

Israeli Voice Index, April 2019

Prof. Tamar Hermann, Or Anabi

Below is the first column of the **Israeli Voice Index**, the new monthly survey of the Guttman Center at the Israel Democracy Institute.

This index – which we will run in lieu of participation in the Peace Index—will focus each month on an issue or two from the Israeli public agenda. As far as possible we will make use of data from the past to clarify trends in Israeli public opinion.

We hope the new format will serve you well.

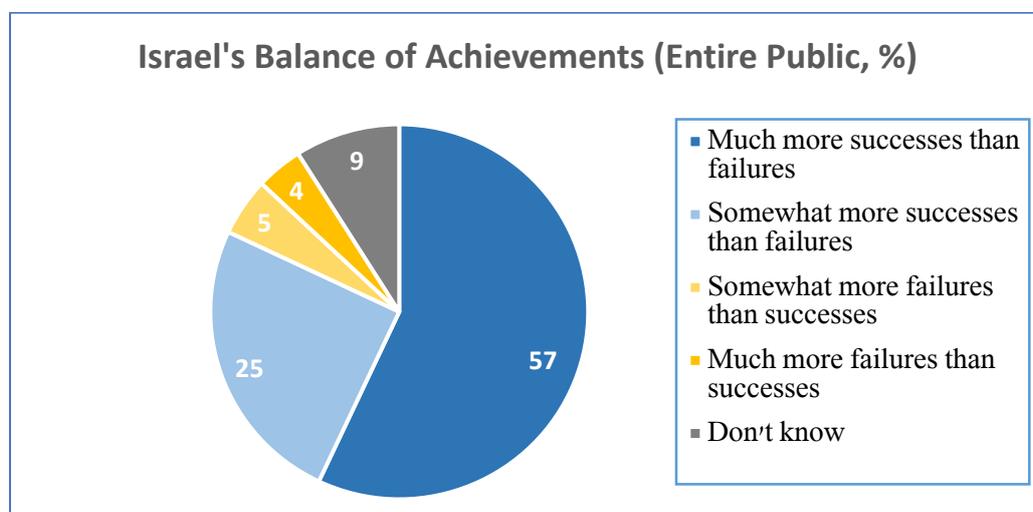
The new column will deal with two issues:

- **Israel at Its 71st Birthday**
- **The 2019 Elections and Their Results**

Israel at Its 71st Birthday

The balance of the country's achievements

On the eve of the state of Israel's 71st Independence Day, a majority of the entire Israeli public thinks that the national balance of achievements shows much more or somewhat more successes than failures (82% vs. 9%, with another 9% having no opinion on the issue).



Both among the Jewish and the Arab interviewees, we found a majority for the view that the balance of Israel’s successes is positive, though the majority among the Jews is larger than among the Arabs (85% vs. 68%).

A segmentation of the Jewish sample by religiosity (self-definition) revealed that among the religious, the rate of those who view the successes as greater than the failures is the highest (93%). Among the haredim, the traditional, and the secular, the rate of those who see it that way is about 80%. A segmentation by political self-definition showed that on the right, this rate stands at 90%, compared to 83% in the center and 79% on the left.

The forecast for the future on the democracy issue

We asked: “How do you feel about the state of democratic governance in Israel in the foreseeable future?” The majority (54%) of the Jewish interviewees were very optimistic or moderately optimistic about the future of democratic governance in Israel, compared to only a minority (39%) of the Arab interviewees.

A segmentation of the Jewish sample by political camp (self-definition) revealed huge differences: on the left and in the center only a minority are optimistic about the future of democratic governance in Israel, compared to a large majority of the right (respectively: 21%, 34%, and 74%). Indeed the data indicate that the rate of those optimistic about democratic governance in the foreseeable future among the Jewish left and center is lower than among the Israeli Arabs.

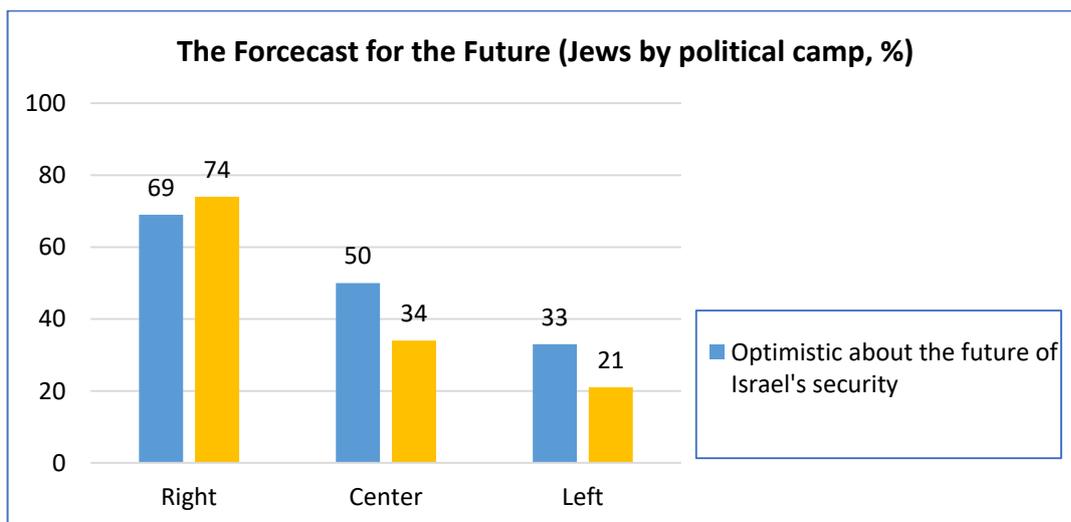
A segmentation by religiosity (self-definition) revealed that the religious are the most optimistic about democratic governance in the foreseeable future while the secular are the most pessimistic. The secular are indeed the only group for which only a minority is optimistic on this question:

	Optimistic about democratic governance in Israel in the foreseeable future
Haredim	77%
Religious	83%
Traditional religious	65%
Traditional nonreligious	61%
Secular	36%

The forecast for the future on the security issue

We asked: “And how do you feel about Israel’s security situation in the foreseeable future?” We found that the rate of Jews who are optimistic about the future of Israel’s security (58%) exceeds the rate of those who are optimistic about the issue of the future of democratic governance in Israel (as noted above, 54%). Especially interesting is the finding that on the question of future security, among the Arab interviewees, too, a majority is optimistic (51.5%), contrasting with the minority of this public who are optimistic about the future of democratic governance in Israel (as noted above, 39%).

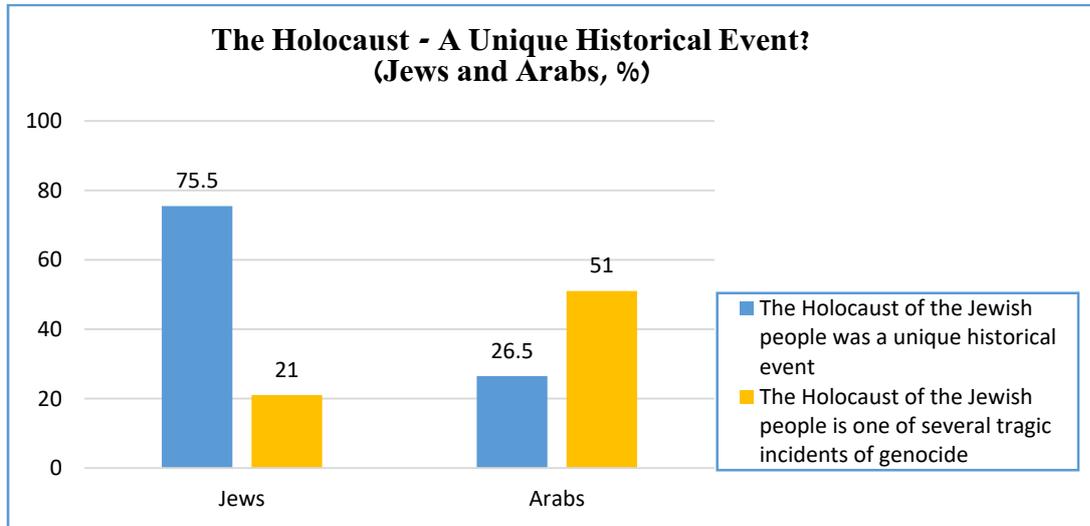
A segmentation of the Jewish sample on this question by political camp (self-definition) also turned up differences between the three camps, but they are smaller than regarding the forecast for the future of democratic governance. Furthermore, among the left and the center the rate of those optimistic about security significantly exceeds their rate on the democracy issue, while on the right the rate of those optimistic about democratic governance is slightly higher than the rate of those optimistic about Israel’s security in the foreseeable future.



The Holocaust - a unique historical event or one of several tragic incidents of genocide?

The national days between Holocaust Remembrance Day and Independence Day are an opportunity for national stocktaking, and an opportunity for us as researchers to look into some of the collective basic assumptions. We wanted to know whether, in the opinion of the Israeli public, the Holocaust was a unique event or a tragic case among comparable cases of genocide. We found that in the Jewish public, a large majority (75.5%) thinks it was a unique

historical event, while among the Arab public a small majority (51%) sees the Holocaust of the Jewish people as one of several tragic incidents of genocide.



A segmentation of the Jewish interviewees’ responses by political camp (self-definition) on the right, in the center, and on the left shows large differences. The majority on the right that regards the Holocaust as a unique historical event is clearly larger than the majority that views it that way on the left (82% vs. 60%), with the center, on this question, almost in the middle (69%).

The 2019 Elections and Their Results

The main consideration in voting

We asked: “What was your main consideration when choosing which party to vote for?” Among the Jews the primary consideration was who headed the party (21%), and the second in importance was the party’s positions on socioeconomic issues (20%). Among the Arabs the most important consideration was the party’s positions on socioeconomic issues (30%), and the second most important was its leader (13%).

A segmentation of the Jewish sample by political camp (self-definition) revealed different arrays of considerations in each camp:

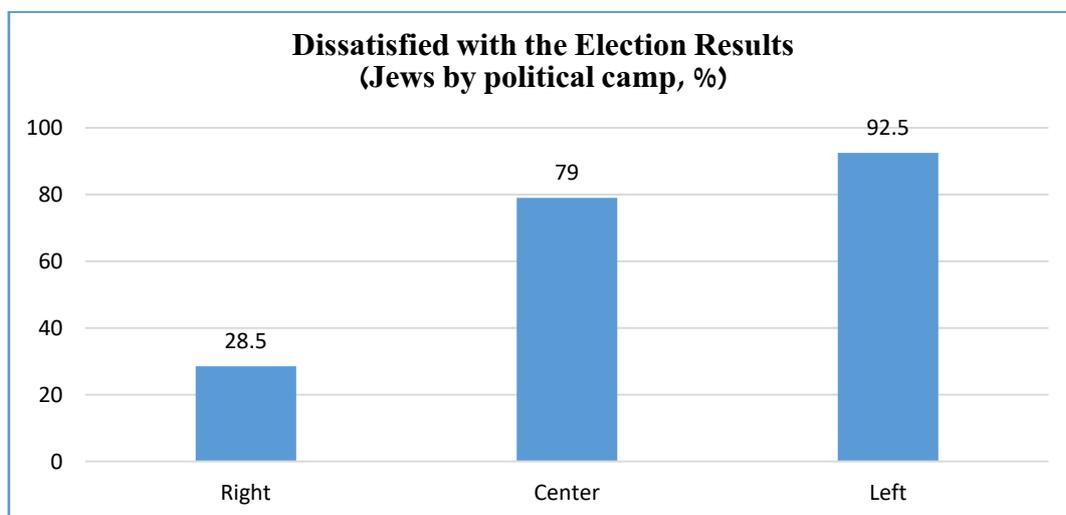
	Most important consideration in deciding whom to vote for	Second most important consideration in deciding whom to vote for
Right	Who is the head of the party (27%)	The party's positions on foreign and defense issues (17.5%)
Center	The party's positions on socioeconomic issues (32%)	The party's list of Knesset candidates (17.5%)
Left	The party's positions on socioeconomic issues (27%)	The party's positions on foreign and defense issues (11.5%)

(Dis)Satisfaction with the election results

A majority of the interviewees in the survey expressed dissatisfaction with the results of the elections (52% among the Jews and 63% among the Arabs).

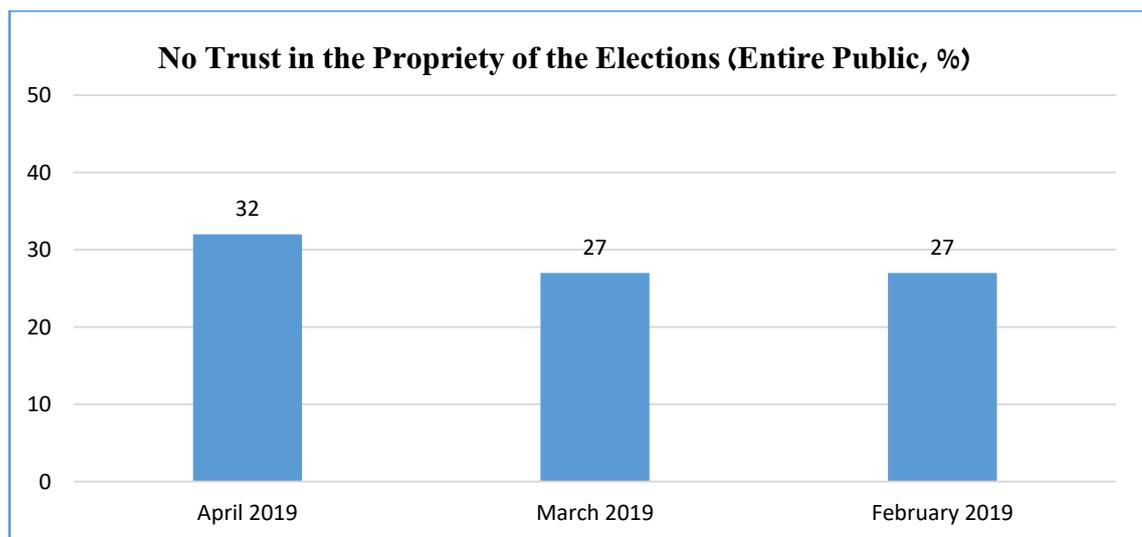
A segmentation of the Jewish sample by political camp (self-definition) sheds light on the matter: a large majority of the left and the center are dissatisfied with the results as well as a little more than one-quarter of the right, probably voters for New Right or Zehut.

A segmentation by religiosity (self-definition) reveals that among the haredim, the rate of those who are dissatisfied is the lowest (11%); from that point the rate rises. Among the traditional nonreligious and the secular, a majority is dissatisfied: religious - 19%, traditional religious - 37.5%, traditional nonreligious - 50%, secular - 74%.



Propriety of the elections

After the elections were held and the results announced, we came back for a third time to the question: “To what extent do you have or not have trust in the propriety of the Knesset elections, meaning that the results that are announced reflect precisely how the public voted?” As in the previous two months, this time as well we found that many interviewees do not have trust in the propriety of the elections; indeed, the rate of those who feel that way rose after the latest elections!



What is especially worrisome on this issue is the almost incredible rate of Arabs who responded in this survey that they do not have trust in the propriety of the elections—50%! (compared to 38% in March 2019 and 32% in February 2019). In other words, the Arab public’s distrust in the electoral process has increased sharply over the past few months.

Especially “dirty” elections?

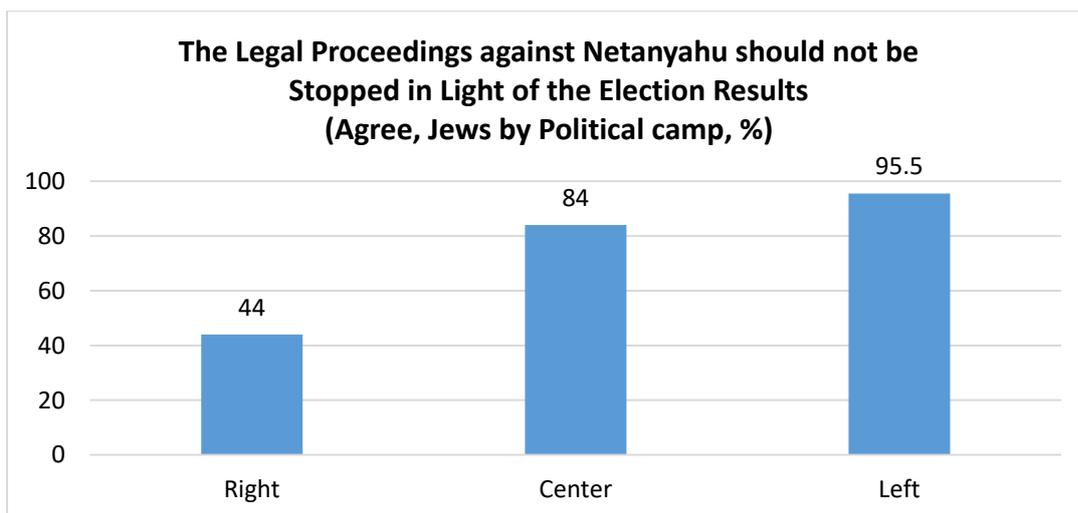
We asked: “Some claim that the latest election campaign was more ‘dirty’ than its predecessors. Do you agree or disagree with that claim?” A majority (64% of the Jewish sample and 60% of the Arab sample) agreed with the claim that the latest election campaign was especially “dirty.” A segmentation of the Jewish sample turned up a majority that thinks so in all three political camps.

The election results and positions on Netanyahu’s case

We wanted to know whether, in the opinion of the Israeli public, the elections are a legal alternative—that is, whether the fact that Likud, headed by Netanyahu, won the elections should exempt him from prosecution since the people have had their say. We asked: “Some

claim that Netanyahu's victory in the elections shows that the people want him as prime minister and therefore, at this point, the legal proceedings against him should be stopped. Do you agree or disagree with this claim?" The majority of the entire public (with almost no disparity between Jews and Arabs) does not agree; that is, the majority thinks the election results do not constitute a legal alternative.

A segmentation of the Jewish sample by political camp shows a huge majority saying that the legal proceedings against Netanyahu should not be stopped: on the left 95.5%, and in the center 84%. The right, however, is split, with a slight advantage for those who think the legal proceedings against Netanyahu should be stopped in light of the results of the latest elections (48% vs. 44%). Furthermore, among the voters for the Likud, Netanyahu's party, a majority of two-thirds (67%) think the legal proceedings against him should be stopped in light of the election results.



A unity government with Blue and White, and the future of this party

A small majority (51%) of the entire public (with negligible differences between Jews and Arabs) currently supports the establishment of a National Unity Government with the Blue and White Party as a partner. The Likud voters are divided on this question: 40% favor such a unity government while 43% are against it. Among Blue and White voters, we found a large majority (80%) in favor; however, another measurement is needed to confirm that this is indeed the dominant trend among them.

At the same time, a majority of the Jews (56%) believe that Blue and White will fall apart in the foreseeable future (among the Arabs only 35% think so, but the rate of those who did not have an opinion on this question was too high to draw a valid conclusion from that datum). Among the Blue and White voters, the large majority (60%) assesses that the party will not fall apart in the foreseeable future.

The Israeli Voice Index is a project of the Guttman Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research of the Israel Democracy Institute. In the survey, which was conducted on the internet and by telephone (supplements of groups that are not represented proportionally on the network) from April 30 to May 2, 621 men and women were interviewed in the Hebrew language and 163 in the Arabic language, constituting a representative national sample of the entire adult population of Israel aged 18 and older. The maximum sampling error for the entire sample was $\pm 3.6\%$ at a confidence level of 95%. The fieldwork was done by the Rafi Smith Institute. For the full data file see: <https://dataisrael.idi.org.il/>