SUMMARY

THE ISRAELI DEMOCRACY INDEX

2018

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Or Anabi | Ella Heller | Fadi Omar
Over the years, there has been a gradual rise in the percentage of Israelis who characterize Israel’s situation as good or very good, and a steady decline in the percentage of those who view it as bad or very bad.
"Most Arab citizens of Israel want to integrate into Israeli society and be part of it"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Do not know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabs</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
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</table>
The major finding of this year’s Index is the consolidation of the Israeli public into two distinct blocs, characterized by their opposing positions on many aspects of Israeli life. In the past, the distinction between Right and Left revolved primarily around the political-security nexus. Today, the differences between them relate to socioeconomic, legal, and religious issues as well.
Today, the Jewish public perceives that the highest degree of tension in Israeli society is between Right and Left; and among the Arab public - between Jews and Arabs.
Strongest tension in Israeli society, over time (Jewish respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Between Right and Left*</th>
<th>Between Ashkenazi and Mizrahim**</th>
<th>Between Jews and Arabs</th>
<th>Between religious and secular Jews</th>
<th>Do not know/All tensions are equal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*On foreign policy and security issues  ** Israeli Jews of Middle Eastern descent

Israel’s government is also democratic towards its Arab citizens (Jews and Arabs)

- **Arabs**
  - Somewhat disagree: 26%
  - Somewhat agree: 40%
  - Strongly disagree: 1%
  - Strongly agree: 27%
  - Do not know: 1%

- **Jews**
  - Somewhat disagree: 15%
  - Somewhat agree: 36%
  - Strongly disagree: 8%
  - Strongly agree: 40%
  - Do not know: 1%
"The power of judicial review over Knesset legislation should be taken away from the Supreme Court"  (of the total sample)

* Although they remain a minority, the percentage of Israelis who believe that the Supreme Court should be denied the authority to overturn laws (judicial review) is gradually increasing.

"The power of judicial review over Knesset legislation should be taken away from the Supreme Court"  Agree, by political affiliation (Jewish respondents)
More than half the public (56%) disagree with the statement that most Knesset members work hard and are doing a good job. At the same time, the percentage who agree is higher than the average in past years (33%).

“Most Knesset members work hard and are doing a good job” (of the total sample)

Feel they have little or no influence on government policy (of the total sample, %)

The 2018 Israeli Democracy Index
Which state institutions do Israelis trust? (Jewish Respondents)

Trust in State Institutions

- IDF: 89%
- President of Israel: 68%
- Municipalities: 60%
- Supreme Court: 55%
- Police: 52%
- Attorney General: 47%
- Government: 34%
- Media: 33%
- Knesset: 30%
- Political parties: 16%

Perception of corruption in state institutions (of the total sample)

- Government: 72%
- Municipalities: 69%
- Knesset: 66%
- Rabbinate / Shari’a court / Christian canonical court: 66%
- Media: 58%
- Police: 46%
- Supreme Court: 35%
- IDF: 23%
Is the country’s leadership corrupt? (of the total sample)

- Quite corrupt: 19%
- Very corrupt: 28%
- Not at all corrupt: 43%
- Not so corrupt: 32%
- So-so: 2.5%
- Very corrupt: 12.5%
- Not so corrupt: 12.5%
- Do not know: 6%

Agree that country’s leadership is quite corrupt or very corrupt, over time (of the total sample)

- 2014: 43%
- 2015: 48%
- 2016: 55%
- 2017: 50%
- 2018: 47%
Most important quality in a politician

- Keeps promises to voters: 17% (Jews), 33% (Arabs)
- His/her ideology: 16% (Jews), 2% (Arabs)
- Integrity and Honesty: 40.5% (Jews), 24% (Arabs)
- Ability to get things done: 21.5% (Jews), 39% (Arabs)

“State funding should be withdrawn or cut back from institutions or artists sharply critical of the state” Agree, by political affiliation (Jewish respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Affiliation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Is there a good balance today between the Jewish and democratic components of the character of the state? (Jewish respondents)

- 30% There is a good balance
- 39% Jewish component is too dominant
- 24% Democratic component is too dominant
- 7% Do not know
- 30%

Which component would you want to be the dominant one? By political affiliation (Jewish respondents)

- Right: 42% Jewish, 43% Both equally, 15% Democratic
- Center: 11% Jewish, 41% Both equally, 48% Democratic
- Left: 4% Jewish, 26% Both equally, 70% Democratic
“Israel has the right to be defined as the nation-state of the Jewish people” (Arab respondents)

- Somewhat disagree: 42%
- Strongly disagree: 27%
- Somewhat agree: 26%
- Strongly agree: 4%
- Do not know: 1%

“People who are unwilling to affirm that Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people should lose their right to vote” (Jewish respondents)

- Somewhat disagree: 35%
- Strongly disagree: 35%
- Somewhat agree: 35%
- Strongly agree: 12%
- Do not know: 3%
"People who are unwilling to affirm that Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people should lose their right to vote"

Agree, by political affiliation (Jewish respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Affiliation</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<td>Left</td>
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* Only a minority of Arabs believe that in order to preserve their national identity, they should live separately from Jews. Among Jews, however, the percentage who believe that in order to preserve their national identity they should live separately is much higher.

"To preserve national identity, it is better for Jews and Arabs in Israel to live separately"

(Agree, Jews and Arabs)

- **Jews**: 43%
- **Arabs**: 29%

Agree, by level of religious observance (Jewish respondents)

- Haredi: 76.5%
- National religious: 56%
- Traditional religious: 54%
- Traditional non-religious: 43%
- Secular: 30%
“The state should encourage greater representation of women in political bodies; for example, by making party funding contingent on appropriate representation of women on the party’s electoral list” (Of the total sample)

62% Agree
36.5% Disagree
1.5% Do not know

The government should encourage greater representation of women in political bodies Agree by level of religious observance (Jewish respondents)

- Haredi: 21%
- National religious: 53%
- Traditional religious: 78%
- Traditional non-religious: 80%
- Secular: 74%
Support men and women earning equal pay for equal work

Agree with the IDF’s current policy of expanding the range of roles open to female soldiers. Agree, by level of religious observance (Jewish respondents)
Israel’s ranking on international indicators of quality of democracy and functioning of government is not too bad. However, we are near the bottom of the list when compared with OECD member states.

Democratic rights and freedoms
- Political rights (FREEDOM HOUSE)
- Civil rights (FREEDOM HOUSE)
- Freedom of the press (REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS)

Democratic process
- Voice and accountability (THE WORLD BANK)
- Political participation (THE ECONOMIST)
- Democratic Equal Rights (V-Dem)
- Civic Participation (V-Dem)
- Deliberative Democracy (V-Dem)
- Democratic political culture (THE ECONOMIST)

Governance
- The government’s functioning (THE ECONOMIST)
- Rule of Law (THE WORLD BANK)

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

Israel recognized the positive impact of IDI’s research and recommendations by conferring upon the institute its most prestigious award, the Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievement.

The Israeli Democracy Index, The Israeli Democracy Index is the flagship project of the Guttman Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research. It presents decision-makers, researchers and the public at large with an annual survey of public opinion on the state of Israeli democracy, including trust in government institutions, identification with the state, the Jewish and democratic characters of the state, politics and political activism, economic attitudes, as well as an evaluation of Israel’s standing in the democratic world as measured by a number of international indices. Recognizing the importance of a substantive and stable democracy in Israel, the Index is used to identify areas that need to be improved and enhanced in our democratic culture and regime.