influence government policy. As we have seen, in countries where citizens feel that they lack such a capacity, a rupture takes place between the people as sovereign and the decision-making echelon; in such a situation, the essence of democracy is undermined, even if its formal trappings remain. The data indicate that in Israel today, as in several other democracies, the sense of influence—and perhaps even its actual extent, which we obviously cannot measure in a survey—is at a very low ebb (though there have been worse years, as recorded in past surveys). On the question of how much the interviewees and their friends are able to influence government policy, a substantial majority (70.6%) responded that they are able to affect it only to a small extent or not at all. The breakdown by nationality (in Figure 17, below) shows that although the majority of both Jewish and Arab respondents feel that their influence on the government is minimal, this feeling is stronger among the Arabs (76.6%) than among the Jews (69.5%).

Question 23

Appendix 1, p. 250

Appendix 2, p. 280

Figure 17: To what extent are you and your friends able to influence government policy? (by nationality; percent)



In the Jewish sample, we observed certain differences based on religiosity. Of the four groups in this category, the ultra-Orthodox feel the least able to influence government policy: only 12.9% believe that they can have an impact, as opposed to 32.4% of the Orthodox, 37.7% of the traditional, and 27.1% of secular. The differences on this issue between those who locate themselves at the center of Israeli society or at the margins are precisely as expected: (Perceived) proximity to the center correlates with a stronger sense of influence (within the bounds of the finding presented above, whereby the majority feel unable to influence government policy).

Table 35 (percent)

	Self-location at center of society	Self-location at margins of society
Feel that they can influence government policy	34.4	17.7

Somewhat surprisingly, there were no differences found between young adults and the two older age groups, between the various political camps, and between the various levels of political knowledge in the sense of inability to influence government policy. In all of the groups, roughly two thirds feel that they cannot affect policy—a troubling sign when we are speaking of one of the most important aspects of a stable, functioning democracy.

A further prerequisite for a stable democracy, as cited in the professional literature, is the sense on the part of citizens that their elected representatives take their opinions into account, and hence, perhaps serve their interests to a greater degree. This allows citizens to rely on those they elect, and to be able to “keep their distance” from politics in normal times and in between elections, based on the faith that those who are charged with acting on their behalf indeed consider the will of the people and serve the overall interests of the public.

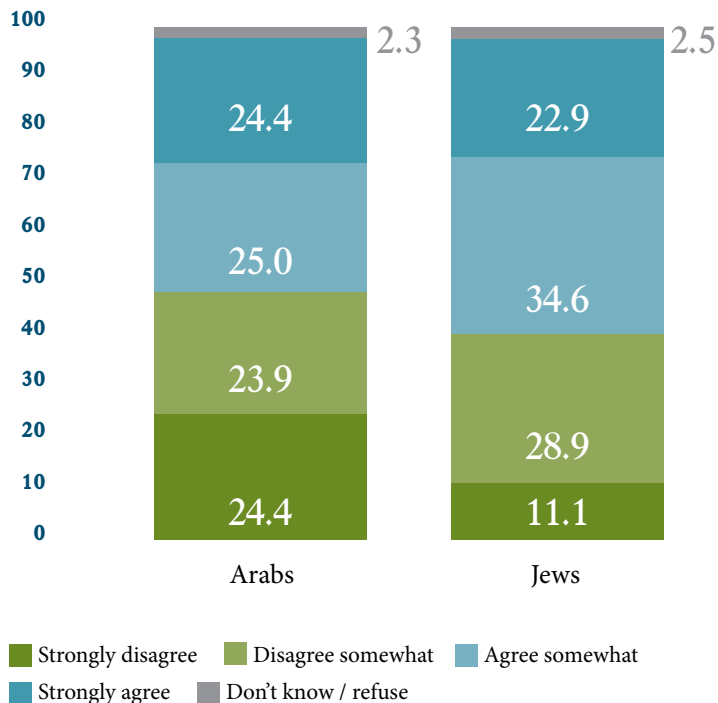
The situation in Israel today on this score is far from encouraging. In keeping with the sense of minimal influence that we presented above, a majority (56.4%) of the total sample hold that politicians

Attentiveness to the will of the people

do not tend to consider the opinions of the average citizen. Again we find an interesting difference based on nationality: Whereas in the Arab sample, there is actually an almost equal distribution between those who feel that the people at the top do heed the feelings of the public and those who hold that they do not (48.3% versus 49.4%, respectively), in the Jewish sample the percentage who feel that the public is not being listened to clearly exceeds the share of those who believe the opposite (57.5% compared with 40%, respectively). In fact, the proportion of Arabs who totally reject the claim of lack of attentiveness to public opinion is more than twice that of the Jews! This may be due to differing expectations, although it is also possible that the Arab elected representatives are more successful than their Jewish counterparts in giving their voters the sense that they are listening to them.

Question 7.1
 Appendix 1, p. 239
 Appendix 2, p. 281

Figure 18: Politicians do not tend to consider citizens' opinions (by nationality; percent)



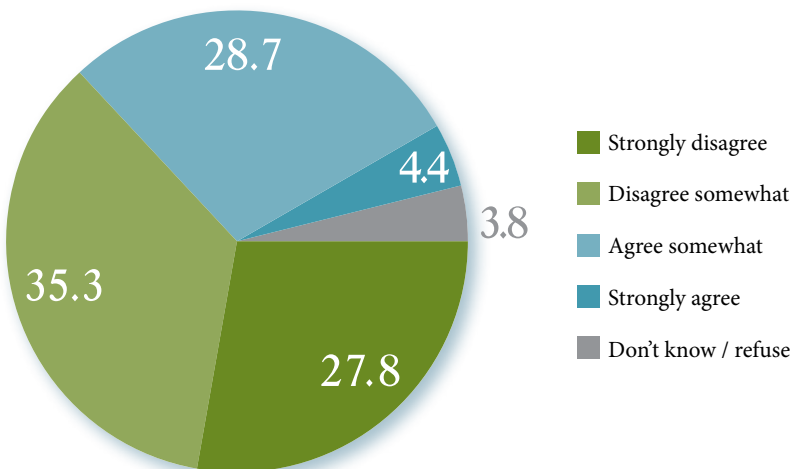
The variables of sex, age, political knowledge, and self-location in society were not found to affect the interviewees' assessment of politicians' attentiveness or lack thereof; nor did breaking down the data by political camp in the Jewish sample produce huge differences. By contrast, a breakdown by religiosity highlights the anomaly of the Orthodox group, which is divided as to whether politicians do or do not consider the opinions of the "man in the street." In the three other groups in this category, the share of those who hold that such consideration is lacking clearly outstrips that of the respondents who believe that politicians are attentive to the will of the citizenry. In other words, in this area as well, the Orthodox interviewees are (relatively) more satisfied than the other three groups with the functioning of the political system.

The public's displeasure with the political echelon, and its lack of satisfaction with government performance (as reflected in the survey results), is also expressed in the following finding: Roughly two thirds (63.1%) of the total sample do not agree with the statement that most members of Knesset work hard and are doing a good job overall. Stated otherwise, only one third of the Israeli public as a whole think that their elected representatives are truly immersed in their work—which can explain, at least partially, the low level of trust in the Knesset that we pointed to earlier.

Do Knesset members work hard?

Question 7.4
Appendix 1, p. 239

Figure 19: Overall, most members of Knesset work hard and are doing a good job (total sample; percent)



The Jewish respondents are slightly more critical of the members of Knesset than are the Arabs, but the difference between the groups is not statistically significant. Age as well did not turn out to have an influence on the assessment of Knesset members' performance. Breaking down the data by religiosity, we find that although only a minority in all four groups think that Knesset members work hard, in general the more religious the respondent, the higher the level of approval for their work: secular – 26.1%; traditional – 34%; Orthodox – 46.1%; ultra-Orthodox – 45.1%. Thus the Orthodox and the ultra-Orthodox are much more satisfied with the amount of effort expended by Knesset members than are the traditional and the secular. This finding presumably reflects the relative satisfaction of the respondents in these groups with the work of the Knesset members from the party they themselves voted for. Among those who locate themselves at the margins of society, the percentage who believe that Knesset members do not work hard is slightly higher than it is among those who see themselves at the center (67.3% as compared with 60.9%, respectively), but the overall trend is similar—the majority are not satisfied with the nation's elected representatives.

A breakdown of the Jewish sample by self-reported political orientation (right, center or left) shows that there is virtually no difference between the groups, and that the majority in all the political camps believe that Knesset members do not work hard; however, the left-wing camp is somewhat less “forgiving” than those from the center or the right. That is to say, those on the left disagree to a slightly greater extent with the statement that overall the members of Knesset are a hardworking group: left – 67.9%; center – 62.3%; and right – 63.9%.

Whom do politicians look out for?

Question 19.1

Appendix 1, p. 247

Appendix 2, p. 281

Again, according to the figures presented above, the prevailing sentiment among Israeli citizens today is that politicians do not place the voters' interests above all else. This year as well, a clear majority of the total sample (70.6%) agreed with the statement that “politicians look out more for their own interests than for those of the people who elected them.” Almost no differences were found in this regard when the data were broken down by subgroups of the population.

As for the integrity of politicians, here too the assessment of the public is less than flattering: A sizeable minority (43.1%) of the total sample agree with the statement that to reach the top in Israeli politics today, you have to be corrupt. A total of 37.9% disagree with this statement, while 19.1% are unsure or don't know. In the Arab sample, it should be noted, a slightly smaller proportion agree with the above statement (37.2%, as opposed to 44.1% among the Jews). This is consistent with the finding that we cited earlier, namely, that the Arabs are apparently more satisfied than the Jews with their political leadership.

Breaking down the data by age reveals that on this question, the young people actually give less credit to the politicians than do their elders; that is, a large proportion of young adults—in fact, a majority (50.2%)—feel that in order reach the top politically you have to be corrupt (as compared with 46.1% in the intermediate age group and 36.8% in the older group).

A breakdown of the figures by religiosity shows that, in keeping with the Orthodox respondents' relatively greater satisfaction with the political system, the proportion of this group who agree to some extent with the above statement is the smallest in this category: 33.1%, as opposed to 47.3% of the ultra-Orthodox, 47% of the secular, and 42.2% of the traditional. Self-location on the center-periphery continuum was shown to be an influential variable: Among those who see themselves at the center of society, 40.4% agree with the statement in question, as opposed to nearly one half (49%) of those who consider themselves at the margins. In other words, distance from the social "hub" intensifies the image of the decision makers and the political leadership as corrupt.

Political orientation was found to have a definite effect on the response to this question. Whereas in the center and right-wing camps, only a minority (though a larger one on the right) agree with the statement that to reach the top politically you have to be corrupt, on the left a majority take this view—perhaps because the highest positions in politics today are occupied largely by those who are not aligned with the left.

Integrity of politicians

Question 19.4

Appendix 1, p. 248

Appendix 2, p. 282

Table 36 (percent who agree)

	Left	Center	Right
To reach the top in Israeli politics today, you have to be corrupt	53.8	41.3	45.9

With regard to integrity as well—meaning the political leadership’s sense of obligation to its own constituents—the public has significant reservations regarding the present situation. Thus, a majority of the respondents (52.9%) objected in principle to political maneuvers such as those of Ariel Sharon (when he left the Likud over the Disengagement Plan) or Ehud Barak (when he quit the Labor party against the backdrop of continuing differences of opinion with fellow party leaders and of what he presented as his commitment to the government headed by Benjamin Netanyahu in which he is presently serving). Only a minority (34.6%) responded that it is acceptable for a party leader to take such a step if he believes that it serves the best interests of the state.

Question 10
Appendix 1, p. 241

Interestingly, opposition to such a move was found to be significantly higher among the Arab population than among the Jewish one (61.7% versus 51.4%, respectively). The younger respondents (in the total sample) were more tolerant of such a move than were the intermediate and older age groups (47.5% of the young adults expressed disapproval, as compared with 52.6% of the intermediate group and 56.6% of the older age group). This may be because they were born into a system where such non-ideological moves are considered the norm (to a greater extent than in the past), or because their overall expectations of politicians are lower.

A breakdown of the data by religiosity indicates that criticism of such moves rises with an increase in the level of religiosity of the respondents: A large minority (46.2%) of the secular group takes a negative view of such maneuvers, as opposed to a majority (55.5%) of the traditional and Orthodox respondents and an even larger majority (60.2%) of the ultra-Orthodox group. Those who located themselves at the margins of society were once again more critical: 59.2% of them held that such a move was unacceptable, as opposed to 50.5% of those who saw themselves at the center of society.

Breaking down the figures by self-reported political orientation indicates that the ideological camps—i.e., the left and the right—are more sensitive to leaders’ acting counter to what they promised their voters than are those who identify with the center. Hence, a majority on both the left and right (55.7% and 55.3%, respectively) characterize moves like those of Sharon and Barak as “not acceptable,” compared with 48% in the center camp.

To summarize the public’s attitude toward politicians, the survey indicates (and not for the first time, as will be shown in Part Two, below) a very poor image of elected representatives in the eyes of the voters—considerably lower than their outlook on the political system as a whole.

The ideal democratic citizen is one who takes an interest and is active when it comes to politics. In this area, it would appear that the average Israeli citizen deserves a pat on the back. Despite—or perhaps because of—their displeasure with the performance of their representatives, once again this year the interviewees display an impressive degree of political interest: 76.8% of the total sample indicate that they take an interest in politics (79.3% of the Jews and 62.2% of the Arabs). Nonetheless, the level of interest is not uniform: Men report a greater interest in politics than do women (81.8% as opposed to 72%, respectively). Likewise, respondents who locate themselves at the center of Israeli society claim a greater degree of interest in politics than do those who see themselves at the margins 81.6% versus 68.5%, respectively). Breaking down the data by religiosity reveals that the ultra-Orthodox evince the least amount of interest in politics, although those who report being interested still constitute a majority of the group (60.2%, as opposed to 77.8% of the Orthodox respondents, 81.2% of the traditional, and 82.0% of the secular).

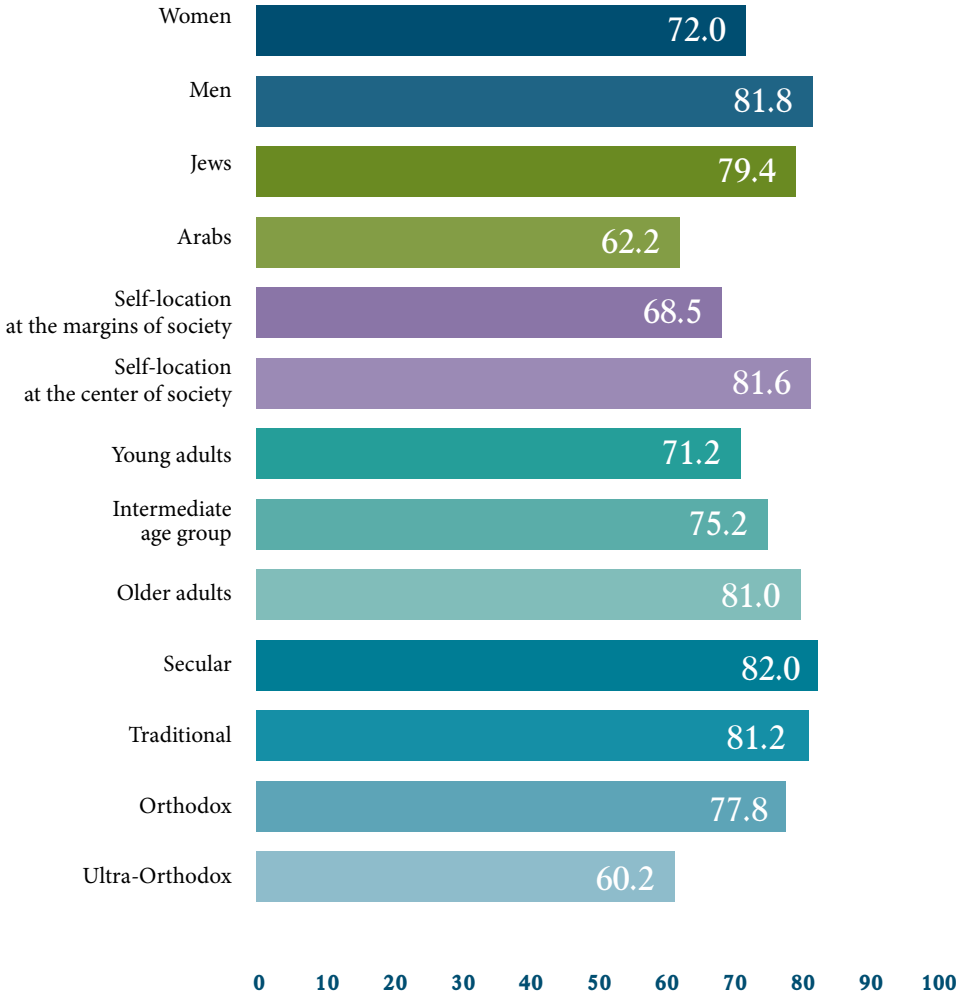
Interest in politics

Question 20

Appendix 1, p. 249

Appendix 2, p. 282

Figure 20: Interest in politics (to a large extent and to some extent; total sample, by subgroup; percent)



As we might expect, there is a correlation between political knowledge and interest in politics, but even those with limited political awareness exhibit considerable interest.

Table 37 (percent)

	High political knowledge	Moderate political knowledge	Limited political knowledge
Interested in politics to a large extent or to some extent	94.6	81.5	60.0

Breaking down the responses on extent of interest in politics by political camp did not turn up differences between those who identify with the right, center or left.

One finding of great interest is that the younger age group indicates a high level of interest in politics, quite similar to that of the two older groups (young adults – 71.2%; intermediate age group – 75.2%; older adults – 81%). This finding contradicts the popular image of young people in Israel (reflected in the responses to a question on this topic) as being much less interested in politics than their elders. In the total sample, a definite majority of 65.5% (Jews – 65.3%; Arabs – 66.6%) feel that young people care less about politics than the intermediate and older age groups. As for social issues not related to politics, the prevailing image is somewhat different, with young people being given more credit: Only a minority of the total sample, albeit a large one (43.4%), hold that young people care less than the older age groups about social issues. The percentage who espouse this view is virtually equal in both the Jewish and Arab communities. Young people have a lower opinion of themselves than do the older age groups when it comes to interest in politics, but not so with regard to social and economic, as opposed to political, issues.

Question 48
Appendix 1, p. 264

Question 49
Appendix 1, p. 264

Table 38 (percent who agree)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
Young people care less about political issues than their elders do	69.6	65.5	63.3
Young people care less about social (non-political) issues than their elders do	38.8	45.9	44.4

Talking politics

And what about discussions of political issues? Here too, the Israeli public shows itself to be “politically minded” to an impressive degree. A clear majority of the total sample (70.6%) report that they talk quite frequently with friends and family about political issues. This pattern is shared by Jews and Arabs alike, although the percentage is higher among Jews than Arabs (72.4% versus 60.6%, respectively).

Breaking down the sample by age, we find that young people, by their own report, discuss politics with their friends to a lesser extent than do the intermediate age group, and much less so than the older one, although those young adults who “talk politics” still constitute a majority of their group, by their own report.

Question 13

Appendix 1, p. 244

Appendix 2, p. 283

Table 39 (percent)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
Talk about political issues with friends and family a lot or to some extent	65.2	70.3	85.1

A breakdown of the Jewish sample by religiosity reveals that the secular (78.5%), traditional (73.3%), and Orthodox (68.5%) respondents tend to a much greater extent than the ultra-Orthodox (48.4%) to discuss politics with those close to them.

Political knowledge was found to correlate very strongly with the frequency of respondents’ discussions about politics with family and friends. Presumably, there is a “vicious circle” at work here: Those who are not interested don’t talk politics, and those who don’t talk politics don’t accumulate political knowledge.

Table 40 (percent)

	High political knowledge	Moderate political knowledge	Limited political knowledge
Talk about political issues with friends and family a lot or to some extent	89.2	73.2	51.0

Breaking down the data by political camp shows that a greater share of those who identify with the left report that they frequently discuss political issues with those close to them, as compared with respondents from the center or right of the political map (left – 83%; center – 74.6%; right – 71.4%).

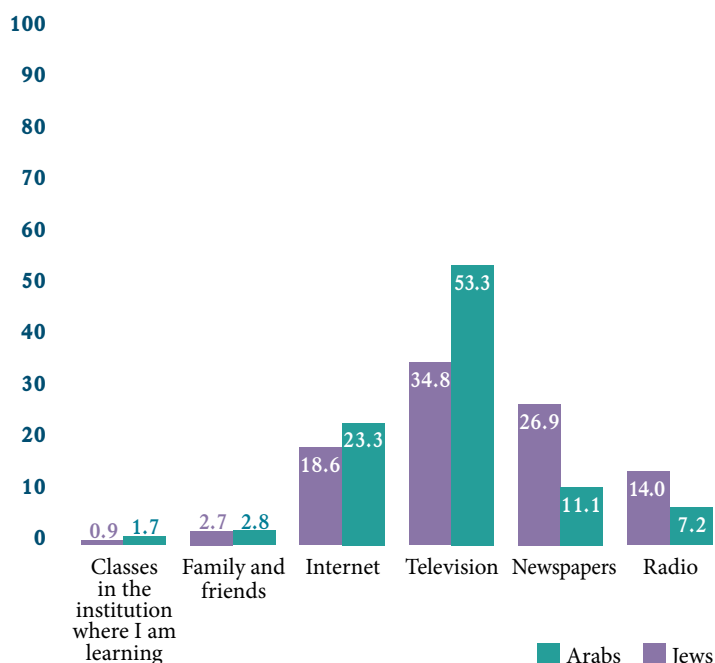
We asked the interviewees where they generally get most of their information about what is happening in politics. The media unquestionably emerge as the primary sources of information: television (37.6%), radio (24.5%), and Internet (19.3%). The figures indicate that (by their own report, at least) the Arab public relies on television and the Internet to a significantly greater degree than does the Jewish population; by the same token, newspapers and radio are much less popular as sources of information among Arabs than among Jews.

Sources of political information

Question 24

Appendix 1, p. 250

Figure 21: Primary source of information about political developments (total sample; by nationality; percent)



As expected, young adults—more than the older age groups—cite the Internet as their primary source of political information: 33.1%, as compared with 18.6% in the intermediate age group and 11.7% in the oldest group. However, contrary to popular belief, even among young people the Internet does not play a dominant role in the political context—at least at this point.

Breaking down the data in the Jewish sample by religiosity shows significant differences between groups in terms of their primary sources of information on political topics: The Orthodox and secular groups are the most diversified in their sources of information, while the traditional and ultra-Orthodox tend to cluster around one predominant source—the traditional respondents around television, and the ultra-Orthodox around newspapers. At the same time, it was interesting to discover that a considerable share of ultra-Orthodox interviewees report drawing their political information from the Internet, despite the fact that in their public pronouncements the group’s leaders are opposed to the notion of roaming through cyberspace.

Table 41 (percent)

My source of political information is:	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
Radio	10.6	13.9	23.2	22.6
Newspapers	26.3	21.5	26.3	51.6
Television	36.7	44.9	28.3	1.1
Internet	22.7	14.9	14.1	9.7
Family/friends	1.2	2.0	3.0	14.0
Educational institution	60.0	0.7	3.0	0.0

A breakdown of responses by political knowledge demonstrates that, for the most part, the primary source of information is television, though those with limited political awareness tend to rely on it more than do those with moderate or high levels of political knowledge (43.6%, as opposed to 36% and 29%,

respectively). The respondents who are best informed politically have two principal sources of information of almost equal weight—newspapers (29.9%) and television (29.0%). This group also relies more heavily on radio than do those with moderate or limited political knowledge (18.1%, compared with 12.4% and 12.1%, respectively).

If we break down the responses by political camp, we find that the left relies primarily on newspapers for its political information (38.9%), in contrast to the center and the right, who rely mainly on television (35.2% and 33.3%, respectively). The left also depends much less on radio (7.5%) than do the center (15.7%) and the right (14.5%).

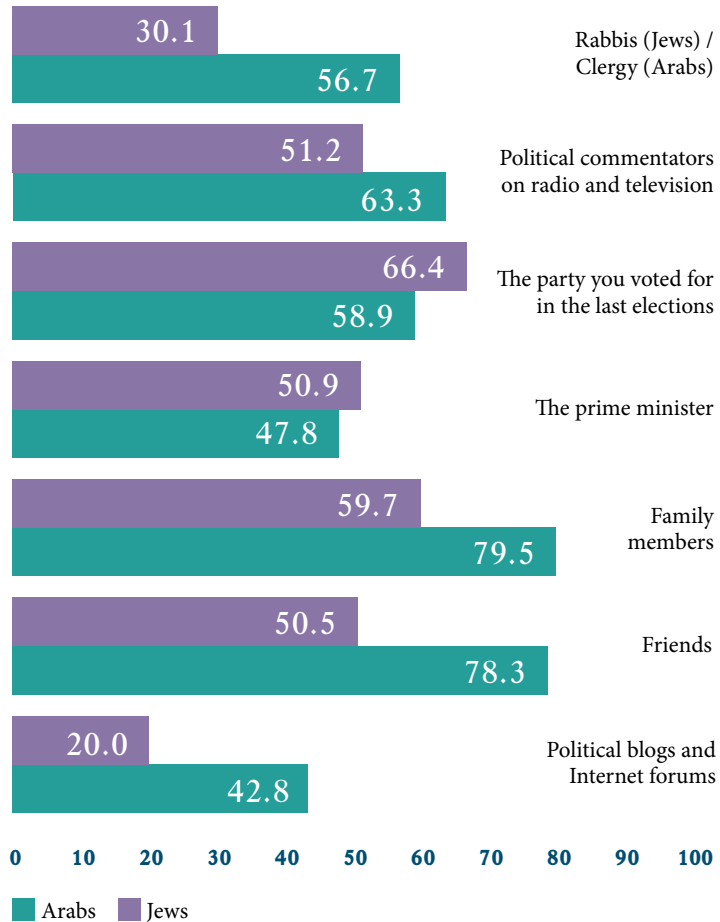
We endeavored to understand who has the greatest impact on Israelis' political preferences, or more precisely, whom do they look to as "sources of authority" on political issues. The following options were presented to the respondents: rabbis, political commentators on radio and television, the party they voted for in the last elections, the prime minister, family members, friends, and political blogs/Internet forums. We asked how important each of these is to the respondent in formulating his or her opinion on political issues.

The findings highlight the differences between Jewish and Arab society, the most outstanding of these being the importance ascribed to clergy or rabbis as authorities on political matters (Arabs consider the opinion of their religious leaders much more important than do Jews: 56.7% as opposed to 30.1%, respectively) and the (tremendous) importance accorded to family and friends (79.5% among Arabs, as contrasted with 59.7% among Jews).

Who influences citizens politically?

Questions 28.1-28.7
Appendix 1, p. 252

Figure 22: Importance of various influences in forming political opinions (very important and quite important; by nationality; percent)



When we asked the respondents to choose what they considered the most important of all the influences listed above, it emerged that for the sample as a whole, the family is the primary “political agent” (22.3%), followed by political commentators (18.5%). Breaking down the findings by nationality reveals that for Jews and Arabs alike, the family plays the “starring” role, albeit to different extents (20.5% and 32.8%, respectively). In the Jewish sample, however, the second largest group chose radio and

television commentators as a close second to family, whereas the Arab respondents ranked the party for which they had voted in the last elections in second place. Based on this finding, taken together with other data presented above, we can tentatively conclude that the degree of estrangement between voters and their representatives, and between the electorate and the parties that received their votes, is less profound in the Arab population than in the Jewish one.

If we break down the results by age, it becomes apparent that young adults, to a greater extent than the intermediate and older age groups, see the family as their most important source of political authority (28.1% as opposed to 26.3% and 15.8%, respectively). This finding can perhaps explain, at least partially, the relative political conservatism of the younger age group in Israel.

But the most interesting finding in this context is that rabbis (for Jewish youth) or clergy (for Arab youth) enjoy a much higher status among young people in Israel today than they do among the two older age groups. This phenomenon no doubt has its roots in the high representation of Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews in this age group; but in light of the demographic growth of the religious population in general, this finding holds great significance for the future of democracy in Israel.

Table 42 (percent)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
Rabbis or clergy are my source of political authority	21.7	10.6	5.3

However here too, as expected, there are salient differences between young Jews who define themselves as religious and those who do not. A breakdown of the young Jewish population by religiosity shows that among the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox, the rabbis are—without question—a key source of political authority (57%), with the family playing a secondary role. By contrast, among young traditional and secular Jews, the rabbis' role as political authority is very minor (only 5% pointed to them

Questions 29

Appendix 1, p. 253

as a very important or quite important source of opinions) while the family is the primary political agent.

Breaking down the entire Jewish sample by religiosity reveals that the ultra-Orthodox derive their political opinions largely from the rabbis. Among the Orthodox, the status of rabbis as a source of political authority is also high, but to a lesser extent. For secular and traditional Jews, television commentators enjoy a standing similar to that of rabbis in the religious group. In addition, the secular, traditional, and Orthodox groups are more varied in their sources of political authority than are the ultra-Orthodox population. And finally, some 15% of the secular and 11% of the traditional respondents see themselves as their own political “rabbis,” though none of the ultra-Orthodox group see themselves as such! The Orthodox respondents fall precisely in the middle, with roughly 6% relying on themselves in formulating their political opinions.

Table 43 (percent)

My source of political authority is:	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
Rabbis	0.0	5.0	24.2	79.6
Political commentators on radio and television	24.9	22.8	8.1	1.1
Party I voted for in the last elections	11.0	9.9	16.2	4.3
Prime minister	8.2	12.9	11.1	3.2
Family members	22.7	20.8	22.2	7.5
Friends	6.6	6.3	3.0	1.1
Political blogs and Internet forums	2.8	1.7	0.0	2.2
My own opinion	15.3	11.6	6.1	0.0

A breakdown of the data by political camp shows that the major source of authority on the left is political commentators, followed

(far behind) by family members (30.2% and 18.9%, respectively). When forming their political opinions, those in the center attach the greatest importance to political commentators and to family, in equal measure (23% for each). On the other hand, the right looks mainly to rabbis (21.2%) and the family (18%).

With regard to political knowledge, those with limited knowledge rely primarily on family (25.7%) and rabbis (16.3%) in forming their political opinions. Respondents with moderate political awareness indicated that they depend on family (21.5%) and political commentators on radio and television (20.3%), while the most well informed rely to precisely the same extent on family and on commentators (20.8%). Interestingly enough, the Internet still lags far behind as a source of information or political authority for all groups in this category, when compared with the classic social agents (family) and the more familiar media (mainly television and radio, including political commentators).

Nonetheless, a strong interest in politics, and frequent discussion of political issues with family and friends, do not necessarily translate into active, ongoing political participation—unlike voting in elections, for example, which is a brief, sporadic form of political participation. And indeed, it turns out that the association between the two is not direct: The Israeli public, which takes an interest in political affairs and discusses them often, is not noted for a corresponding level of long-term political involvement, despite the fact that—as we will show in Part Three of this paper, which discusses the comparative international indexes—Israel actually places quite high in the global rankings in the area of political participation.

In terms of involvement with political parties, this year as well the figures show that the Israeli public tends to shy away from the political arena. Thus, a majority of the total sample (69.3%) reported that they are not members or supporters of any political party; 23.2% stated that they support a particular party but are not members of it; and only 7.1% responded that they are either active or non-active members of a political party.

Women tend to join political parties somewhat less than men do. Likewise, young adults and the intermediate age group are less

Political involvement: parties

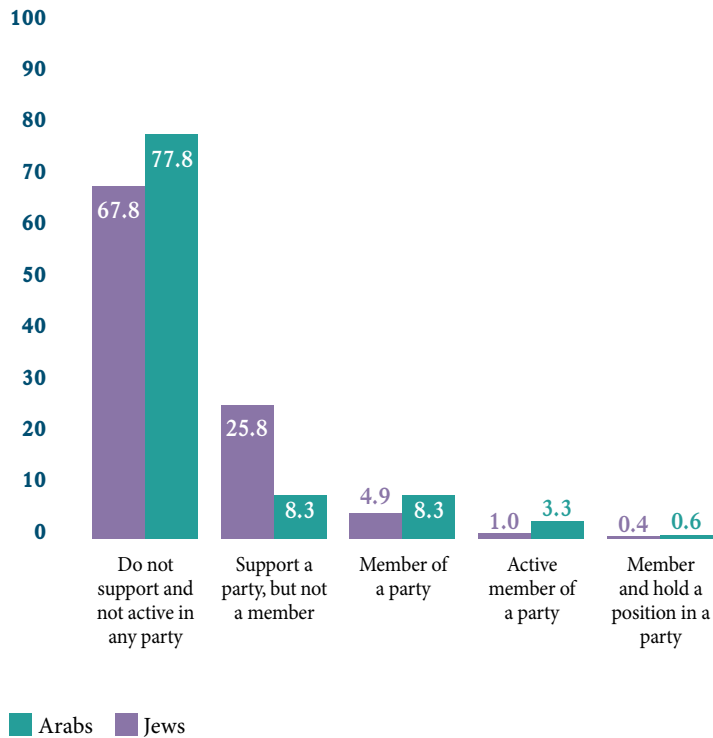
Question 27

Appendix 1, p. 251
Appendix 2, p. 283

inclined to do so than the older age group. The same pattern of non-membership in a political party holds true for the secular, traditional, and Orthodox respondents. The ultra-Orthodox report slightly higher levels of membership than the other three groups; but here too, the share of registered members is negligible. The percentage of respondents who do not belong to or support a party is somewhat higher among those who locate themselves at the margins of society (74.6%) than among those who see themselves at its center (67%).

If we compare the Jewish and Arab populations, certain differences emerge: The share of Arabs who report membership and some degree of involvement in a political party is higher than that among the Jews.

Figure 23: Involvement in political parties (by nationality; percent)*



* Together with the “don’t know / refuse” responses, the total in each group comes to 100%.

Breaking down the data by political camp, we find that the proportion of those who are not members or supporters of any party is highest at the center of the political spectrum, whereas the greatest share of respondents who report belonging to a political party is on the left.

Table 44 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Do not belong to or support any party	55.7	70.8	62.0
Am a member, active member, or office holder in a party	14.1	5.4	5.1

As expected, those with a high level of political knowledge report being a member or supporter of a political party to a greater extent than do those with moderate or limited political awareness, since membership in a party generally stems from an interest in politics, and this interest is in turn generated and intensified by belonging to a party.

When respondents were asked if they had ever thought of going into politics, here too 84.3% of the total sample responded in the negative; that is to say, the majority did not express an interest in “diving into the political waters.” Yet 3.4% of the total sample do say that they have considered entering national politics; 7.8%, local politics; and 3.8%, both, with 1.4% reporting that they are already involved in politics. In other words, 15.3% of the total sample (23.3% of the Arab public, and 13.8% of the Jewish) are considering entering politics at the national or local level, or have already done so.

Breaking down the data into subgroups points to certain differences, though not huge ones, between groups. Thus, the share of women who have never considered entering politics is clearly greater than that of the men (90.1% versus 78%, respectively). Among those who locate themselves at the center of Israeli society, 15.4% have either considered going into national or local politics or are already involved at one or both levels, while the

Entering political life

Question 21
Appendix 1, p. 249

corresponding figure for those who see themselves at the margins is only 11.6%. Of the ultra-Orthodox respondents, almost no one shows any intention of taking the plunge politically. Among long-time Jewish residents, 13.7% have considered becoming or are already involved politically, as opposed to 9% of immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (FSU). We also found a correlation between political knowledge and intention to enter the political arena or actual involvement: The majority at all levels of political knowledge report that they do not plan on entering politics, but the size of the minority who are considering doing so or are already active politically rises with an increase in political knowledge (limited political knowledge – 10.9%; moderate – 16.5%; high – 21.3%). Surprisingly, age was not found to affect the responses to this question. Likewise, political affiliation with the right, left or center does not influence the desire to enter, or to avoid entering, politics.

Opinions about political involvement

Even if they themselves are not interested in trying their hand at politics, a considerable proportion of all respondents (33.9%, or roughly one third) responded that if asked to advise a family member on whether or not to enter politics, they would encourage him or her to take such a step. Among Arabs, the percentage who would recommend a political career (38.3%) is slightly higher than that among Jews (33%). In the sample as a whole, the share of men who would advise a friend or family member to enter politics exceeds that of women (37.2% versus 30.7%, respectively). Religiosity also plays somewhat of a role: Of the four religious groups, the ultra-Orthodox are the least inclined to advise those close to them to enter politics. By contrast, the difference between those who locate themselves at the center of society and those who see themselves at the margins is more pronounced: 38.7% of the former as opposed to 26% of the latter would advise a friend or family member to go into politics. Here too, based on the findings, age, political knowledge, and political orientation do not play an important role.

Question 22
Appendix 1, p. 249
Appendix 2, p. 284

Awareness of democratic values

In a democratic state, even citizens who are not active politically are expected to be aware of democratic values and to be able to act on them. We therefore sought to examine to what extent the

basic values of democracy are in fact entrenched in the Israeli population in theory and in practice. As we demonstrated in the 2010 Democracy Index, on the abstract level the majority of Israelis are ostensibly “defenders of democracy.” The problems emerge when it comes time to translate these values into action.¹⁹

Equal rights under law: In the sample as a whole, there is a virtually total consensus in favor of the principle that all people should enjoy the same rights under law, regardless of their views (total sample – 86.4%; Jews – 86.4%; Arabs – 86.1%). There are certain differences between subgroups in the responses to this question, but these are not dramatic. For example, older adults support this principle slightly more than the intermediate and younger age groups do (89.2%, 85.3%, and 82.9%, respectively). Similarly, a greater share of secular respondents agree with it, compared with the others in their category (89.7%, as opposed to 86.4% among the traditional; 73.8% among the Orthodox; and 80.7% among the ultra-Orthodox). The other variables were not found to influence the responses.

The above notwithstanding, however, the translation into practice of this sweeping support for equality is far from ideal. Only 67.9% of the Jewish public express support for full equality of rights between Jews and Arabs in Israel (support for this principle is of course much higher among the Arab public, at 95.6%). In other words, one third of the Jewish public do not support full equal rights under law for Arab citizens. As shown in Figure 24, there are profound differences on this subject when the results are broken down by religiosity. A majority of the ultra-Orthodox respondents do not even pay lip service to the principle of full equality, while the Orthodox group is divided on this issue. Only among the traditional and the secular is there a majority who favor full equality under law for Arab citizens.

Question 19.5

[Appendix 1, p. 248](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 285](#)

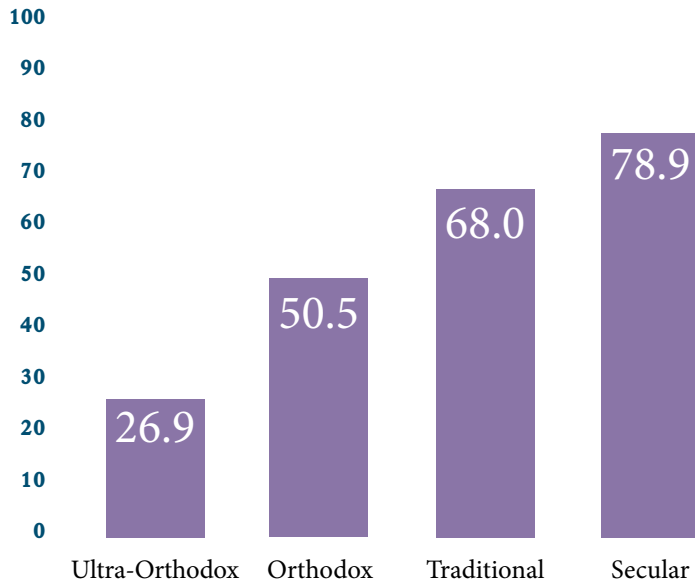
Question 40

[Appendix 1, p. 260](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 286](#)

19 See Asher Arian, Tamar Hermann, Yuval Lebel, Michael Philippov, Hila Zaban, and Anna Knafelman, *The 2010 Israeli Democracy Index: Democratic Values in Practice* (Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 2010), Part Three, pp. 99–164 at http://www.idi.org.il/sites/english/SectionArchive/Documents/Auditing_Israeli_Democracy_2010.pdf

Figure 24: Full equality of rights for Arabs (somewhat support and strongly support; by religiosity; percent)



Breaking down the results by age indicates that young people in Israel are less “democratic” than the older age groups. Thus, only 59.2% of young adults support full equal rights for Arabs, compared with 74.5% of the intermediate age group and 77% of the older adults. As in other cases, a breakdown of the young Jewish population by religiosity raises a striking difference: among the Orthodox/ultra-Orthodox group, 25.6% support full equal rights for Arabs, as contrasted with 61.5% of the secular/traditional group.

As expected, political orientation (right, left or center) is a decisive factor with regard to equal civil rights for the Arab public. A minority on the right, as opposed to a majority in the center and a large majority on the left, support the granting of full equal rights to Arab citizens of Israel.

Table 45 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Support full equal rights for Arab citizens of Israel	93.4	74.6	42.3

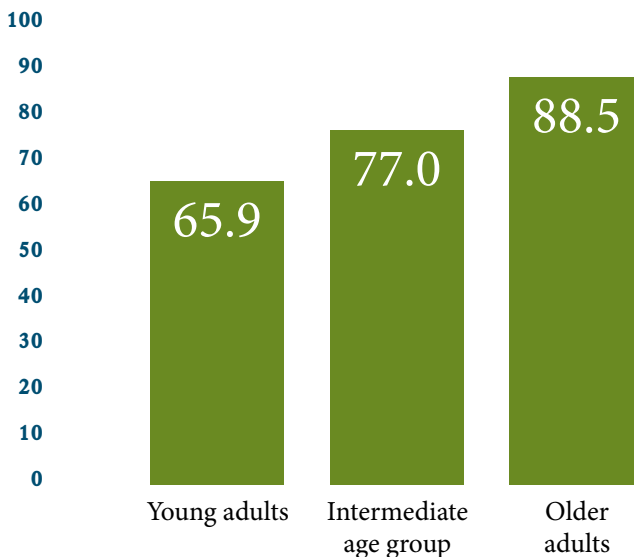
Freedom of expression: Again, on the abstract level this appears to be quite a deeply rooted principle. In the total sample, 76.2% responded that they support granting freedom of expression to all people, regardless of their views. Jews—as the majority group, whose founding narrative is threatened by the competing narratives of minorities in Israel—are somewhat less enthusiastic about granting freedom of expression in all cases, whereas Arabs, as a minority group, are more interested in this principle (73.8% as compared with 90%, respectively).

Age, it transpires, plays a decisive role in the results: Support for freedom of expression in the older age groups is noticeably higher than it is among the young.

Question 19.2

Appendix 1, p. 247

Figure 25: Freedom of expression for all, regardless of their views (agree and strongly agree; total sample; by age; percent)



Breaking down the responses of the Jewish young adults by level of religiosity does show some difference (Orthodox/ultra-Orthodox – 52.5%; secular/traditional – 62.1%), though both groups fall short of the intermediate and older (Jewish) age groups in their support for freedom of expression. In the Jewish sample as a whole, religiosity is shown to exercise considerable influence: Although the majority in all the groups explicitly endorse freedom of expression, greater religiosity seems to go hand in hand with lesser support for this principle.

Table 46 (percent)

	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
Support freedom of expression for all, regardless of their views	77.1	73.6	70.7	56.0

Although the majority of the Jewish public in all political camps state their support in principle for full freedom of expression, there are definite differences in the extent of this majority, with the level of support rising the further left we move along the political spectrum: on the right, 63.1% are in favor; in the center, 76.1%; and on the left, 84.9%.

In terms of practice, however, it seems that, for many, the principle of freedom of expression has been internalized only partially. Thus the Israeli public as a whole is divided on the question of whether or not to allow speakers to harshly criticize the state in public. In fact, we found a slight tendency toward prohibiting such speech: 50.8% feel that it should not be allowed, as opposed to 46%, who feel it should be permitted. The remainder hold no opinion.

Question 7.2
Appendix 1, p. 239

Not surprisingly, a breakdown of responses by nationality reveals that the Arab public is more inclined to allow severe public criticism of the state (Arabs – 51.7%; Jews – 45%). Age does not play any role on this issue, nor does self-location on the center-periphery continuum. A breakdown of the Jewish public by self-reported religiosity shows that, paradoxically, the

ultra-Orthodox are the ones most willing to prohibit harsh public criticism of the state, although as members of a minority group, they would presumably have a greater need than others to see the principle of free speech protected. But neither are the Orthodox and traditional groups passionate advocates of this protection. In practice, only among the secular respondents is there a majority (though not a large one) who support permitting strong public criticism of the state.

Table 47 (percent)

	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
Speakers should be prohibited from harshly criticizing the State of Israel in public	45.4	56.8	59.6	74.2

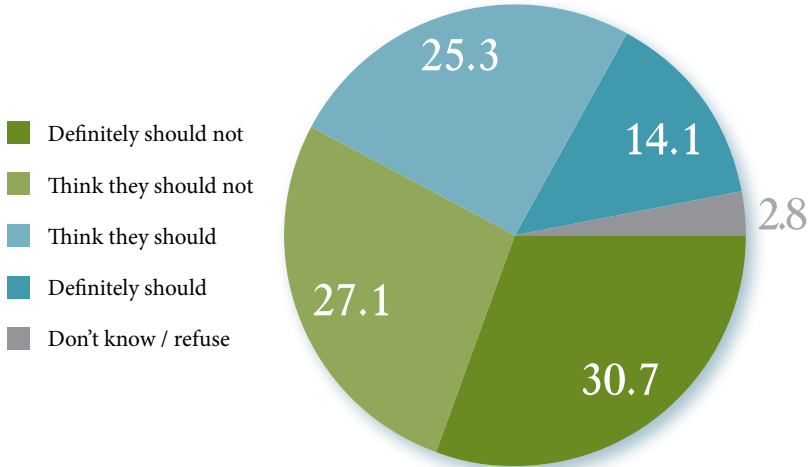
If we look at the political camps (right, center or left) within the Jewish public, the picture that emerges is as follows: on the right and center of the map, the majority agree that harsh public criticism of the state should be prohibited (62% and 53.3%, respectively), whereas on the left a majority are opposed to such a move (65.1%).

Freedom of expression and academic freedom in the educational system: In the total sample, there is a large majority of 75.7% (Jews – 78.6%; Arabs – 71.1%), who feel that teachers should discuss political issues with their pupils during the appropriate classes. However, it appears that the notion of academic freedom is in real danger today in the Jewish public: a majority of 57.8% (as opposed to only 28.2% among the Arab public) hold that university lecturers should be barred in principle from expressing political opinions.

Question 36
Appendix 1, p. 258

Question 37
Appendix 1, p. 259

Figure 26: Expression of political opinions by university lecturers (Jewish sample; percent)



Sex, age, and religiosity did not influence the distribution of responses on this question. Some difference was found between those who locate themselves at the center of Israeli society, 55.7% of whom support such a prohibition, and those who see themselves at the fringes of society, only 48% of whom share this view. As a rule, the former group appear more willing to stand firm in their views and to defend the establishment and the existing public order (which those at the center of society have an obvious interest in preserving) than do those in the latter group (who have less of an interest in maintaining the status quo).

Breaking down the responses to this question by self-reported political orientation, the results are not surprising: A majority on the right and in the center support prohibiting university lecturers from expressing political opinions in their classes, compared with only a minority on the left (though some would argue that the size of this minority is also cause for alarm, and calls into question the left's pretensions to being the "bastion of democracy").

Table 48 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Certain or think that lecturers should not be permitted to express political opinions in their classes	36.8	57.0	70.0

Moreover, the findings indicate an essential misunderstanding on the part of the public of the principle of academic freedom, as demonstrated by the fact that the majority (61% – total sample; Jews – 62.9%; Arabs – 50.6%) believe that the state should oversee the content of courses taught at the universities. Surprisingly, it is the young adults, more than the two older groups, who support oversight of this type:

Question 38

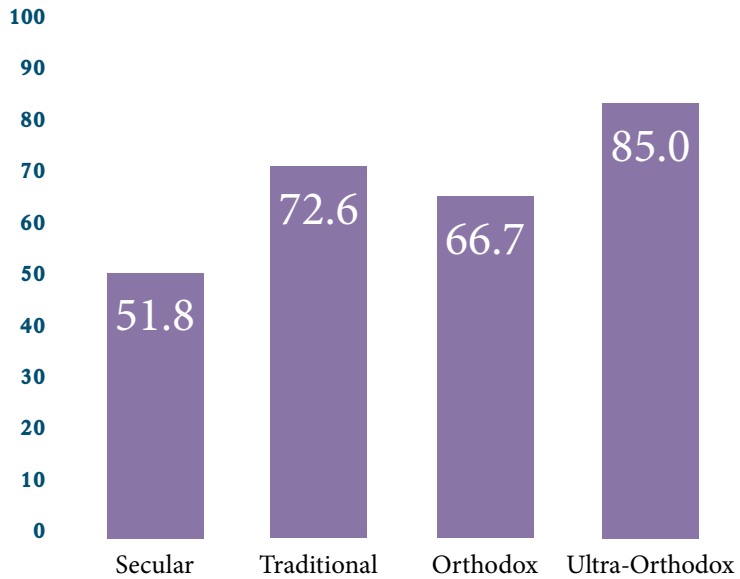
[Appendix 1, p. 259](#)**Table 49** (percent)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
State should oversee course content at universities	66.2	63.1	56.1

Here, the breakdown of responses of young Jewish respondents by religiosity shows positions that do not differ fundamentally from one another. In both groups (Orthodox/ultra-Orthodox and secular/traditional), a majority hold that the state should oversee the content of university courses.

Breaking down the total Jewish sample by religiosity reveals that, paradoxically, the ultra-Orthodox—who do not share the Zionist ethos, who are strongly opposed to state involvement in the curricula of their educational system, and whose presence in academia is negligible—are the biggest supporters of state oversight of university courses! The other three groups also tend to support such oversight, and even among the secular respondents this position garnered a majority.

Figure 27: State oversight of university course content (certain or think it is needed; Jewish sample; by religiosity; percent)



If we break down the responses of the Jewish sample by political camp, we learn that on the right and center, a majority favor state oversight of the content of university courses (74.5% and 60.9%, respectively), but on the left only a minority (though certainly a sizeable one) support it (41.6%). In other words, it would appear that there is no group today in any section of the Israeli public that would come out in massive numbers to fight for academic freedom.

Use of violence to achieve political objectives: One of the basic democratic “rules of the game” is renouncing the use of force for political ends. And in fact, a clear majority of the Israeli public as a whole (68.4%) is of the opinion that the use of violence is never justified, under any circumstances, in pursuit of such goals. The problems arise in the “bending” of this principle to suit certain interests, be they sectoral or political. Thus for example, while

there is a large majority in the Jewish public who oppose the use of violence for political ends (72.7%), a majority of the Arab sample (54%) take exception to the categorical rejection of violence. In other words, the Arab respondents can conceive of situations in which it would be permissible to use violence to achieve political goals. It should be noted that in the Jewish public as well, there is a minority (26%) who take a similar view. It is interesting—though not surprising, given prevailing feminist theory—that in the total sample, the share of women who reject the use of violence is significantly higher than that of men (71.5% as opposed to 65.2%, respectively). Similarly, those who locate themselves at the center of Israeli society, and who are presumably more satisfied than others with the existing political order, are more strongly opposed to the use of violence for political ends than are those who consider themselves at the margins of society (71.4% compared with 62.6%, respectively). Age, political orientation, and religiosity were not found to be influential variables in this context, but there was a definite correlation with political knowledge; whereas the majority at all levels of political knowledge disagreed with the use of violence for political objectives, those with limited political awareness were significantly less opposed to it than were those with moderate or high levels of political knowledge.

Question 7.3

[Appendix 1, p. 239](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 286](#)

Table 50 (percent)

	Limited political knowledge	Moderate political knowledge	High political knowledge
Oppose the use of violence for political ends, under all circumstances	62.3	71.2	74.6

Majority rule or majority tyranny?: In the literature on democracy, there is a clear distinction between majority rule and the tyranny of the majority. The term “majority rule” refers (positively) to the right of the majority to decide, provided that this does not infringe in any way on the basic rights of the minority—a situation that would constitute tyranny of the majority. Various events that have

taken place in the State of Israel in recent years suggest that the Jewish public may be “stretching” the privileges granted to the majority beyond the bounds of the acceptable, or at least what is considered acceptable in Western countries. We therefore examined the accepted interpretation in Israel of the majority principle, focusing specifically on whether the Israeli public understands that the principle of majority rule does not mean the exclusion of minorities or the trampling of their rights.

The findings indicate that the Jewish public is insensitive to the difference between the principle of majority rule and its distortion to the point of majority tyranny, in particular with regard to the status of Arabs in the state. Thus, 77.8%(!) of Jewish respondents agreed with the statement that decisions crucial to the state on matters of peace and security should be made by a Jewish majority. That is to say, over three quarters of the Jewish public are ready to exclude the Arab minority from participating in critical decisions on peace and security, which are highly relevant to their future as well. Some might argue that this position does not indicate support for tyranny of the majority, given that there may be a fundamental conflict of interest between the majority and the minority on this issue. But this argument is undermined by the following finding: We asked the Jewish interviewees their opinion of the statement that decisions crucial to the state regarding governance, economy, and society should be made by a Jewish majority. Here, the argument of a basic conflict of interests between the majority and the minority that would justify exclusion of the latter is no longer valid; yet 69.5% of the Jewish interviewees agreed with this exclusionary statement.

Question 35.1

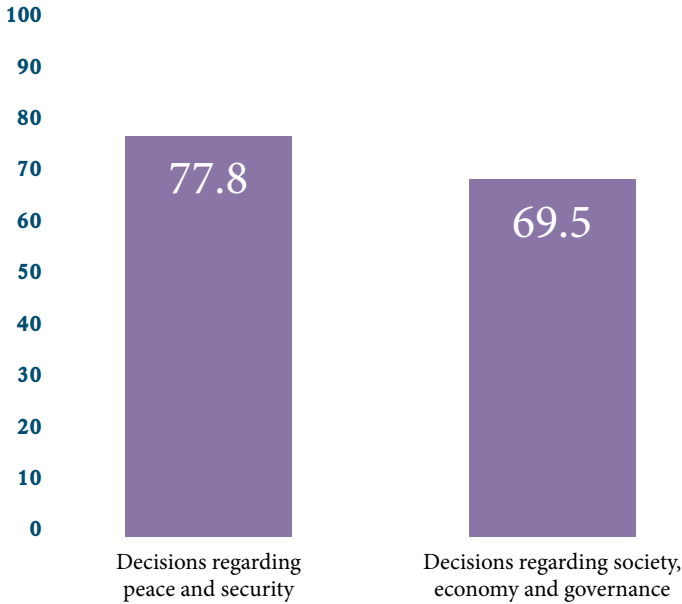
[Appendix 1, p. 258](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 287](#)

Question 35.2

[Appendix 1, p. 258](#)

Figure 28: Necessity of Jewish majority on matters crucial to the state (strongly agree and agree somewhat; Jewish sample; percent)



On this point, sex and age were not found to be significant factors. By contrast, the variable of religiosity was very influential, with the readiness to exclude Arabs from both types of decisions clearly rising with the level of self-reported religiosity. Moreover, in all the groups, the readiness to exclude Arabs from decisions involving peace and security is greater than the desire to bar them from decisions concerning society, economy and governance; but among the ultra-Orthodox, there is no difference between the two sets of issues, and there is even a slightly greater tendency (though not statistically significant) to exclude Arabs precisely from those decisions pertaining to economy, society, and governance.

Table 51 (percent)

	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
Crucial decisions on peace and security should be decided by a Jewish majority	69.5	85.8	89.9	90.3
Crucial decisions on society, economy, and governance should be decided by a Jewish majority	56.4	81.2	85.8	91.4

Self-location at the center or the margins of society also plays a role with regard to inclusion in crucial decisions. Again, those who see themselves at the center of society are more apt to refuse to share the right to shape government policy than are those who locate themselves on the fringes: 70.9% versus 61.3%, respectively.

Breaking down the data by political camp (left, right or center) showed substantial differences. Hence, although the bulk of the respondents in all camps support a Jewish majority for crucial decisions on peace and security, when it comes to matters of society, economy, and governance only the right and the center show a majority in favor of excluding Arabs. On the left, there is a (large) minority who share this view.

Table 52 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Crucial decisions on peace and security should be decided by a Jewish majority	54.7	77.9	90.6
Crucial decisions on society, economy, and governance should be decided by a Jewish majority	47.2	65.4	89.9

Empathy and acceptance vis-à-vis the “other”: Not only does this year’s survey offer worrisome evidence of the readiness of the Jewish public, as the majority group, to exclude Arab citizens of Israel, as a minority, from strategic political processes, but a plurality (51.5%) of the Jewish public also do not feel that the Arabs in Israel are discriminated against (as opposed to 77.6% of the Arab public, who feel that they do suffer from discrimination). Of the different age groups, Jewish young adults are the ones who most strongly reject the claim of discrimination (young – 51.8%; intermediate – 43.5%; older – 46.6%).

A breakdown of the figures by religiosity shows that only among the secular respondents is there a majority (55%) who hold that the Arabs in Israel are in fact discriminated against compared with the Jews. In the three other groups, only a minority share this view: 41.3% of the traditional respondents; 31.3% of the Orthodox; and just 18.3% of the ultra-Orthodox.

An examination of the figures by political camp indicates that the left is the only group in which a clear majority believe that the Arabs are discriminated against; among those in the center of the political spectrum, a large minority feel this way, and on the right, a small minority.

Question 39

[Appendix 1, p. 259](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 287](#)

Table 53 (percent)

	Left	Center	Right
Arab citizens of Israel are discriminated against compared with Jews	67.0	40.9	25.9

With regard to acceptance of the “other,” in this year’s survey we also investigated the perception of human equality, which underpins the democratic concept. We therefore posed the question: Would you be troubled by having as prime minister a woman, an Arab or an ultra-Orthodox Jew? Only a very small minority—4.8% of the total sample—and an almost equal proportion of both Arabs and Jews, responded that they would be troubled by having a woman as prime minister. But when the question related to an ultra-Orthodox prime minister, a majority (61.2%) of the total sample (Jews – 59.7%; Arabs – 70%) stated

Question 51.1
Appendix 1, p. 266

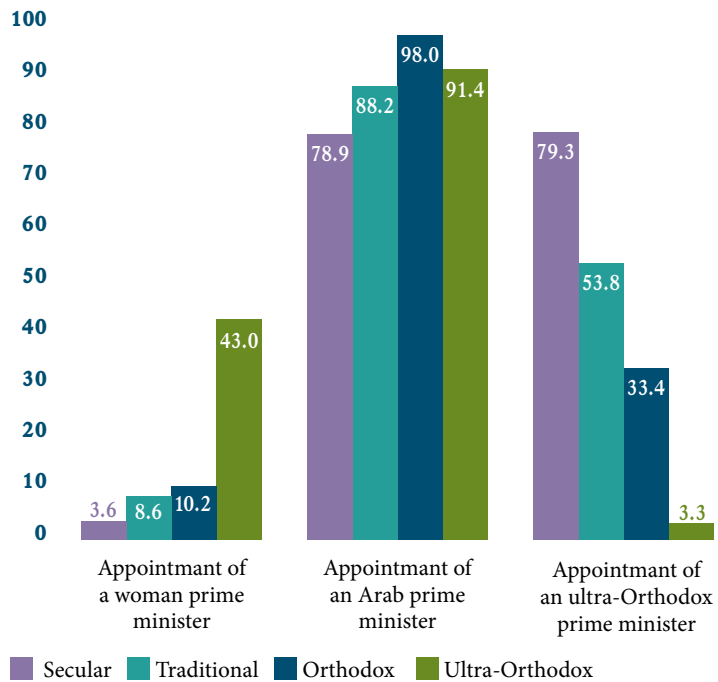
Question 51.3
Appendix 1, p. 266

Question 51.2
Appendix 1, p. 266

that they would be somewhat troubled or very troubled. As for the possibility of an Arab prime minister, as expected there was a dramatic difference between Jews and Arabs: A majority of the Jews (84.3%) and only a small minority of the Arabs (13.3%) stated that it would trouble them to have an Arab prime minister.

A breakdown of the responses in the Jewish sample by religiosity shows that this variable plays a decisive role. The ultra-Orthodox respondents are by far the least tolerant of the idea of a woman prime minister, but are in line with the rest of the Jewish public when it comes to having an Arab in this position. Not surprisingly, the appointment of an ultra-Orthodox prime minister is desirable to them and tolerable to the majority of the Orthodox respondents, but is troubling to most of the traditional group, and even more so, the secular.

Figure 29: Willingness to accept a woman, ultra-Orthodox or Arab prime minister (very troubled and somewhat troubled; Jewish sample; by religiosity; percent)



Breaking down the responses by political camp reveals a majority not only of the right and center but also of the left (albeit smaller) who report being troubled by the appointment of an Arab prime minister.

Table 54 (percent)

	Woman	Ultra-Orthodox	Arab
Right	18.4	47.1	92.9
Center	7.0	64.5	61.0
Left	0.0	69.9	58.5

Summary

- > In this chapter, we discussed the following: citizens' ability to influence government policy; the effort invested by Israel's elected representatives in fulfilling their duties; whose interests the representatives look out for, as well as their level of integrity; the extent of citizens' interest in, and discussion of, politics; the sources of information relied on by the public in forming their political opinions, and the relative influence of these sources; the forms and extent of political involvement on the part of the public; and the degree to which democratic values have been internalized.
- > More than two thirds of the public feel that their ability to influence government policy is limited. This feeling is shared by all sectors of the population, but is especially striking among the ultra-Orthodox and those who locate themselves at the margins of society.
- > Over one half of the total sample (56.4%) hold that elected representatives do not consider the voters' opinions. In this context, it is interesting to note that the Jews feel more strongly than the Arabs that their leaders do not listen to them. Although there is a minority of Orthodox Jews who share this view, in relative terms this group perceives less inattentiveness on the part of Knesset members than do the secular, traditional, and ultra-Orthodox respondents.
- > The public is highly critical of the amount of effort invested by their elected representatives in carrying out their duties: some two thirds disagree with the statement that in general most members of Knesset work hard and are doing their job satisfactorily. Moreover, a large majority (70.6%) feel that politicians look out more for their own interests than for those of the voters. While not a majority, a large portion of the public (43.1%) also agree with the claim that in order to reach the top politically in Israel, one has to be corrupt.
- > The level of interest in politics among the public is high. A total of 76.8% report that they are interested in politics to a large extent or to some extent. Standing out in their level of

interest are men, those who see themselves at the center of society, and persons with a high level of political knowledge. A majority (70.6%) also attest that they discuss political issues quite frequently. It is interesting to note that, contrary to popular opinion, young people report being only slightly less interested in politics than do the older age groups, although they discuss political issues with their friends much less than their elders do.

- In the public as a whole, a majority (65.5%) feel that young people care less about politics than the older age groups do. A minority (43.4%) hold that this is also the case for social issues unrelated to politics.
- The media—for the most part television, radio, and Internet—are the primary source of political information in all sectors of the public. As expected, young people—more than the older age groups—cite the Internet as their major source of information, although we are still speaking of a minority (33.1%). The ultra-Orthodox are the only group for whom newspapers are the primary source of information on political issues.
- For the majority of the Israeli public in all sectors, the primary source of political authority and agent of political socialization is the family. Among Jews in general, political commentators are ranked in second place, and among Arabs, the party that they voted for in the Knesset.
- Although a majority of the public (69.3%) report that they do not belong to or support any party, there is still a small but significant minority in Israel (7.1%) who are involved in party activity to some degree. An even greater majority (84.3%) report that they are not interested in entering political life; but roughly one third (33.9%) state that if asked by a friend or family member whether to “take the plunge” politically, they would advise in favor of doing so.
- This year as well, we found that the bulk of the Israeli public espouse basic democratic values—at least in theory. However, when it comes to translating these values into practice, there is notable opposition from a number of groups. Thus, there is a consensus (86.4%) as to the need for equality before the

law regardless of a person's political views, but with regard to full equality between Arabs and Jews, approximately one third of the Jewish public—primarily the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox, and those who define themselves as right-wing—are opposed. Moreover, support in principle for freedom of expression is widespread; yet roughly one half of the public (50.8%) agree with the statement that severe public criticism of the state should be prohibited. A majority of the Jewish public (57.8%) hold that university lecturers should not be permitted to express political opinions in class, and more than half of the Jewish respondents (62.9%) also support state oversight of course content in universities. It is interesting to note that the ultra-Orthodox, paradoxically, are the biggest supporters of such oversight.

- Rejection of the use of violence for political ends is very strongly felt among the Jewish public (72.7%). At the same time, we found a majority (54%) of Arab respondents who take issue with the statement that violence in pursuit of political goals is never justified under any circumstances.
- In the Jewish public, the principle of rule by majority is apparently interpreted by many as tyranny by majority. Thus, a large majority support the exclusion of the Arab population from the decision-making process, not only on matters of peace and security (77.8%) but also on socioeconomic issues and questions related to governance (69.5%).
- The bulk of the Jewish public (51.5%) reject the claim that Arab citizens of Israel suffer from discrimination. The younger age group disagree the most strongly with this assertion.
- A large majority of the Jewish public, cutting across all political lines, report that it would be troubling to them to have an Arab as prime minister of Israel. As for an ultra-Orthodox prime minister, such an appointment would bother mainly Arabs—and among Jews, the traditional, the secular, and those who identify with the left. Apart from the ultra-Orthodox, the Israeli public as a whole would not be troubled by having a woman as prime minister.

Chapter 3: The Citizen and Israeli Society

Despite the public's evident dissatisfaction with the political system, one of the recurring findings in the Democracy Index through the years, and this year as well, is the very strong sense of belonging among Israeli citizens and their pride in being a part of the Israeli collective. In other words, the doubts concerning the functioning of government and politicians do not trickle down to the common essence and do not splinter it. Thus, it would be incorrect to state, as we often hear today, that the Israeli collective is disintegrating in terms of its shared identity.

Of the total sample, 58.1% answered this year that they are very proud to be Israelis, and another 24.6% defined themselves as quite proud (for a total of 82.7%). If we look at the Jewish sample alone, the share of those who are quite proud or very proud is even higher, at 87.9% (64.7% are very proud, and 23.2% are quite proud). At the same time, given the circumstances, the fact that a majority of Arab citizens (52.8%) are proud to some degree of being Israeli—20.6% report being very proud, and 32.2%, quite proud—is an impressive finding.

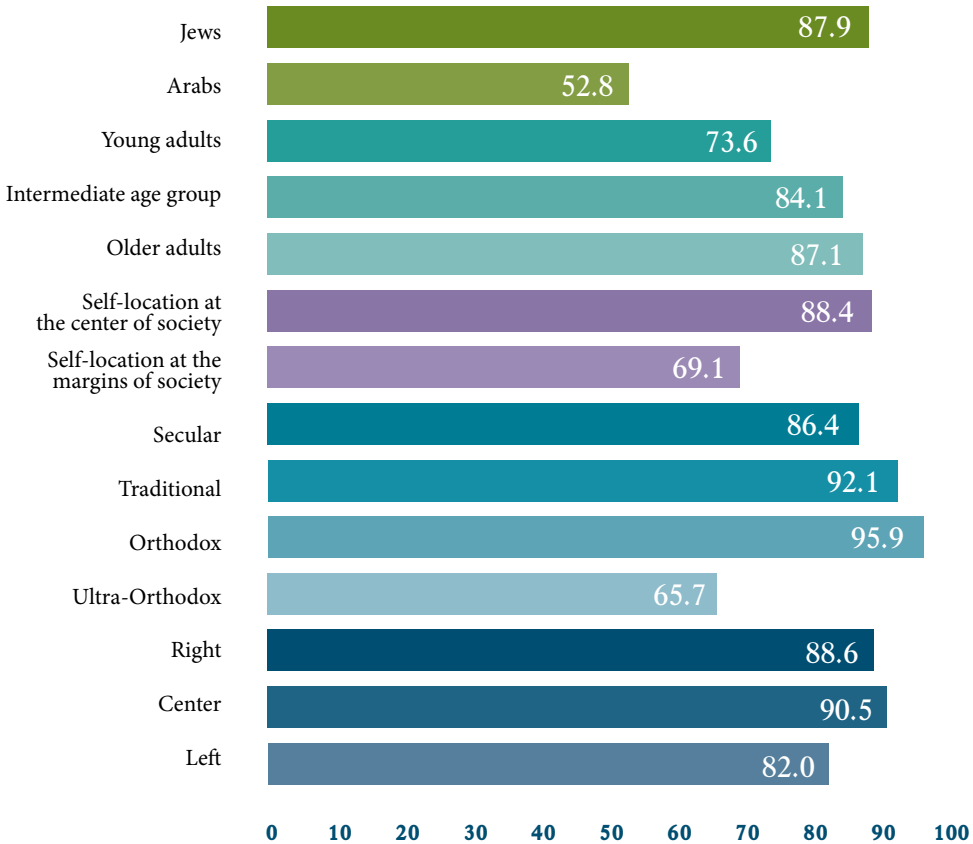
**Pride in being
Israeli**

Question 14

[Appendix 1, p. 244](#)

[Appendix 2, p. 288](#)

Figure 30: Pride in being Israeli (very proud and quite proud; total sample, by subgroup; percent)



Yet there is cause for some concern, in light of the finding that a smaller share of young people in the total sample are “very proud” to be Israeli, and a larger share are “not at all proud,” in comparison with the older age groups.

Table 55 (percent)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
Very proud to be Israeli	47.8	58.8	63.6
Not at all proud to be Israeli	13.7	5.7	4.7

Breaking down the Jewish public by religiosity, we find that the traditional and Orthodox respondents rate significantly higher in the “very proud” category than do the secular and ultra-Orthodox groups. However, if we add the category of “quite proud” to the data, the difference between the secular, on the one hand, and the traditional and Orthodox, on the other, is reduced, while the ultra-Orthodox remain, to a marked degree, the group with the lowest degree of pride in being Israeli.

Table 56 (percent)

	Ultra-Orthodox	Orthodox	Traditional	Secular
Very proud	44.1	82.8	80.2	56.4
Quite proud	22.6	13.1	14.9	30.3
Total	66.7	95.7	95.1	86.7

Those who locate themselves on the fringes of Israeli society are less likely to report being “very proud” to be Israeli (44.5%) than are those who see themselves at its center (64%). This gap between the groups remains more or less constant even if we add in the category of “quite proud” (69.1% and 88.4%, respectively).

Although the majority in all the political camps are “very proud” to be Israeli, this majority is more clear-cut on the right than on the left (72.9% versus 52.8%, respectively, with 65.2% in the center). But if we include the “quite proud” category, the results for the three groups are more similar: right – 88.6%; center – 90.5%; left – 82%.

Feeling part of the state and its problems

Question 12
Appendix 1, p.
Appendix 2, p.

Over two thirds (69.5%) of the total sample report that they feel part of the State of Israel and its problems to a large extent or a very large extent. But combining Jews and Arabs into one sample of Israelis once again obscures the profound differences between the groups: Whereas among the Jews, a sizeable majority (75.6%) indicate that they feel a sense of belonging to a large or a very large extent, only 35% of the Arabs share this feeling. A larger share of the Arab respondents (37.2%) feel a part of the state to a small or a very small extent, while 27.2% report that they belong to only some extent. In other words, almost two thirds of Israel's Arab citizens do not feel "connected" to the state and its problems.

A breakdown of the data by age shows that, compared with the older age groups, fewer young people feel very much a part of Israel and its problems, and a greater share feel part of them to only a small extent.

Table 57 (percent)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
Feel a part of Israel and its problems to a very large extent	31.4	38.4	45.2
Feel a part of Israel and its problems to only a very small extent	9.7	8.0	3.7

A breakdown of the Jewish public by religiosity shows that the Orthodox respondents, once again, are at the head of the list, with the strongest sense of belonging to the state (54.5% feel a part of the state and its problems to a very large extent). The ultra-Orthodox feel the least connected to the state, with 24.7% in the above category. The secular and traditional groups fall in between the two in terms of belonging "to a very large extent." However, when we add in those who feel a part of the state and its problems "to a large extent," the differences dissipate, with the exception of the ultra-Orthodox group, whose sense of belonging to the state is clearly less than that of the other three groups. Thus, the combined data for those who feel a part of the state and its problems to

a large and to a very large extent are: ultra-Orthodox – 53.7%; Orthodox – 86.8%; traditional – 78.2%; and secular – 82.3%.

The difference between those who locate themselves at the margins of Israeli society and those who see themselves at its center is a dramatic one: Only 24.9% of the former group feel part of the state and its problems to a very large extent, as opposed to 45.7% of those in the latter group. A breakdown by political camp shows a striking similarity between the right, left, and center, which suggests that the claim that the left is estranged from the state and its problems has no basis in reality, or at the very least does not fit the self-perception of those who identify with that side of the political map.

Figure 31: Feeling part of the State of Israel and its problems (to a large extent and a very large extent; Jewish sample, by political orientation; percent)

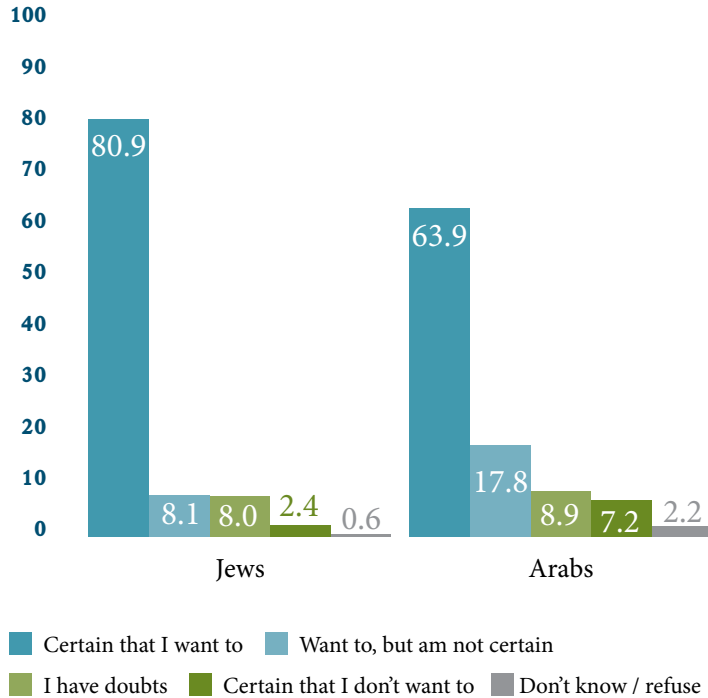


The feelings of pride and belonging are presumably among the major factors behind the finding that a decisive majority (78.3%) of the total sample are certain that they want to live in Israel in the long term (9.6% want to but are not certain, and 8.2% have doubts, while 3.1% say that they are certain they do not want to live in Israel). If the data are broken down by nationality, the overall pattern is similar, though the Arab public is slightly less certain than the Jewish one of its desire to live in Israel.

Staying in Israel?

Question 17
 Appendix 1, p. 245
 Appendix 2, p. 289

Figure 32: Desire to live in Israel in the long term
(by nationality; percent)



A breakdown of the figures by age shows that while the proportion of young adults who are certain that they wish to live in Israel in the long term is high in absolute terms, it is low relative to the two older age groups. By contrast, the percentage of young adults who are certain that they do not want to live in Israel, although low in absolute numbers, is greater than that in the intermediate and older age groups. This difference is not unexpected, since young people as a group, no matter when or where, always have the highest emigration potential. Nonetheless, if we consider all the above, along with other indicators of weaker ties with Israel that we pointed to earlier, we are speaking of a significant phenomenon.

Table 58 (percent)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
Certain that want to live in Israel in the long term	63.9	78.6	86.5
Certain that don't want to live in Israel in the long term	7.4	2.1	1.4

A breakdown of the Jewish public by religiosity shows that the proportion of respondents who wish to remain in Israel is highest among the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox (92.9% and 90.5%, respectively) as compared with the traditional (84.2%) and the secular (74.7%). Surprisingly, on the question of remaining in Israel, there is almost no difference between those who locate themselves on the fringes of Israeli society and those who see themselves at its center.

Breaking down the data by self-reported political orientation shows that there is a large majority in all three groups (left, right, and center) who wish to live in Israel in the long term, but on the left this majority is slightly smaller (right – 82%; center – 82.4%; left – 76.4%).

To what extent does the Israeli public not only feel a connection with the state but also believe that Israeli society is marked by mutual solidarity and cohesiveness? We posed two separate questions in this context: one, relating to Israeli society as a whole, and the other, to Israel's Jewish society only. The rating scale presented to the interviewees for both questions ranged from 1 (no solidarity at all) to 10 (very strong solidarity). Here are the findings:

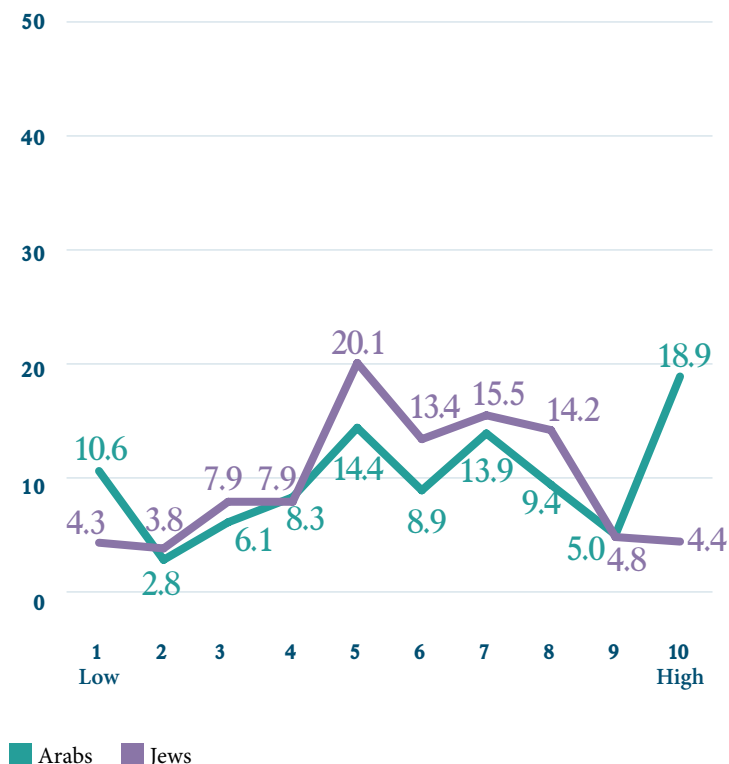
Solidarity of Israeli society

Questions 45-46
Appendix 1, p. 263

Figure 33: Solidarity of Israeli society as a whole (by nationality; percent)



Figure 34: Solidarity of Israeli Jewish society
(by nationality; percent)



As shown in Figure 33, the internal solidarity of Israeli society as a whole, as seen through the eyes of both Jews and Arabs, falls roughly around the middle of the scale, with a slight tendency toward the lower end, that is, a rating of moderate or less. This is evident in the average ratings presented in Table 59. As seen by both the Jewish and Arab populations, the solidarity of Israel's Jewish society is slightly higher, but not by much, than that of Israeli society as a whole, as we can see from the following averages.

Table 59

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Average solidarity rating of Israeli society as a whole	4.8	4.8	4.5
Average solidarity rating of Israeli Jewish society alone	5.8	5.8	6.1

It should be noted that when speaking of Israeli society as a whole, the average assessment of the Jews is higher than that of the Arabs (4.8, as opposed to 4.5, respectively). However, with regard to Israel's Jewish society alone, the Arab respondents see it as more unified than the Jews themselves do. Combining the Arab sector's responses to both questions suggests that the Arabs feel that Jewish society is cohesive and insular, whereas the Jews do not really feel a sense of solidarity among themselves.

A breakdown of responses from the total sample by self-location at the center or the margins of society raises some interesting differences: On average, those who see themselves at the center of society consider both Israeli society as a whole and Israeli Jewish society to be more unified than do those whose self-perceived location is on the fringes. In other words, not surprisingly, those in the latter group feel, on average, that the surrounding society is less cohesive than do those in the former group.

Table 60

	Average solidarity rating of Israeli society as a whole	Average solidarity rating of Israeli Jewish society alone
Locate self at center of Israeli society	5.1	6.0
Locate self at margins of Israeli society	4.1	5.4

And how does self-reported political orientation affect respondents' assessment of the level of solidarity of Israeli society?

Table 61

	Average solidarity rating of Israeli society as a whole	Average solidarity rating of Israeli Jewish society alone
Right	4.8	6.1
Center	4.9	5.8
Left	4.5	5.8

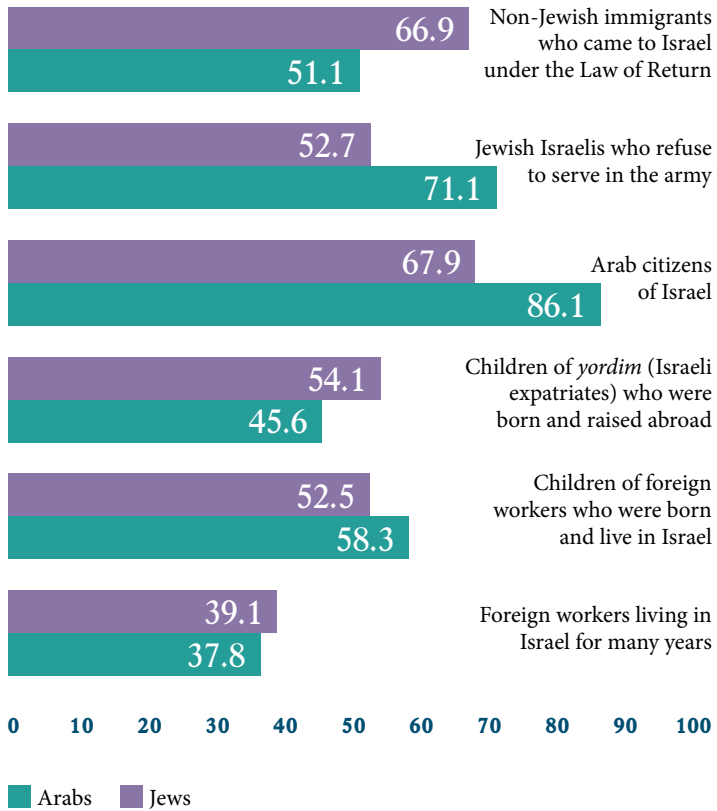
These averages indicate that, with reference to Israeli society as a whole, the assessment of the left is somewhat lower than that of the center or right, whose average ratings of social solidarity are quite close together (the center is slightly higher than the right). By contrast, when speaking of the level of solidarity in Jewish society alone, the center and the left share a lower assessment than the right. This result is consistent with the findings on the various indicators of belonging in the three political camps that we presented earlier.

Over the past year, the question of “who is an Israeli” has arisen in various contexts. It has been discussed, for example, in connection with the decision to deport the children of foreign workers and with the so-called “rabbi’s letter” (against the sale or rental of property to Arabs). In practical terms, the answers given by diverse elements of Israeli society are setting the boundaries of the “legitimate” collective—who belongs and who doesn’t, whose opinion should be considered and whose is irrelevant, which rights the state and society should grant to those who are part of Israeli society, and which should be denied to those who are not recognized as “Israeli” despite the fact that they reside in Israel. As we mentioned above in the context of making decisions crucial to the state, there is a clear-cut majority in the Jewish public that supports the exclusion of the Arab public, both on foreign affairs and security issues and in matters of governance and economy.

Who is an Israeli?

Accordingly, we asked: “Do you consider the following people to be part of Israeli society?” The responses, it transpires, depend on the group being discussed.

Figure 35: Do you consider the following people to be part of Israeli society? (positive response; by nationality; percent)



When the question was asked concerning Arab citizens of Israel, 70.7% of the total sample responded that they see them as Israelis. And in fact, a two-thirds majority of the Jewish public (67.9%) consider them to be Israelis, but this means that in Israel today almost one third take the contrary view—that Arab citizens of Israel are not “Israeli.” Among the Arabs as well, a small minority

(13.9%) state that they do not consider themselves Israeli, although the majority (86.1%) hold the opposite opinion.

As for foreign workers living in Israel for many years, a majority of the total sample (56.9%) feel that they are not Israelis. The Arab respondents, presumably because they are the most threatened economically by the presence of these workers, exclude the foreign workers from the status of “Israeliness” to a larger extent than do the Jews (61.1% versus 56.2%, respectively).

But when it comes to children of foreign workers who were born and live in Israel, the position is reversed: A majority of the total sample (53.5%) consider them Israelis. In this case, Jewish Israelis are actually slightly less accepting than Arabs (52.5% compared with 58.3%, respectively), perhaps out of concern that Israel will lose its Jewish majority in the long term.

And what of non-Jewish immigrants who came to Israel and received citizenship under the Law of Return? A majority of the total sample (64.5%) consider them to be Israelis. In the Jewish sample, the share of those who hold this opinion is noticeably higher than among the Arab sample (66.9% versus 51.1%, respectively).

We examined other exceptional situations, asking about the “Israeliness” of Jews who refuse to serve in the army—i.e., not those whom the army exempts from military service for this or that reason but those who refuse to enlist. In the sample as a whole, 55.5% see them as Israelis. As we found in other questions last year, it seems that the Jewish public today is quite tolerant on the matter of refusal to serve. A majority of Jewish respondents (52.7%) did not consider such a refusal as negating the right to be considered Israeli. This view was shared by 71.1% of the Arab respondents, who, as we would expect, attach less importance to military service as a “ticket” to Israeliness.

Not surprisingly, there is a difference of opinion between Jews and Arabs regarding the Israeliness of children of *yordim* (Israeli expatriates) who were born and raised abroad. In the total sample, 52.9% consider them Israeli; however, while a small majority (54.1%) of the Jewish respondents consider children whose parents are Israelis but who themselves were born, raised, and reside abroad to be “Israeli,” in the Arab population there is a small majority (50.6%) who hold that such children are not Israelis.

Question 50.4
Appendix 1, p. 265

Question 50.1
Appendix 1, p. 265

Question 50.2
Appendix 1, p. 265

Question 50.6
Appendix 1, p. 265

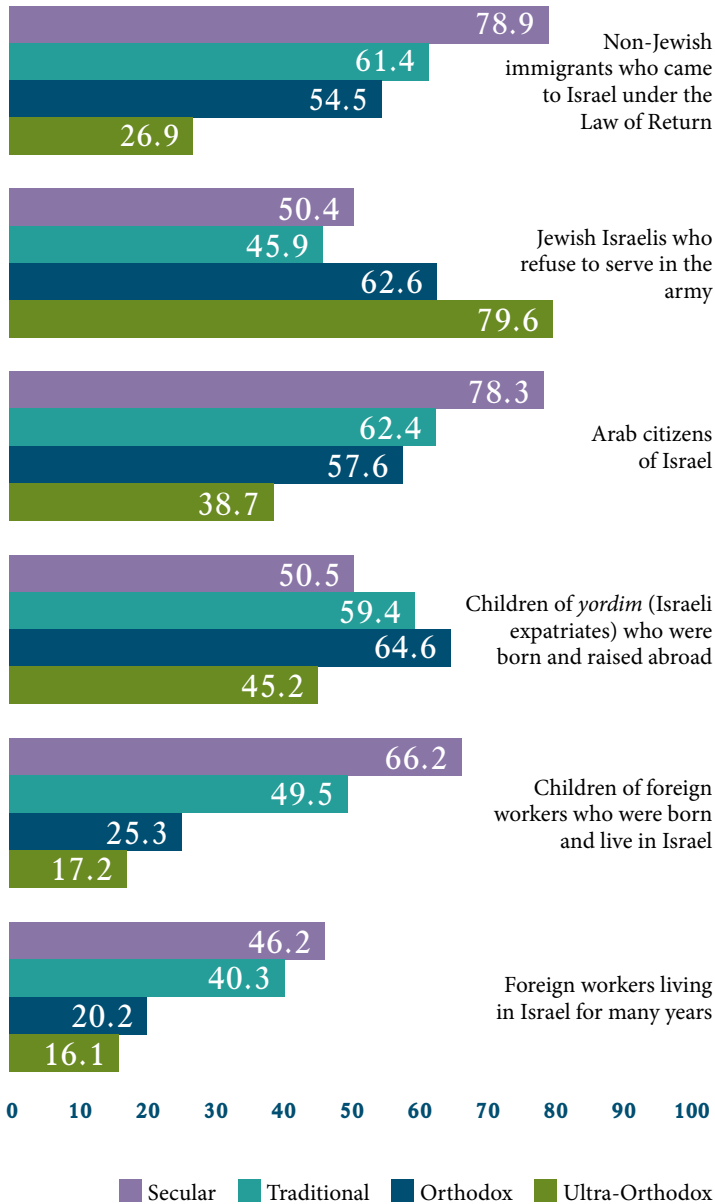
Question 50.5
Appendix 1, p. 265

Question 50.3
Appendix 1, p. 265

On the question of who is an Israeli, the opinions of the younger respondents often differ from those of the older age groups. Thus, the young adults—less than the intermediate and older age groups—consider the children of foreign workers to be Israeli (49.5%, compared with 55% and 54.4%, respectively), while they see the children of *yordim* as Israelis more than the two older groups do (60.5%, as opposed to 47.3% and 52.4%, respectively). Young Israelis consider Arab citizens of Israel to be Israeli significantly less than the intermediate and older age groups (59.2%, as compared with 76.8% and 72.6%, respectively). And again, with regard to the army: Young people—like the intermediate and older age groups—do not see the refusal to perform military service as a problem in terms of the Israeliness of the refusers: 66.2% of the young respondents and 62.1% of the intermediate age group, as opposed to only 44.2% of the older group, also define those who refuse to serve in the army as Israeli.

A breakdown of the responses of the Jewish public by religiosity demonstrates that the secular group is the most inclusive, except with regard to those who refuse to serve or the children of *yordim*. The ultra-Orthodox are the most exclusionary group, except—not surprisingly—when it comes to the Israeliness of Jews who refuse to serve in the army.

Figure 36: Do you consider the following people to be part of Israeli society? (positive response; Jewish sample; by religiosity; percent)



Breaking down the responses to this question by length of residence in Israel (that is, FSU immigrants compared with long-time Jewish residents of Israel) shows that the immigrants exclude almost all the groups on the list from the category of Israeliness to a much greater extent than do the long-time residents—with the exception of Arab Israelis, where the immigrants and long-time residents hold similar views. In addition, as expected, the immigrants show much greater willingness than the long-time residents to recognize non-Jewish immigrants as Israelis (89.2% as opposed to 62.3%, respectively).

A breakdown of the data by self-location at the center or the margins of society reveals that those in the latter group are more apt to exclude from the category of Israeliness foreign workers, their children, and the children of *yordim* who are living abroad than are those in the former group. As for the Israeliness of Arab citizens of Israel, the two groups hold similar opinions. With regard to those who do not serve in the army and to non-Jewish immigrants, respondents who locate themselves on the fringes of society actually exclude these groups to a lesser extent than do those who see themselves at the center, perhaps because there is a congruence in certain respects between themselves and the two groups mentioned (this subject requires additional study).

Breaking down the data by political camp reveals that when the question relates to Arab citizens of Israel or to children of *yordim* who were born and reside abroad, the left is significantly and unmistakably more accepting than the center, and certainly than the right, and in general is willing to recognize the members of all the groups below as Israelis.

Table 62 (percent)

Recognize as Israelis:	Left	Center	Right
Non-Jewish immigrants who came to Israel under the Law of Return	82.1	70.6	51.8
Jewish Israelis who refuse to serve in the army	66.0	52.4	51.4
Arab citizens of Israel	79.2	74.7	47.1
Children of <i>yordim</i> who were born and raised abroad	62.3	53.2	57.3
Children of foreign workers who were born and live in Israel	74.5	57.1	32.5
Foreign workers living in Israel for many years	59.4	41.8	23.9

All societies are constantly in a state of flux, and hence experience dynamic processes of cohesion and division over time. In recent years, much has been said about the emerging schism, or at best incompatibility, between the “State of Tel Aviv” and other parts of the Israeli state and society. We sought to examine the attitude of various groups in the Israeli public to this existing or imagined “State of Tel Aviv.”

We posed the following question: “There has been a lot of talk lately about the ‘State of Tel Aviv,’ implying that those who live there are cut off from the problems of the state and are not eager to fulfill their obligations as citizens. Do you feel that this is indeed the case?” In general, we can state that opinions on this question are divided. Thus, in the total sample, the share of those who feel that this is definitely not the case or who think it is not (together, 48.7%), is only slightly greater than the percentage who think or are certain that such a state indeed exists (44.8%).

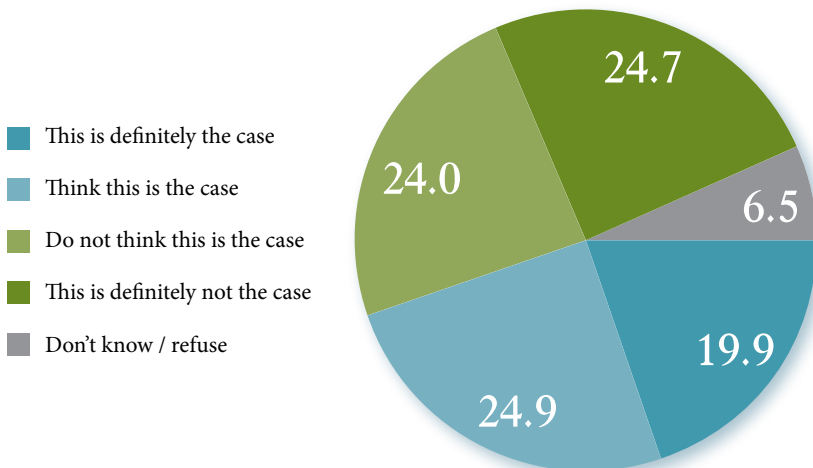
Is there a “State of Tel Aviv”?

Question 43

Appendix 1, p. 261

Breaking down the data by nationality, however, shows that in the Arab public, the share of those who feel that there is a “State of Tel Aviv” that is cut off from the rest of the country is actually somewhat greater than those who hold that this is not the case (45.5% as opposed to 41.6%, respectively). By contrast, among the Jewish public the proportion of those who do not accept this description of Tel Aviv exceeds the percentage of those who do (49.9% versus 44.7%, respectively), presumably because there are more Jews in the sample who live in Tel Aviv and who naturally take issue with the censure implicit in the statement that we presented.

Figure 37: Degree of agreement with the claim that there is a “State of Tel Aviv” (total sample; percent)



Breaking down the responses to this question by age, we find that people in the young and intermediate age groups—certainly to a greater extent than the older group—accept the argument that a “State of Tel Aviv” that is isolated or estranged from the rest of the country does indeed exist. It is interesting to note that differences were not found on this question between young ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox respondents, on the one hand, and young traditional and secular ones, on the other.

Table 63 (percent)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
An estranged “State of Tel Aviv” does exist	48.5	49.8	39.1

A breakdown of the Jewish public by religiosity demonstrates that the secular respondents believe less in the existence of an estranged “State of Tel Aviv,” while the traditional, ultra-Orthodox—and somewhat less so, the Orthodox—agree more strongly with this view.

Table 64 (percent)

	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
An estranged “State of Tel Aviv” does exist	37.4	53.8	49.5	52.7

Breaking down the figures by self-location at the center or the periphery of society did not show differences between the two groups. But a breakdown by political camp revealed that on the right, a majority (56.1%) hold that such a “State of Tel Aviv” does exist; the center is split in their opinions; and only a minority (25.5%) on the left confirm the existence of an estranged “State of Tel Aviv,” whose inhabitants shirk their civic responsibilities.

Political knowledge was also found to be a distinguishing variable: Perhaps because of less exposure to the media, which make frequent reference to this term with a negative connotation, those with limited political knowledge were less apt to confirm the existence of an estranged “State of Tel Aviv” (38.1%) than were those with a moderate or high level of political knowledge (46.2% and 52%, respectively).

Finally, we tested whether residing in Tel Aviv affects the position of respondents on the question of whether a “State of Tel Aviv” does exist. And in fact, the findings showed a correlation: Among residents of Tel Aviv, only one quarter agree with the assertion

that there is a separate, estranged “State of Tel Aviv,” while three quarters reject such a notion. Meanwhile, those who do not live in Tel Aviv are evenly divided between confirming and denying the claim.

Equal opportunity?

One of the fundamental principles of democracy is equal opportunity, even in the eyes of those who do not see economic equality as a basic value. Hence, we examined to what extent the public believes that there are differences in opportunity between various groups in Israel. We began with a question on the likelihood of success in life for those born in Tel Aviv, asking the interviewees if it is true or untrue that “people born and raised in Tel Aviv have a much better chance of succeeding in life.” It emerges that in the total sample, opinions are split almost evenly between those who agree with this statement (47.2%) and those who disagree (48.9%).

Question 44.1

Appendix 1, p. 262

Age and self-location at the center or the fringes of society were not found to play a role in forming an opinion on this question. However, a breakdown of the data by nationality demonstrates once again that Arabs, more than Jews, accord a special status to Tel Aviv: While a large majority of the Arab public (69.4%) agree with the statement that it is much easier for people who live in Tel Aviv to succeed in life, among the Jews a majority (53%) disagreed with this assertion. The fact that only a small number of Arabs live in the “Big City,” which symbolizes economic success and social integration, doubtless plays a strong role here.

A breakdown of the responses by religiosity shows that, of the religious groups, the traditional respondents believe the most strongly that people who are born and raised in Tel Aviv are more likely to succeed in life, while the ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox agree with this the least; the secular respondents fall somewhere in the middle. The reason may lie in the correlation between a traditional religious lifestyle and lower economic status, which makes living in Tel Aviv a much-desired sign of success in the eyes of this group.

Table 65 (percent)

	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
People born and raised in Tel Aviv have a much better chance of succeeding in life in Israel	42.6	51.5	34.4	32.3

Political orientation was found to have a certain influence, though not a strong one, on the responses to this question. A total of 40.4% on the right feel that those who are born and raised in Tel Aviv are more likely to succeed in life, while the corresponding figures for the center and left are 45.7% and 47.2%, respectively. As in the previous question, here too political knowledge is an influential factor: 39.3% of those with limited political knowledge hold that people born and raised in Tel Aviv are more likely to succeed in life, as opposed to roughly half of those with moderate knowledge (49.2%) and the majority of those with a high level of political knowledge (53.4%).

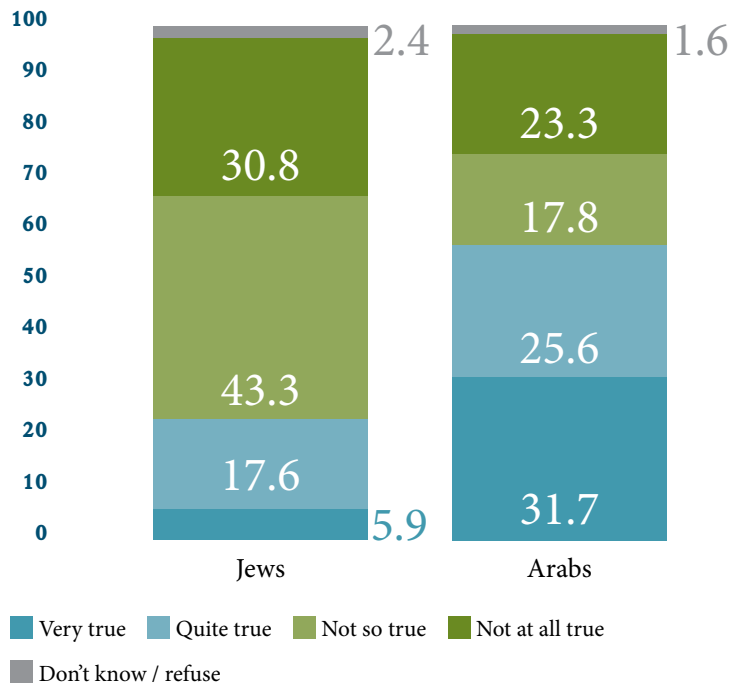
It is noteworthy that living in Tel Aviv was not found to affect the responses to the question of whether Tel Aviv residents enjoy greater chances of success in life.

From here, we moved on to the question of chances of succeeding in Israeli society for Jews as compared to non-Jews. Accordingly, we asked the respondents to express their opinion of the following statement: "People who aren't Jewish have no chance of succeeding in life in Israel today." The difference in this case between the Jewish and Arab respondents was so substantial that it would be wrong to present the distribution of responses of the sample as a whole. Among the Jews, there is a very large majority (74.1%) who feel that this statement is untrue. By contrast, among the Arab respondents, a clear majority (57.3%), though perhaps smaller than expected, agree with the statement that non-Jews have no chance of succeeding in life in Israel today. In other words, as in the question about discrimination against Arabs in Israel, here

Question 44.2
Appendix 1, p. 262

too the Jews do not agree with the assertion that the lives of Jews in Israel are easier than those of “others,” making it less likely that there would be a large majority of the Jewish public who would be in favor of steps to equalize the opportunities of Israel’s Arab citizens.

Figure 38: “People who aren’t Jewish have no chance of succeeding in life in Israel today” (by nationality; percent)



The differences on the basis of sex and age in this case are not large, in contrast to the differences in the Jewish public when the data are broken down by religiosity, which were found to be more substantial. Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox respondents agree less with the above statement (12.1% and 19.4%, respectively) than do secular and traditional Jews (23.8% and 25.5%, respectively), although the majority in all the religious groups in the Jewish

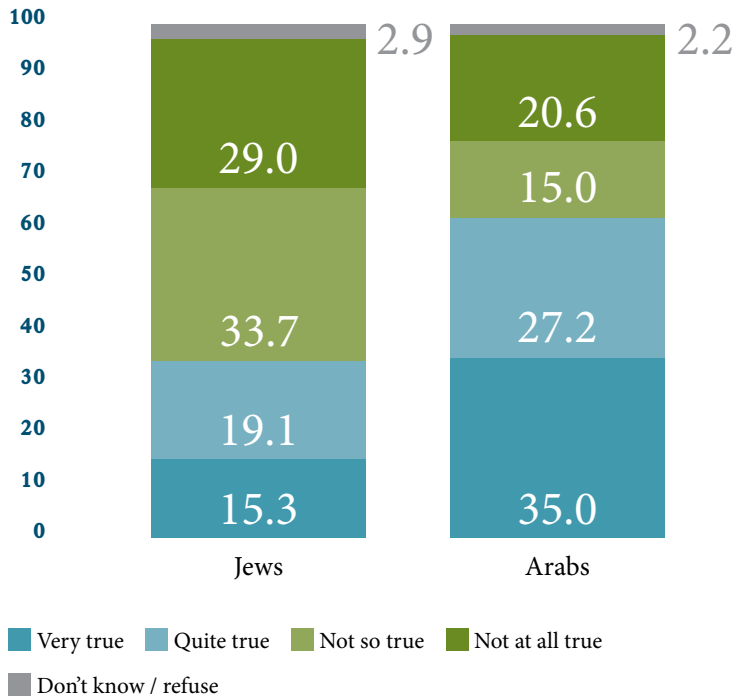
public deny the possibility that being Jewish in Israel makes for an easier life. Although in all three political camps (right, left and center), the majority do not agree with the assertion that Jews have a greater chance of succeeding in Israel, the rejection of this statement is extremely strong on the right (81.1%), less so in the center (73.9%), and weaker still on the left (57.5%).

As we saw above, the problems that a majority of the public consider the most pressing, and consequently the primary goals for the government to address, are the socioeconomic gaps between groups and the lack of affordable housing for young couples. We learned further that the majority feel that the foreign workers—even if they have been working here for many years—are not Israelis. We therefore endeavored to examine the connection between these two findings, that is, to ascertain how deeply the claim has taken root in Israel (raised by those fighting against the continued presence of foreign workers) that the difficulties experienced by many Israelis when they look for work or suitable places to live are related to the presence of foreign workers. We discovered that in “Jewish” Israel, there is no overall climate of opinion that blames the state’s situation on the foreign workers. Thus, only a minority of the Jewish public (34.4%) agree with the statement that Israelis are having a hard time today in terms of jobs and housing because of the foreign workers. By contrast, among the Arabs the share of those who agree with this claim is almost double (62.2%), apparently due to competition between this population and the foreign workers over similar types of work and housing.

Foreign workers as an obstacle

Question 44.3
Appendix 1, p. 262

Figure 39: “Israelis are having a hard time today with jobs and housing because of the foreign workers” (by nationality; percent)



The extent of agreement among young adults with the statement that the presence of foreign workers is making things harder for Israelis is higher than that in the two older groups (49.5%, as opposed to 37.4% in the intermediate age group and 32.9% in the older age group).

Breaking down the responses in the Jewish public by religiosity reveals a strong positive correlation between level of religiosity and the tendency to attribute the difficulties in finding jobs and housing to the presence of foreign workers. The ultra-Orthodox, more than the three other religious groups, unquestionably blame the foreign workers for problems experienced by Israelis in the above areas.

Table 66 (percent)

	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
The foreign workers in Israel make it harder for Israelis to find jobs and housing	20.1	30.5	40.4	63.4

A breakdown of the data by self-location at the margins or the center of society yields the finding that the former group agree more than the latter that the presence of foreign workers is creating difficulties for Israelis in finding housing and jobs (43.6% versus 36.9%, respectively). However, it should be noted that even on the margins of society, the majority do not hold the foreign workers responsible for difficulties in housing and employment.

The perception of the foreign workers as responsible for Israelis' difficulties in finding jobs and housing differs greatly from one political camp to another. The share of those who agree with the assertion that the presence of foreign workers makes it harder for Israelis is close to one half (49.4%) on the right, slightly more than one third in the center (36.8%), and roughly one quarter on the left (25.8%).

History has shown that despair with the present and anxiety about the future are among the primary contributing factors to the rise of anti-democratic movements and the fostering of similar views. We therefore looked at respondents' assessments of the future awaiting young people in Israel in comparison with their parents. The question posed was: "In your opinion, are young people's (ages 20-30) chances of establishing themselves professionally in Israel today better, worse, or the same, in comparison with their parents' generation?" In the sample as a whole, the most frequent response (42.8%) is that the chances of young people today are less than those of their parents (38.1% feel that their chances are greater, and the remainder have no definite opinion).

The distribution of responses shows the profound difference between the Jewish and the Arab populations in their assessment of the Israel's future prospects. Among the Jews, the highest percentage (42.1%) feel that young people's chances of success are greater than those of their parents, 38.8% feel that they are less, and 14.2% believe that there is no difference between the

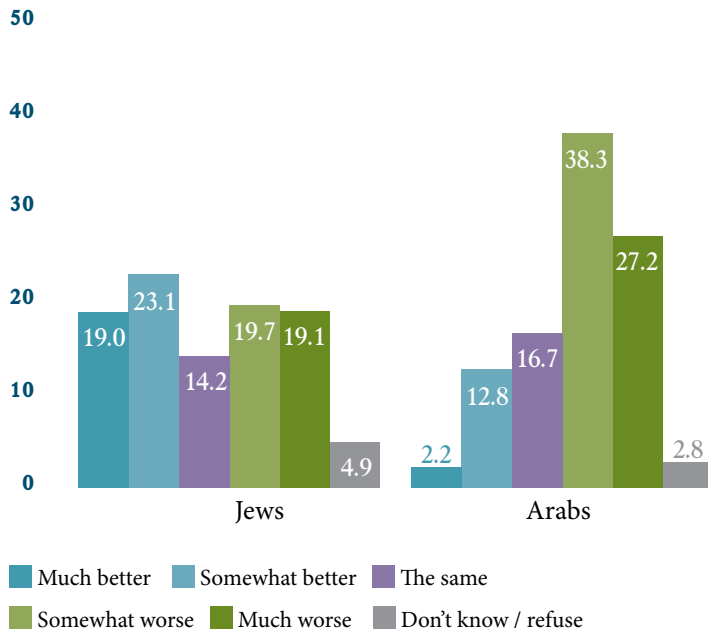
Chances of success then and now

Question 47

Appendix 1, p. 263

generations in this regard. Stated otherwise, the Jewish public holds more hopes than fears for the future. By contrast, roughly two thirds of the Arab public (65.5%) feel that young people's chances of establishing themselves professionally are lower than those of their parents, 16.7% hold that there is no difference between the generations, and only 15% feel that the younger generation's chances of professional success are greater than those of their parents. This finding is apparently a result of the steep rise in the level of education in the Arab public, bringing with it heightened expectations. This rise has not been met with a comparable response in the Israeli labor market, which explains (according to many experts) the political radicalization of the younger generation of Israeli Arabs. No doubt, the feeling in the Arab population of being at a "dead end," and the anticipation of failure in comparison with their parents' generation, is a factor that influences various aspects of political participation, attitudes toward democracy, and integration in the life of the state.

Figure 40: Young people's chances of establishing themselves professionally in comparison with their parents' generation (by nationality; percent)



Gender and religiosity were not found to be explanatory variables for this question. However, a breakdown by age shows that on the whole, young people—much more so than the intermediate and older age groups—feel that their chances of achievement are less than those of their parents' generation, which presumably contributes to their greater willingness to seek their fortune overseas.

Table 67 (percent)

	Young age group	Intermediate age group	Older age group
Young people's chances of success are lower than those of their parents	49.2	44.3	38.0

The same holds true for the respondents who locate themselves at the margins of society as opposed to the center. A much smaller share of the former group believes that young people's chances of success are greater than those of their parents (31.5% versus 40.8%, respectively). The assessment of young people's chances today as compared with those of their parents are not affected by political orientation or by level of political knowledge.

Summary

- > This chapter focuses on the sense of pride in being Israeli; the degree of closeness to the state and its problems; the solidarity of Israeli society in general and Israeli Jewish society in particular; the question of “who is an Israeli”; the existence (or not) of a “State of Tel Aviv”; the extent of equal opportunity in Israeli society; and young people’s chances of success in Israeli society as compared with the opportunities that were available to their parents.
- > The sense of pride in being Israeli is a robust one. A majority of 58.1% of the total sample state that they are “very proud” to be Israeli, while a further 24.6% are “quite proud” (82.7% in total). By nature, the intensity of this feeling among Arabs is lower than that among Jews, but in the Arab public as well the majority report some degree of pride in being Israeli. The sense of pride among young people is high in absolute terms, but lower than that in the two older age groups. The share of those who are proud to be Israeli on the left is lower than that at the center or the right of the political map.
- > A large majority of the total sample (78.3%) state that they are certain of their wish to live in Israel in the long term. The share of respondents who are sure of their desire to live here is lower among young people than it is among the older age groups. In the Arab population, the size of the majority who are interested in living in Israel is lower than that among the Jews (63.9% as opposed to 80.9%, respectively).
- > More than two thirds (69.5%) of the Israeli public feel a part of the state and its problems. But there is a tremendous difference between the Jewish and Arab populations in this regard: 75.3% versus only 35%, respectively.
- > The public gauges the level of solidarity of Israeli society in general as not particularly high. On a scale of 1 to 10, the average score was 4.8. The average solidarity rating of Israeli Jewish society alone is slightly higher at 5.8. Paradoxically, Israel’s Arab citizens ascribe a greater degree of internal solidarity to Jewish society than the latter sees in itself.

- > An examination of the question of “who is an Israeli” shows that only two thirds of the Jewish public consider the Arab population to be Israeli. A majority of the public as a whole (56.9%) do not accept the foreign workers as Israelis, but a similar majority do see the children of the foreign workers who grew up here to be a part of the Israeli collective. This is also true of non-Jewish immigrants who came to Israeli under the Law of Return. With regard to those who refuse to serve in the army, a small majority of the Jewish public, and a large majority of the Arab public, consider them Israelis. Roughly one half of the total public include the children of *yordim* (Israeli expatriates) who were born and raised abroad in the definition of Israelis. But while a majority of the Jewish population recognize them as Israelis, only a minority of the Arab public share this view.
- > Despite the attempts by various elements in the Israeli public to direct the feelings of frustration over jobs and housing toward the foreign workers, the message has taken root only partly: A third of the Israeli public as a whole hold the foreign workers responsible for unemployment and lack of affordable housing. But among the Arabs (as opposed to the Jews), the ultra-Orthodox (as compared with the other religious groups), and those who locate themselves at the fringes of society (as distinct from who see themselves at the center), there is greater agreement with the assertion that the foreign workers are responsible for these problems by their very presence in Israel.
- > The Israeli public is divided on the question of whether there is in fact a “State of Tel Aviv” that is cut off from other parts of the public. Among young people, Arabs, and right-wingers, as well as traditional, Orthodox, and ultra-Orthodox Jews, there are greater percentages who feel that such a phenomenon indeed exists. The vast majority of Tel Aviv residents reject the notion of a “State of Tel Aviv” that is estranged from the rest of the country, whereas those who do not live there are split in their opinions.
- > A majority of the Jewish public (74.1%) assert that there is equal opportunity in Israel, and reject the claim that Jews have

more opportunities than do non-Jews; but the Arab public feels that this is not the case, agreeing by a majority of 57.3% with the statement that non-Jews have no chance of succeeding in today's Israel. It should be noted in this context that a small majority (52.5%) of the Jewish public disagrees with the claim that Arabs in Israel are discriminated against, while 77.6% of the Arab public agree with it.

- With regard to the younger generation's chances of establishing themselves professionally and financially as opposed to those of their parents, a profound difference emerges in the positions of the Jewish and Arab populations. Among the Jews, the most frequent opinion (42.1%) is that young people's chances of success in life are greater than those of their parents' generation. By contrast, two thirds (65.5%) of the Arab respondents feel that children's chances of establishing themselves professionally are poorer than those of their parents. A breakdown of the total sample by age indicates that the share of young people who hold that they have less chance of establishing themselves than their parents did is higher than that in the older two age groups.

**Part Two:
The Israeli Democracy
Index 2011 Findings
Compared with
Previous Years**



Introduction

Part Two of the report attempts to identify changes and trends in public opinion in Israel regarding issues examined repeatedly in Democracy Index surveys. Differences among the data gathered over the years may signify authentic, cumulative change in public opinions over periods of a year or more, as well as the special influence of key issues on the public agenda at the time the respective data were gathered.²⁰ Part Two maintains the same order as Part One and relates only to survey questions that were also asked in previous years. The findings generally reflect responses by the total sample, except those specifically designated as applicable to the Jewish sample only. Furthermore, the absence of data in a given year means that the relevant questions were not included in that year's survey.

Chapter 1: The Political System: Its Nature, Structure, and Functioning

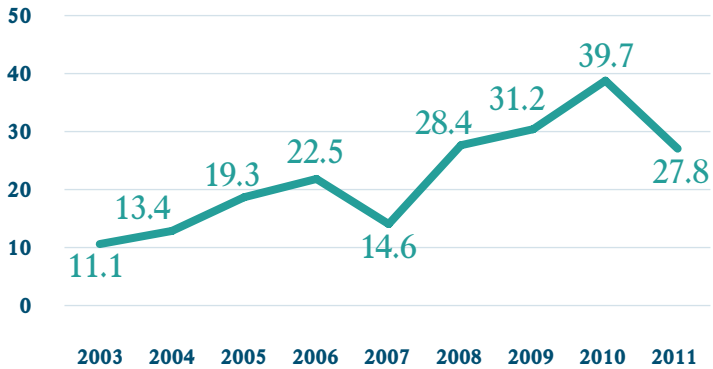
Over the years, only a minority of the population believed that Israel's situation was "very good" or "good" (in the peak year, 2010, the percentage came to 39.7% of the total sample). Nevertheless, as shown in Figure 41, there was a steady rise in positive assessment of Israel's situation from 2003 to 2010 (except for an aberrant decline in 2007), apparently because of the improvement in security conditions during those years as compared with the peak years of the Second Intifada in the early 2000s. This trend did not continue in 2011, however, as the Index displays no further rise:

**Israel's overall
situation**

²⁰ Comparison over time also entails methodological problems, such as differences in wording of questions in the respective surveys. As indicated, Part Two and Appendix 2—that presents data discussed here in the form of tables—direct the reader's attention to such cases. Another remark concerning methodology: The Democracy Index comprises a wide range of issues, augmented annually by additional questions relevant to the times. Nevertheless, constraints on interview duration may entail omission of certain Index components in the various surveys. Hence each year's survey may lack data on some of the issues nominally addressed by the Index.

The percentage of respondents assessing the overall situation as “very good” or “good” in fact declined by 11% compared with the previous year’s figures. Essentially, the percentage of the sample that assesses Israel’s situation positively now stands at about the same point as it did in 2008 (27.8% vs. 28.4%, respectively).

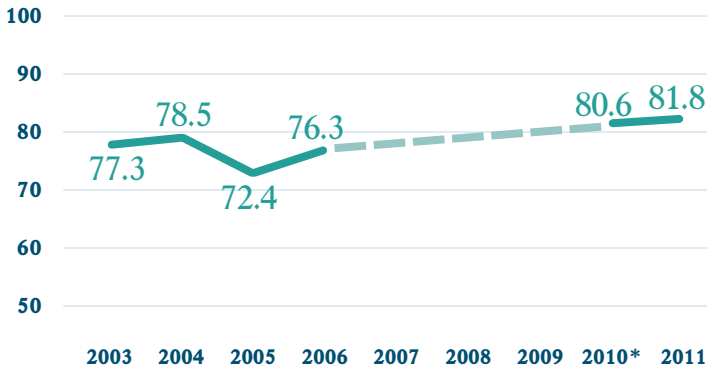
Figure 41: Assessment of Israel’s overall situation (very good and good; total sample; percent)



Democracy as the best form of government

Each year, a large majority supports the claim that democracy is the best form of government. In the most recent survey, a record 81.8% of the total sample expressed such support, a higher rate than in previous years, possibly influenced by the past year’s passionate discussions of issues connected with democracy and emphasis on the dangers of its erosion. In this sense, except for one slightly deviant figure recorded in 2005, public support for the general concept of democracy as the best form of government appears to be rising steadily.

Figure 42: Democracy is the best form of government (strongly agree and agree; total sample; percent)



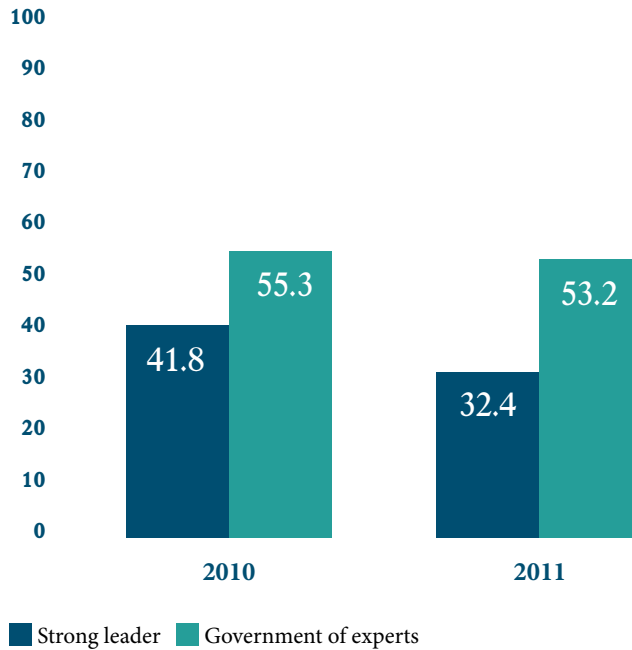
* There were only four response categories in 2010.

Over the past two years, we also examined public opinion regarding other forms of government. A clear majority of the total sample objects to forms of government characterized by a strong leader who does not have to take the Knesset or election results into account. In the last survey, 63.7% believed that this form is “bad” or “very bad,” compared with 53.5% who deemed it undesirable in the previous year’s survey.²¹ Opposition to a strong leader may have increased because of intensified public discourse about democracy following legislation and events that attested to the strengthening of anti-democratic elements in Israel, although support for a government of experts rather than elected representatives, that is also a none too democratic form of government, only declined slightly: Even today, a small majority of the public (53.2%) supports this form of government, as compared with 55.3% in the previous year.

Preferred form of government

21 It should be noted that previously, desire for strong leaders was not expressed as selection of a form of government, but rather as agreement with the statement that such a person “could be more useful to the country than all the discussions and laws.” When the issue was framed as such, a majority supported it, with peak support recorded in 2007 (65.5%)—a year in which public attitudes toward the political leadership in Israel were at a record low in many respects.

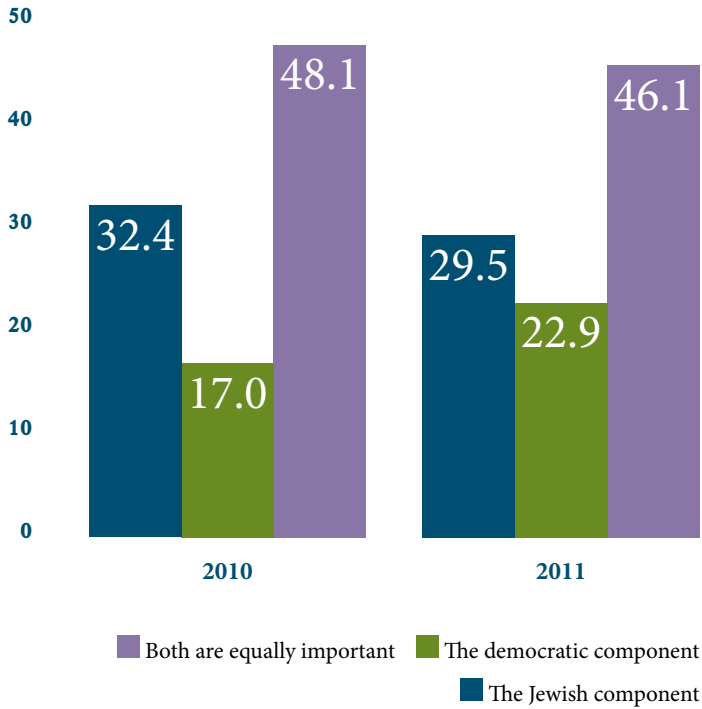
Figure 43: Strong leader vs. government of experts (very good and somewhat good form; total sample; percent)



A Jewish and/or a democratic state

In public discussion of Israel's definition as a Jewish and democratic state, the two focal characteristics may be considered either complementary or competing, depending on one's point of view. This year and last year, when the question was asked for the first time, the option with the greatest public support was the dual definition—Jewish and democratic. The second most popular preference emphasized the Jewish component, although this year the percentage of Jewish respondents who accorded preference to the democratic component rose to 22.9% (compared with 17% in 2010), possibly because of the numerous debates concerning relevant issues, such as the Rabbis' Letter. The respective figures for the remaining options were 29.5% for emphasis on a Jewish state (down from 32.4% last year) and the dual definition (down to 46.1% from 48.1% last year). It should be recalled, however, that emphasis on the democratic component is still the least popular option among the three, its supporters accounting for less than a quarter of the total sample.

Figure 44: Which component is more important to you personally in the term “Jewish and democratic” state? (Jewish sample; percent)*

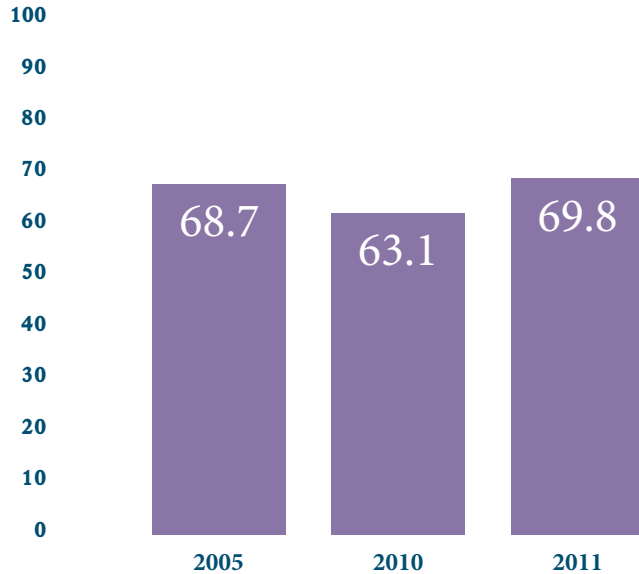


* For each year, the total of 100% includes those who responded “don’t know / refuse.”

All surveys over the years indicate that a two-thirds majority of the Jewish sample believes that rabbis should not rule on controversial political issues. The percentage was slightly higher in 2011 than in 2010 (when the question was worded slightly differently), essentially returning to the same level recorded in 2005.

Democratic principles or Jewish law?

Figure 45: Rabbinic rulings on controversial political issues (not appropriate; Jewish sample; percent)*

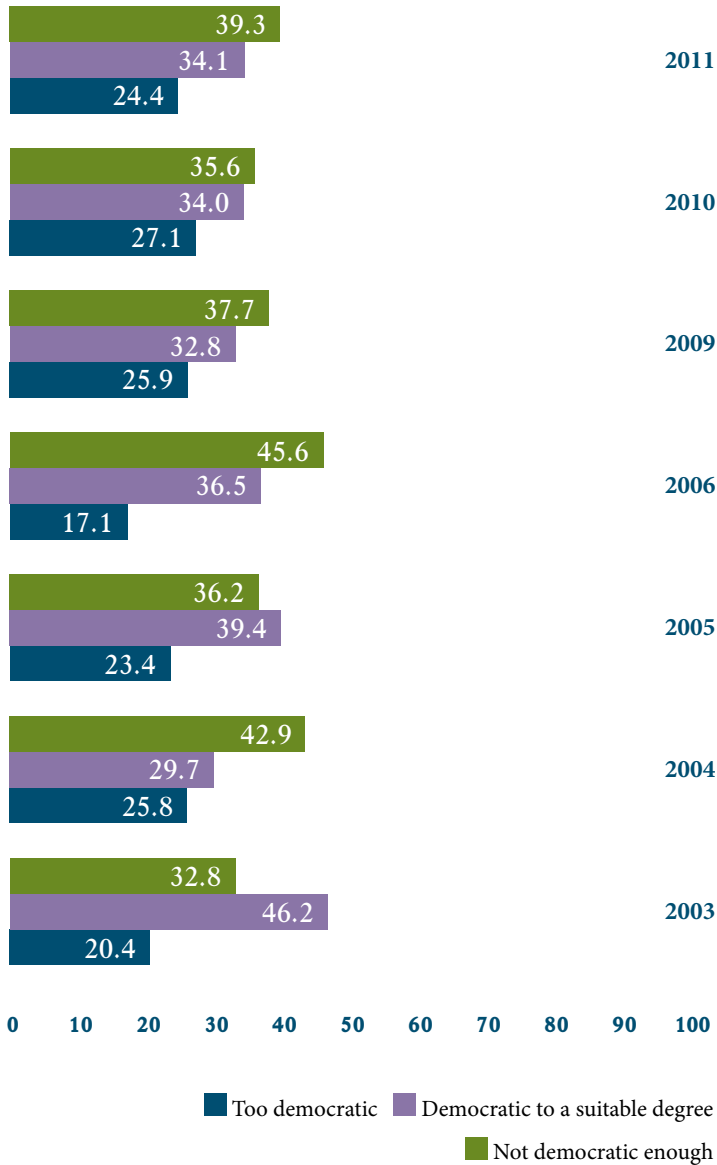


* In 2005, the question/statement was worded “Is it justified or not...” and in 2010 “Rabbis should always be consulted more often when crucial political decisions are made” (31.8% agreed with this statement, 63.1% disagreed and 5.1% did not answer).

How democratic is Israel?

This year, as in previous years, the most common assessment (expressed by a little more than a third of the interviewees) is that Israel is not democratic enough. In second place (about one third) is the claim that Israel is democratic to a suitable degree, while the smallest percentage believe that Israel is too democratic. This distribution of opinions is very similar to those prevailing from 2006 through 2010 and different from those of 2003 and 2005, when the most common assessment was that Israel is democratic to a suitable degree (the distribution in 2004 resembled that of the past few years). In other words, the percentage of people dissatisfied with democracy in Israel—i.e., those who said there was too little or too much democracy—was consistently greater than the percentage believing the extent of democracy in Israel is what it should be.

Figure 46: Is Israel today democratic to a suitable degree, too democratic, or not democratic enough?
(total sample; percent)*

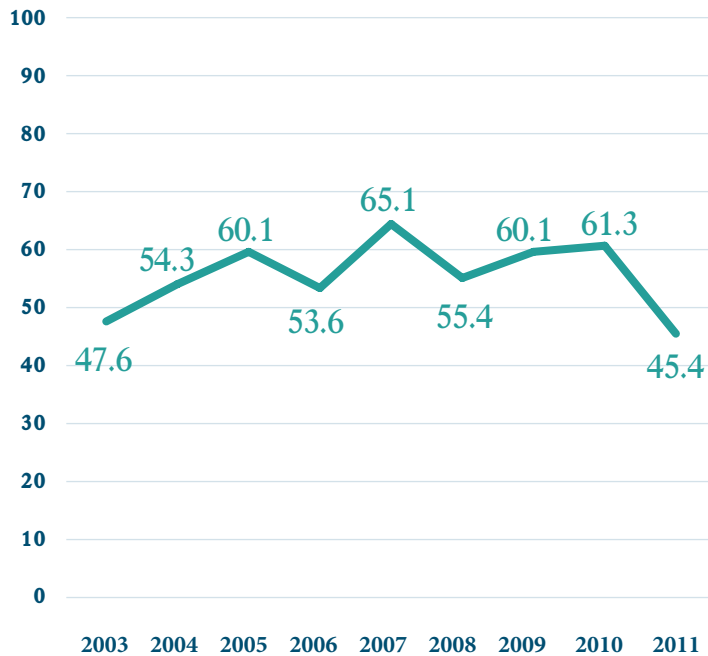


* For each year, the total of 100% includes those who responded “don’t know / refuse.”

**And how are
Israel's democracy
and government
performing?**

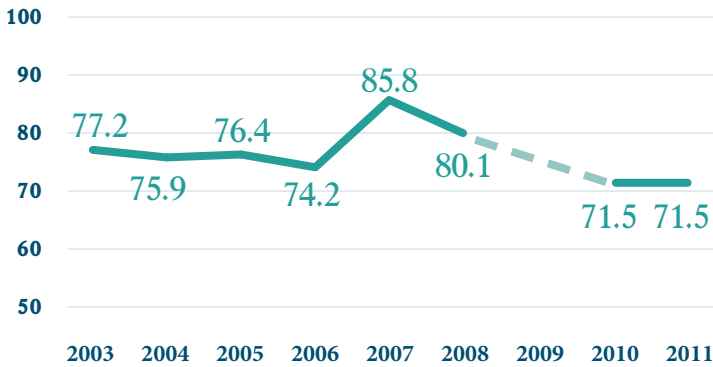
In 2011, a small majority of the total sample (52.3%) was satisfied with the performance of Israeli democracy, the highest satisfaction rate since 2003. This may represent a certain measure of recovery, but further evaluation will be required to determine whether the data represent a trend or simply an aberrant positive measurement, as the percentage of dissatisfied respondents systematically exceeded that of satisfied ones from 2005 to 2010.

Figure 47: Satisfaction with the functioning of Israeli democracy (very dissatisfied and dissatisfied; total sample, percent)



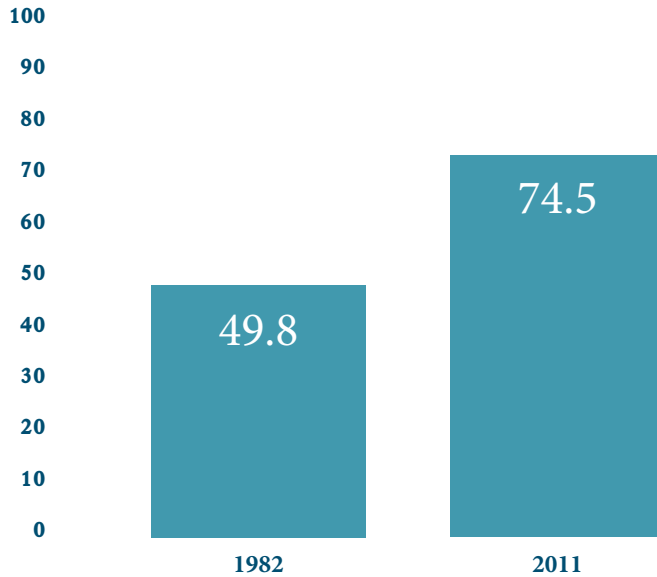
By contrast, in 2011 and 2010 alike, a very large majority of interviewees (71.5%) was dissatisfied with the way the government is handling state problems. Nevertheless, as Figure 48 shows, the percentage of dissatisfied respondents has declined slightly in the last two surveys, especially in comparison to the peak discomfort of 2007 and 2008, when dissatisfaction rates reached 85.8% and 80.1%, respectively.

Figure 48: Government's handling of state problems (not at all well and not so well; total sample, percent)



This year's survey included a question that had been part of the Guttman Center for Social Research surveys from 1969 to 1982 but omitted thereafter, examining feelings about whether the government is doing enough these days to explain its decisions to the public. A comparison of this year's results with those recorded nearly 30 years earlier (1982) displays a sharp decline in the percentage of respondents who feel that the government is explaining its decisions to the public adequately: In 1982, a little over half the sample believed the government was doing well in explaining its decisions, while the remaining 49.8% claimed it was doing nothing or almost nothing in this respect. By contrast, in the most recent survey, the latter percentage rose to 74.5%, as compared with only 22.7% who consider the government's explanatory conduct to be satisfactory or outstanding.

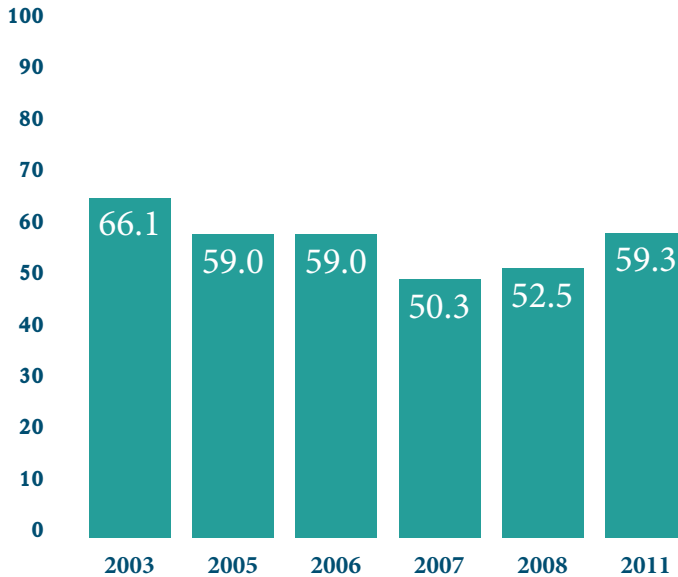
Figure 49: Is the government doing enough these days to explain its decisions to us? (doing too little and doing almost nothing; total sample, percent)



How representative is the Knesset?

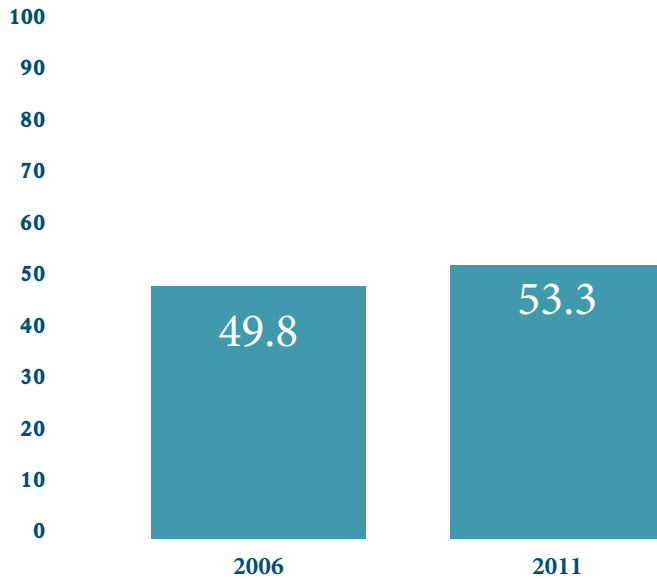
All Democracy Index surveys show that a majority of the sample believes that the respective Knesset factions duly reflect distribution of the public's opinions. Nevertheless, in the two preceding surveys examining this issue (2007 and 2008), a certain decline was observed in the percentage of respondents estimating that such representation is indeed appropriate (50.3% vs. 52.5%, respectively). The most recent survey displayed an increase in this percentage, with a clear majority of the sample (59.3%) believing that today, the balance of power among Knesset factions truly reflects the distribution of opinions among the public. Support for this position still has not yet returned to its 2003 level of about two thirds (66.1%), however and further evaluation will be required to determine whether a recovery trend is underway.

Figure 50: Balance of power among Knesset factions as a reflection of public opinion (to a large extent and to some extent; total sample; percent)



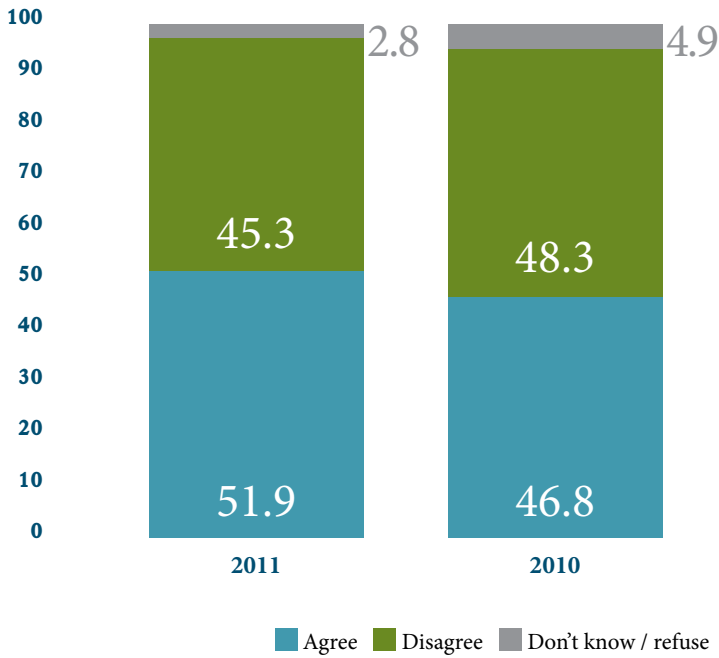
A small majority of the sample (53.3%) agree that competition among political parties strengthens democracy, representing a moderate rise relative to the results of the 2006 survey (49.8%). Nevertheless, the public's divided opinion appears consistent throughout the survey years, perhaps implying that the Israeli public has not internalized the basic democratic value of pluralism and constructive competition among parties.

Figure 51: Competition between Israel's political parties strengthens democracy (strongly agree and agree; total sample; percent)



This year and last year, we also examined whether the public perceives differences among the parties, considering repeated claims that the dividing lines have become diffuse and that the parties, especially the larger ones, have begun resembling one another. Last year, public opinion was divided on this issue, while this year a majority believe there are no real differences among the parties.

Figure 52: There are no real differences between the political parties in Israel today (total sample; percent)*



* Five response categories were offered in 2011 and four in 2010. For purposes of comparison, we divided the “not certain” response proportionately between those who agree and those who disagree, bringing the total percentage of respondents in this year’s survey who agreed with the statement to 51.9% and those who disagreed to 45.3%.

A comparative assessment of changes in public trust of institutions and officials during the years surveyed displayed a significant rise in 2011, especially in comparison to results recorded over the past 4 to 5 years. There appears to be a trend toward recovery and return to the trust rates typical of the first few Democracy Indexes conducted in the early 2000s. The following figures present comparative findings:

Trust in officials and institutions

Figure 53: Trust in the Supreme Court, State Attorney’s Office, Attorney-General and State Comptroller (to a large extent and to some extent; total sample; percent)



Figure 54: Trust in the Knesset, government and political parties (to a large extent and to some extent; total sample; percent)

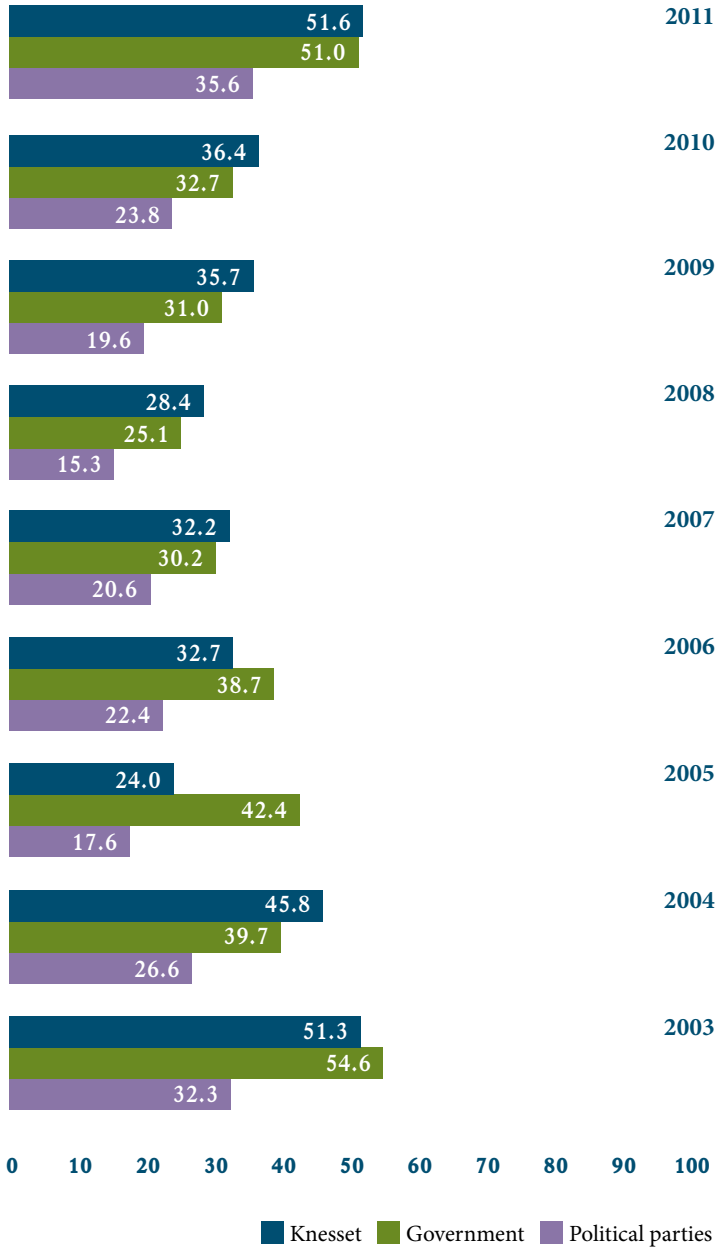


Figure 55: Trust in the army (IDF) and the police (to a large extent and to some extent; total sample; percent)

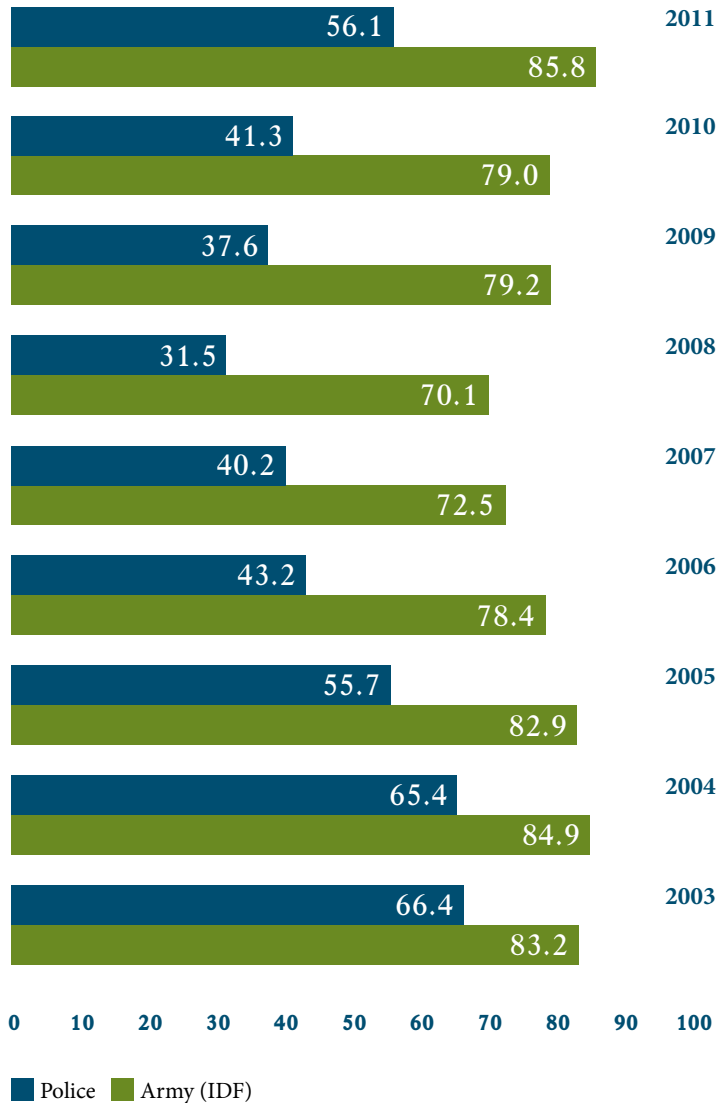


Figure 56: Trust in the Chief Rabbinate (to a large extent and to some extent; total sample; percent)

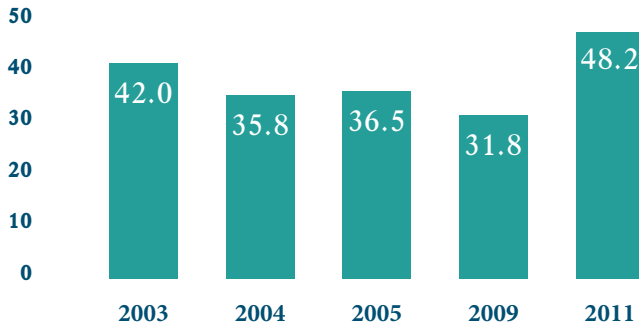


Figure 57: Trust in the media (to a large extent and to some extent; total sample; percent)

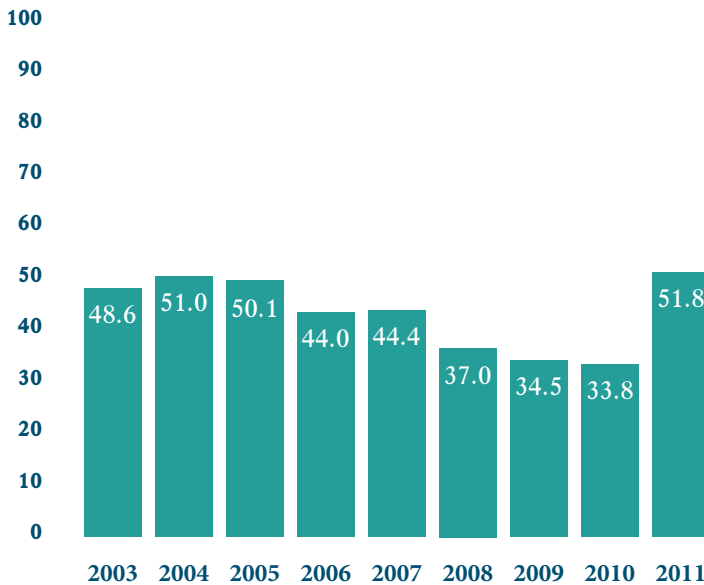


Figure 58: Trust in the prime minister and the president (to a large extent and to some extent; total sample; percent)

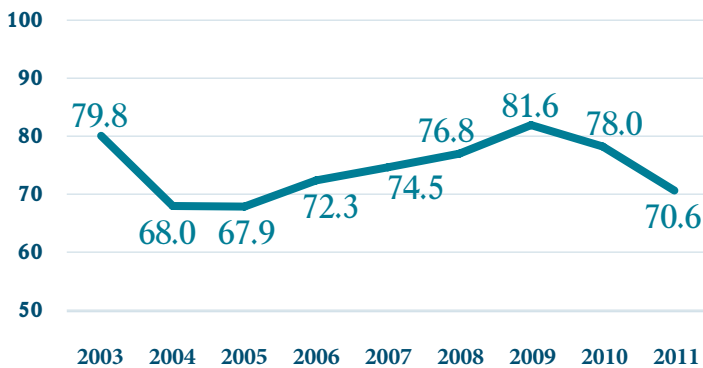


Chapter 2: The Citizen and Democratic Politics

In all years surveyed, a majority of the sample—ranging from a low of 68% in 2004 to a high of 81.6% in 2009—feel unable to influence government policy. This year, the figure came to 70.6%, a smaller majority than in recent years. In other words, it appears that although a majority feels helpless, the percentage of Israelis believing the public does have the ability to influence policy has increased slightly. Further evaluation will be required to determine whether this increase marks a trend of improvement.

Citizens' ability to influence policy

Figure 59: To what extent are you and your friends able to influence government policy? (to a small extent and not at all; total sample; percent)

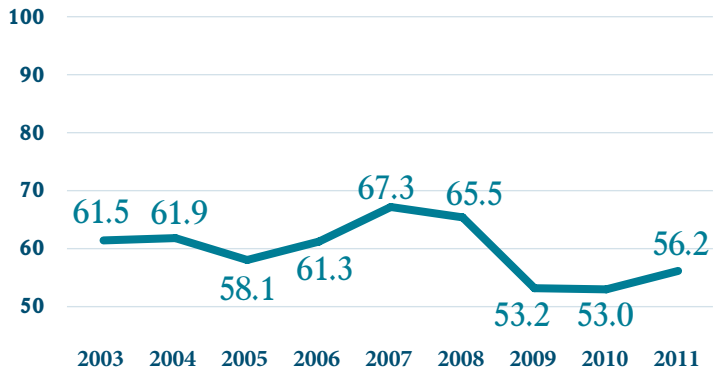


A rather slender majority consistently maintained that politicians do not tend to consider the opinion of the average citizen. The percentage of respondents who share this view increased gradually from 2006 to 2008, reaching about two thirds of the sample. In 2009 and 2010, however, a certain improvement was noted, i.e., the percentage of respondents expressing this view declined (51.4% and 50.5%, respectively). In this year's survey, the percentage rose slightly (56.2%), indicating a worsening in

Attentiveness to the will of the people

public evaluation of elected officials’ attentiveness. In this case as well, further evaluation is required to determine whether this downturn marks the inception of a return to the “bad years.”

Figure 60: Politicians do not tend to consider citizens’ opinions (strongly agree and agree; total sample; percent)*

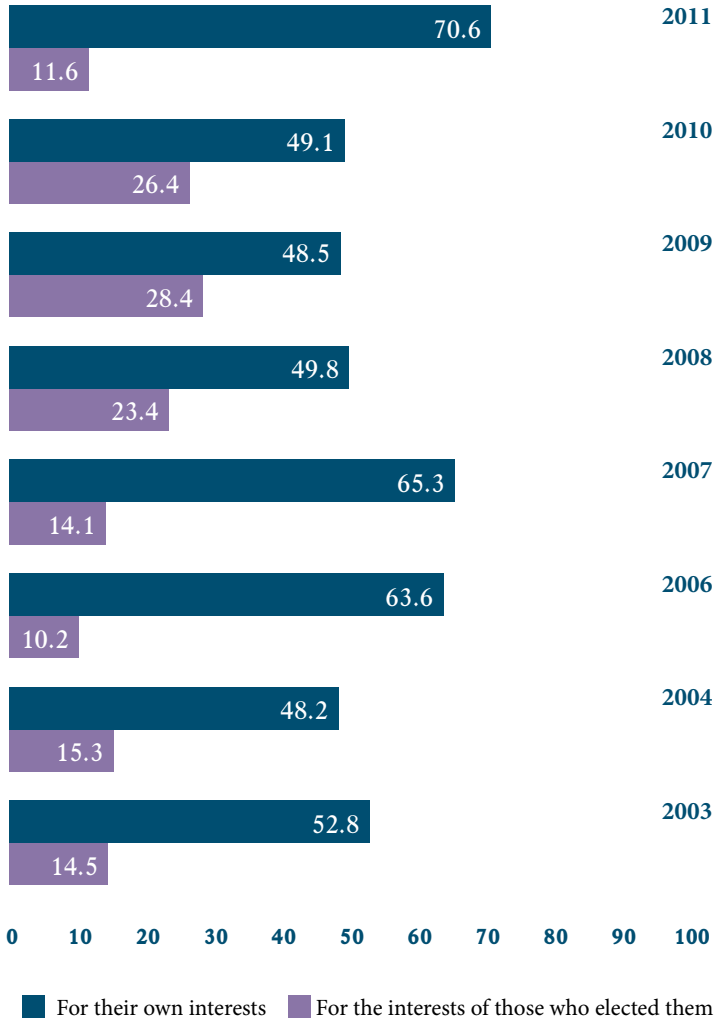


* Five response categories were offered in 2009 and 2010, as opposed to four categories in surveys of other years. For purposes of comparison, we divided the “not certain” response in those years proportionately between those who agree and those who disagree, bringing the total percentage of respondents who agreed with the statement to 53.2% in 2009 and 53% in 2010.

Whom do politicians look out for?

Are politicians more concerned for their own interests and well-being than those of the public? Each year, about half to two-thirds of the sample believed that politicians look out more for their own interests. In the most recent survey, the percentage of respondents who suspected politicians’ motives and considered them very selfish was higher than in previous years, reaching 70.6%, while an increasing minority believed that elected officials consider public interests to be foremost. The declining percentage of respondents who were not sure or did not know apparently reflects the public’s conviction that politicians largely look out for themselves. It should be noted, however, that this question has been phrased in numerous ways and one should exercise caution in comparing data.

Figure 61: Politicians look out more for their own interests than for those of the people who elected them* (total sample; percent)**



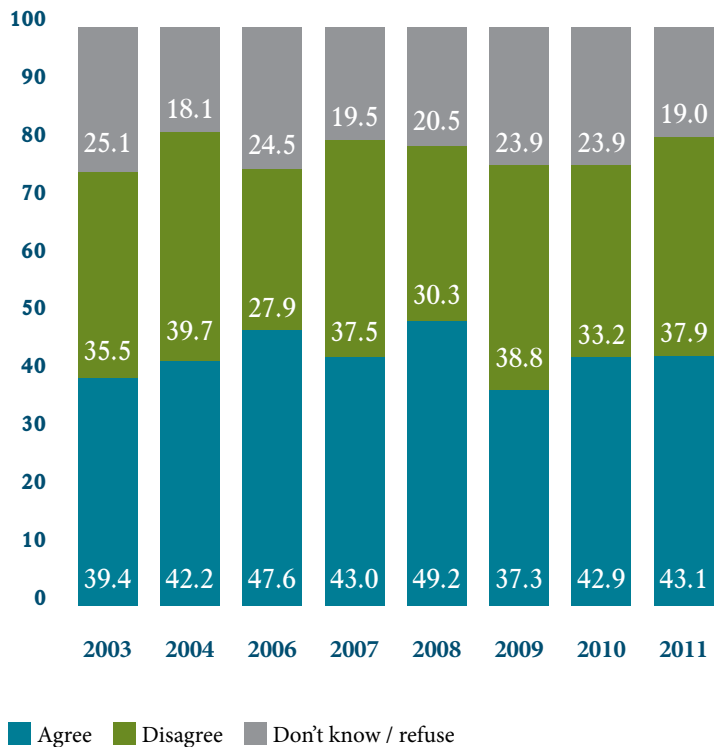
* The phrasing of the question changed over the years. Beside the personal interest of “the people leading the country,” “the leaders,” and, from 2009 “politicians,” were: the interests of the public that elected them, the general public interest or of the country in general. The number of possible responses also changed—3, 4 or 5—as did their phrasing. Thus, caution should be exercised in comparing the data (the phrasing from 2009-2011 is identical).

** For each year, the total of 100% includes those who responded “not sure,” “equally” and “don’t know / refuse.”

Integrity of politicians

Every year (except 2009, for some reason), surveys showed that the public tended to suspect the integrity of politicians as well. The prevailing conception among many was that to reach the top in Israeli politics, you have to be corrupt, with an increasingly larger percentage of persons agreeing with this statement than disagreeing (except in 2009, as indicated). Perception of corruption as a political springboard was more common in 2006 and 2008 (47.6% and 49.2%, respectively), while 43.1% of the sample concurred in the most recent survey.

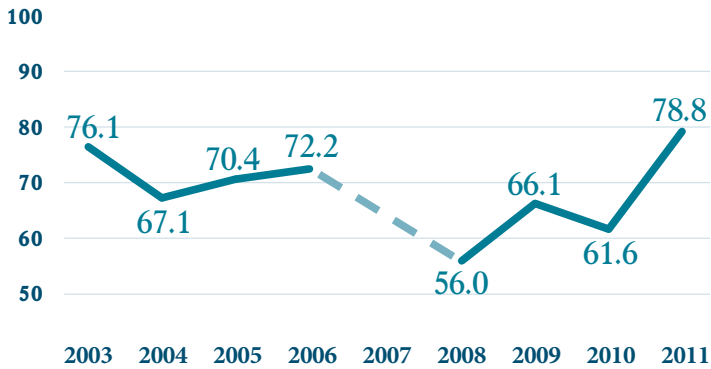
Figure 62: To reach the top in Israeli politics, you have to be corrupt (agree vs. disagree; total sample; percent)



Over the years, the Israeli public's interest in politics has experienced certain fluctuations, but a considerable majority of Israelis consistently report high interest in politics, especially when compared to the level of interest displayed by citizens of many European democratic countries and especially the United States. In the most recent survey, the percentage of respondents who reported a large extent or some extent of interest in politics was 78.8%—the highest rate ever, similar only to the one recorded in the first Democracy Index in 2003.

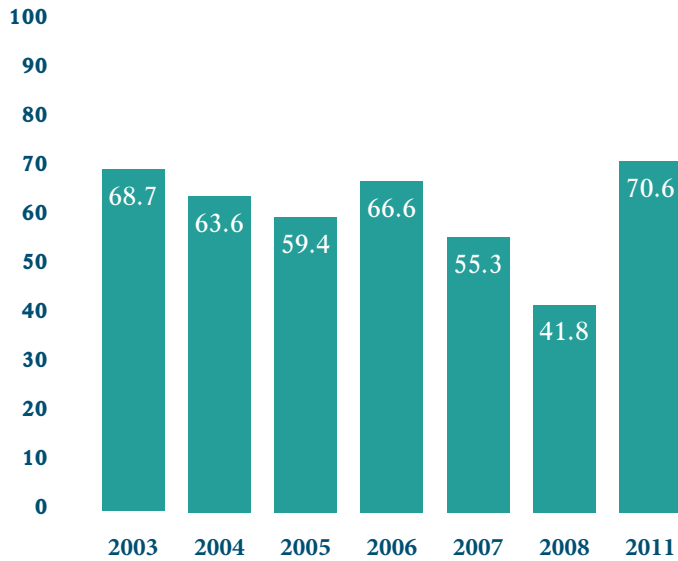
Interest in politics

Figure 63: Interest in politics (to a large extent and to some extent; total sample; percent)



In all years (except 2008, which marked a low point in the relationship between citizens and the political system, as indicated earlier), most interviewees reported that they tended to talk about political issues with their friends and family. The percentage this year (70.6%) is the highest of all, even exceeding the figures for 2003 and 2006. In this case as in others, passionate debates over democracy-related issues may have intensified the topic's centrality in the public and interpersonal discourse.

Figure 64: How much do you talk with friends and family about political issues? (a lot and to some extent; total sample; percent)*

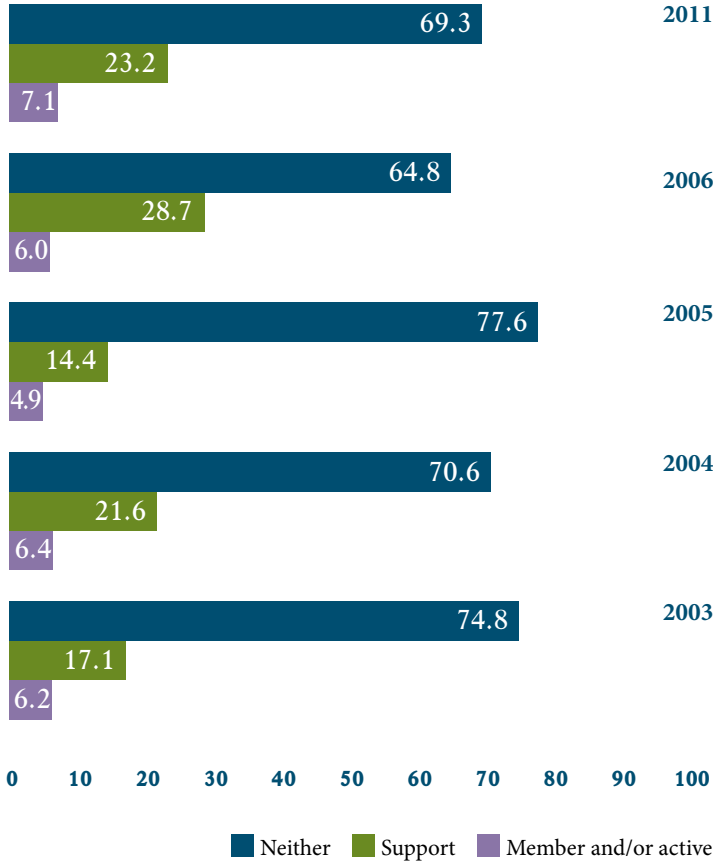


* In the 2008 survey, the categories were worded: “very often,” “sometimes” and “very seldom.”

Political involvement: parties

Despite the high interest in politics, a sizable majority of the public does not belong to or support any political party whatsoever. Only a few respondents (7.1%) reported party membership this year, with no dramatic change in percentage over the years (only in 2004 was the reported party membership rate significantly lower than those recorded in the other surveys). Figure 65 shows that the percentage of non-member supporters of political parties is low as well, ranging around one fifth of the population, with some fluctuation.

Figure 65: Involvement in political parties (total sample; percent)*

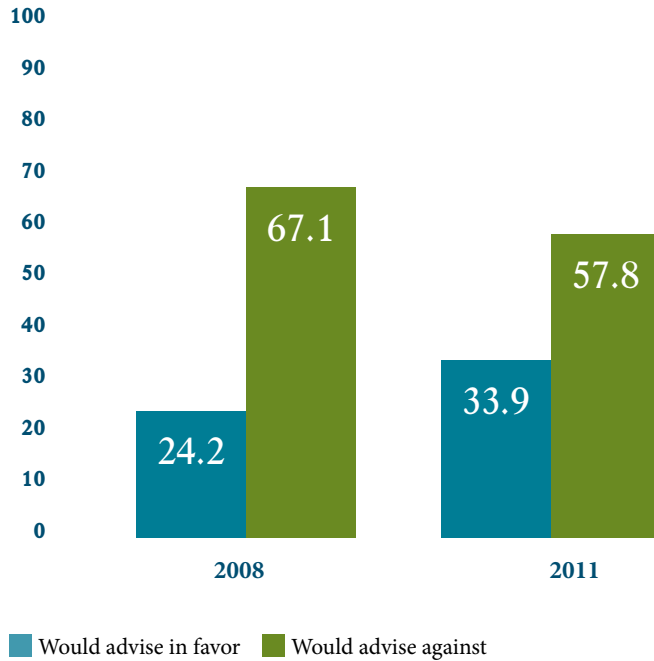


* For each year, the total of 100% includes those who responded “don’t know / refuse.”

Most of the public would not advise a close friend or relative to go into politics. However, in comparison to 2008, when the question was presented for the first time, the percentage of respondents who would so advise if asked increased somewhat this year (33.9%, as compared with 24.2% in 2008).

**Entering
political life**

Figure 66: If someone close to you—a friend or family member—were considering going into politics, how would you advise him or her? (total sample; percent)*



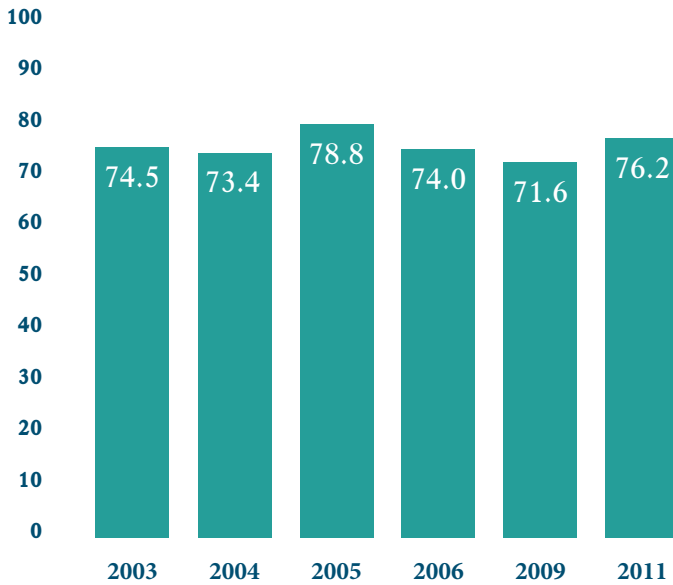
* For each year, the total of 100% includes those who responded “don’t know / refuse.”

Awareness of democratic values

On an abstract level, most of the public in Israel supports the principles of democracy, although a comparison over the years displays constant discrepancies between perception in principle and opinions connected with the realities of life in Israel.

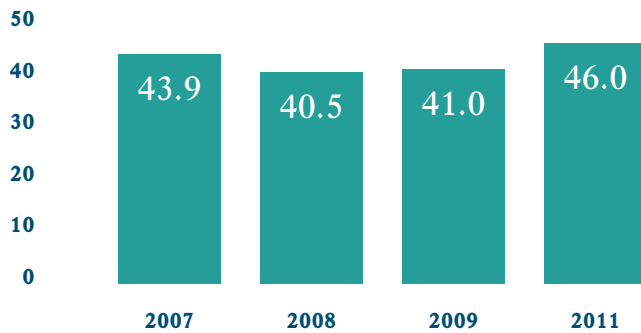
Freedom of expression: In all years, about three quarters of the sample support freedom of expression for all people, irrespective of their opinions. This year, the percentage comes to 76.2% (exceeded only in 2005 – 78.8%).

Figure 67: Freedom of expression for all, regardless of views (strongly agree and agree; total sample; percent)



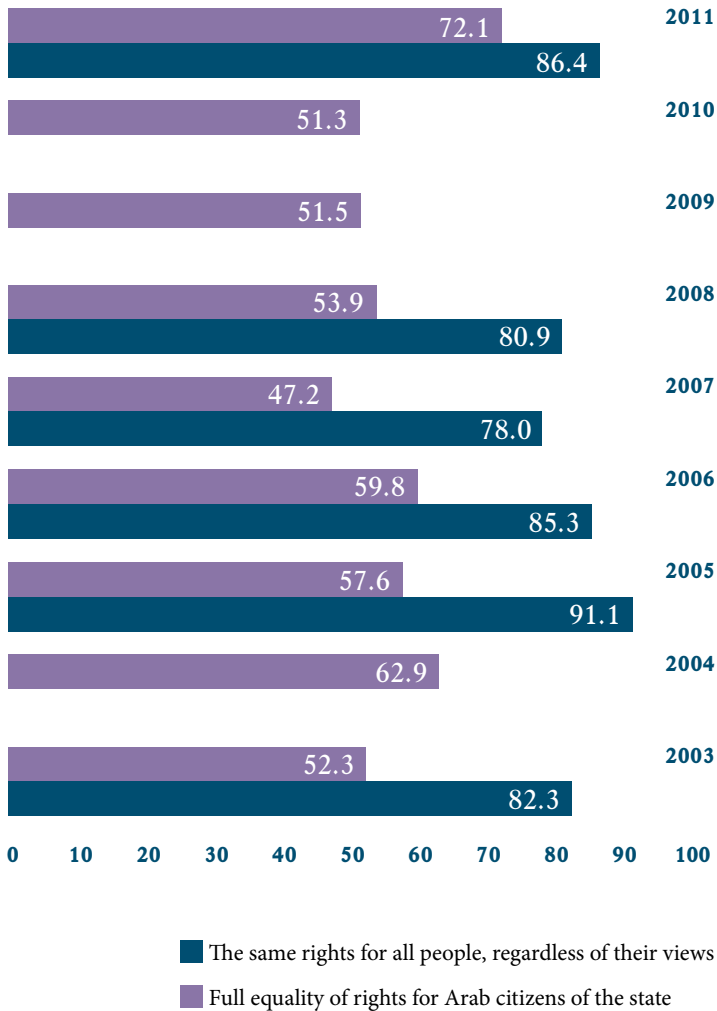
When the percentage of support for public criticism of the state is examined, however, it turns out to be far lower than that of support in principle for freedom of expression. Nevertheless, receptivity to such criticism, when voiced by public speakers, increased slightly to a record high this year (46%).

Figure 68: Speakers should be prohibited from harshly criticizing the State of Israel in public (strongly disagree and disagree somewhat; total sample; percent)



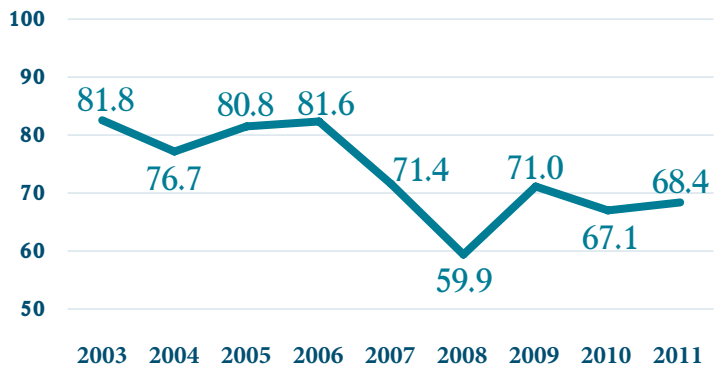
Equal rights: This year, support in principle for equal rights under the law, irrespective of one's opinions, is among the highest ever measured in any Democracy Index (86.4%; a peak of 91.1% was recorded in 2005). Nevertheless, when public support for full equality of rights between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel is examined, the picture is somewhat less rosy. As Figure 69 shows, support for full equality between Arab and Jewish citizens has fluctuated over the years, but was always less than support for full rights under the law in the abstract sense. In the 2011 survey, however, it appears that thanks to the recent increasing public discourse on this issue, such support has reached a record high (72.1%, compared with values ranging from the previous high of 62.9% in 2004 to a low of 47.2% in 2007).

Figure 69: Equal rights for all and equal rights for Arab citizens of the state (strongly agree and agree somewhat; total sample; percent)



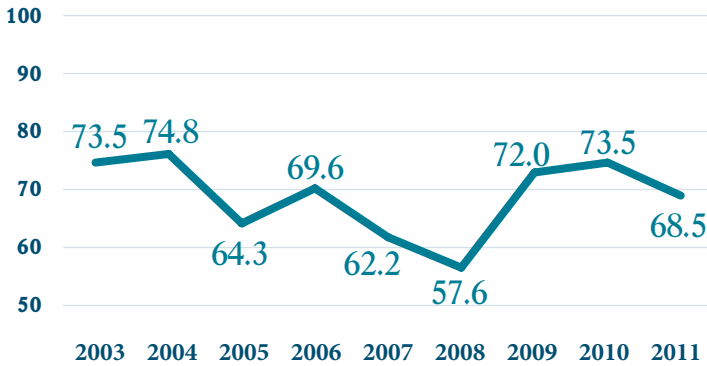
Use of violence to achieve political objectives: A majority of Israel's population has consistently opposed the use of violence to achieve political ends. In this year's survey, 68.4% of the sample expressed such opposition, resembling percentages recorded over the past few years but lower than those noted from 2003 to 2007. In other words, there is a tendency toward decline in opposition to use of violence for political purposes. This trend is highly deleterious to the democratic process, which calls for settling disputes by non-violent means.

Figure 70: It is never justified to use violence to achieve political ends (strongly agree and agree somewhat; total sample; percent)



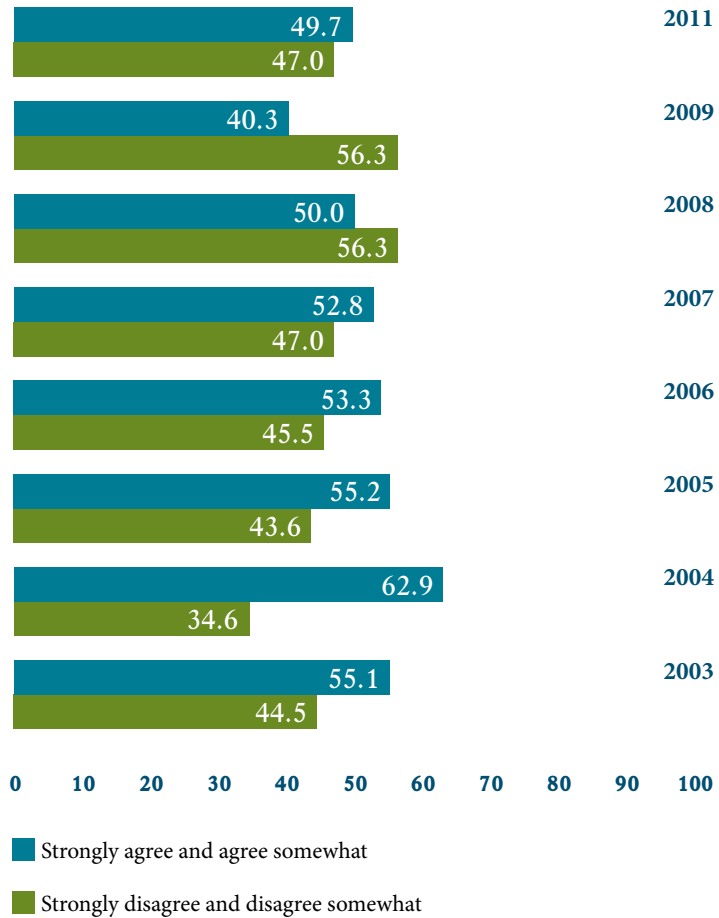
Majority rule or majority tyranny?: Most of Israel's Jewish population (68.5% in 2011) has believed consistently that crucial state decisions concerning peace and security must be made by a Jewish majority. Support for actually excluding Arab citizens of Israel from such decision making has fluctuated, however. Assent to exclusion reached a peak of nearly two thirds in 2003, 2004, 2009 and 2010.

Figure 71: Decisions crucial to the state on matters of peace and security should be made by a Jewish majority (strongly agree and agree somewhat; Jewish sample; percent)



Empathy and acceptance vis-à-vis the “other”: In most years, the Israeli public was divided more or less equally between those who agree or disagree with the statement that Arab citizens of Israel are discriminated against compared with Jewish citizens. The distribution recorded in the most recent survey resembles those of 2007 and 2008; in earlier surveys (2003-2006), the percentage of respondents believing that Arab citizens are discriminated against was slightly higher, especially in 2004 (62.9%), but was extraordinary low in 2009 (only 40.3%). Nevertheless, as noted in Part One (p. 125), there is a vast difference between assessments by the Jewish and Arab populations (a datum that is not reflected in the following figure): A majority of Jewish citizens rejects the claim of discrimination against Arabs, while most Arab citizens accept it. In other words, over the past few years, the majority believing that Arab citizens of Israel are discriminated against has diminished, as much of the Jewish population have changed their agreement with the claim of discrimination against Arabs to denial of it.

Figure 72: Arab citizens of Israel are discriminated against, compared with Jewish citizens (total sample; percent)*



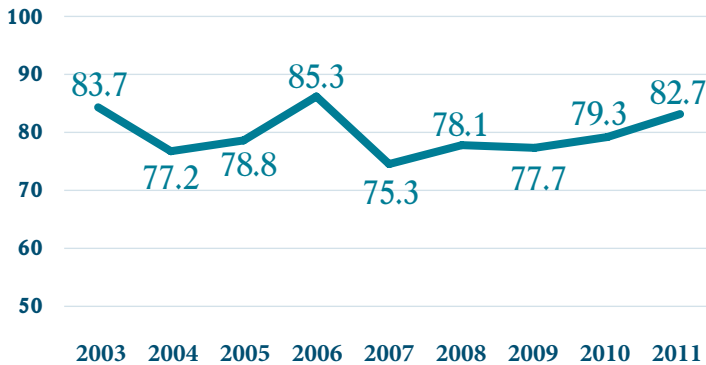
* For each year, the total of 100% includes those who responded “don’t know / refuse.”

Chapter 3: The Citizen and Israeli Society

Pride in being Israeli was expressed by most respondents in all years surveyed. Half the sample or slightly more claimed to be “very proud” to be Israeli and a vast majority consistently selected the “very proud” or “somewhat proud” responses. Minor fluctuations in this respect are clearly no cause for concern.

Pride in being Israeli

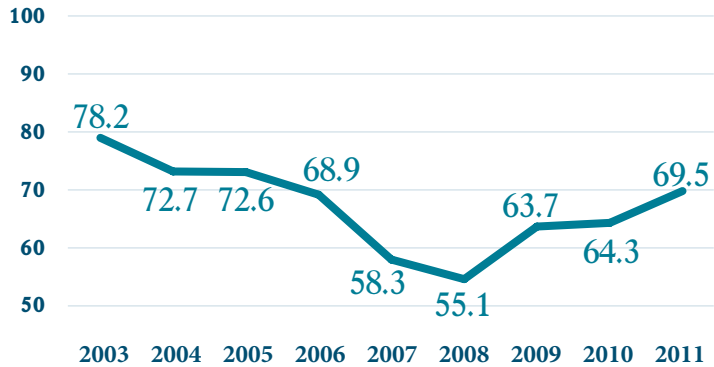
Figure 73: Pride in being Israeli (very proud and somewhat proud; total sample; percent)



As in the issue of pride in being Israeli, most Israelis report consistently that they feel part of the State of Israel and its problems, although there has been a downward trend followed by recovery. The highest percentage of respondents expressing such feelings was recorded in the 2003 survey (78.2%). This was followed by a steady decline, reaching a low of 55.1% in 2008 (responses of “to a large extent” and “to a very large extent”). Since then, however, the trend has reversed and the feeling of being part of Israel has been on the rise, with 69.5% of respondents expressing such feelings in the 2011 survey.

Feeling part of the state and its problems

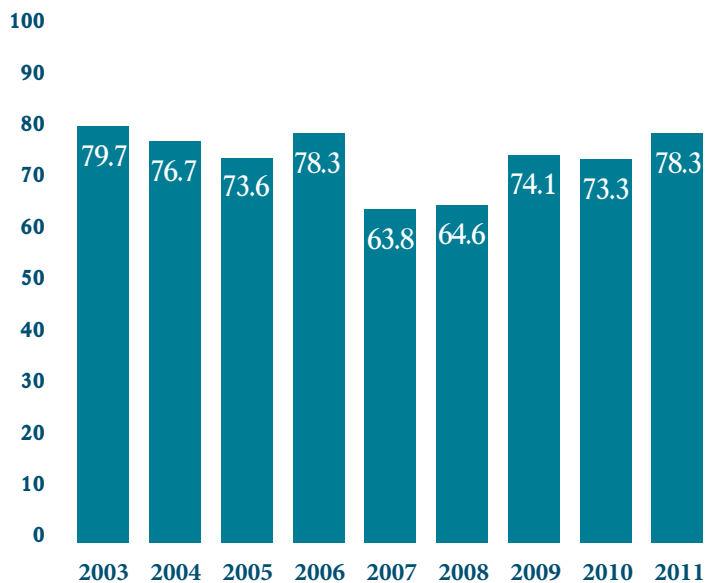
Figure 74: Feeling part of the state and its problems (to a very large extent and to a large extent; total sample; percent)



Staying in Israel?

Most Israelis are convinced that they want to live in Israel in the long term. In 2011, 78.3% of respondents expressed such convictions—among the highest percentages recorded in surveys throughout the years, as shown in Figure 75. The low point in support for this issue and numerous others was observed in 2007 and 2008 (about 64% only).

Figure 75: Desire to live in Israel in the long term
(certain; total sample; percent)



Summary of Part Two

- Part Two of this report attempted to identify changes and trends in public opinion regarding issues arising in successive Democracy Indexes since the first one was conducted in 2003, raising several interesting paradoxes concerning the public's conceptions of Israeli democracy.
- Although only a minority considers Israel's situation to be good or very good, from a more comprehensive viewpoint, public perception of the country's overall situation appears to be improving from year to year. This year, however, a certain decline was observed and further evaluation will be required to determine whether the phenomenon is a one-time occurrence or whether this minority is beginning to grow smaller.
- According to all relevant indicators, most of the public perceives democracy as the preferred form of government. Support for a "strong leader" is on the wane, with half the population consistently supporting a democracy of elected representatives, although between these two extremes, some steady support for a government of non-elected experts is evident.
- The definition of Israel as a "Jewish and democratic state" is the one preferred by the Jewish population of Israel, although the percentage of Jews who consider the Jewish component more important is higher than those who believe the democratic one to be paramount. Nevertheless, most of the Jewish population has consistently opposed having rabbis rule on controversial political issues.
- Over the past few years, the prevailing assessment has been that the State of Israel is not democratic enough, but the most recent Democracy Index, perhaps surprisingly, shows a small majority of the population to be somewhat satisfied with the performance of Israeli democracy.
- A comparative examination of the Israeli public's trust in its central institutions of democracy and the people who head them—the president and the prime minister—attests to a certain recovery after several years of decline. Nevertheless, in relating to "politicians" in general, a higher percentage of the

sample consistently believes that one must be corrupt to reach the top and that politicians do not consider the opinions of average citizens, compared with the percentage of those who do not concur with these statements. The past year's data shows a sharp rise in the percentage of respondents maintaining that politicians look out more for their own interests than for those of the people who elected them.

- > As in all previous years, most Israelis feel they have no influence on government policy and that the government does not consider public opinion. Nevertheless, this year, the percentage of respondents who believe that they do have an influence rose slightly.
- > Over the years, it was found that most Israelis are indeed aware of the importance of democratic values and support them declaratively, yet are consistently willing to compromise regarding these values when facing practical dilemmas. A sizable share of the Jewish population consistently exhibited unwillingness to accord equal rights to Arabs. Also observed was an extended and powerful desire to exclude Arabs from crucial state decision making.
- > All Democracy Indexes, including the present one, show that the public has little trust in political parties. Nevertheless, Israelis are familiar with the importance of political party competition in a democracy and estimate that the balance of power among Knesset factions indeed reflects the distribution of opinions among the public.
- > Over the years, there has been a significant discrepancy between the keen interest that Israelis display in politics—as expressed, for example, in discussion of political issues with friends and family—and their poor participation in political activity, such as party membership.
- > Other systematic findings indicate that most Israelis are proud to be Israeli, most of the public feel that it is part of the State of Israel and its problems and a majority is interested in living in Israel in the long term.

**Part Three:
Israel 2011: An International
Comparison**



Chapter 1: The Indicators

International research institutes annually publish a series of international comparative quantitative indicators addressing a variety of structural, functional and ethical aspects of democracy in various countries. These indicators (hereinafter: “Democracy Indicators”), expressed in numerical scores accorded to each country, represent these institutes’ current respective evaluations of the specific and relative situations of dozens and even hundreds of countries. The evaluations are largely based on a combination of primary and secondary sources and on the estimates of professionals in the respective countries. Part Three of the Israeli Democracy Index examines Israel’s scores and attendant relative positions. This year, we relate to twelve Democracy Indicators, as shown in Table 68:

Table 68

Indicator	Institution	Operative Definition
1. Corruption Perceptions Index	Transparency International	Scale of 0-10 (10 = no political corruption) assessing “abuse of power for personal gain,” based on a combination of 13 surveys from ten research institutions, examining the perceptions of experts regarding the extent of corruption in their own countries or others.
2. Functioning of Government	Economist Intelligence Unit	Scale of 0-10 (10 = very effective functioning), based on an expert questionnaire, assessing the extent of government authority in determining and implementing policies.



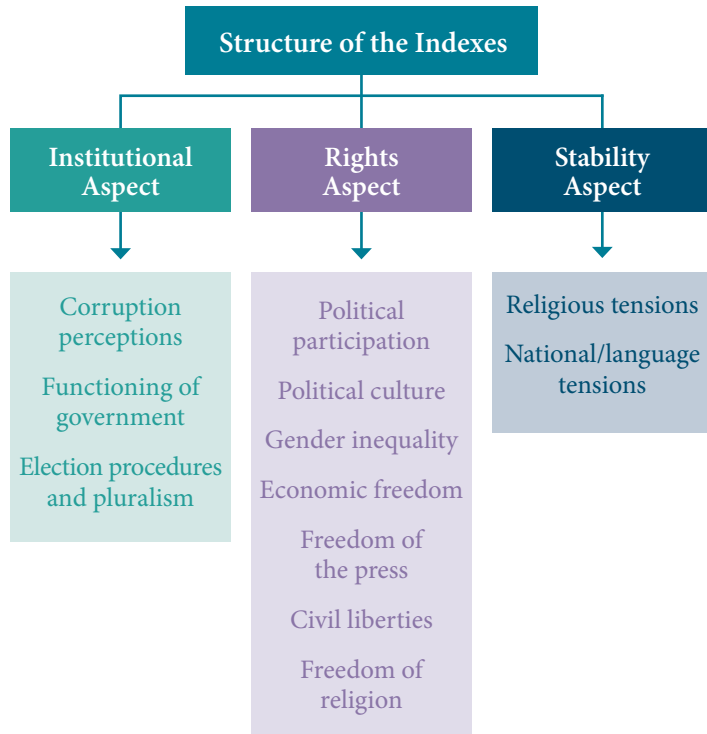
Indicator	Institution	Operative Definition
3. Electoral Process and Pluralism	Economist Intelligence Unit	Scale of 0-10 (10 = freest elections), based on an expert questionnaire, assessing the public's ability to change its decision makers through an institutionalized electoral system.
4. Political Participation	Economist Intelligence Unit	Scale of 0-10 (10 = highest participation), based on an expert questionnaire, assessing the extent of public participation in various political processes.
5. Democratic Political Culture	Economist Intelligence Unit	Scale of 0-10 (10 = well-established democratic political culture), based on an expert questionnaire, assessing the extent to which a country's political culture is democratic.
6. Gender Inequality	Human Development Report	Scale of 0-1 (0 = full equality of men and women), based on expert evaluations, assessing the lack of discrimination between men and women and egalitarian application of rights to both genders, particularly in employment, politics and education.
7. Index of Economic Freedom	Heritage Foundation	Scale of 0-100 (100 = full economic freedom), based on expert evaluations, assessing the extent of government intervention in the state economy.

Indicator	Institution	Operative Definition
8. Freedom of the Press	Freedom House	Scale of 0-100 (0 = full freedom of the press), based on expert evaluations, assessing the freedom enjoyed by the printed and broadcast press in each country examined.
9. Civil Liberties	Economist Intelligence Unit	Scale of 0-10 (10 = full civil liberties), based on an expert questionnaire, assessing the extent to which a country accords its citizens basic civil liberties.
10. Freedom of Religion	CIRI Human Rights Data Project	Scale of 0-2 (2 = full freedom of religion), based on an expert questionnaire, assessing the extent to which the freedom of citizens to exercise and practice their religious beliefs is subject to actual government restrictions.
11. Religious Tensions	International Country Risk Guide	Scale of 0-6 (6 = no religious tensions) assessing the intensity of tensions among a country's religious groups.
12. Ethnic/Nationality/Language Tensions	International Country Risk Guide	Scale of 0-6 (6 = no ethnic/racial/language tensions) assessing the intensity of a country's ethnic/racial/language tensions.

**Democracy
Indicator
Classification**

These 12 indicators were classified among three overall aspects of democratic performance: Institutional, rights and stability.²²

Figure 76: Structure of the Democracy Index



Institutional Aspect: Refers to the system of official institutions at the foundation of democratic rule, the division of power among them and the reciprocal relations obtaining among actors in the system. Three indicators represent this aspect in the Israeli Democracy Index 2011: Electoral procedures and pluralism, government functioning and government integrity (or the opposite—perception of political corruption).

22 For further information, see Asher Arian, David Nahmias, Doron Navot, and Danielle Shani, *Democracy in Israel – Follow-Up Report, 2003: The Democracy Index Project* (Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 2003), pp. 15-20 [Hebrew].

Rights Aspect: Addresses realization of the basic principles of democracy: Protecting human dignity and liberty, minority rights and the rule of law. This year, six indicators were included in this aspect: Gender inequality, political participation, civil liberties, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, economic freedom (property rights) and political culture.

Stability Aspect: Ostensibly, at least, this aspect differs from the others, as it does not reflect any characteristic unique to democracy. Stability may typify various forms of government and not necessarily democratic ones only. Nevertheless, stability of government is certainly an objective toward which every democratic government aspires. In its absence, moreover, the essence of democracy is liable to be affected adversely. This year, the stability aspect included indicators of religious tensions and ethnic/nationality/language tensions.

Democracy indicators are assessed along two comparative axes:

- > Qualitative: Israel's performance and activity compared with those of other countries.
- > Historical: Israel's performance this year in comparison with previous years.

Each institute has its own list of countries to which it relates in publishing its indexes. As this report obviously cannot list all countries so assessed, we decided to limit the number to 28, including Israel. Countries were selected primarily for their geographic location, providing appropriate representation to a variety of regions throughout the world. Moreover, we decided that the comparison group should also include several countries that are not democratic but are located in the same vicinity as Israel or share several political features with it, as we believe it is important to assess Israel's position not only in the "classic democratic family" but also in the "Middle Eastern family" and the "family of young democracies."

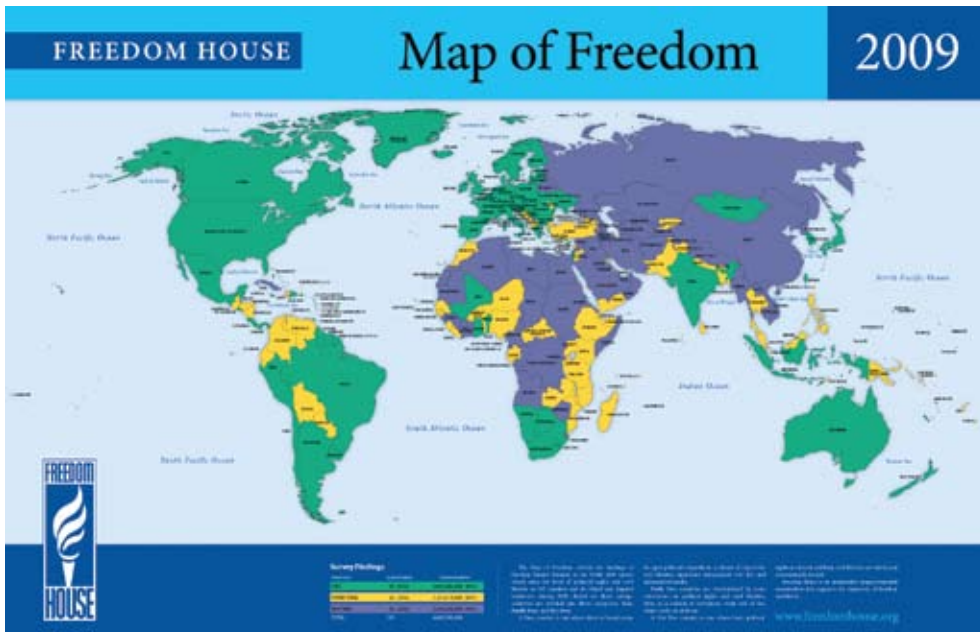
The updated list of countries thus includes five countries in the Americas (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the United States and Venezuela), nine in Western Europe (Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom), three in Central and Eastern Europe that were formerly part of the Soviet Bloc (the Czech Republic, Hungary

**Countries
compared with
Israel**

and Russia), six in the Middle East (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Turkey), and four in Central Asia and the Far East (China, India, Japan and New Zealand).

Country selection also relied on analysis conducted by Freedom House, which provides annual estimates of the extent of freedom in 194 countries representing 14 world regions, classifying them into three categories: Free, partly free and not free.²³ Accordingly, our list of 27 countries consists of 18 free countries (Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary India, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States), three partly free (Lebanon, Turkey and Venezuela) and six not free (China, Egypt, Jordan, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Syria). According to Freedom House, Israel is defined as partly free. The following map displays the extent of freedom in countries throughout the world, as evaluated by Freedom House.

Freedom House World Map of Freedom



Source: <http://freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2011>.

- Free
- Partly free
- Not free

23 For further information, see the organization's website: www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=1.

Chapter 2: Israel Compared with Other Countries

Figure 77, displays the ranks Israel achieved this year compared with 27 other countries (vertical axis) according to the twelve indicators we selected (horizontal axis). The horizontal axis is divided among the three overall aspects noted above: Institutional, rights and stability.

Note: Position 1 on the horizontal axis (the apex) represents the highest score in terms of quality of democracy and position 28 (at the bottom) the lowest. Countries are situated along these axes according to the annual scores they received. At times, Israel may share its score with one or more other countries, with the group collectively occupying a range of scores rather than individual positions. For example, on the democratic political culture scale, Israel shares its score with five other countries: Belgium, France, Greece, Japan and Spain. Consequently, it ranks in places 10-15. This common range is displayed in the figure as two vertical lines.

Similarly, it is important to clarify that the changes in position and score are not entirely correlated: A country may receive the same score year after year, yet rise or decline in its position relative to those of other countries. Thus, if the scores of the remaining countries rose, it may drop on the comparative scale even if its score remained steady. Conversely, if the remainder decline, it may rise in relative position even if no improvement was noted in its democratic performance.

Figure 77: Israel's ranking in major democracy indicators – 2011*



* The vertical lines represent Israel's rank (or range of ranks shared with other countries).

Institutional aspect

- 1. Corruption Perceptions:** Israel (score: 6.1) ranks slightly above the center of the scale, in positions 11 and 12, which it shares with Spain.
- 2. Functioning of Government:** Here as well, Israel ranks near the center of the scale (score: 7.5) in positions 12-13, along with Brazil.

3. **Electoral Process and Pluralism:** Israel is below the center of the scale (score: 8.75),²⁴ in positions 18-19, together with Argentina.

1. **Political Participation:** Israel ranks third, very near the top of the scale (score: 8.33).

2. **Democratic Political Culture:** Israel ranks slightly above center (score: 7.5), in positions 10-15 (along with Belgium, France, Greece, Japan and Spain, as indicated).

3. **Gender Inequality:** Israel ranks in 13th place, at the center of the scale (score: 0.332).

4. **Economic Freedom:**²⁵ Israel ranks in 13th place, at the center of the scale (score: 68.5).

5. **Freedom of the Press:** Israel ranks in 13th place, at the center of the scale (score: 29).

6. **Civil Liberties:** Israel ranks rather low, in 21st place (score: 5.29).

7. **Freedom of Religion:** Israel (score: 0) ranks in the lowest group, positions 21-28, together with seven other countries (China, Egypt, Jordan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Turkey).

Rights aspect

1. **Religious Tensions:**²⁶ Israel (score: 2.5) ranks in the lowest group, positions 26-28, together with India and Lebanon.

2. **Ethnic/Nationality/Language Tensions:** Israel (score: 2) ranks in the lowest group, positions 27-28, together with Turkey.

Stability aspect

In other words, according to its scores this year, for most indicators, Israel ranks at or near the center of the scale, standing out positively for its position on the political participation scale and negatively for electoral procedures and pluralism, civil

24 Israel ranks low for this indicator because the Palestinians in the Territories are not allowed to participate in Knesset elections. Obviously, were it not for this component, its score would have been considerably higher.

25 This indicator is relevant to assessment of the quality of democracy in the eyes of those who maintain that a free market is a basic condition for quality democracy. It is not accepted by those who believe in the democratic value of state intervention in the market to ensure a high level of social services and reduce economic gaps.

26 This indicator has a low sensitivity level, as it includes only three categories.

liberties, freedom of religion and especially religious tensions and ethnic/nationality/language tensions.

Other than a slight improvement for certain indicators, there was virtually no change in Israel's position this year compared with that of previous years.

Table 69: Israel's position among 28 countries in 2011 and 2010

	Position in 2011	Position in 2010	Difference
Institutional Aspect			
Corruption perceptions	11	11	=
Functioning of government	12-13	13-14	=
Electoral process and pluralism	18-19	16-19	=
Rights Aspect			
Political participation	3	3	=
Democratic political culture	12-15	12-15	=
Gender inequality ²⁷	13	-	-
Economic freedom	12	12	=
Freedom of the press	13	14-15	▲
Civil liberties	21	21	=
Freedom of religion	21-28	19-28	=
Stability Aspect			
Religious tensions	26-28	26-28	=
Ethnic/racial/language tensions	27-28	27-28	=

Key:

▲ Improvement in Israel's 2011 score compared with that of the previous year.

= No change in Israel's 2011 score compared with that of the previous year.

²⁷ This year, the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) decided to introduce a change in the calculation methods used in its Human Development Report, rendering it impossible to compare Israel with other countries from the previous years.

Chapter 3: Israel 2011 Compared with Israel 2010

Israel's present and past achievements will be compared according to scores received for each of the indicators this year and the previous year. As shown in Table 70, none of this year's scores for any of the indicators changed for the worse: Nine remained unchanged and two improved compared with 2010—Economic Freedom and Freedom of the Press.

Table 70: Israel's Democracy Indicator Scores – 2011 and 2010

Indicator	2011 Score	2010 Score	Scale	Difference
Institutional Aspect				
Corruption Perceptions	6.1	6.1	0–10 (10 = no corruption)	=
Functioning of Government	7.5	7.5	0–10 (10 = max. positive score)	=
Electoral Process and Pluralism	8.75	8.75	0–10 (10 = max. positive score)	=
Rights Aspect				
Political Participation	8.33	8.33	0–10 (10 = max. participation)	=
Democratic Political Culture	7.5	7.5	0–10 (10 = most democratic culture)	=
Gender Inequality	0.332	-	0–1 (0 = full equality)	-



Indicator	2011 Score	2010 Score	Scale	Difference
Economic Freedom	68.5	67.7	0–100 (100 = full freedom)	▲
Freedom of the Press	29	29	0–100 (100 = full freedom)	▲
Civil Liberties	5.29	5.29	0–10 (10 = full civil liberties)	=
Freedom of Religion	0	0	0–2 (2 = full religious freedom)	=
Stability Aspect				
Religious Tensions	2.5	2.5	0–6 (6 = no religious tensions)	=
Ethnic/ Nationality/ Language Tensions	2	2	0–6 (6 = no ethnic, nationality or language tensions)	=

Key:

▲ Improvement in Israel's 2011 score compared with that of the previous year.

= No change in Israel's 2011 score compared with that of the previous year.

Chapter 4: Breakdown of Findings

Institutional aspect

Corruption Perceptions: We decided to use the Corruption Perceptions Index developed by Transparency International,²⁸ a world leader in the battle against all kinds of corruption. As indicated, scores range from 0 to 10: The higher a country's score, the freer it is of corruption. As shown in Figure 78, New Zealand, Canada and Switzerland obtained the highest scores this year, while Syria, Russia and Venezuela received the lowest. Israel (score: 6.1) ranks in positions 11-12 this year, a little above the center of the scale, sharing its place with Spain.²⁹ Israel received the same score in 2010, meaning that its situation did not change for better or worse in this respect.³⁰

Functioning of Government: This year, we added a new indicator for review, Functioning of Government, published by the British magazine *The Economist's* Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), that examines the extent of a government's autonomy in determining and implementing its policies³¹ on a scale of 0 (ineffective government) to 10 (highly effective government). This year, Israel (score: 7.5) was in positions 12-13, near the center of the scale, sharing its place with Brazil. Heading the countries whose governments function outstandingly were Norway, New Zealand and Canada, while Russia, Saudi Arabia and Syria were at the bottom of the scale. Israel's score this year is identical to the one it received from the EIU in 2008.

28 The Israeli branch of Transparency International is known by its Hebrew acronym, Shvil. For further information, see www.ti-israel.org.

29 This estimate is based on six surveys conducted by five research institutes. It should be emphasized that in the organization's full index, Israel is situated in 30th place among 179 countries examined, but the present report only compares Israel with another 27 selected countries.

30 For further information, see www.transparency.org.

31 For details on issues at the focus of this and other EIU indicators, see www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=demo2010.

Figure 78: Political corruption perceptions:
An international comparison

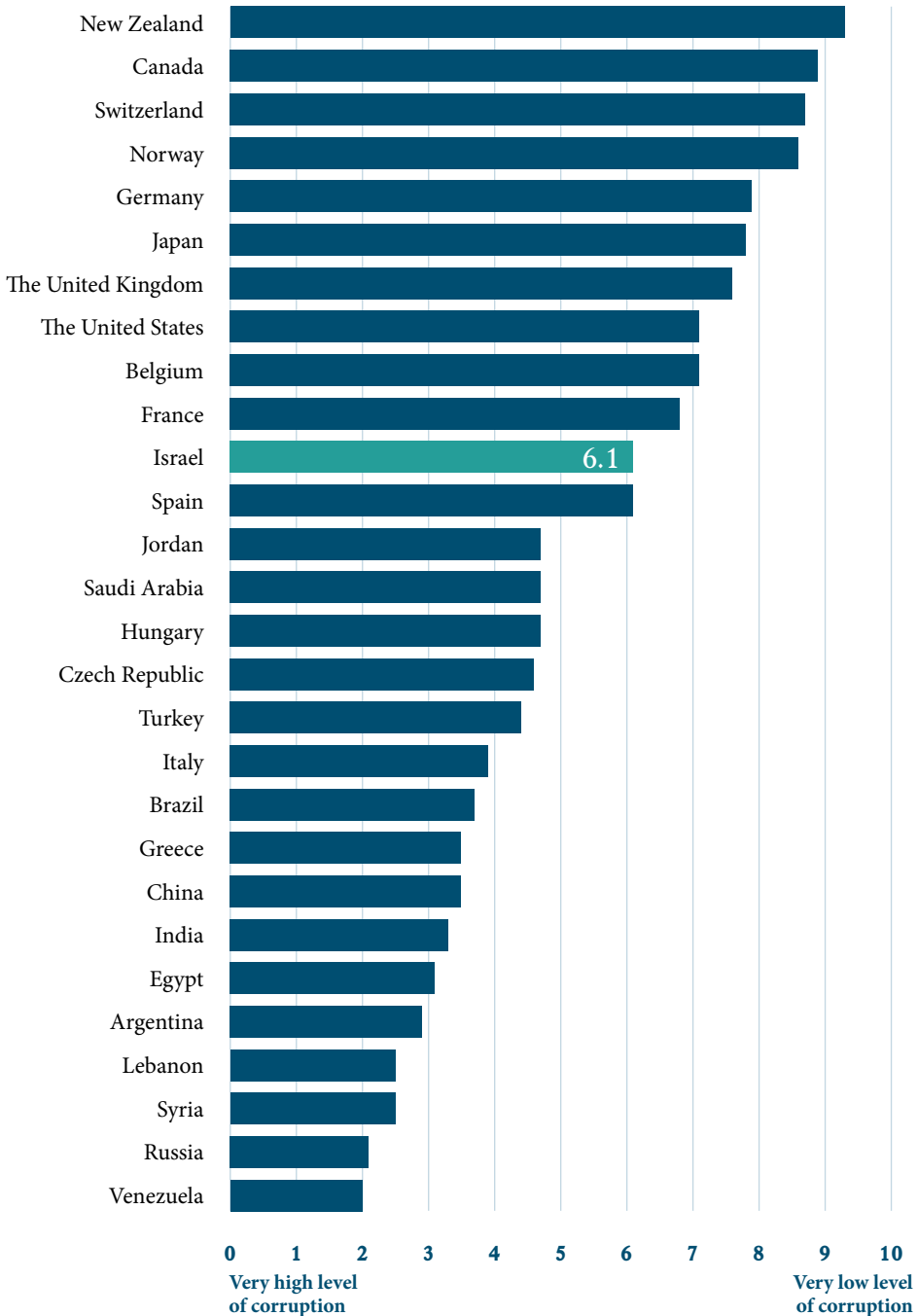
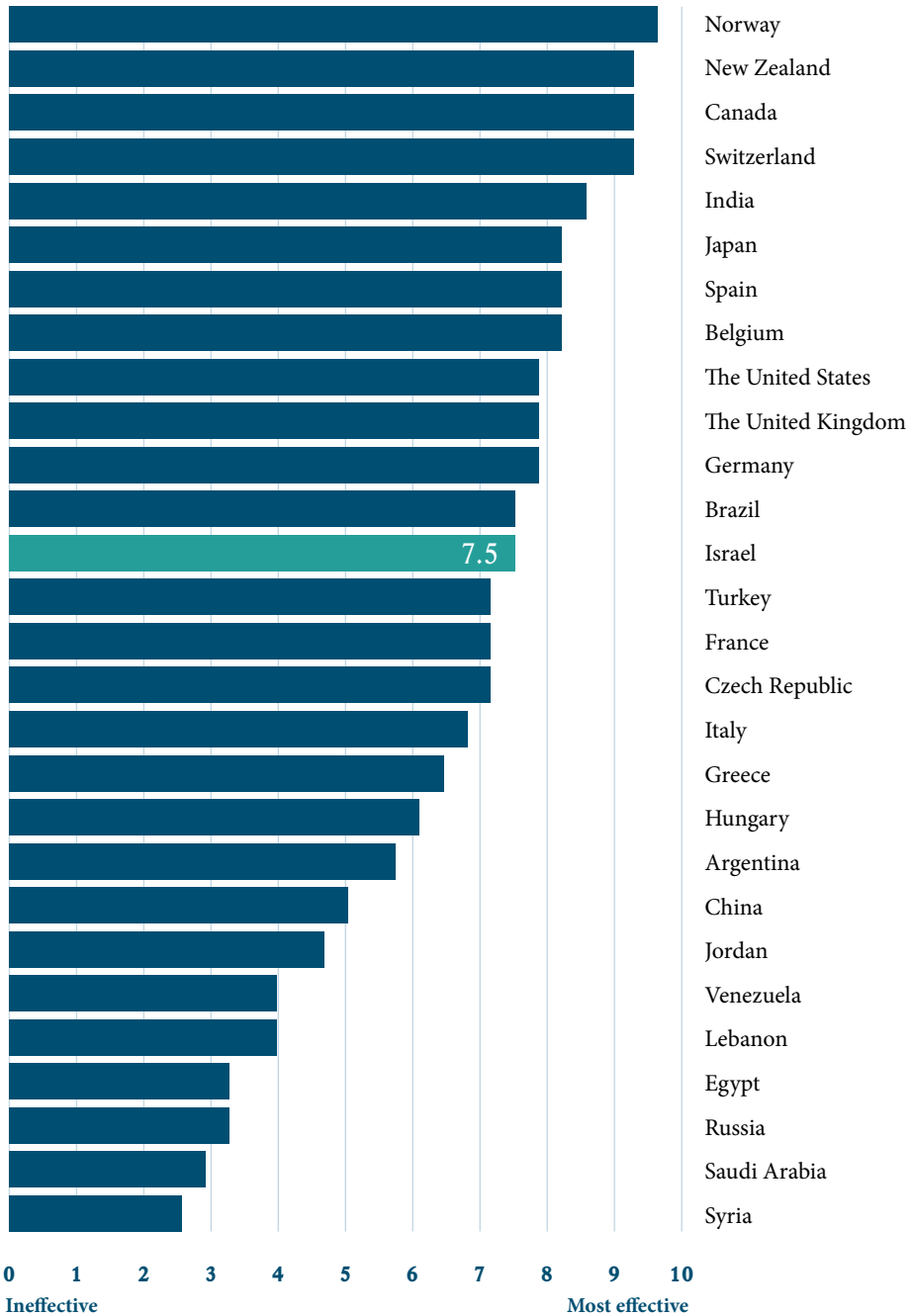


Figure 79: Functioning of government:
An international comparison



Electoral Process and Pluralism: Another EIU index is the Electoral Process and Pluralism Index, based on an average of 12 evaluations of issues concerning the country's electoral system, including the extent to which elections are free and fair, whether citizens are free to form political parties and whether opposition parties have a realistic prospect of achieving government,³² expressed on a scale of 0 (no free elections) to 10 (freest elections). As shown in Figure 80, Israel (score: 8.75) ranked in positions 18-19, below the center of the scale, sharing its place with Argentina. As indicated above, its low position is the result of a lack of free elections for Palestinian residents of the Territories. Under different circumstances, Israel's score would have been higher. Heading the countries outstanding for their electoral process and pluralism are Norway and New Zealand (score: 10), while Syria, China and Saudi Arabia (score: 0) are at the bottom of the scale. Israel's score this year is identical to the one it received from the EIU in 2008.

Rights aspect

Political Participation: The EIU Political Participation Index, that addresses the rights aspect, is another new indicator being included this year for the first time. It reflects the average score for responses to nine questions based on parameters such as the rate of participation in elections, political party membership and involvement in politics.³³ A score of 10 attests to extensive political participation, whereas 0 represents very little political participation. As shown in Figure 81, the two top positions on the scale are held by Norway and New Zealand and the lowest ones by Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia. Israel attained a high score (8.75) and is in a very good position at the top of the scale, between New Zealand and Canada.

32 For details about the topics and issues at the center of the index see: www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=demo2010

33 For more information about the methodology and for the questions themselves see: www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=demo2010

Figure 80: Electoral process and pluralism:
An international comparison

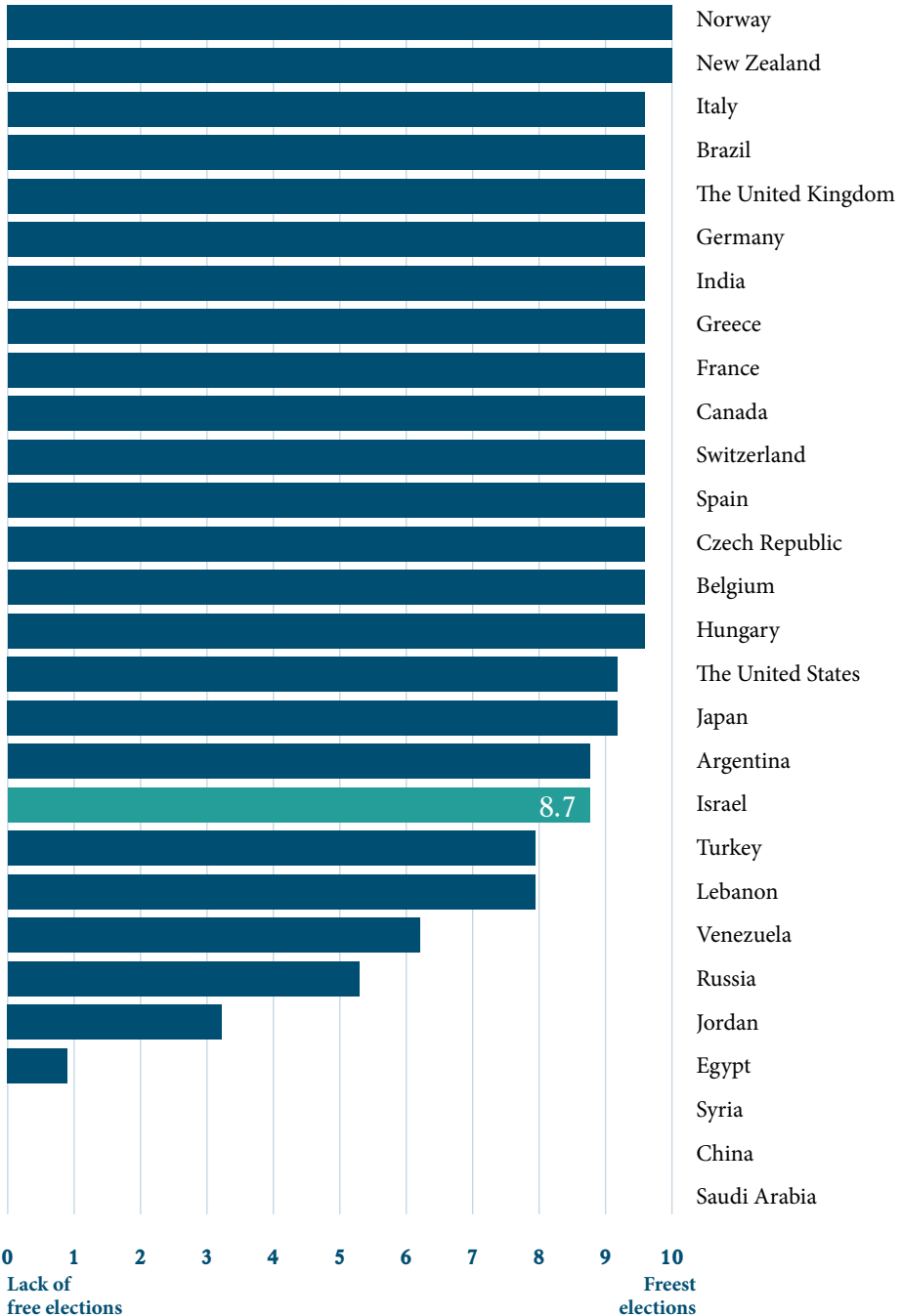
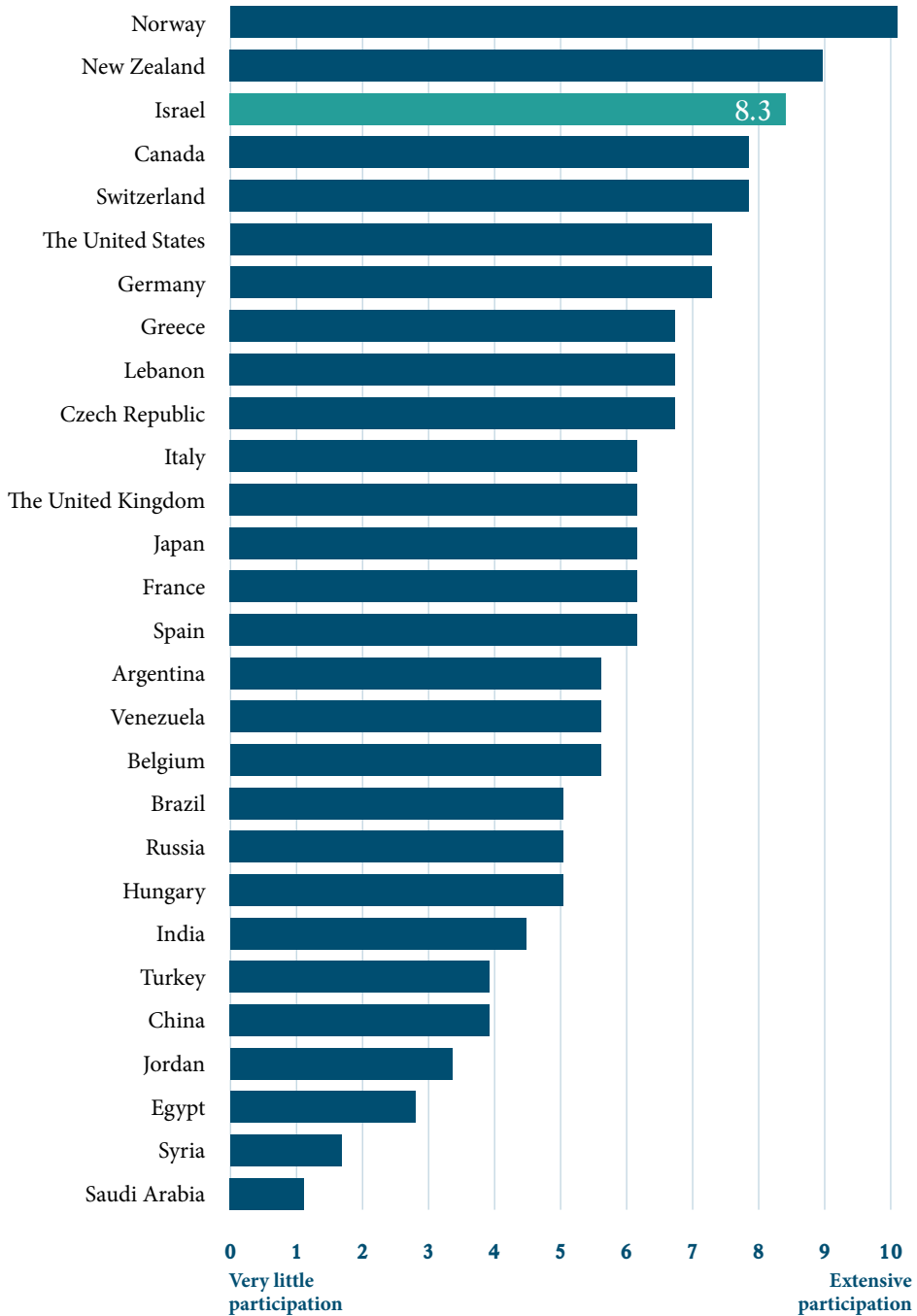


Figure 81: Political participation: An international comparison



Democratic Political Culture: Yet another EIU indicator, the Democratic Political Culture Index, is also included among the democracy indicators for the first time. It reflects the average score for responses to eight questions based on parameters such as consensus regarding democratic values, military involvement in politics, overall support of democracy, tradition of separation of religion and state and the like.³⁴ A score of 10 is accorded to countries with well-rooted democratic political culture, while 0 is assigned to those with no such culture. As shown in Figure 82, the top positions on the scale are held by Norway, Switzerland and Canada and the bottom ones by Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Russia. Israel received a score of 7.5, placing it in the above-average positions 10-15 along with Greece, Japan, France, Spain and Belgium.

Gender Inequality: Besides the political, economic and civil rights reviewed so far, we also examined another aspect of rights—gender equality, i.e., the absence of discrimination between men and women. One of the most popular indicators in this area is the United Nations Development Program's Gender Inequality Index, published annually in its Human Development Report.³⁵ The indicator focuses on egalitarian implementation of rights for both genders, especially in employment, politics and education. Scores are assigned on a scale of 0 (full equality) to 1 (no equality), but to facilitate comprehension of the data for this indicator, we reversed the scale, so that a higher score designates greater gender equality. Figure 83 shows Israel's position in the international arena, indicating that the countries most outstanding for their gender equality are Switzerland, Norway and Belgium and those with the least equality are Egypt, India and Saudi Arabia. Israel (score: 0.66) ranks 13th this year. In the latest edition of the Index, the UNDP decided to institute a change in calculation methodology, rendering it impossible to compare this year's scores with those of previous years.

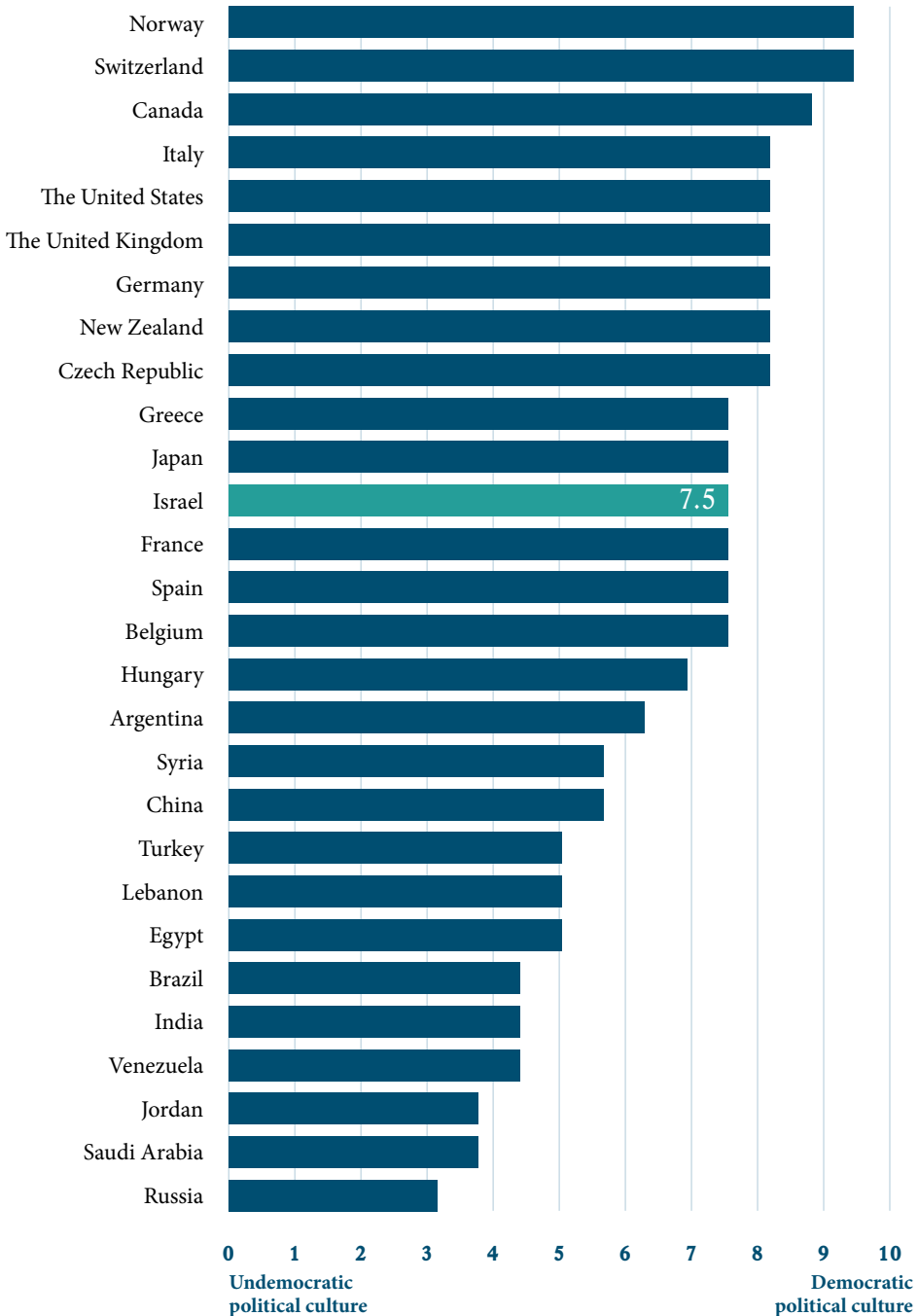
34 For more information about the methodology and for the questions themselves see:

www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=demo2010

35 See the Human Development Report, 2011:

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2010>.

Figure 82: Democratic political culture:
An international comparison



Economic Freedom: One popular annual indicator in this sphere is the Index of Economic Freedom, developed by the Heritage Foundation, with the recent cooperation of *The Wall Street Journal*. It should be noted that these two organizations profess adherence to the neo-liberal principles of a free market and minimal government intervention in production, marketing and services.³⁶ According to this conception, any government intervention beyond what is essential for the maintenance of a state economy adversely affects basic democratic freedoms, particularly property values.³⁷ The Index of Economic Freedom scale ranges from 0% (absence of economic freedom) to 100% (much economic freedom). Figure 84 shows that the countries with the most economic freedom are New Zealand, Switzerland and Canada, while Syria, Russia and Venezuela have the least. In 2011, Israel ranked 13th (with a score of 68.5%), between Jordan and Hungary, representing a slight improvement over last year's score (67.7%).

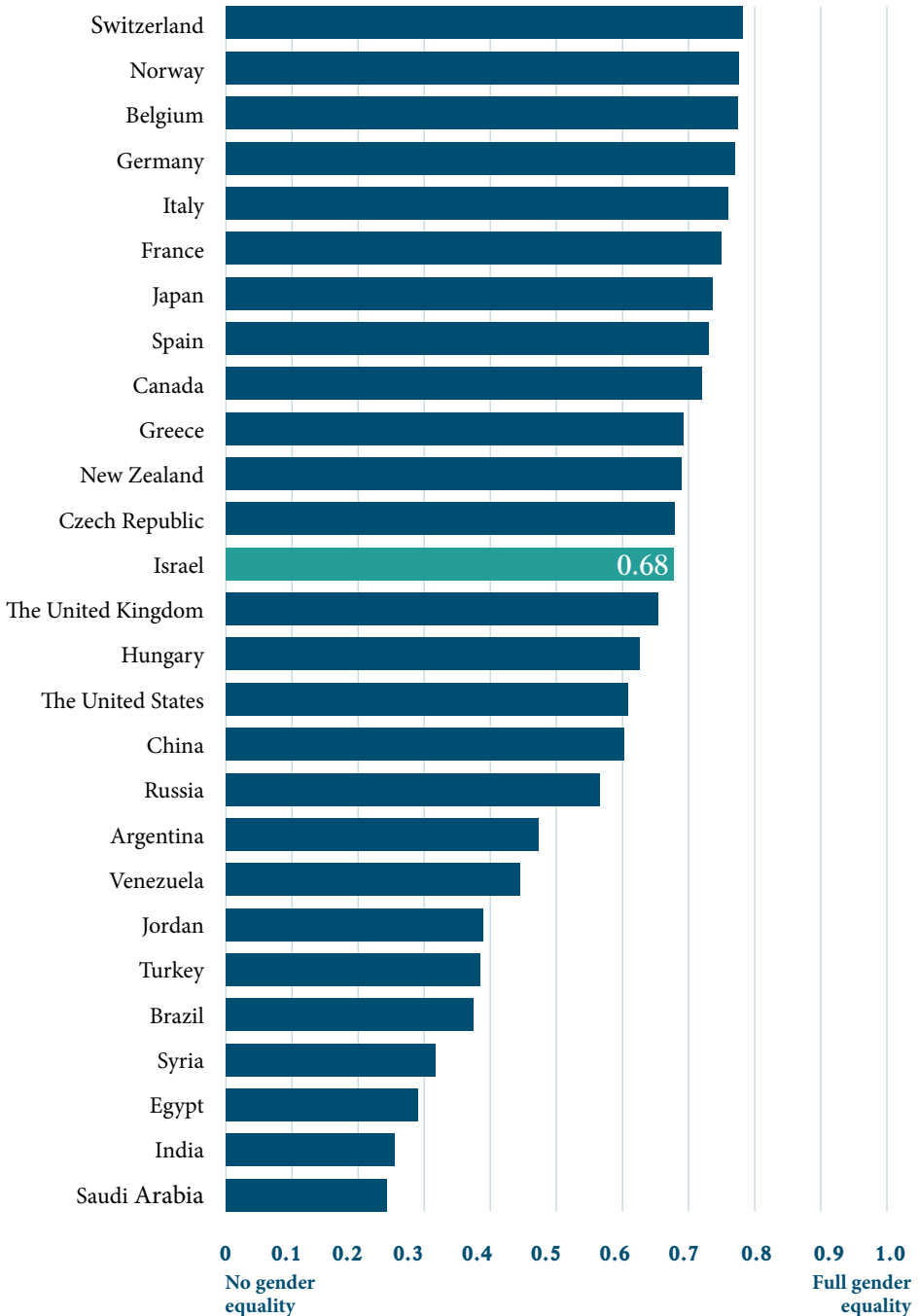
Freedom of the Press: The Freedom of the Press Index, developed by Freedom House and published since 1979, presents scores for printed and broadcast press freedom in 195 countries and regions throughout the world.³⁸ The final weighted score for each country is calculated according to a combination of results of a survey conducted by experts. Figure 85 shows the ranking of countries according to scores received in May 2011, ranging from 0 (full press freedom) to 100 (absence of press freedom). Countries with scores of 0-30 are considered to have a free press, 31-60 a partly free press and 61-100 no free press. In other words, in the original index, a lower score is better in the democratic sense. Please

36 The Index is published each year at the beginning of January. See www.heritage.org/index.

37 The scores countries receive are based on a combination of the following ten indicators: Quantitative evaluations of government trade policy, taxation system, government intervention in economics, monetary policy, foreign investment and cash flow, banking and financing, wages and prices, property rights, regulation and freedom from economic corruption.

38 For details on the organization, its studies and publications, see www.freedomhouse.org. For specific information about the Press Freedom Index, see www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=668.

Figure 83: Gender inequality: An international comparison



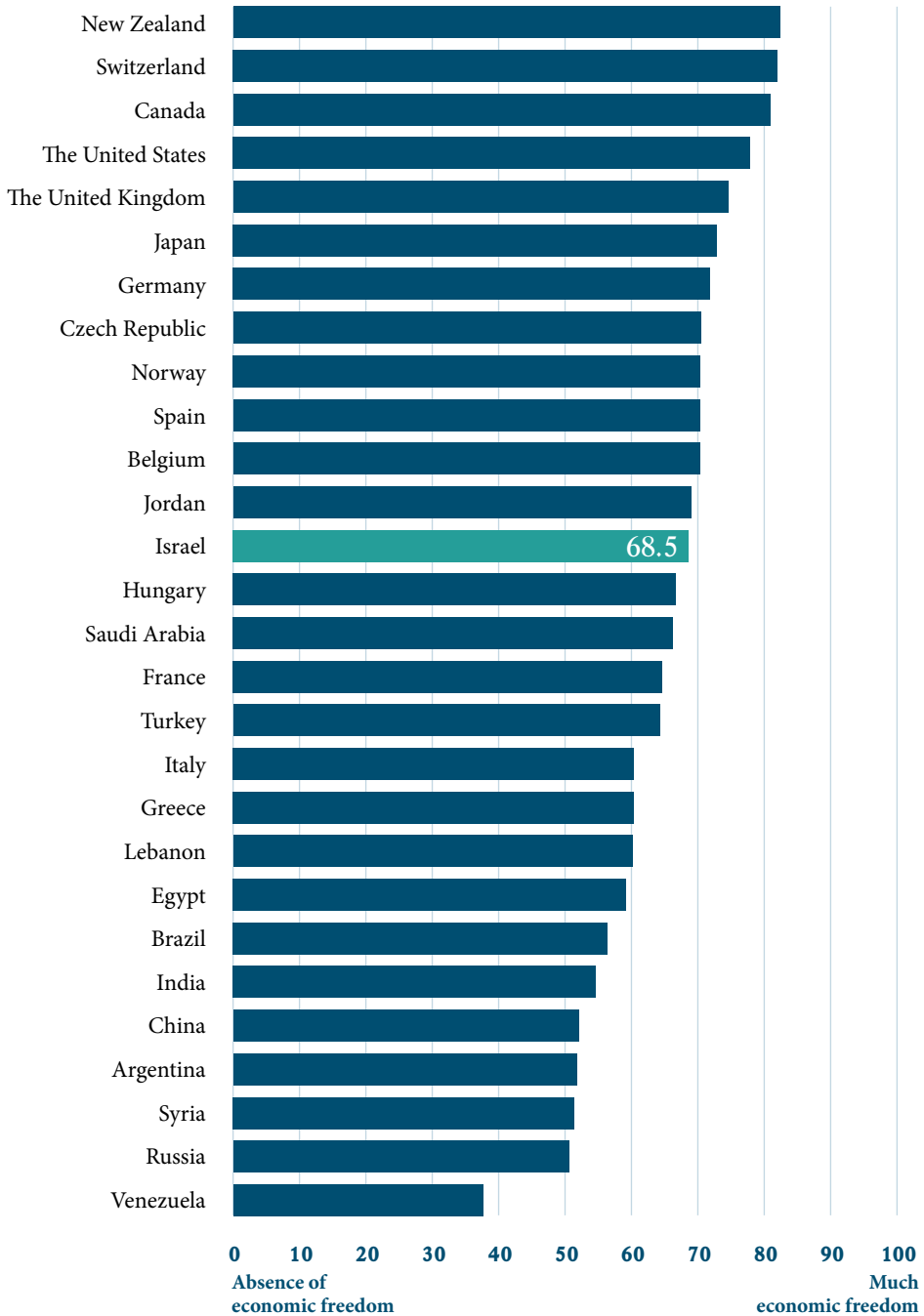
note, however, that to facilitate comprehension of the data, we systematically reversed the scale so that a higher score indicated greater freedom. Norway, Belgium and Switzerland have the most freedom of the press and Saudi Arabia, Syria and China the least. Israel, with a score of 71, is positioned in the middle of the scale, in 13th place, between Spain and Hungary. Israel's score this year is the same as it was last year, but its relative position improved because of a decline in scores for Hungary and Greece. It appears that freedom of the press in Israel in 2011 is markedly limited by the government and its agencies, although some offer the security conditions under which the Israeli democracy functions as an explanation or excuse.

Civil Liberties: The EIU's Civil Liberties Index, included in the Israeli Democracy Index for the first time this year, is based on an average of responses to questions concerning such issues as the existence of a free press, freedom of expression, freedom of protest and freedom of association, on a scale of 0 (no respect of civil rights) to 10 (full respect of civil rights). As shown in Figure 86, Norway, New Zealand and Canada have the highest scores and Syria, Saudi Arabia and China the lowest. Israel's score of 5.2 places it in the bottom third of the scale, between Lebanon and Turkey.

Freedom of Religion: The CIRI Human Rights Data Project Freedom of Religion Index is also included in the Israeli Democracy Index for the first time this year.³⁹ This indicator measures the extent to which citizens are free to exercise and practice their religious beliefs without government restriction. Scores are calculated on a scale of 0 (numerous government restrictions on religious leaders) to 2 (no government restrictions on freedom of religion). As shown in Figure 87, several countries share the highest score, including Belgium, Canada and New Zealand, while eight are in the lowest positions with a score of 0, including Israel, Russia and Turkey.

39 See <http://ciri.binghamton.edu/index.asp>.

Figure 84: Economic freedom: An international comparison



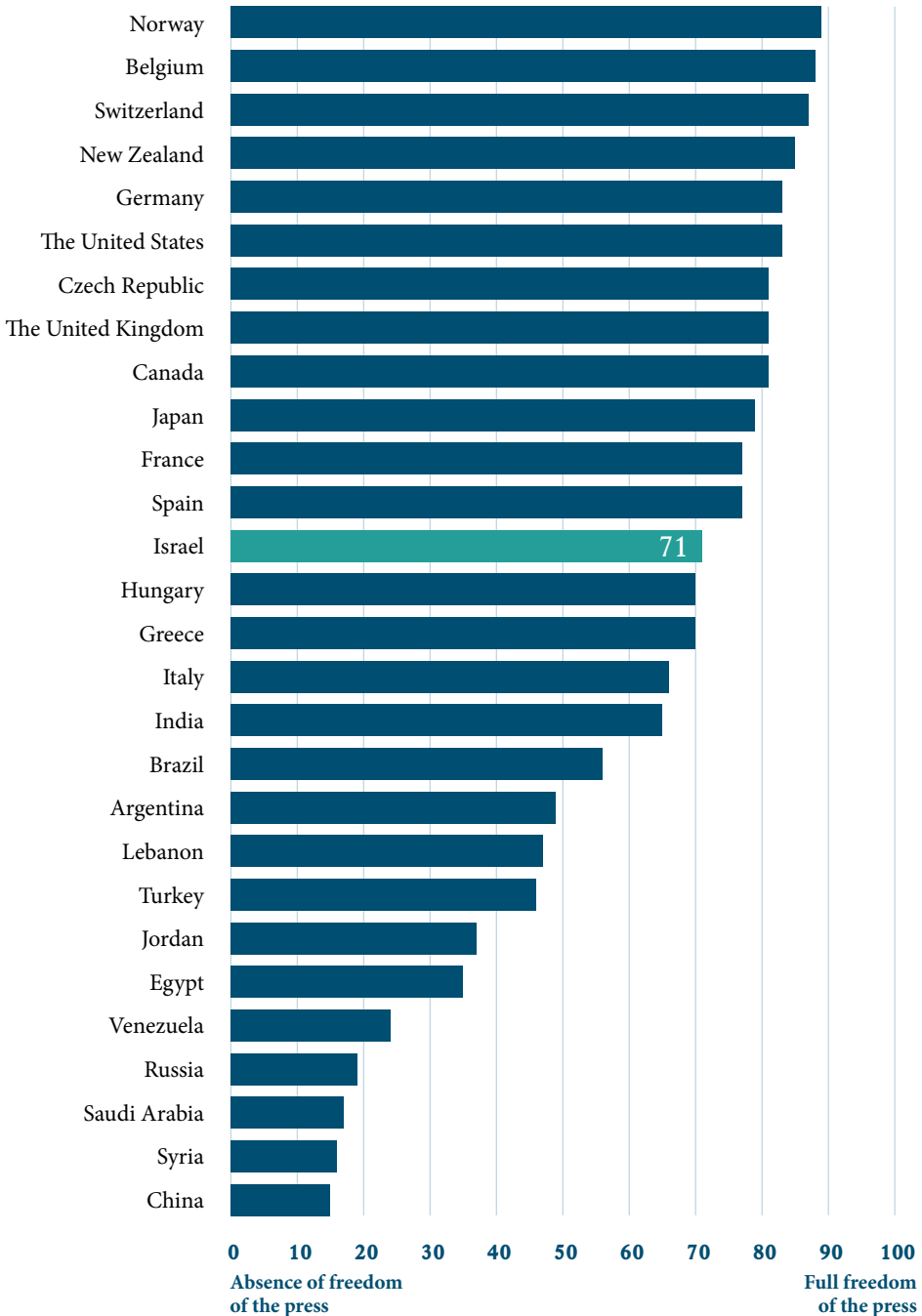
Stability aspect

Religious Tensions: Quantitative evaluation of the intensity of a country's social rifts is an especially difficult task. Consequently, only a few research institutes offer the relevant comparative quantitative data. The International Country Risk Guide (ICRG) is perhaps the most outstanding among research institutes that have accepted this formidable challenge.⁴⁰ The Religious Tensions Index it developed evaluates the tensions among a country's religious groups, which may be reflected in attempts to replace civil law with religious law, exclusion of religious groups from important political and social processes, suppression and coercion aimed at consolidating a governing hegemony by a particular religion and the like. Religious tensions are measured on a scale of 0-6: The higher the score, the less the religious tension. Figure 88 displays Religious Tensions Index scores for the relevant countries in 2011, showing that India, Israel and Lebanon received the lowest score (2.5), while Argentina, Brazil, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, the Czech Republic and Canada scored the highest (6). Israel's score this year remains the same as it was the previous year. Although Israel is always at the bottom of the scale, its score has fluctuated from 3 in 1992-1997 to 2 in 1997-2003, 3 in 2004 and then dropping somewhat to 2.5 in 2005, where it has remained since.⁴¹

40 The score ascribed to each country is estimated by a team of experts, based on reports in local and international newspapers and publications of international organizations. Note that the ICRG keeps its questionnaire confidential and thus fails to comply with evaluation transparency conditions. For further information, see www.prsgroup.com/ICRG.aspx.

41 For further information, see Asher Arian, Shlomit Barnea, Pazit Ben-Nun, Raphael Ventura, and Michal Shamir, *The 2005 Israeli Democracy Index: A Decade after the Assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin* (Jerusalem: The Israel Democracy Institute, 2005).

Figure 85: Freedom of the press: An international comparison



Note: For clarity's sake, values are displayed in reverse order.

Ethnic/Nationality/Language Tensions: Many countries throughout the world have to cope with a multitude of rifts in society. In this respect, Israel represents an extreme example of a divided society in terms of number and intensity of schisms. The final democracy indicator, that evaluates the rifts on this background, is the ICRG's Ethnic/Nationality/Language Tensions Index—a seven-category index on a scale ranging from 0 to 6: The higher the score, the less the ethnic/nationality/language tension. Figure 89 displays Ethnic/Nationality/Language Tensions Index scores for the relevant countries in 2011, showing that Israel and Turkey received the lowest score (2), while Argentina and Japan scored the highest (6). There was no change in Israel's score this year compared with those of previous years.⁴²

42 Ibid.

Figure 86: Civil liberties: An international comparison

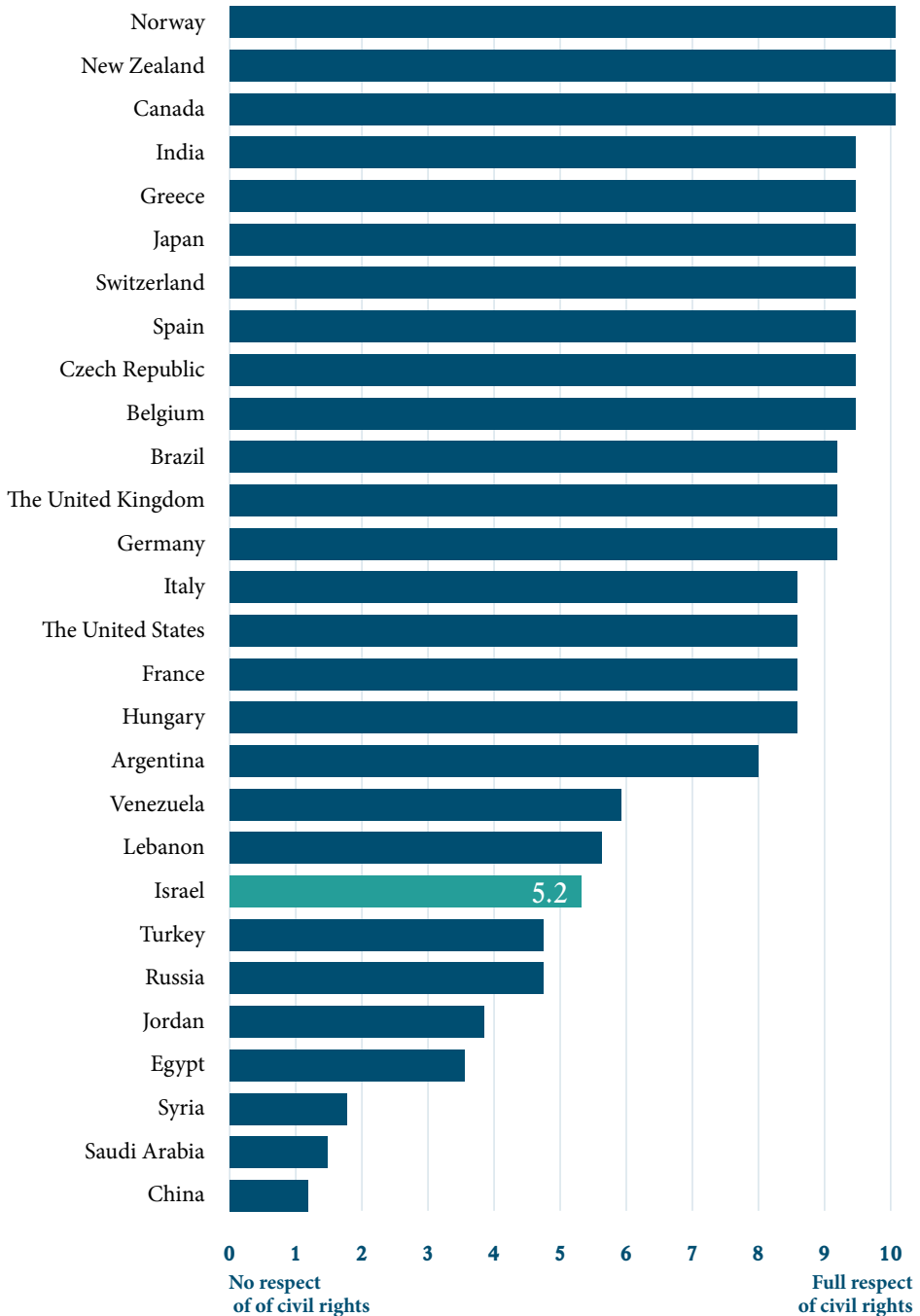


Figure 87: Freedom of religion: An international comparison



Figure 88: Religious tensions: An international comparison

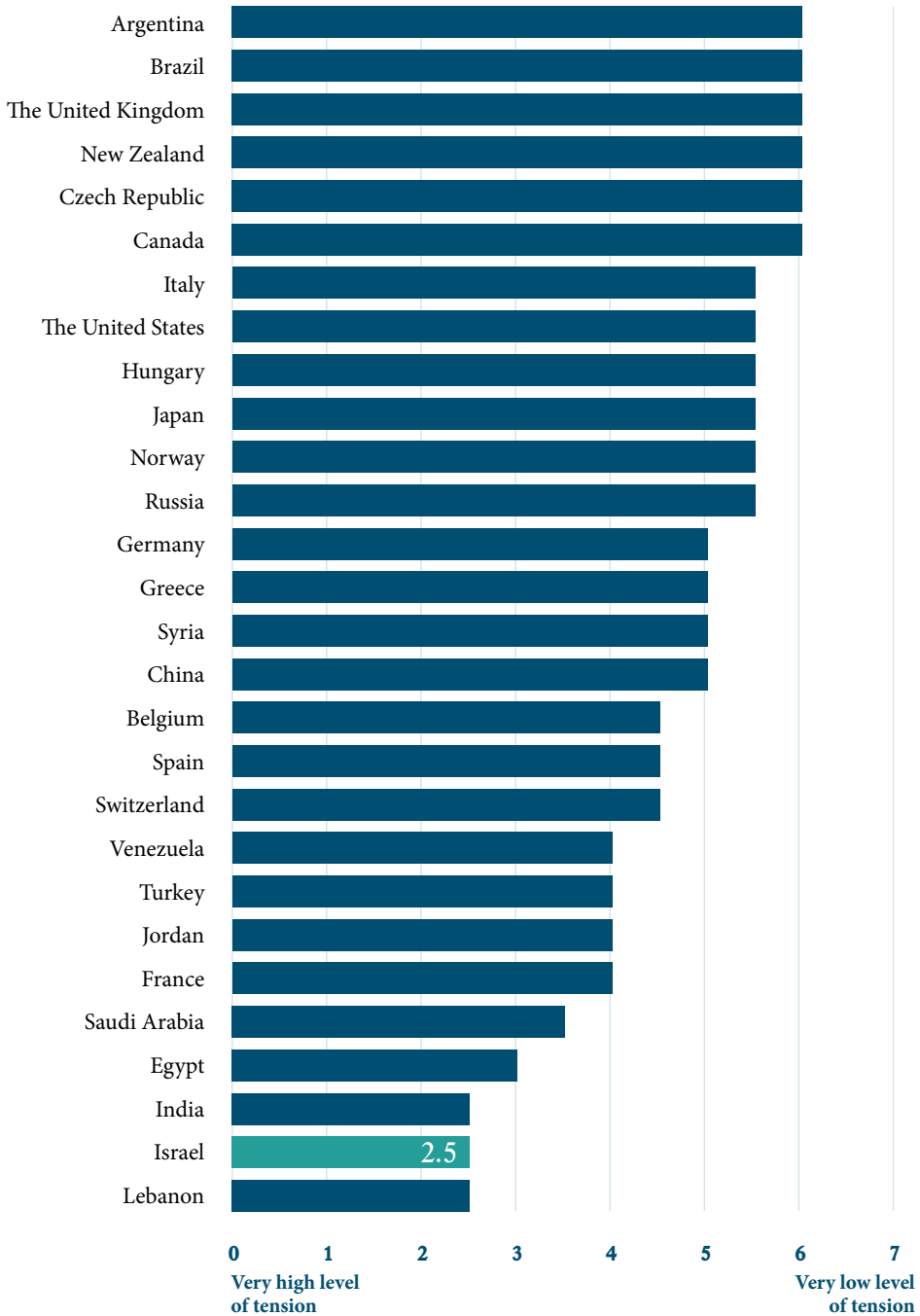
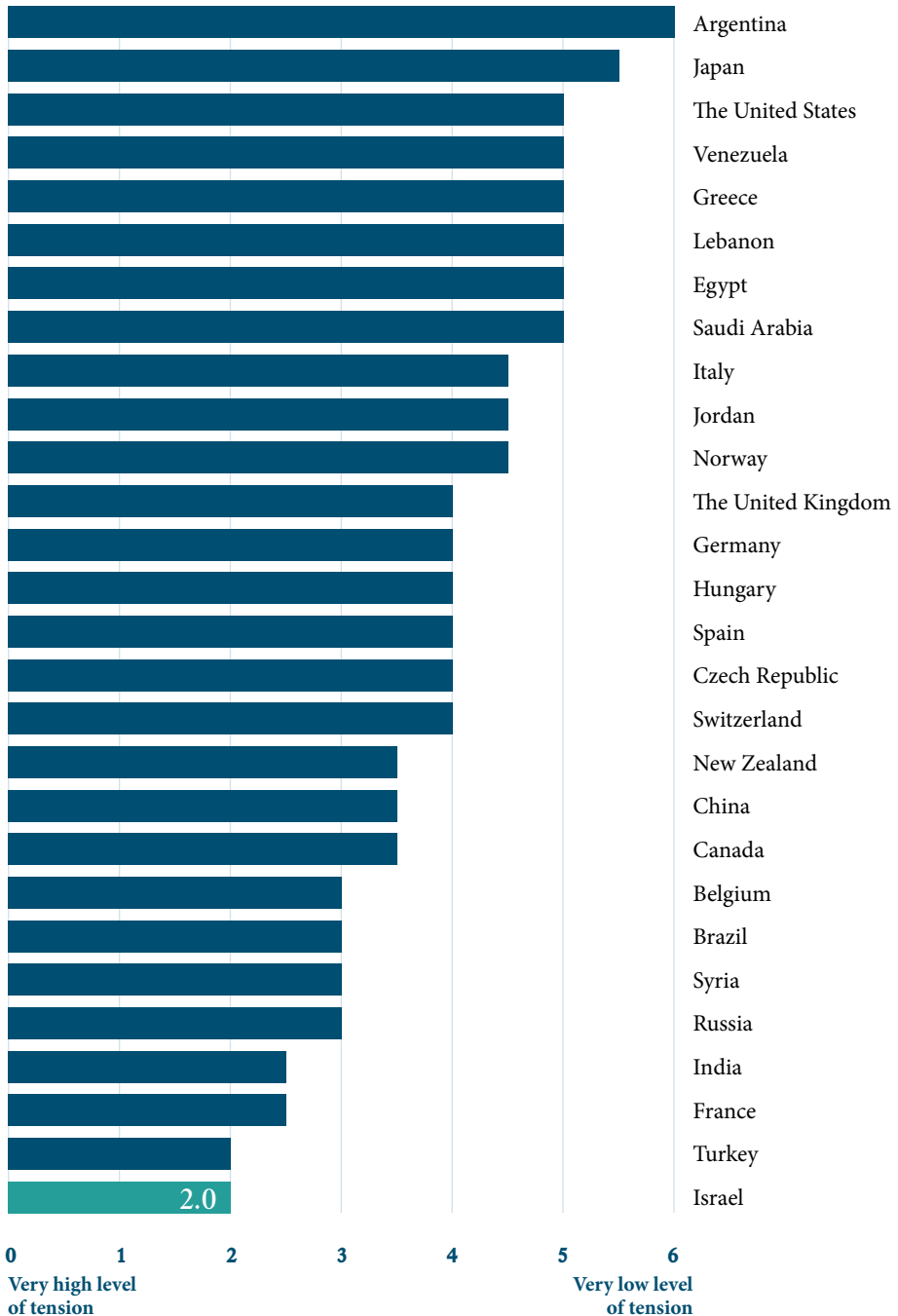


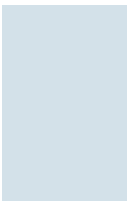
Figure 89: Ethnic/nationality/language tensions:
An international comparison



Summary of Part Three

- Part Three compares Israel with 27 other countries, representing a variety of geographic areas and varying degrees of political freedom (as defined by Freedom House: Countries that are free, partly free or not free).
- The comparison addresses 12 indicators that examine numerous aspects of the extent of democracy.
- Analysis relates to Israel's position relative to those of 27 other countries and to the scores Israel received this year compared with last year.
- For most indicators, Israel is positioned at or near the center of the scale, following countries classified as free and alongside those considered partly free.
- Israel stands out positively for its third-place position on the Political Participation Index, following New Zealand and preceding Canada.
- On the negative side, Israel is in a low position on the Electoral Procedures and Pluralism Index, sharing positions 18-19 with Argentina; on the Freedom of Religion Index, it ranks in positions 21-28 together with China, Egypt, Jordan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Turkey; on the Religious Tensions Index, Israel is at the bottom of the list in positions 26-28 along with India and Lebanon and on the Ethnic/Nationality/Language Tensions Index, it occupies the lowest position together with Turkey.
- Generally speaking, there was no substantive change in any of the scores Israel received this year relative to previous years, except for a slight improvement in the Index of Economic Freedom and the Freedom of the Press Index.

Appendices



Appendix 1: Israeli Democracy Survey 2011 Distribution of Responses (percent)

1. How would you assess Israel's overall situation today?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Very good	6.4	6.0	8.9
Quite good	21.4	22.9	12.8
So-so	41.0	42.5	32.2
Quite bad	16.0	15.9	16.7
Very bad	13.7	11.0	28.9
Don't know / refuse	1.5	1.7	0.5
Total	100	100	100

2. What is your opinion of the way the government is handling the current problems of the state?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Handling them very well	2.3	2.3	2.2
Handling them well	22.3	21.2	28.3
Handling them not so well	44.3	46.0	35.0
Handling them not at all well	27.2	26.0	33.9
Don't know / refuse	3.9	4.5	0.6
Total	100	100	100

General comments

- This appendix includes the distribution of responses to the questions posed in the Israeli Democracy Survey 2011, in their original order, with the exception of nos. 3 and 4, which were open-ended questions. For a discussion of the responses to those questions, see page ???.
- In the 2011 Survey, the option "don't know / refuse" was not read to the respondents.

3. Israel is defined as a democratic state. Different people attach different meanings to the term “democracy.” What do you think is the most important characteristic of a democratic regime? (Open-ended question)

4. Israel is defined as a Jewish state. Different people attach different meanings to the term “Jewish state.” What do you think is the most important characteristic of a Jewish state? (Open-ended question)

5. Israel is defined as both a Jewish and a democratic state. Which part of this definition is more important to you personally?

	Jews
Jewish state	29.5
Democratic state	22.9
Both are equally important	46.1
Neither is important *	1.0
Don't know / refuse	0.5
Total	100

* Not read to respondent.

** This question was posed to Jews only.

6. In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the functioning of Israeli democracy?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Very dissatisfied	11.9	10.5	20.0
Dissatisfied	33.5	33.5	33.3
Satisfied	47.3	48.8	38.3
Very satisfied	5.0	4.5	7.8
Don't know / refuse	2.3	2.7	0.6
Total	100	100	100

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Strongly agree	Don't know / refuse	Total
7.1. Politicians do not tend to consider the opinion of the average citizen						
Total sample	13.1	28.2	33.2	23.2	2.3	100
Jews	11.1	28.9	34.6	22.9	2.5	100
Arabs	24.4	23.9	25.0	24.4	2.3	100
7.2. Speakers should be prohibited from harshly criticizing the State of Israel in public						
Total sample	22.4	23.6	23.3	27.5	3.2	100
Jews	21.7	23.3	23.9	29.0	2.1	100
Arabs	26.7	25.0	19.4	18.9	9.9	100
7.3. It is never justified to use violence to achieve political ends						
Total sample	18.1	12.3	14.8	53.6	1.2	100
Jews	14.9	11.1	15.5	57.2	1.3	100
Arabs	36.1	18.9	11.1	33.3	0.6	100
7.4. Overall, most members of Knesset work hard and are doing a good job						
Total sample	27.8	35.3	28.7	4.4	3.8	100
Jews	26.8	37.0	28.4	3.8	4.0	100
Arabs	33.9	25.6	30.0	7.8	2.7	100

8. In your opinion, is the State of Israel today democratic to a suitable degree, too democratic, or not democratic enough?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Much too democratic	7.6	7.6	7.2
Too democratic	16.8	18.6	6.7
Democratic to a suitable degree	34.1	36.1	22.8
Not democratic enough	27.5	28.0	24.4
Definitely not democratic enough	11.8	7.1	38.9
Don't know / refuse	2.2	2.6	--
Total	100	100	100

9. To what extent does the balance of power among Knesset factions reflect the distribution of opinions in the general public?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
To a large extent	26.0	25.8	27.2
To some extent	33.3	34.7	25.6
To a small extent	25.0	23.4	33.9
Not at all	8.5	7.9	11.7
Don't know / refuse	7.2	8.2	1.6
Total	100	100	100

10. Several years ago, Ariel Sharon quit the Likud and founded the Kadima party. Recently, Ehud Barak took a similar step, leaving the Labor party and establishing the Independence faction. Do you consider it acceptable or unacceptable for the leader of a party to take such a step if he believes that it serves the best interests of the state?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
It is not acceptable for a party leader to take such a step, because in doing so he breaks his word to those who voted for the party that he headed.	52.9	51.4	61.7
It is acceptable for a party leader to take such a step if he feels that it serves the best interests of the state.	36.4	39.6	18.3
It depends on the circumstances—in some cases, it's acceptable, and in other cases, it's not.*	6.4	5.7	10.6
Don't know / refuse	4.3	3.3	9.4
Total	100	100	100

* Not read to respondent.

11. To what extent do you trust each of the following officials or institutions?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a large extent	Don't know / refuse	Total
11.1. The political parties						
Total sample	28.3	32.7	31.9	3.7	3.4	100
Jews	26.2	33.7	33.2	3.0	3.9	100
Arabs	40.6	26.7	24.4	7.2	1.1	100
11.2. The prime minister						
Total sample	25.3	24.0	33.3	16.3	1.2	100
Jews	20.5	24.4	36.0	17.9	1.2	100
Arabs	52.8	21.7	17.8	6.7	1.0	100

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a large extent	Don't know / refuse	Total
11.3. The media						
Total sample	24.4	22.8	37.4	14.4	1.0	100
Jews	25.0	24.2	37.1	12.8	0.9	100
Arabs	21.1	15.0	39.4	23.3	1.2	100
11.4. The State Attorney's Office						
Total sample	16.2	17.1	37.8	23.3	5.6	100
Jews	15.1	15.5	39.7	24.1	5.6	100
Arabs	22.2	26.1	26.7	18.9	6.1	100
11.5. The Supreme Court						
Total sample	13.6	13.0	27.3	41.4	4.8	100
Jews	14.2	11.8	26.8	41.8	5.4	100
Arabs	10.0	20.0	30.0	39.4	0.6	100
11.6. The police						
Total sample	20.5	21.8	38.2	17.9	1.6	100
Jews	16.1	23.0	41.2	17.9	1.8	100
Arabs	45.6	14.4	21.1	17.8	1.1	100
11.7. The president of Israel						
Total sample	10.8	9.8	21.8	56.0	1.6	100
Jews	6.5	8.2	22.2	61.7	1.4	100
Arabs	35.0	18.9	20.0	23.9	2.2	100
11.8. The Knesset						
Total sample	19.7	27.3	43.3	8.3	1.4	100
Jews	17.9	27.5	45.1	7.9	1.6	100
Arabs	29.4	25.6	33.3	10.6	1.1	100

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a large extent	Don't know / refuse	Total
11.9. The army (IDF)						
Total sample	7.2	5.8	17.0	68.8	1.2	
Jews	2.2	3.6	16.6	77.0	0.6	100
Arabs	35.6	17.8	19.4	22.2	5.0	100
11.10. The government						
Total sample	22.3	25.6	41.1	9.9	1.1	100
Jews	17.7	27.8	44.0	9.7	0.8	100
Arabs	47.8	12.8	24.4	11.1	3.9	100
11.11. The Chief Rabbinate						
Total sample	24.8	16.9	23.8	24.4	10.1	100
Jews	29.1	19.9	28.0	14.6	8.4	100
Arabs*	--	--	--	80.0	20.0	100
11.12. The Attorney-General						
Total sample	11.3	14.1	34.6	29.5	10.5	100
Jews	9.4	12.7	36.0	30.6	11.3	100
Arabs	21.7	21.7	26.7	23.3	6.6	100
11.13. The State Comptroller						
Total sample	8.3	9.8	28.7	47.0	6.3	100
Jews	6.9	8.1	28.0	50.5	6.5	100
Arabs	16.1	19.4	32.2	27.2	5.1	100
11.14. The governor of the Bank of Israel						
Total sample	9.3	9.3	27.5	47.5	6.4	100
Jews	6.4	7.7	27.4	52.6	5.9	100
Arabs	25.6	18.3	28.3	18.3	9.4	100

*Arab respondents were asked about clergy.

12. To what extent do you feel part of the State of Israel and its problems?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
To a very large extent	39.6	43.4	17.8
To a large extent	29.9	32.2	17.2
To some extent	18.2	16.6	27.2
To a small extent	5.5	4.3	12.2
To a very small extent	6.7	3.4	25.0
Don't know / refuse	0.1	0.1	0.6
Total	100	100	100

13. How much do you talk with friends and family about political issues?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
A lot	39.3	41.0	30.0
To some extent	31.3	31.4	30.6
A little	19.7	19.2	22.2
Not at all	9.5	8.1	17.2
Don't know / refuse	0.2	0.3	--
Total	100	100	100

14. How proud are you to be an Israeli?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Very proud	58.1	64.7	20.6
Quite proud	24.6	23.2	32.2
Not so proud	8.8	7.9	13.3
Not at all proud	7.2	3.4	28.3
Don't know / refuse	1.3	0.8	5.6
Total	100	100	100

15. Do you feel that the government is doing enough these days to explain its decisions to us?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Yes, it is doing everything possible, a great deal	6.4	7.0	3.3
Yes, it is doing a lot	15.6	15.7	15.0
No, it is doing too little	51.5	52.7	44.4
No, it is doing almost nothing	23.8	21.9	35.0
Don't know / refuse	2.7	2.7	2.3
Total	100	100	100

16. In your opinion, how much can you believe of what government spokespersons tell the public?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
You can believe everything	1.9	1.3	5.6
You can believe most things	14.3	15.3	8.3
You can believe some things	56.0	56.4	53.9
You cannot believe most things	14.3	14.7	12.2
You cannot believe anything	12.8	12.0	17.8
Don't know / refuse	0.7	0.3	2.2
Total	100	100	100

17. Do you want to live in Israel in the long term?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Certain that I want to	78.3	80.9	63.9
Want to, but am not certain	9.6	8.1	17.8
I have doubts	8.2	8.0	8.9
Certain that I don't want to	3.1	2.4	7.2
Don't know / refuse	0.8	0.6	2.2
Total	100	100	100

18. Below are four forms of government. What is your opinion of each of them as a way to run our country?

Total sample

	Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	Don't know/refuse	Total
18.1 A strong leader who does not need to take the Knesset or elections into account	10.8	21.6	23.5	40.2	3.9	100
18.2 A government made up of experts rather than elected representatives	18.2	35.0	23.3	17.2	6.3	100
18.3 A democratic system of government, with representatives elected by all citizens	34.8	48.1	9.5	3.8	3.8	100
18.4 A direct democracy in which significant issues are decided by public referendum	23.2	43.3	19.2	10.7	3.6	100

Jews

	Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	Don't know/refuse	Total
18.1 A strong leader who does not need to take the Knesset or elections into account	9.8	19.7	24.8	42.5	3.2	100
18.2 A government made up of experts rather than elected representatives	19.4	35.4	23.3	15.4	6.5	100
18.3 A democratic system of government, with representatives elected by all citizens	35.3	49.1	8.8	3.0	3.8	100
18.4 A direct democracy in which significant issues are decided by public referendum	22.5	43.8	20.0	10.8	3.7	100

Arabs

	Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	Don't know/refuse	Total
18.1 A strong leader who does not need to take the Knesset or elections into account	16.7	32.2	16.1	27.2	7.8	100
18.2 A government made up of experts rather than elected representatives	11.1	32.8	23.3	27.2	5.6	100
18.3 A democratic system of government, with representatives elected by all citizens	31.7	42.2	13.3	8.3	4.5	100
18.4 A direct democracy in which significant issues are decided by public referendum	27.2	40.6	14.4	14.4	3.4	100

19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/refuse	Total
19.1. Politicians look out more for their own interests than for those of the people who elected them							
Total sample	2.7	8.9	16.8	28.1	42.5	1.0	100
Jews	2.1	8.6	17.7	29.4	41.0	1.2	100
Arabs	6.1	10.6	11.1	20.6	51.1	0.5	100
19.2. I support freedom of expression for all people, regardless of their views							
Total sample	3.8	9.3	10.2	36.9	39.3	0.5	100
Jews	3.5	10.7	11.5	38.9	34.9	0.5	100
Arabs	5.0	1.1	2.8	25.6	64.4	1.1	100

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ refuse	Total
19.3. Democracy is the best form of government							
Total sample	1.9	4.8	10.6	36.4	45.4	0.9	100
Jews	1.5	5.1	11.3	38.3	43.0	0.8	100
Arabs	4.4	3.3	6.7	25.6	58.9	1.1	100
19.4. To reach the top in Israeli politics today, you have to be corrupt							
Total sample	13.6	24.3	16.6	22.9	20.2	2.4	100
Jews	11.8	24.1	17.3	23.8	20.3	2.7	100
Arabs	23.9	25.0	12.8	17.8	19.4	1.1	100
19.5. All people should enjoy the same rights under law, regardless of their views							
Total sample	2.7	6.3	4.1	30.3	56.1	0.5	100
Jews	2.3	6.7	4.1	32.3	54.1	0.5	100
Arabs	5.0	3.9	3.9	18.9	67.2	1.1	100
19.6. There are no real differences between the political parties in Israel today							
Total sample	11.1	26.3	16.9	27.6	15.3	2.8	100
Jews	10.4	26.9	17.6	29.3	13.4	2.4	100
Arabs	15.0	22.8	12.8	17.8	25.6	6.0	100
19.7. Competition between Israel's political parties strengthens democracy							
Total sample	7.2	19.7	17.1	34.9	18.4	2.7	100
Jews	6.9	21.5	17.7	35.9	15.5	2.5	100
Arabs	8.9	9.4	13.3	29.4	35.0	4.0	100
19.8. The parties in Israel reflect the people's views							
Total sample	14.5	27.3	23.0	24.0	9.1	2.1	100
Jews	13.6	28.3	24.2	24.0	7.9	2.0	100
Arabs	19.4	21.1	16.1	23.9	15.6	3.9	100

20. To what extent are you interested in politics?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
To a large extent	37.7	38.8	31.1
To some extent	39.1	40.5	31.1
To a small extent	16.0	14.7	23.3
Not at all	7.1	6.0	13.3
Don't know / refuse	0.1	--	1.2
Total	100	100	100

21. Have you ever thought of going into local or national politics?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
I haven't thought of going into politics	84.3	86.0	74.4
Yes, local politics	6.7	6.1	10.0
Yes, national politics	3.4	3.6	2.2
Yes, both of them	3.8	3.2	6.7
I'm already in politics *	1.4	0.9	4.4
Don't know / refuse	0.4	0.2	2.3
Total	100	100	100

* Not read to respondent.

22. If someone close to you—a friend or family member—were considering going into politics, how would you advise him or her?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Would strongly advise in favor	8.6	8.4	9.4
Would advise in favor	25.3	24.6	28.9
Would advise against	25.3	28.1	9.4
Would strongly advise against	32.5	29.7	48.3
Don't know / refuse	8.3	9.2	4.0
Total	100	100	100

23. To what extent are you and your friends able to influence government policy?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
To a large extent	7.3	7.2	7.8
To some extent	21.1	22.3	14.4
To a small extent	35.3	35.9	31.7
Not at all	35.3	33.6	45.0
Don't know / refuse	1.0	1.0	1.1
Total	100	100	100

24. In general, where do you receive most of your information about what is happening in politics? Indicate your primary source.

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Radio	13.0	14.0	7.2
Newspapers	24.5	26.9	11.1
Television	37.6	34.8	53.3
Internet	19.3	18.6	23.3
Family and friends	2.8	2.7	2.8
Classes in the institution where I am learning	1.0	0.9	1.7
Don't know / refuse	1.8	2.1	0.6
Total	100	100	100

25. There is a lot of talk about left and right in politics. Where would you place yourself on a left-right continuum, where 1 is the right extreme and 7 is the left extreme?

	1 Right	2	3	4	5	6	7 Left	Did not identify	Total
Total sample	14.3	8.2	17.5	21.5	16.4	7.4	8.6	6.1	100
Jews	15.8	9.2	19.7	22.0	17.1	6.5	4.0	5.7	100
Arabs	6.1	2.2	5.0	18.9	12.8	12.8	34.4	7.8	100

26. On a continuum from 1 to 4, where 1 is the place closest to the center of Israeli society, and 4 represents the margins of Israeli society, where would you place yourself today?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
At 1 on the continuum, at the center of Israeli society	26.5	28.7	13.9
At 2, quite close to the center of Israeli society	39.5	39.9	37.2
At 3, quite far from the center of Israeli society	19.9	17.9	31.1
At 4, very far from the center of Israeli society	8.9	7.5	17.2
Don't know / refuse	5.2	6.0	0.6
Total	100	100	100

27. Do you support, or are you active in, any political party?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
No, I do not support and am not active in any party	69.3	67.8	77.8
I support a party, but am not a member	23.2	25.8	8.3
I am a member of a party	5.4	4.9	8.3
I am an active member of a party	1.3	1.0	3.3
I am a member and hold a position in a party	0.4	0.4	0.6
Don't know / refuse	0.4	0.1	1.7
Total	100	100	100

28. When forming an opinion about a particular political issue, how important is it to you to first hear the position of the following:

	Very important	Somewhat important	Quite unimportant	Not at all important	Don't know / refuse	Total
28.1. Rabbis						
Total sample	16.2	17.9	12.8	50.3	2.8	100
Jews	14.6	15.5	13.0	53.6	3.3	100
Arabs*	25.0	31.7	11.1	31.1	1.1	100
28.2. Political commentators on radio and television						
Total sample	13.4	39.6	18.2	27.8	1.0	100
Jews	11.7	39.5	18.6	29.3	0.9	100
Arabs	23.3	40.0	15.6	19.4	1.7	100
28.3. The party you voted for in the last elections						
Total sample	31.7	33.6	12.0	18.4	4.3	100
Jews	31.7	34.7	12.1	18.0	3.5	100
Arabs	31.7	27.2	11.7	20.6	8.8	100
28.4. The prime minister						
Total sample	20.5	29.9	17.5	31.3	0.8	100
Jews	20.8	30.1	17.0	31.7	0.4	100
Arabs	18.9	28.9	20.6	29.4	2.2	100
28.5. Family members						
Total sample	26.3	36.3	15.3	20.5	1.6	100
Jews	21.5	38.2	16.2	22.5	1.6	100
Arabs	53.9	25.6	10.0	8.9	1.6	100
28.6. Friends						
Total sample	16.5	38.2	19.5	24.9	0.9	100
Jews	11.8	38.7	20.9	27.6	1.0	100
Arabs	43.3	35.0	11.7	9.4	0.6	100

	Very important	Somewhat important	Quite unimportant	Not at all important	Don't know / refuse	Total
28.7. Political blogs and Internet forums						
Total sample	6.3	17.2	18.4	50.4	7.7	100
Jews	4.0	16.0	18.6	54.0	7.4	100
Arabs	18.9	23.9	17.2	30.0	10.0	100

* Arab respondents were asked about clergy.

29. Out of all of them, whose opinion do you consider to be the most important?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Rabbis*	11.1	11.2	10.6
Political commentators on radio and television	18.5	20.1	9.4
The party you voted for in the last elections	10.6	10.5	11.1
The prime minister	8.8	9.3	6.1
Family members	22.3	20.5	32.8
Friends	5.8	5.6	7.2
Political blogs or Internet forums	2.8	2.2	6.1
My own opinion**	10.8	12.4	2.2
No one's opinion**	6.3	5.6	10.6
Don't know / refuse	3.0	2.6	3.9
Total	100	100	100

* Arab respondents: clergy

** Not read to respondent.

30. People often discuss what the country's primary goals should be over the next few years. I will present you with a list of goals. On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important), how much importance do you attach to each of the following goals:

	Not at all important	Not so important	So-so/ in the middle	Quite important	Very important	Don't know / refuse	Total
30.1. Integrating ultra-Orthodox Jews into the work force							
Total sample	8.2	6.3	8.6	26.8	47.8	2.3	100
Jews	4.2	5.7	8.6	27.9	51.3	2.3	100
Arabs	30.6	10.0	8.3	20.6	28.3	2.2	100
30.2. Narrowing socioeconomic gaps							
Total sample	0.7	1.3	4.3	19.8	73.7	0.2	100
Jews	0.3	1.1	3.7	20.7	74.0	0.1	100
Arabs	2.8	2.8	7.8	14.4	71.7	0.6	100
30.3. Improving relations between Jewish and Arab citizens							
Total sample	8.6	6.0	10.1	28.2	45.9	1.3	100
Jews	9.6	6.9	11.3	31.6	39.2	1.5	100
Arabs	2.8	1.1	3.3	8.9	83.9		100
30.4. Strengthening ties between elected representatives and citizens							
Total sample	4.9	6.8	10.8	30.9	45.7	0.9	100
Jews	4.7	7.5	11.4	33.0	42.5	0.9	100
Arabs	6.1	2.8	7.2	18.9	63.3	1.7	100
30.5. Helping young people to afford an apartment of their own							
Total sample	0.9	1.8	4.7	19.4	72.8	0.4	100
Jews	0.6	1.7	4.6	21.1	71.7	0.3	100
Arabs	2.8	2.2	5.0	10.0	79.4	0.6	100

	Not at all important	Not so important	So-so/ in the middle	Quite important	Very important	Don't know / refuse	Total
30.6. Achieving peace with the Palestinians							
Total sample	8.7	5.6	9.3	23.2	51.4	1.8	100
Jews	9.8	6.3	10.4	26.1	45.2	2.2	100
Arabs	2.2	1.7	2.7	6.7	86.7	--	100
30.7. Strengthening Israel's military capability							
Total sample	5.1	3.5	4.7	17.0	69.0	0.7	100
Jews	0.9	1.9	3.6	16.9	76.4	0.3	100
Arabs	28.9	12.8	10.6	17.8	27.2	2.7	100
30.8. Improving Israel's image and international standing							
Total sample	4.3	3.2	4.6	22.7	65.2	--	100
Jews	2.5	2.5	3.6	23.7	67.5	0.2	100
Arabs	14.4	6.7	10.0	16.7	52.2	--	100
30.9. Improving government efficiency							
Total sample	2.2	3.2	8.8	28.6	55.3	1.9	100
Jews	2.1	3.0	8.2	29.8	54.5	2.4	100
Arabs	2.8	3.9	11.7	21.7	59.4	0.5	100

31. Since the leadership must decide on which of the above to concentrate, which goal is the most important in your eyes?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Integrating ultra-Orthodox Jews into the work force	2.3	2.7	0
Narrowing socioeconomic gaps	22.8	24.9	11.1
Improving relations between Jewish and Arab citizens	7.1	2.7	31.7
Strengthening ties between elected representatives and citizens	1.1	0.9	2.2
Helping young people to afford an apartment of their own	11.6	11.9	10.0
Achieving peace with the Palestinians	17.3	14.0	35.6
Strengthening Israel's military capacity	20.5	23.9	1.1
Improving Israel's image and international standing	8.9	10.2	1.7
Improving government efficiency	3.8	4.2	1.7
None of the above*	0.2	--	1.1
Don't know / refuse	2.1	2.0	2.8
Other: Specify	2.3	2.6	1.0
Total	100	100	100

* Not read to respondent.

32. In the event of a conflict between democracy and halakha (Jewish religious law), should preference be given to upholding democratic principles or to observing the tenets of Jewish law?*

	Jews
It is preferable in all cases to uphold democratic principles	49.7
Sometimes one, and sometimes the other	26.5
It is preferable in all cases to observe the tenets of Jewish religious law	21.0
Don't know / refuse	2.8
Total	100

* Questions 32 through 34 were posed to Jews only.

33. Do you feel it is appropriate for rabbis to issue religious rulings on controversial political issues?

	Jews
It is appropriate	21.8
It is not appropriate	69.8
It depends on the circumstances*	5.5
Don't know / refuse	2.9
Total	100

* Not read to respondent.

34. Would a religious ruling issued by rabbis on a controversial political issue be of personal importance to you?

	Jews
It would be very important	12.4
It would be quite important	13.0
It would be slightly important	22.7
It would not hold any importance	47.6
Don't know / refuse	4.3
Total	100

35. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Strongly agree	Don't /know refuse	Total
35.1. Decisions crucial to the state on matters of peace and security should be made by a Jewish majority						
Total sample	18.3	11.5	22.6	45.9	1.7	100
Jews	9.5	10.8	25.2	52.6	1.9	100
Arabs	68.3	15.6	7.8	7.8	0.5	100

35.2. Decisions crucial to the state regarding governance, economy, and society should be made by a Jewish majority

Total sample	22.3	15.4	23.9	37.0	1.4	100
Jews	13.1	16.1	27.2	42.3	1.3	100
Arabs	73.9	11.7	5.6	7.2	1.6	100

36. In your opinion, should teachers discuss burning political issues with pupils during the appropriate classes in school?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Definitely should	37.4	37.0	40.0
Think they should	38.3	39.6	31.1
Think they should not	12.5	12.3	13.9
Definitely should not	9.8	8.9	15.0
Don't know / refuse	2.0	2.2	--
Total	100	100	100

37. And with regard to universities, should lecturers be permitted in principle to express political opinions?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Certain they should not be permitted	28.2	30.7	13.9
Think they should not be permitted	25.2	27.1	14.4
Think they should be permitted	25.7	25.3	27.8
Certain they should be permitted	18.3	14.1	41.7
Don't know / refuse	2.6	2.8	2.2
Total	100	100	100

38. In your opinion, should the state oversee the content of university courses?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Certain it should not	18.7	16.7	30.0
Think it should not	16.5	16.5	16.7
Think it should	35.6	37.0	27.8
Certain it should	25.4	25.9	22.8
Don't know / refuse	3.8	3.9	2.7
Total	100	100	100

39. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement that Arab citizens of Israel are discriminated against compared with Jewish citizens?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Do not agree at all	29.8	33.2	10.0
Agree to a small extent	17.2	18.3	10.6
Agree somewhat	27.0	26.9	27.8
Agree strongly	22.7	18.1	48.3
Don't know / refuse	3.3	3.5	3.3
Total	100	100	100

40. To what extent do you support or oppose full equality of rights between Jewish and Arab citizens of the state?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Strongly oppose	12.8	14.8	1.1
Somewhat oppose	11.4	13.0	2.2
Somewhat support	38.7	42.7	15.6
Strongly support	33.4	25.2	80.0
Don't know / refuse	3.7	4.3	1.1
Total	100	100	100

41. If you had no restrictions such as apartment prices or work location, and you could choose freely today where you would like to live, which of the following places in Israel would you choose?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
A large city	36.6	38.4	26.1
A city, but not a large one	24.1	26.4	11.1
A Jewish community in the West Bank/Judea and Samaria*	2.2	2.5	--
A community settlement	10.3	11.6	3.3
A kibbutz or moshav	12.7	14.2	3.9
A village	13.3	6.1	53.9
Don't know / refuse	0.9	0.8	1.7
Total	100	100	100

*Asked of Jews only.

42. In which large city would you like to live? (Respondents who preferred a large city)

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Tel Aviv	39.2	39.3	38.3
Haifa	13.7	10.7	38.3
Jerusalem	26.2	29.1	2.1
Beersheva	2.3	2.6	--
Another large city*	15.9	17.3	4.3
Don't know / refuse	2.7	1.0	17.0
Total	100	100	100

* Not read to respondent.

43. There has been a lot of talk lately about the "State of Tel Aviv," implying that those who live there are cut off from the problems of the state and are not eager to fulfill their obligations as citizens. Do you feel that this is indeed the case?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
This is definitely the case	19.9	19.1	24.4
I think this is the case	24.9	25.6	21.1
I do not think this is the case	24.0	25.2	17.2
This is definitely not the case	24.7	24.7	24.4
Don't know / refuse	6.5	5.4	12.9
Total	100	100	100

44. In your opinion, are the following statements true or untrue?

	Very true	Quite true	Not so true	Not at all true	Don't know / refuse	Total
44.1. People born and raised in Tel Aviv have a much better chance of succeeding in life in Israel						
Total sample	17.9	29.3	26.7	22.2	3.9	100
Jews	14.3	28.9	29.5	23.5	3.8	100
Arabs	38.3	31.1	10.6	14.4	5.6	100
44.2. People who aren't Jewish have no chance of succeeding in life in Israel today						
Total sample	9.8	18.8	39.5	29.7	2.2	100
Jews	5.9	17.6	43.3	30.8	2.4	100
Arabs	31.7	25.6	17.8	23.3	1.6	100
44.3. Israelis are having a hard time today with jobs and housing because of the foreign workers						
Total sample	18.3	20.3	30.9	27.8	2.7	100
Jews	15.3	19.1	33.7	29.0	2.9	100
Arabs	35.0	27.2	15.0	20.6	2.2	100

45. How would you rate the level of solidarity (sense of “togetherness”) in Israeli society as a whole today (including Jews, Arabs, secular Jews, religious Jews, rich, poor, Mizrahi Jews, Ashkenazi Jews, etc.)? Answer on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is “no solidarity at all,” and 10 is “very strong solidarity.”

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know / refuse	Total	Average
Total sample	10.7	5.1	12.3	10.6	24.1	12.2	12.0	5.8	0.9	2.9	3.4	100	4.8
Jews	8.7	5.4	12.4	11.1	24.7	12.3	12.5	6.2	1.1	2.1	3.7	100	4.8
Arabs	21.7	3.3	12.2	7.8	20.6	11.7	9.4	3.3	--	7.8	2.2	100	4.5

46. How would you rate the level of solidarity (sense of “togetherness”) in Jewish Israel's society? Answer on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is “no solidarity at all,” and 10 is “very strong solidarity.”

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know / refuse	Total	Average
Total sample	5.3	3.7	7.7	8.0	19.3	12.8	15.3	13.5	4.8	6.6	3.0	100	5.8
Jews	4.3	3.8	7.9	7.9	20.1	13.4	15.5	14.2	4.8	4.4	3.7	100	5.8
Arabs	10.6	2.8	6.1	8.3	14.4	8.9	13.9	9.4	5.0	18.9	1.7	100	6.1

47. In your opinion, are young people's (ages 20-30) chances of establishing themselves professionally in Israel today better, worse, or the same, in comparison with their parents' generation?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Much better	16.5	19.0	2.2
Somewhat better	21.6	23.1	12.8
The same	14.6	14.2	16.7
Somewhat worse	22.5	19.7	38.3
Much worse	20.3	19.1	27.2
Don't know / refuse	4.5	4.9	2.8
Total	100	100	100

48. In your view, do young people in Israel care about politics more, less, or to the same degree, compared with older adults?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Care much more	3.8	3.6	5.0
Care a little more	8.6	8.1	11.1
To the same degree	18.2	18.3	17.3
Care a little less	35.3	35.0	37.2
Care much less	30.2	30.3	29.4
Don't know / refuse	3.9	4.7	--
Total	100	100	100

49. And what about social, not political, issues? Do young people in Israel care about these issues more, less, or to the same degree, compared with older adults?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Care much more	9.9	10.6	6.1
Care a little more	18.9	17.3	28.3
The same degree	23.8	25.4	14.4
Care a little less	26.3	26.0	28.3
Care much less	17.1	16.4	21.1
Don't know / refuse	4.0	4.3	1.8
Total	100	100	100

50. Do you consider the following people to be part of Israeli society?

	Yes	No	Don't know / refuse	Total
50.1. Foreign workers living in Israel for many years				
Total sample	38.8	56.9	4.3	100
Jews	39.1	56.2	4.7	100
Arabs	36.7	61.1	2.2	100
50.2. Children of foreign workers who were born and live in Israel				
Total sample	53.5	41.1	5.4	100
Jews	52.5	42.0	5.5	100
Arabs	58.3	36.1	5.6	100
50.3. Children of <i>yordim</i> (Israeli expatriates) who were born and raised abroad				
Total sample	52.9	41.9	5.2	100
Jews	54.1	40.3	5.6	100
Arabs	45.6	50.6	3.8	100
50.4. Arab citizens of Israel				
Total sample	70.7	26.3	3.0	100
Jews	67.9	28.5	3.6	100
Arabs	86.1	13.9	--	100
50.5. Jewish Israelis who refuse to serve in the army				
Total sample	55.5	40.5	4.0	100
Jews	52.7	43.0	4.3	100
Arabs	71.1	26.1	2.8	100
50.6. Non-Jewish immigrants who came to Israel under the Law of Return				
Total sample	64.5	32.2	3.3	100
Jews	66.9	29.7	3.4	100
Arabs	51.1	46.1	2.8	100

51. Would you be troubled by having any of the following as prime minister:

	Very troubled	Somewhat troubled	Hardly troubled	Not troubled at all	Don't know / refuse	Total
51.1. A woman						
Total sample	4.8	5.1	11.3	78.3	0.5	100
Jews	4.6	4.9	11.6	78.3	0.6	100
Arabs	5.6	6.1	10.0	78.3		100
51.2. An Arab						
Total sample	58.8	14.9	6.8	17.5	2.0	100
Jews	67.8	16.5	5.8	7.5	2.4	100
Arabs	7.2	6.1	12.2	74.4	0.1	100
51.3. An ultra-Orthodox Jew						
Total sample	41.9	19.3	12.5	24.2	2.1	100
Jews	39.3	20.4	13.0	25.2	2.1	100
Arabs	56.7	13.3	9.4	18.3	2.3	100

52. Which party received the highest number of votes in the last elections (2009)?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Likud	19.8	18.3	27.8
Kadima	65.7	69.5	43.9
Labor	1.1	0.6	3.9
Yisrael Beitenu	1.3	1.2	1.7
Shas	0.1	--	0.6
Don't know / refuse	12.0	10.4	22.1
Total	100	100	100

53. How many representatives are there in the Knesset?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
75	0.7	0.6	1.1
80	0.6	0.5	1.1
100	0.8	1.0	
120	88.4	88.9	85.6
150	0.6	0.6	0.6
Don't know / refuse	8.9	8.4	11.6
Total	100	100	100

54. Who decides which judges will be appointed to the Supreme Court?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
The president of the state	9.1	9.6	6.1
The prime minister	3.4	2.7	7.2
A committee of jurists and politicians	25.3	26.1	21.1
The minister of justice	16.0	15.4	19.4
The Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee of the Knesset	20.3	19.3	25.6
Don't know / refuse	25.9	26.9	20.6
Total	100	100	100

55. During which war did Israel conquer the Golan Heights?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
The War of Independence	1.6	1.3	3.3
The Six Day War	70.8	69.0	80.6
The Yom Kippur War	13.2	15.1	2.2
The First Lebanon War	3.0	2.9	3.3
The Second Lebanon War	0.8	0.7	1.7
Don't know / refuse	10.6	11.0	8.9
Total	100	100	100

56. Which is the first country that Israel signed a peace treaty with?

	Total sample	Jews	Arabs
Egypt	87.8	87.9	87.2
Jordan	5.8	5.7	6.7
Syria	0.4	0.3	1.1
Lebanon	0.6	0.6	0.6
None of the above	0.6	0.2	2.8
Don't know / refuse	4.8	5.3	1.6
Total	100	100	100

Appendix 2: Israeli Democracy Survey 2011 Compared with Previous Israeli Democracy Surveys

Section 1: The Political System: Its Nature, Structure, and Functioning

1. How would you assess Israel's overall situation today?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Very good	2.5	2.3	2.8	3.1	3.2	5.3	4.3	5.8	6.4
Quite good	8.6	11.1	16.5	19.4	11.4	23.1	26.9	33.9	21.4
So-so	26.1	32.9	37.5	38.2	34.3	35.7	38.4	35.2	41.0
Quite bad	24.3	22.7	16.8	18.4	25.0	16.1	17.1	13.8	16.0
Very bad	38.5	30.6	25.8	20.4	25.2	18.2	12.2	9.8	13.7
Don't know / refuse	0.0	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.9	1.6	1.1	1.5	1.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

General comments

- The comparative analysis presents the results of the entire sample, (in percent) including the category of “don't know / refuse.”
- The questions are presented here in the order in which they appear in the text, but they are numbered in accordance with Appendix 1 (where they are arranged in the order that they were posed in the Israeli Democracy Survey 2011).
- N/A (not asked) indicates that the question was not asked this year.

19.3. Democracy is the best form of government

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010*	2011
Strongly disagree	2.7	3.5	6.8	2.2				4.8	1.9
Disagree	7.7	7.7	10.4	6.7				9.6	4.8
Not sure	11.6	9.0	9.5	13.3				N/A	10.6
Agree	41.8	32.8	28.3	32.9	N/A	N/A	N/A	29.3	36.4
Strongly agree	35.5	45.7	44.1	43.4				51.3	45.4
Don't know/ refuse	0.7	1.3	0.9	1.5				5.0	0.9
Total	100	100	100	100	0	0	0	100	100

* In 2010 only 4 categories of responses were presented

18. Below are two forms of government. What is your opinion of each of them as a way to run our country?

18.1. A strong leader who does not need to take the Knesset or elections into account

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Very bad*								30.3	40.2
Somewhat bad								23.2	23.5
Somewhat good	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22.8	21.6
Very good								19.0	10.8
Don't know / refuse								4.7	3.9
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100

18.2. A government made up of experts and not elected representatives*

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Very bad						15.2		17.4	17.2
Somewhat bad						21.1		21.8	23.3
Somewhat good	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	21.6	N/A	34.3	35.0
Very good						32.1		21.0	18.2
Don't know / refuse						10.0		5.5	6.3
Total	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100	100

* In the Israeli Democracy Survey 2011, respondents were asked whether such a form of government is “good or bad”; in 2010, “desirable or not”; and in 2008, the question posed was “What do you think about the idea of giving up Knesset elections and shifting to a government of experts prominent in various fields?” with four possible responses, ranging from “I like the idea very much” to “I don’t like the idea at all.”

5. Israel is defined as both a Jewish and a democratic state. Which part of this definition is more important to you personally? (Jewish sample only)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Jewish state								32.4	29.5
Democratic state								17.0	22.9
Both are equally important	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	48.1	46.1
Neither is important								1.7	1.0
Don't know/ refuse								0.8	0.5
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100

33. Do you feel it is appropriate for rabbis to issue religious rulings on controversial political issues?*

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
It is appropriate			27.4					31.8	21.8
It is not appropriate	N/A	N/A	68.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	63.1	69.8
Don't know/refuse			3.9					5.1	8.4
Total	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100	100

* In 2005, the wording of the question was "justified or unjustified." In the Israeli Democracy Survey 2010, the question posed was: "Rabbis should be consulted more often when crucial political decisions are made" (agree/disagree); 31.8% agreed with this statement, 63.1% did not agree, and 5.1% did not respond.

8. In your opinion, is the State of Israel today democratic to a suitable degree, too democratic, or not democratic enough?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Much too democratic	4.9	9.6	8.1	4.6			7.2	6.8	7.6
Too democratic	15.5	16.2	15.3	12.5			18.7	20.3	16.8
Democratic to a suitable degree	46.2	29.7	39.4	36.5			32.8	34.0	34.1
Not democratic enough	25.5	34.2	29.0	34.1	N/A	N/A	27.3	29.0	27.5
Definitely not democratic enough	7.3	8.7	7.2	11.5			10.4	6.6	11.8
Don't know / refuse	0.6	1.6	1.0	0.8			3.6	3.3	2.2
Total	100	100	100	100	0	0	100	100	100

6. In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the functioning of Israeli democracy?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Very dissatisfied	11.1	14.7	12.6	14.5	17.9	14.7	17.4	16.5	11.9
Dissatisfied	37.5	39.6	37.5	39.1	47.2	40.7	42.7	44.8	33.5
Satisfied	47.8	41.5	45.7	43.1	30.8	38.3	34.9	32.8	47.3
Very satisfied	3.0	3.4	3.2	2.9	1.9	3.6	2.7	3.6	5.0
Don't know / refuse	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.4	2.2	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

2. What is your opinion of the way the government is handling the current problems of the state?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Handling them very well	2.0	1.6	1.8	2.7	1.6	2.2	N/A	2.0	2.3
Handling them well	20.0	19.7	20.2	22.3	11.1	15.6		23.0	22.3
Handling them not so well	42.1	42.6	43.9	42.9	39.5	43.0		49.3	44.3
Handling them not at all well	35.1	33.3	32.5	31.3	46.3	37.1		22.2	27.2
Don't know / refuse	0.8	2.8	1.6	0.8	1.5	2.1		3.5	3.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	0	100	100

15. Do you feel that the government is doing enough these days to explain its decisions to us?

	1982	2011
Yes, it is doing everything possible, a great deal	18.5	7.1
Yes, it is doing a lot	30.7	15.6
No, it is doing too little	40.5	52.4
No, it is doing almost nothing	9.3	22.1
Don't know / refuse	1.0	28.0
Total	100	100

9. To what extent does the balance of power among Knesset factions reflect the distribution of opinions in the general public?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
To a large extent	20.5	N/A	15.4	15.3	15.1	14.5	N/A	N/A	26.0
To some extent	45.6		43.6	43.7	35.2	38.0			33.3
To a small extent	23.7		27.5	25.6	27.8	27.4			25.0
Not at all	8.7		10.8	11.8	12.1	12.0			8.5
Don't know / refuse	1.5		2.7	3.6	9.8	8.1			7.2
Total	100	0	100	100	100	100	0	0	100

19.7. Competition between Israel's political parties strengthens democracy

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Strongly disagree				8.2					7.2
Disagree				14.5					19.7
Not sure				24.8					17.1
Agree	N/A	N/A	N/A	34.4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	34.9
Strongly agree				15.4					18.4
Don't know/ refuse				2.7					2.7
Total	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100

19.6. There are no real differences between the political parties in Israel today

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Strongly disagree								25.6	11.1
Disagree								22.7	26.3
Not sure*								N/A	16.9
Agree	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	23.2	27.6
Strongly agree								23.6	15.3
Don't know/ refuse								0.9	2.8
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100

* This option was not presented to respondents for a number of years.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
11.7. The president of Israel									
Not at all	16.1	12.3	17.6	15.3	54.2	29.6	21.8	14.6	10.8
To a small extent	15.6	12.9	16.9	16.9	20.0	22.4	15.9	14.3	9.8
To some extent	36.1	33.7	29.4	30.3	14.9	24.1	27.4	25.7	21.8
To a large extent	31.4	35.5	34.7	33.5	5.6	21.6	30.2	42.3	56.0
Don't know / refuse	0.8	5.6	1.4	4.0	5.3	2.3	4.7	3.1	1.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
11.8. The Knesset									
Not at all	19.5	24.4	42.2	33.0	32.0	36.2	29.5	25.8	19.7
To a small extent	28.6	28.6	33.5	33.7	33.2	33.9	31.4	34.8	27.3
To some extent	38.2	37.3	20.0	25.3	26.0	22.9	27.1	27.6	43.3
To a large extent	13.1	8.5	4.0	7.4	6.2	5.5	8.6	8.8	8.3
Don't know / refuse	0.6	1.2	0.3	0.6	2.6	1.5	3.4	3.0	1.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
11.9. The army (IDF)									
Not at all	35.4	28.0	36.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	32.0	N/A	24.8
To a small extent	20.8	15.1	24.4				25.9		16.9
To some extent	27.1	21.8	20.1				21.1		23.8
To a large extent	14.9	14.0	16.4				10.7		24.4
Don't know / refuse	1.8	21.1	2.4				10.3		10.1
Total	100	100	100	0	0	0	100	0	100

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
11.10. The government									
Not at all	19.9	27.7	26.6	31.2	37.2	41.4	30.7	30.5	22.3
To a small extent	25.4	30.8	30.5	28.8	30.2	32.2	35.4	35.1	25.6
To some extent	40.8	35.3	30.3	29.6	23.6	20.1	24.9	26.4	41.1
To a large extent	13.8	4.4	12.1	9.1	6.6	5.0	6.1	6.3	9.9
Don't know / refuse	0.1	1.8	0.5	1.3	2.4	1.3	2.9	1.7	1.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
11.11. The Chief Rabbinate									
Not at all	35.4	28.0	36.7				32.0		24.8
To a small extent	20.8	15.1	24.4				25.9		16.9
To some extent	27.1	21.8	20.1	N/A	N/A	N/A	21.1	N/A	23.8
To a large extent	14.9	14.0	16.4				10.7		24.4
Don't know / refuse	1.8	21.1	2.4				10.3		10.1
Total	100	100	100	0	0	0	100	0	100
11.12. The Attorney-General									
Not at all						30.9	22.7		11.3
To a small extent						27.6	19.9		14.1
To some extent	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	24.0	28.8	N/A	34.6
To a large extent						9.7	16.8		29.5
Don't know / refuse						7.8	11.8		10.6
Total	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	0	100

7.1. Politicians do not tend to consider the opinion of the average citizen

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009*	2010*	2011
Strongly disagree	14.4	12.1	17.5	16.4	16.7	14.0	15.6	16.3	13.1
Disagree somewhat	23.9	25.2	24.3	21.4	13.1	16.7	20.8	18.8	28.2
Not sure	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	19.2	22.0	N/A
Agree somewhat	32.2	32.1	26.8	24.1	25.0	28.3	23.9	23.0	33.2
Strongly agree	29.3	29.8	31.3	37.2	42.3	37.2	17.5	17.5	23.2
Don't know / refuse	0.2	0.8	0.1	0.9	2.9	3.8	3.0	2.4	2.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

* In 2009 and 2010, 5 response categories were presented, as opposed to 4 in other years.

19.1. Politicians look out more for their own interests than for those of the people who elected them*

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Their personal interest	52.8	48.2		63.6	65.3	49.8	48.5	49.1	70.6
The public interest	14.5	15.3	N/A	10.2	14.1	23.4	28.4	26.4	11.6
Don't know / refuse / not sure / to the same extent	32.7	36.5		26.2	20.6	26.8	23.1	24.5	17.8
Total	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100

* This question appeared in a number of different versions over the years; see Part 2, p. ???.

19.4. To reach the top in Israeli politics today, you have to be corrupt

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Strongly disagree	8.9	14.9	N/A	11.9	17.5	12.2	18.9	10.8	13.6
Disagree	26.6	24.8		16.0	20.0	18.1	19.9	22.4	24.3
Not sure	24.4	16.3		22.5	16.9	17.2	19.1	21.3	16.6
Agree	24.9	22.9		26.5	22.5	28.1	22.1	24.6	22.9
Strongly agree	14.5	19.3		21.1	20.5	21.1	15.2	18.3	20.2
Don't know / refuse	0.7	1.8		2.0	2.6	3.3	4.8	2.6	2.4
Total	100	100		0	100	100	100	100	100

20. To what extent are you interested in politics?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
To a large extent	36.3	28.6	28.9	35.7	N/A	22.6	28.9	23.3	37.7
To some extent	39.8	38.5	41.5	36.5		33.4	37.2	38.3	39.1
To a small extent	17.5	23.3	18.1	18.2		25.6	22.0	24.9	16.0
Not at all	6.0	9.4	11.4	7.8		16.6	11.3	12.9	7.1
Don't know / refuse	0.4	0.2	0.1	1.8		1.8	0.6	0.6	0.1
Total	100	100	100	100		0	100	100	100

13. How much do you talk with friends and family about political issues?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*	2009	2010	2011
A lot	30.5	26.5	27.0	29.7	24.6	10.7			39.3
To some extent	38.2	37.1	32.4	36.9	30.7	31.1			31.3
A little	24.3	24.6	28.6	24.6	28.4	31.5	N/A	N/A	19.7
Not at all	6.8	10.7	11.0	8.6	15.1	23.2			9.5
Don't know / refuse	0.2	1.1	1.0	0.2	1.2	3.5			0.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	0	0	100

* In the 2008 Israeli Democracy Survey, the responses were worded as follows: "very often," "often," "seldom," and "very seldom."

27. Do you support, or are you active in, any political party?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
No, I do not support and am not active in any party	74.8	70.6	77.6	64.8					69.3
I support a party, but am not a member	17.1	21.6	14.4	28.7					23.2
I am a member of a party	4.3	3.3	3.0	3.8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.4
I am an active member of a party	1.7	2.8	1.6	1.9					1.3
I am a member and hold a position in a party	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3					0.4
Don't know / refuse	1.9	1.4	3.1	0.4					0.4
Total	100	100	100	100	0	0	0	0	100

22. If someone close to you—a friend or family member—was considering going into politics, how would you advise him?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Would strongly advise in favor						5.9			8.6
Would advise in favor						18.3			25.3
Would advise against	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	19.4	N/A	N/A	25.3
Would strongly advise against						47.5			32.5
Don't know / refuse						8.9			8.3
Total	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	100

19.2. I support freedom of expression for all people, regardless of their views

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Strongly disagree	2.3	6.4	3.6	3.0			10.7		3.8
Disagree	9.1	10.6	7.6	8.3			15.6		9.3
Not sure	12.1	8.2	9.2	13.5			N/A		10.2
Agree	43.2	34.1	26.8	34.3	N/A	N/A	22.2	N/A	36.9
Strongly agree	31.3	39.3	52.0	39.7			48.4		39.3
Don't know/ refuse	2.0	1.4	0.9	1.2			3.1		0.6
Total	100	100	100	100	0	0	100	0	100

* In 2009, 4 options for response were given to interviewees, as opposed to 5 in other years.

7.2. Speakers should be prohibited from harshly criticizing the State of Israel in public

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2011
Strongly disagree					19.5	15.8	23.0	22.4
Disagree somewhat					24.4	24.7	18.0	23.6
Not sure					18.5	19.8	N/A	N/A
Agree somewhat	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	21.8	21.5	19.3	23.3
Strongly agree					12.0	12.4	35.4	27.5
Don't know/refuse					3.9	5.7	4.6	3.4
Total	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	100

19.5. All people must enjoy the same rights under law, regardless of their views

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Strongly disagree	1.7		1.4	1.7	3.7	6.0			2.7
Disagree	5.1		1.9	4.3	8.6	5.2			6.3
Not sure	10.6		5.3	7.9	7.9	6.2			4.1
Agree	44.6	N/A	30.5	32.5	32.7	28.7	N/A	N/A	30.3
Strongly agree	37.7		60.6	52.8	45.3	52.2			56.1
Don't know/refuse	0.3		0.3	0.8	1.8	1.7			0.7
Total	100	0	100	100	100	100	0	0	100

Appendix 3: Socio-demographic Characteristics of (Total) Sample (percent)

Table 1

Sex	Total sample
Male	48.5
Female	51.5
Education	
Up to 10 years of schooling	6.9
11-12 years of schooling	30.5
13-15 years of schooling	25.7
16+ years of schooling	36.0
Did not respond	0.9
Monthly family expenditure	
Below average	33.7
Average	25.8
Above average	31.8
Did not respond	8.8
Nationality	
Jews and others*	85.0
Arabs	15.0
Religion (Arabs)	
Muslims	71.1
Christians	16.1
Druze	12.8
Ethnic origin (Jews)	
Europe-The Americas	22.8
Asia-Africa	23.9
Former Soviet Union	21
Mixed	29.6
Other / did not respond	2.6



* As defined by the Central Bureau of Statistics, the category of “others” includes “no religion” and non-Arab Christians, and constitutes 1.3% of the sample.

→ Length of residence in Israel (Jews)

Long-time residents (native-born, or arrived before 1990)	81.3
Immigrants from FSU (1990 onward)	16.6
Immigrants from other countries (1990 onward)	1.2
Did not respond	1.0

Age**

18-34	24.9
35-54	32.3
55+	41.8
Did not respond	1.0

** It should be noted that the share of young people in the sample this year is less than their proportion of the population according to the Central Bureau of Statistics (25.2% as opposed to 37.8%). We have decided not to weight this group in accordance with its share of the population in order to keep the data “authentic.” However, weighting would not have greatly affected the distribution or responses, as demonstrated by the responses to the first two questions in the survey, before and after weighting:

1. In your opinion, what is Israel’s overall situation today?

	Total sample (unweighted)	Total sample (weighted)
Very good	6.4	5.8
Quite good	21.4	22.2
So-so	41.0	41.9
Quite bad	16.0	15.6
Very bad	13.7	13.0
Don't know / refuse	1.5	1.5

2. What is your opinion of the way the government is handling the current problems of the state?

	Total sample (unweighted)	Total sample (weighted)
Handling very well	2.3	2.0
Handling well	22.3	21.2
Handling not so well	44.3	45.4
Handling not at all well	27.2	27.6
Don't know / refuse	4.0	3.9

Appendix 4: Distribution of Variables (Self-defined) (percent)

Table 1: Religiosity (Jews)*

Secular	49.6
Traditional	30.2
Orthodox	9.9
Ultra-Orthodox (haredi)	9.3

Table 2: Self-Location on Left-Right Continuum (Jews)**

1 - Right	15.8
2	9.2
3	19.7
4	22.0
5	17.1
6	6.5
7 - Left	4.0
Don't know	5.8

Comments

* In 2011, as in previous years, the youngest age group defined itself as ultra-Orthodox or Orthodox to a greater extent than did the intermediate and older age groups. The following is the breakdown of religiosity by age for this year (in percent):

Age	Ultra-Orthodox	Orthodox	Traditional	Secular	Other/don't know/refuse	Total
18-34	21.1	14.9	23.2	39.5	1.3	100
35-54	9.0	9.0	32.5	48.6	0.9	100
55+	3.3	7.6	30.8	57.4	0.9	100

** It should be borne in mind that there is a strong correspondence between political views (right – center – left) and religiosity:

	Secular	Traditional	Orthodox	Ultra-Orthodox
Right	15.8	28.6	44.4	43.0
Center	63.1	58.9	48.5	47.3
Left	16.0	6.9	2.0	1.1

Table 3: Self-location on center-periphery continuum of Israeli society (total sample)

In the center of Israeli society	26.5
Close to the center	39.5
Quite far from the center	19.9
Very distant from the center (on the periphery)	8.9
Don't know	5.2

Table 4: Distribution by category (self-defined)

Center	66
Periphery	28.8

Table 5: Breakdown of self-location in center or periphery of society by socio-demographic or socio-political characteristics (total sample)

	Locate themselves in center of society	Locate themselves on periphery of society
Nationality		
Jews	77	23
Arabs	51.5	48.5
Age		
Young people	69.1	30.9
Intermediate age group	67.8	32.2
Older adults	71.1	28.9
Sex		
Female	67.3	32.7
Male	71.9	28.1



Education		
Up to 10 years of schooling	65.4	34.6
11-12 years of schooling	70.4	29.6
13+ years of schooling	69.8	30.2
Level of political knowledge		
Limited	63.2	36.8
Moderate	67.8	32.3
High	81	19
Family expenditure		
Below average	55.4	44.6
Average	72	28
Above average	72.4	27.6
Political orientation (Jews only)		
Right	74.7	25.3
Center	73.3	26.7
Left	56.8	43.2
Level of religiosity (Jews only)		
Secular	73.6	26.4
Traditional	77.6	22.4
Orthodox	82.8	17.2
Ultra-Orthodox	47.6	52.4

As a rule, the majority in all the groups, with the exception of the ultra-Orthodox, locates itself at or near the center of Israeli society; however, the size of the majority differs from group to group. Thus, many more Jews than Arabs feel themselves to be at or near the center of society, although the fact that more than half the Arab respondents nonetheless located themselves at the center of Israeli society is significant.

With much smaller differences, older Israeli adults feel closer to the center of society than do young people and those in the intermediate age group; similarly, men feel slightly closer than women. Education plays virtually no role. However, a high level of political knowledge goes hand in hand with a feeling of centrality. Below-average family expenditure is associated with a feeling of marginality, as opposed to average and above-average levels of spending. As a group, those who characterize their political orientation as leftist feel more marginalized than those at the right and center of the political map. Orthodox Jews feel closer to the center of Israeli society than do secular and traditional Jews, and of course, much closer than the ultra-Orthodox.

These findings support the data from previous years (see for example the Israeli Democracy Indexes of 2008 and 2009), according to which the majority of the public locates itself at the center of Israeli society, and the feeling of centrality vs. marginality correlates (but not strongly or significantly) with most sociodemographic and sociopolitical variables (with the single exception of ultra-Orthodoxy, which is very connected to feelings of marginality). Since Israeli society is very “intimate”—or alternatively, “multi-centered”—the unquestioned inclusion of individuals in their own social circles offers people a sense of belonging.

Appendix 5: Grading the Public's Political Knowledge*

Table 1: Percentage of correct answers

0	2.2
1	5.8
2	13.5
3	27.5
4	32.7
5	18.4

Table 2: Levels of political knowledge:

Limited (0-2 correct answers)	21.4
Moderate (3-4 correct answers)	60.2
High (5 correct answers)	18.4

* Questions 52–56 in Appendix 1

General comments

* As expected, there was a consistent statistical association between the level of political knowledge of the respondents and their age (positive correlation: the greater the age, the higher the level of political knowledge); education (positive correlation: more years of education went hand in hand with greater political knowledge); level of religiosity (negative correlation: greater religiosity was associated with lower levels of political knowledge); and their self-location at the center or the periphery of Israeli society (positive correlation: a sense of closeness to the center corresponded with greater political knowledge).

Table 3: Breakdown of political knowledge by socio-demographic and socio-political variables

	High	Moderate	Limited
Nationality			
Jews	25.4	54.2	20.4
Arabs	17.6	47.2	35.2
Age			
Young people	13.2	45.6	41.2
Intermediate age	22.5	54.1	23.4
Older adults	26.5	55.8	17.7
Sex			
Female	13.8	52.3	33.9
Male	29.7	53.1	17.2
Education			
Up to 10 years of schooling*	9.8	57.4	32.8
11-12 years of schooling	15.8	51.4	32.8
13+ years of schooling	26.3	53.6	20.1
Level of political knowledge			
Limited	16.7	51.1	31.8
Moderate	24.1	51.8	24.1
High	18.9	54.1	26.2
Family expenditure			
Below average	26.4	51.3	22.3
Average	12.2	57.3	30.6
Above average			



* Only 61 respondents belonged to the category of “up to 10 years of schooling” and answered the question regarding political knowledge.

→ Level of religiosity (Jews only)			
Secular	24.7	55.9	19.4
Traditional	21.2	54.8	24
Orthodox	25.3	54.2	20.5
Ultra-Orthodox	15.9	39	45.1
Political orientation (Jews only)			
Right	18.7	52.2	29.1
Center	23.7	53.3	23
Left	24.8	55.9	19.3

In all the groups studied, those with middling knowledge of politics constituted the majority. At the same time, as the above figures indicate, those with a high level of political knowledge tend to be found more frequently on the left as opposed to the center or the right; among those who locate themselves at the center of Israeli society in contrast to the periphery; among Orthodox and secular Jews more than among traditional Jews, and much more than among the ultra-Orthodox; and among those who are better educated as compared with those who are less well educated. Men demonstrated a greater degree of political knowledge than did women; older adults, more than the intermediate and younger age groups; and Jews, more than Arabs. Average family expenditure did not emerge as a distinguishing variable with regard to political knowledge.

Israeli Democracy Index 2011 Research Team

Prof. Tamar Hermann is Academic Director of the Guttman Center, a Senior Fellow of the Israel Democracy Institute, and a full professor of political science at the Open University.

Nir Atmor is a research assistant on the Israel Democracy Institute's Political Reform project, and a doctoral student in political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Dr. Karmit Haber is a researcher at the Israel Democracy Institute, and teaches in the Sociology Departments of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Bar-Ilan University.

Ella Heller is the survey coordinator at the Guttman Center, and a former director of research at the Modi'in Eizrachi Research Institute and senior researcher at the Knesset's Research and Information Center.

Yuval Lebel is a research assistant in the Israel Democracy Institute's project for Renewing Israel's Social Contract, and a course coordinator in political science at the Open University.

Dr. Raphael Ventura is director of the database at the Guttman Center, and a lecturer at the Lauder School of Government of the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya.

Dror Walter is a research assistant at the Guttman Center, and a master's student in political communication at the Political Science Department of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

