
The Viterbi Family Center
for Public Opinion and Policy Research

Selected Findings

20 years of Surveying Democracy in Israel (2003–2022)

The Israeli Democracy Index

2022

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THE ISRAEL
DEMOCRACY
INSTITUTE



The Israeli Democracy Index 2022

Each year, the **Israeli Democracy Index** takes the public pulse by conducting research based on the findings of a survey of a representative sample of the entire population of Israel. The analyses provide in-depth insights on the Israeli public's views and attitudes across a broad range of key issues, including the functioning of the Israeli democratic system; commitment to core democratic values; the degree of trust in government institutions and in decision-makers; minority rights; and religion and state.

This is the 20th year of the publication of the Index (2003–2022). Alongside the findings for 2022, this year's version also reviews the findings from the past two decades, revealing long-term trends, in terms of what has remained stable and what has changed in the public's view of the government, Israeli politics, and Israeli society. Or in other words: Where have we come from, where are we today, and perhaps to begin to think about where we might be headed?

The Democracy Index this year is particularly timely. It went to press at the home stretch of the process of forming Israel's new coalition government, following a fifth election in under four years, and is arousing controversy among various sectors in the population, sometimes as to the core values of democracy.

The findings presented here provide a snapshot of the public's attitudes and beliefs in diverse areas, among them:

- The overall situation in Israel, the extent to which Israeli democracy is under threat, and the extent to which Israeli citizens are able to influence the government's policy.
- Trust in State institutions, such as the IDF, the Supreme Court, the police, political parties, and others
- Tensions between various groups that make Israel's social mosaic: Right and Left, rich and poor, Jews and Arabs, secular and religious Jews, and Ashkenazim and Mizrahim
- The equality of all citizens and minority rights—the perception of the current situation along with the respondent's view of what should be.
- Religion and state: What should be the proper balance between the Jewish and democratic components of Israel's identity? Which of the two should predominate?

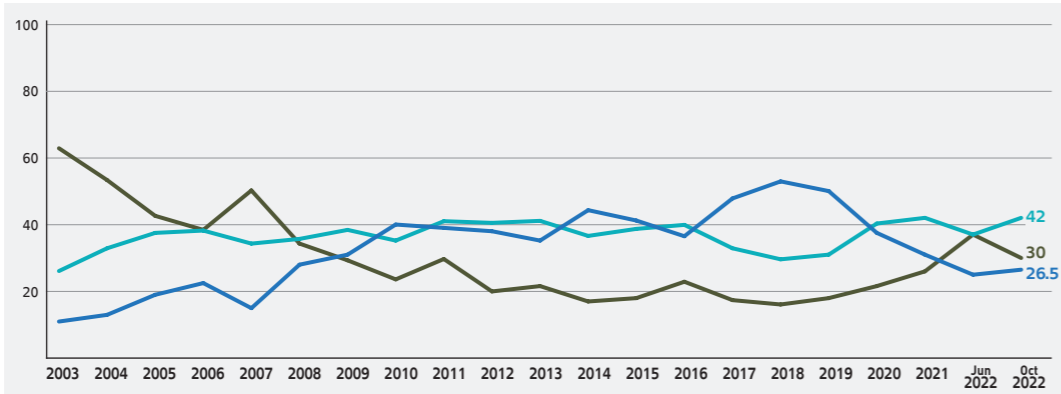
Presented each year to the President of Israel, the **Israeli Democracy Index** has become the go-to address for reliable, comprehensive, and up-to-date information on the state of Israeli democracy. Its analysis of survey findings influences the public discourse and provides a comprehensive database for informed decision-making among policymakers.

How is Israel Doing?

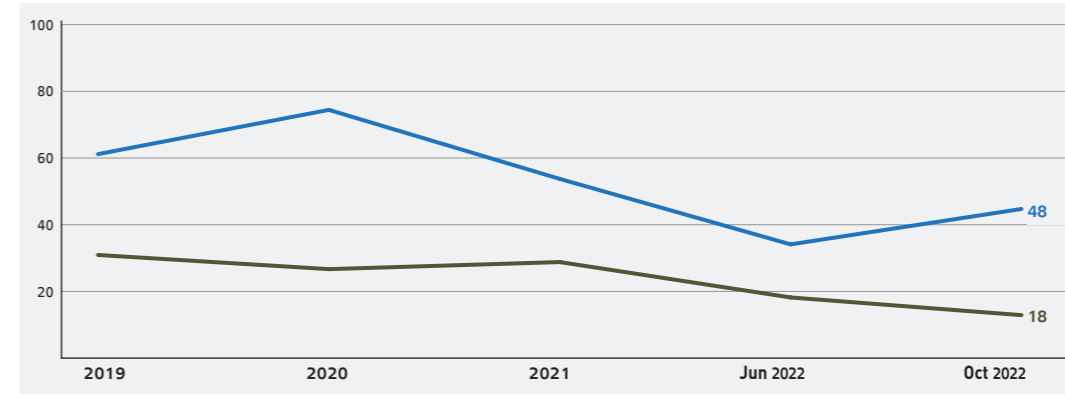
- Good and very good
- So-so
- Bad and very bad

Since 2019 and until June 2022, there was a decline in the percentage of the total sample who define Israel's overall situation as good or very good, and a rise in the percentage among those who rate the situation as bad or very bad. However, in October 2022 the data reveal a drop in the percentage of respondents assessing the situation as bad, and an increase in those assessing the situation as "so-so."

How would you rate Israel's overall situation? (total sample, %)



Agree that Israel ensures the security and the welfare of its citizens (total sample, %)



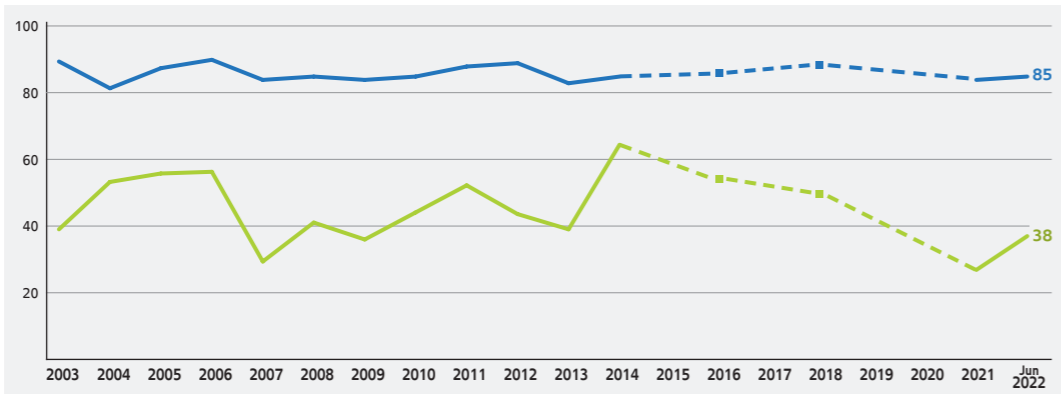
- Israel ensures the security of its citizens
- Israel ensures the welfare of its citizens

It is important to note that over time, respondents consistently rated Israel's success in ensuring the security of its citizens as higher than its success in ensuring their welfare.

- Jews
- Arabs

The pride in being Israeli has remained stable among the Jewish public over the years (multi-year average: 85.9%). In the Arab public, this year's figure of 38% is significantly lower than the multi-year average (46%).

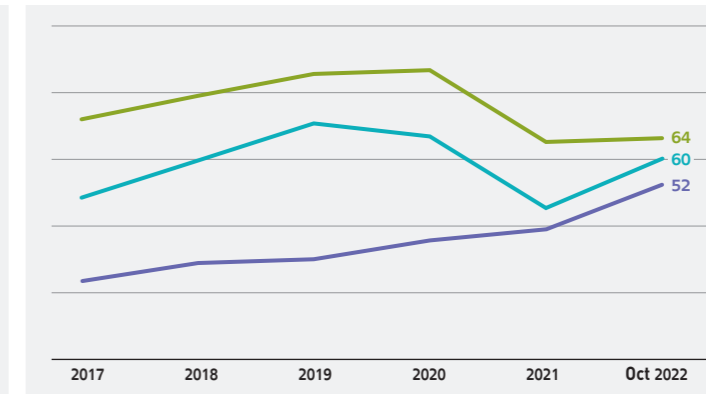
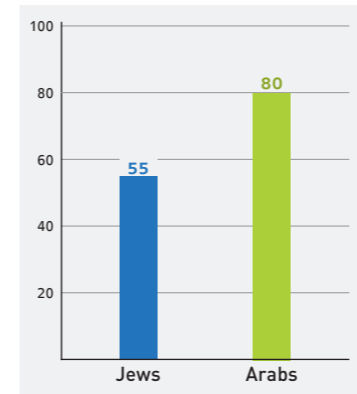
Proud to be Israeli (Jews and Arabs, %)



Agree that the democratic system in Israel is in grave danger

(2022, Jews and Arabs, %)

(Jews by political orientation, %)



- Right
- Center
- Left

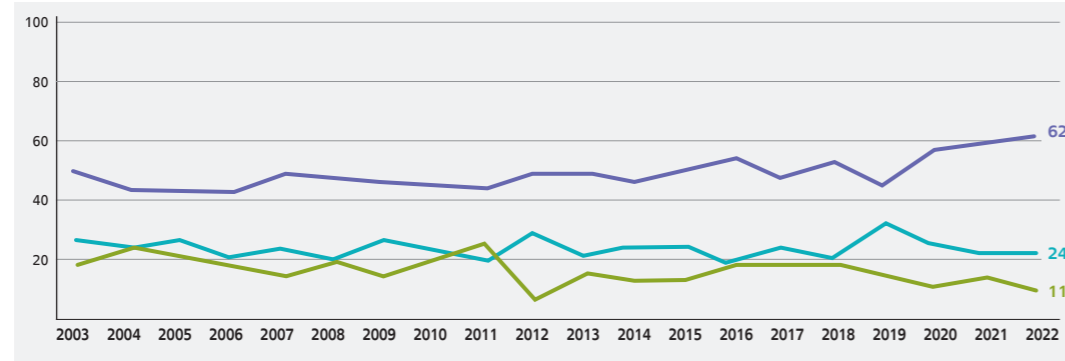
Self-Identification (Jews)

Note that all the data in this chapter is based on respondents' self-identification in IDI's surveys

- Right
- Center
- Left

Age, Political Orientation, and Religiosity The findings reveal that over the last 20 years, a higher percentage of younger respondents than of older respondents have identified themselves as being on the Right. In all age groups the percentage of respondents on the Right has consistently risen over the years.

Political orientation (Jews, %)



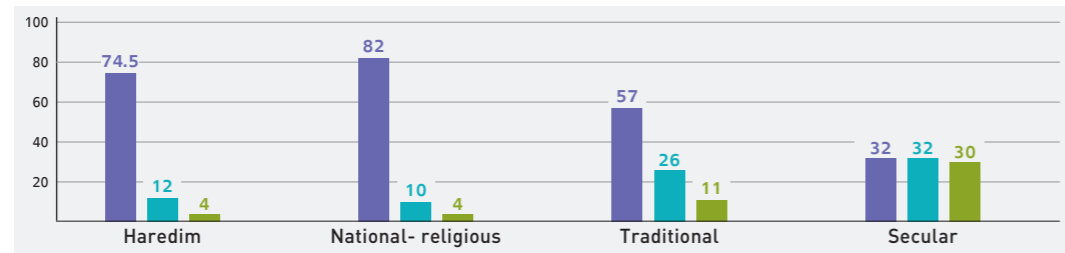
Self-identify as on the Right, by age group, 2022 (Jews, %)

Age	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Right	73	75	62	53	52	46

- Right
- Center
- Left

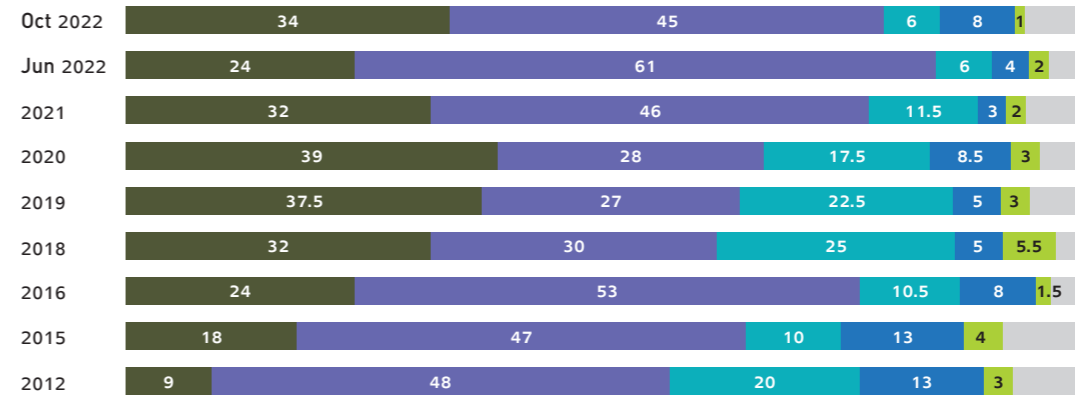
There is a significant overlap between religiosity and political orientation. In all the religious groups, a majority define themselves as being on the Right, with the exception of the secular group, which is divided fairly evenly between the three political camps.

Political orientation (Jews by religiosity, %)



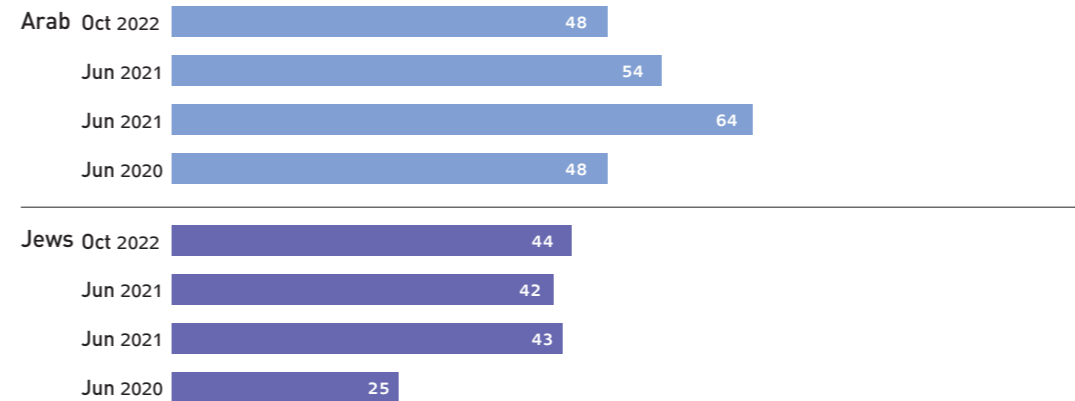
Tensions in Israeli Society

Between which of the following groups is there the strongest tension? (total sample, %)



- Right and Left
- Jews and Arabs
- Religious and secular Jews
- Rich and poor
- Mizrahim and Ashkenazim
- Don't know

The strongest tension in Israeli society is between Jews and Arabs (Jews and Arabs, %)



The Arab public viewed the tension between Jews and Arabs as the most severe tension between groups in Israeli society in all these surveys, and by the Jewish public- in most of them.

The events of spring 2021 drove these numbers higher among both groups, though there has since been a decline in this assessment among Arab respondents, while it has stayed at the same high level among Jews, and even risen slightly in 2022.

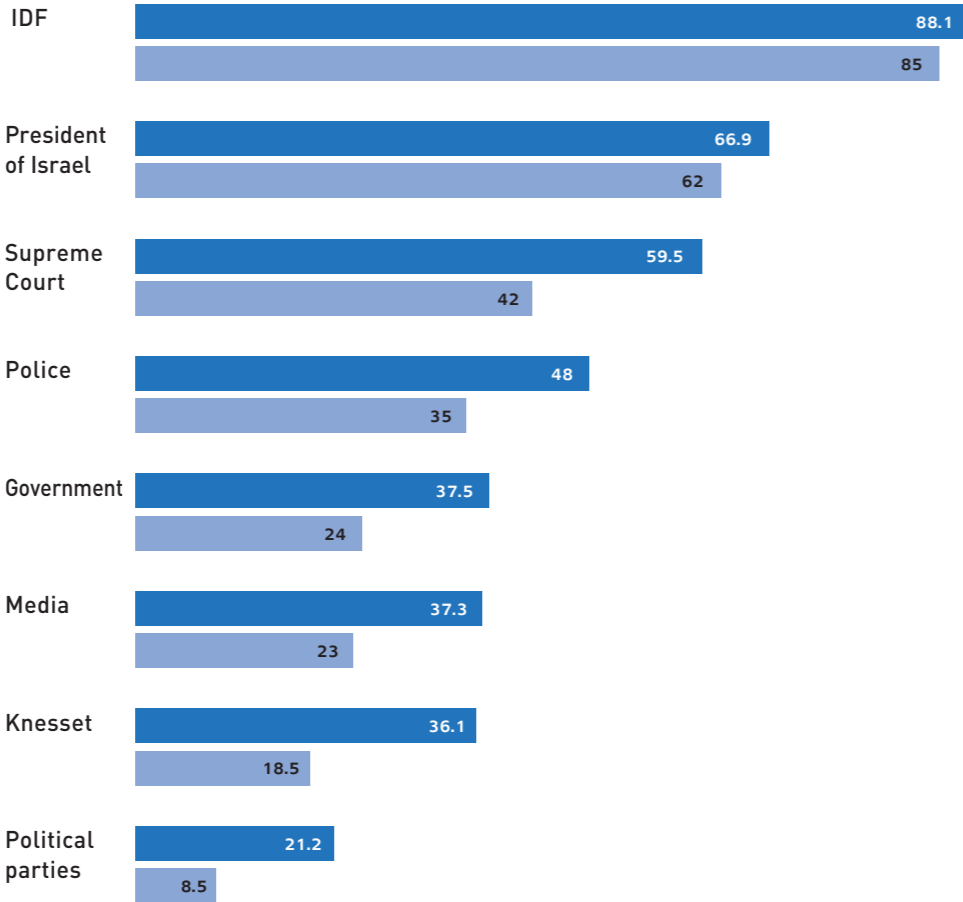
Public Trust in State Institutions

■ Multi-year average (2003–2022)
 ■ October 2022

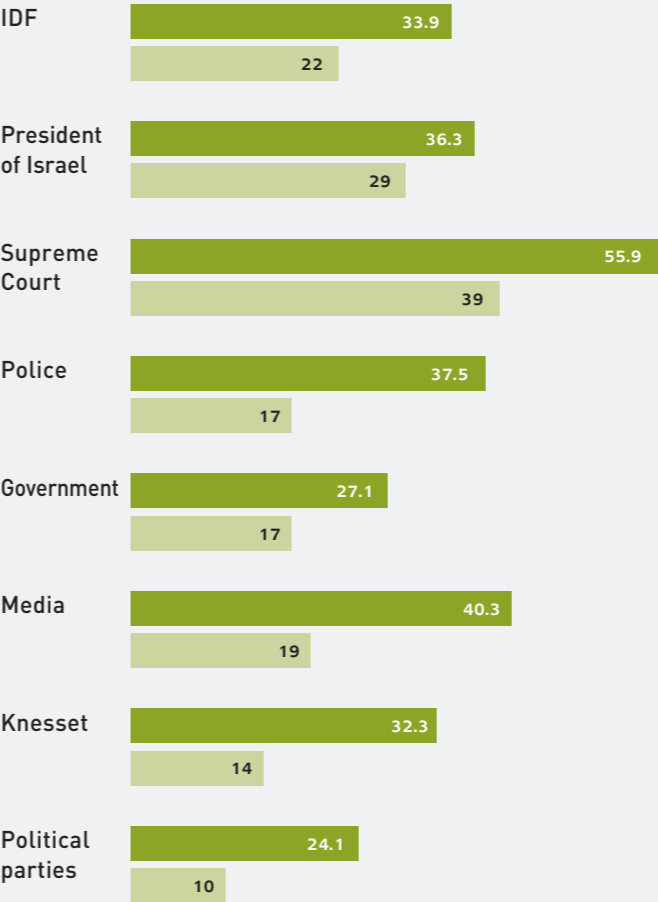
Once again, we assessed the level of public trust in various state institutions. These figures present the 2022 findings and the multi-year averages for the Jewish and Arab samples.

For all the institutions shown, this year's findings for the Jewish public are lower than the multi-year average.

Trust in state institutions (Jews, %)



Trust in state institutions (Arabs, %)



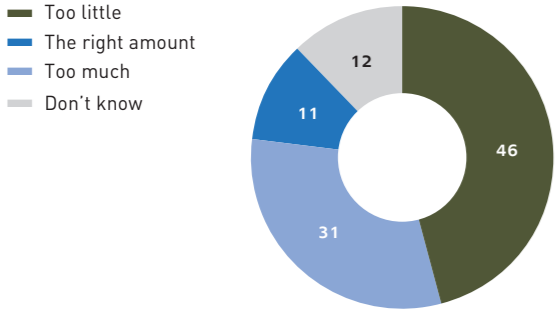
■ Multi-year average (2003–2022)
 ■ October 2022

For the majority of the institutions which appear in the above figure, the percentage of Arab citizens of Israel who express trust is lower than the percentage found among Jewish citizens.

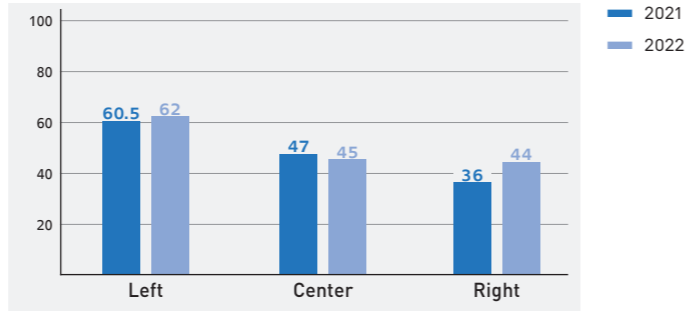
For the majority of the institutions which appear in the above figure, the percentage of Arab Israelis who express trust in 2022 is higher than the multi-year average.

Separation of Powers

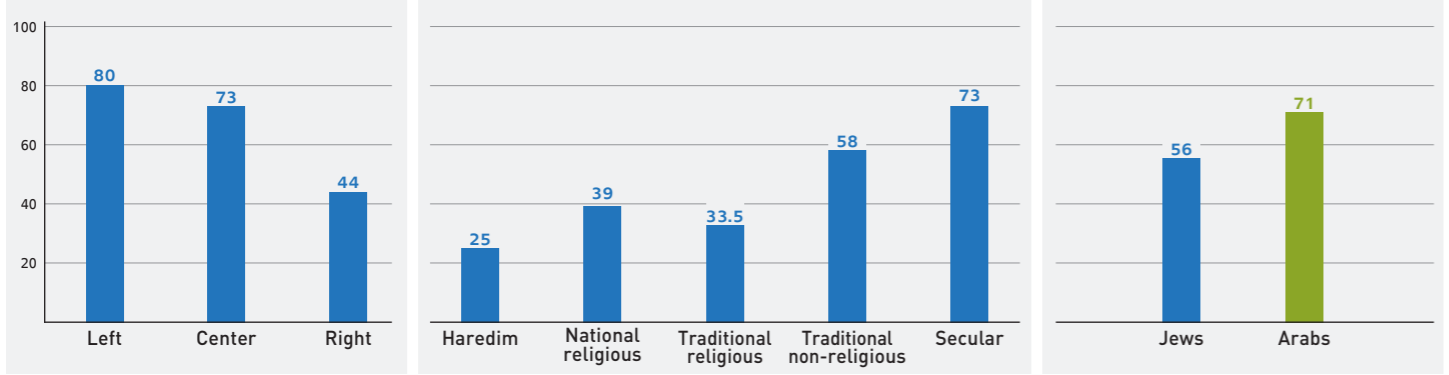
To what extent is the principle of separation of powers upheld in Israel today? (total sample, %)



Agree that separation of powers is upheld too little in Israel (Jews, %)



The Supreme Court should have the power to overturn laws passed by the Knesset if they conflict with democratic principles such as freedom of expression or equality before the law (October 2022, % who agree)



Religion and State

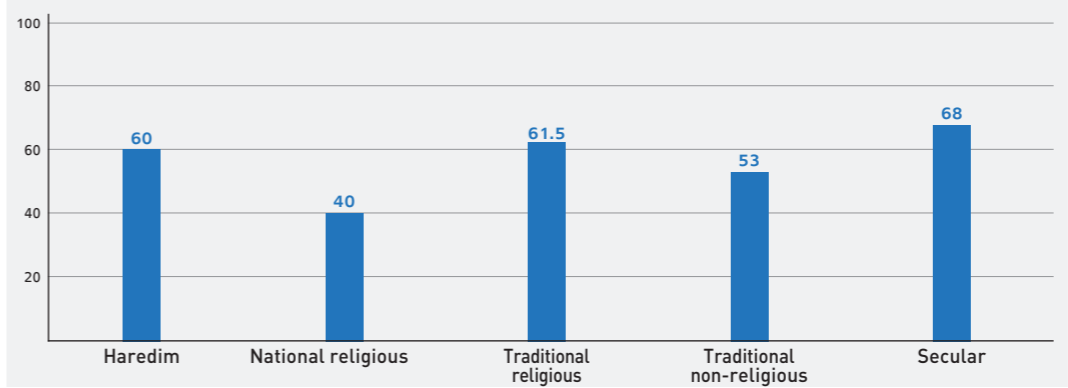
Israel is defined as both a Jewish and democratic state. In your opinion which component should predominate? (Jews, %)



Legend:
 - Jewish component (dark blue)
 - Democratic component (green)
 - The two should carry equal weight (light blue)
 - Don't know (grey)

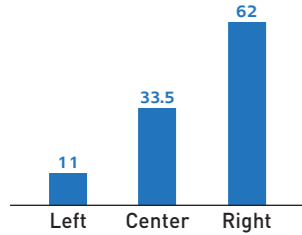
There is greater support for the idea that the Jewish component should predominate among the Haredi, national religious, and traditional religious groups than among the secular and traditional non-religious groups.

Worried that they will be unable to maintain their preferred lifestyle because of the increasing power of specific groups in Israeli society that advocate for a different way of life from theirs (Jews, %)

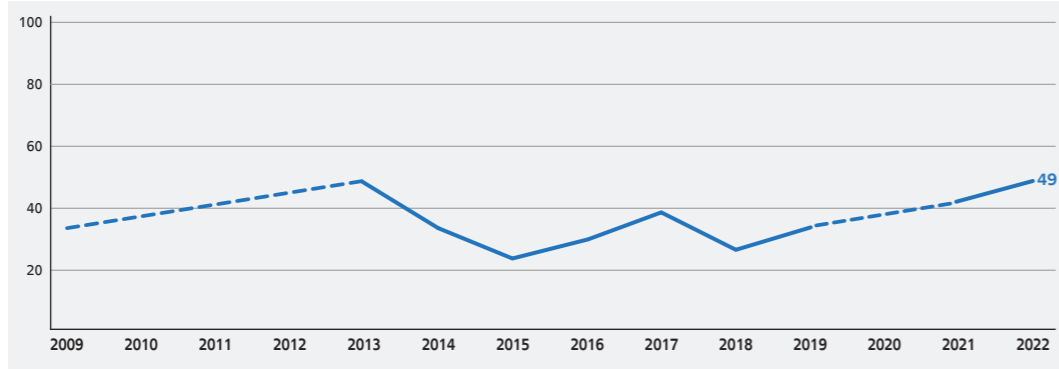


Civil Equality

2022 (Jews by political orientation; %)

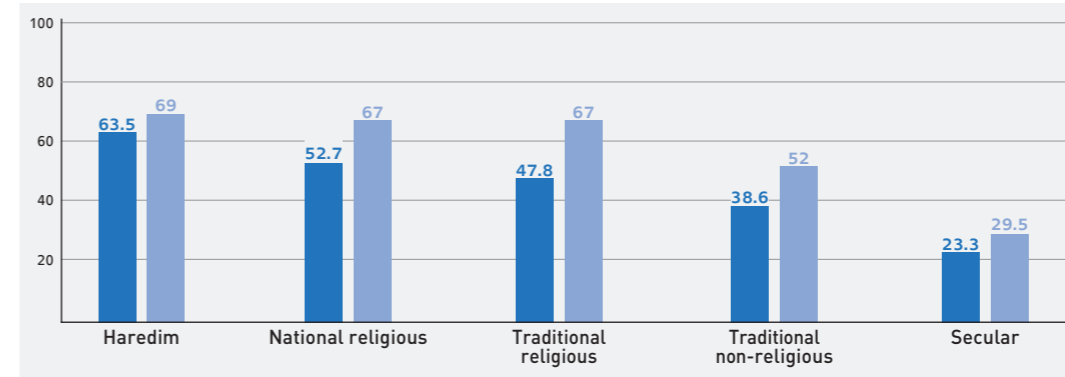


Agree that Jewish citizens should have more rights than non-Jewish citizens (Jews, %)



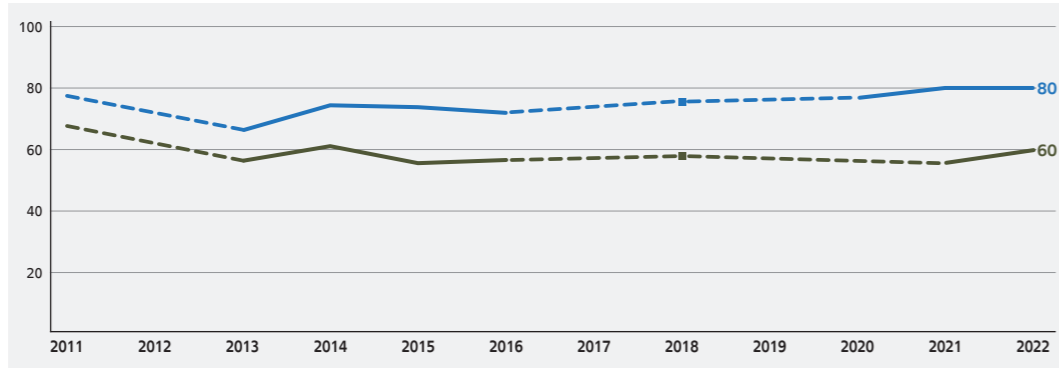
Agree that Jewish citizens should have more rights than non-Jewish citizens (Jews, %)

Religiosity

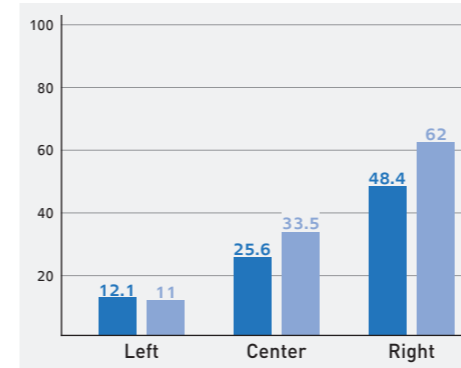


Agree that decisions crucial to the state on issues of peace and security and on issues of economy and society should be made by a Jewish majority (Jews, %)

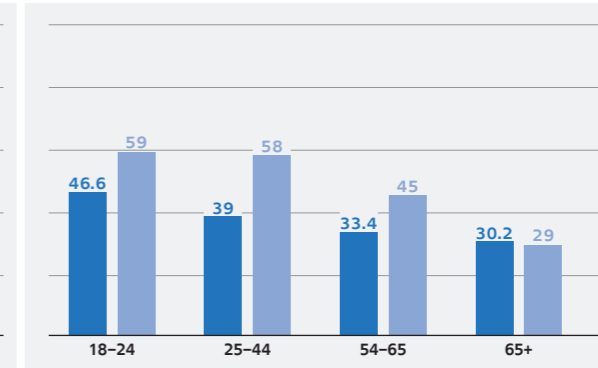
- Crucial decisions on issues of peace and security
- Crucial decisions on issues of economy and society



Political orientation

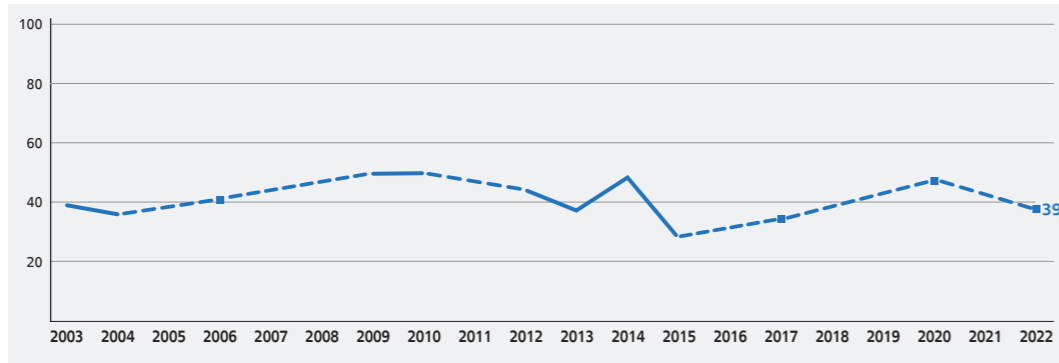


Age



Civic Participation

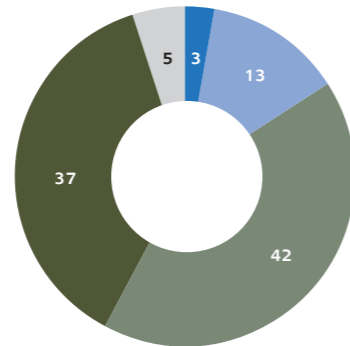
It makes no difference who you vote for; it doesn't change the situation (total sample, % who agree)



To what extent are you and your friends able to influence government policy? (total sample, %)

- Very much
- Quite a lot
- Not so much
- Not at all
- Don't know

Though the public has a negative assessment of its ability to influence politics, only a minority (albeit a sizable one) think that it makes no difference who they vote for as it doesn't change the situation.

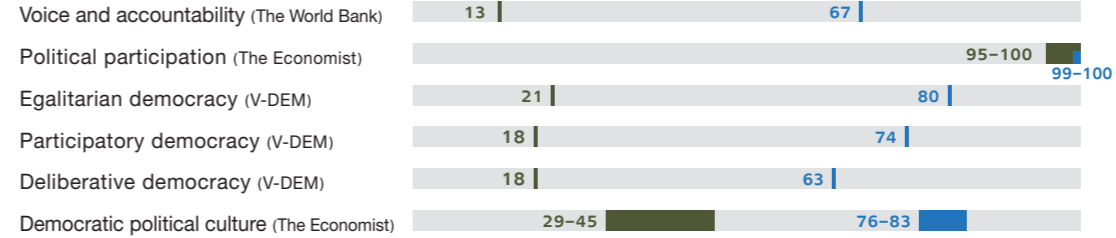


Israel and the World

Democratic rights and freedoms



Democratic process



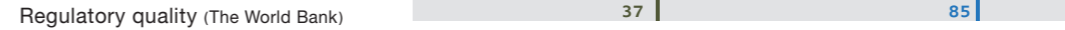
Governance



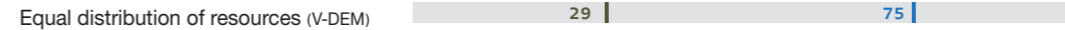
Corruption



Regulation



Economic equality



0 Lowest ranking | Highest ranking 100

- Percentile among all countries surveyed
- Percentile among OECD countries

As in the past, Israel's ranking relative to countries around the world is average to high, though excelling in political participation, and is low when compared only to the group of OECD states.

The full Index report presents the multi-year averages, which show that in most indicators, the assessments of Israeli democracy have remained stable over the years.

The Israel Democracy Institute (IDI) is an independent center of research and action dedicated to strengthening the foundations of Israeli democracy. IDI works to bolster the values and institutions of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. A non-partisan think-and-do tank, the Institute harnesses rigorous applied research to influence policy, legislation, and public opinion. IDI partners with political leaders, policymakers, and representatives of civil society to improve the functioning of the government and its institutions, confront security threats while preserving civil liberties, and foster solidarity within Israeli society. The State of Israel recognized the positive impact of IDI's research and policy recommendations by bestowing upon the Institute its most prestigious award, the Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievement.

The Viterbi Family Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research conducts rigorous empirical research on the views and attitudes of the Israeli public regarding the functioning of the country's democratic system and its commitment to core democratic values. Data Israel: The Louis Guttman Social Research Database, maintained by the Center, presents current and historical survey data and other material collected since 1949 by the Institute for Applied Social Research founded by Prof. Guttman, and which have been donated to IDI. The Viterbi Family Center strives to inform public discourse and debate in Israel on social and policy issues, by generating, analyzing, and publicizing reliable and up-to-date information, and making it readily accessible to researchers, the media, and interested members of the public in Israel and around the world.

The Israeli Democracy Index, published annually since 2003, assesses the state of Israeli democracy. It is based on an in-depth and detailed survey of a representative sample of Israel's adult population. The Index aims to explore trends in Israeli society on fundamental questions relating to the realization of democratic goals and values, and the performance of government systems and elected and appointed officials.



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