



Viterbi Family Center  
for Public Opinion  
and Policy Research



## Selected Findings



# THE ISRAELI DEMOCRACY INDEX 2024

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## Data collection

The two polling firms that carried out the field work for this year's survey were Shiluv I2R (Hebrew interviews, via internet and telephone) and Afkar Research and Knowledge (Arabic interviews, via telephone).

The data were collected between May 16 and May 29, 2024 by Shiluv I2R. Between October 28 and November 3, 2024, a validation was conducted of some of the survey findings, and where the results of this validation appear below, they are identified as such. The validation was conducted by the Dialogue Research and Polling Institute.





## Israeli Democracy Index 2024

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 analysis provides in-depth insights on the Israeli public's views and attitudes across a broad range of 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, religion and state. This year's Index also included a special focus on questions of national security.

The findings this year mark a harrowing period in Israel's history, as the data was collected and released in the midst of an intense, multifront, ongoing war that followed the October 7, 2023 massacre. Yet, contrary to the expectations of many in Israel and abroad, findings indicate that many fundamentals of Israeli society have not shifted since before the events of October 7. For example, a plurality of Israelis rate the country's overall situation as "bad"—and though there was a spike in May 2024, the rate here ultimately leveled out. Likewise, the rate of Israelis who believe that Israeli democratic rule is in grave danger has hovered within the same ten-point range in recent years.

Among the various possible explanations of this stability, we can point to the deep sense of crisis that predated the war, and indeed has prevailed in Israel since late 2019—from five elections held in short succession to the vehement protests against the government's proposed judicial overhaul. The views of Jewish and Arab citizens on key issues have also remained stable for the most part, with only slight fluctuations, having no major impact on the face of Israeli society.

At the same time, the Index reveals a number of findings that very much reflect a country grappling with the ongoing war. For example, there has been a drop in citizens' belief that they can rely on the state to come to their aid in times of trouble, alongside a rise in the belief that their fellow citizens will come to their aid in times

of trouble—reflecting their sense that the state was unprepared for October 7 and that citizens and civil society stepped in to fill the void. Israelis perceive the greatest external existential threat to be a full scale, multifront war in the region, which, at the time of each round of the survey, reflects escalation with Hezbollah in the North, direct attacks by Iran, periodic attacks from militia groups in Yemen and Iraq, and continued rocket fire from Gaza.

**The findings presented throughout this executive summary provide a snapshot of the public attitudes and beliefs in diverse areas, including:**

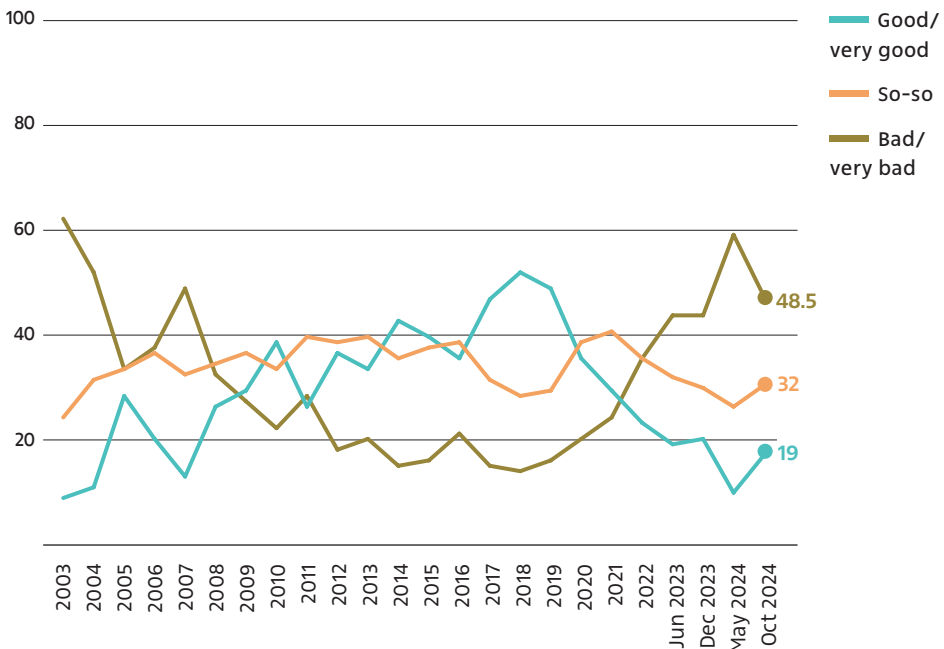
- \* Israel's overall situation, the extent to which democratic rule is under threat, the greatest existential threats from within the country and beyond its borders, and the extent to which Israelis feel part of the state of Israel and its problems.
- \* Tensions between the various groups that make up Israel's social mosaic: Right and Left, rich and poor, Jewish and Arab, secular and religious, Ashkenazi and Mizrahi.
- \* Social solidarity, including the extent to which Israelis can rely on one another versus relying on the state, and whether there is a belief that Arab Israelis want to integrate into society.
- \* Trust in institutions, particularly state institutions, and Israelis' perceptions of civil society organizations.
- \* The assessment of whether there is a proper balance between the dual components of Israel's identity—Jewish and democratic.
- \* A look at what Israelis believe will best ensure Israel's future security in the short and the long term, as well as their trust in various components of the security establishment.

Presented each year to the President of the State of Israel, the Israeli Democracy Index is 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.

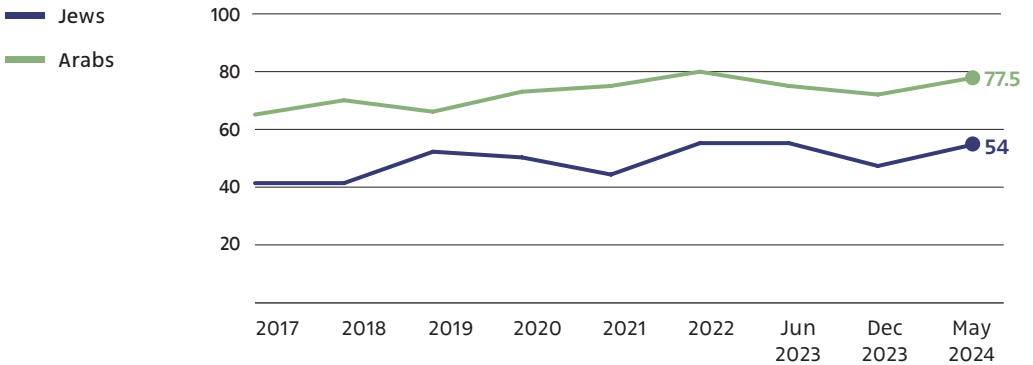
## How is Israel Doing?

In May 2024, we found a record high of 60% of respondents who characterize Israel's overall situation as bad or very bad. By October, this percentage had fallen to below half (48.5%), while there was a rise in the share of respondents who defined Israel's situation as good or very good or as so-so. Jews have a more positive view of Israel's overall situation than Arabs (bad or very bad—Jews, 45%; Arabs, 67%; good or very good—Jews, 22%; Arabs, 8%).

### How would you characterize Israel's overall situation today, 2003–2024 (total sample; %)

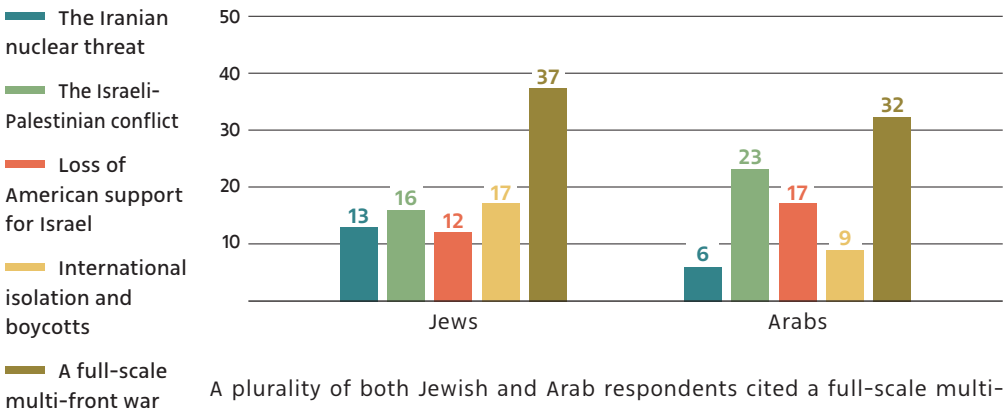


### Agree that democratic rule in Israel is in grave danger, 2017–2024 (Jews and Arabs; %)



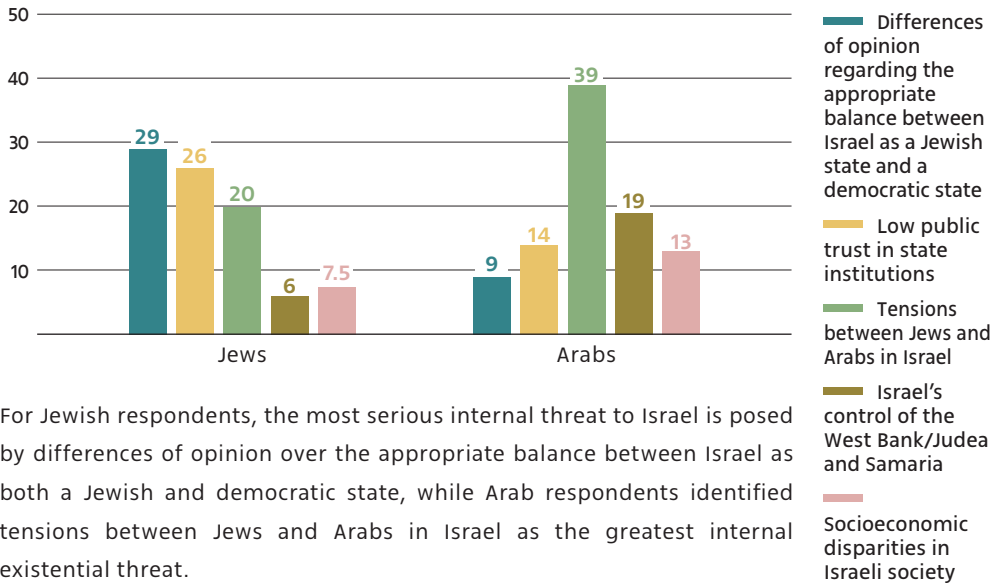
More than three-quarters of the Arab public think that democratic rule in Israel is in grave danger, as do a small majority of the Jewish public.

### What is the greatest external existential threat to the State of Israel? (Jews and Arabs; %)



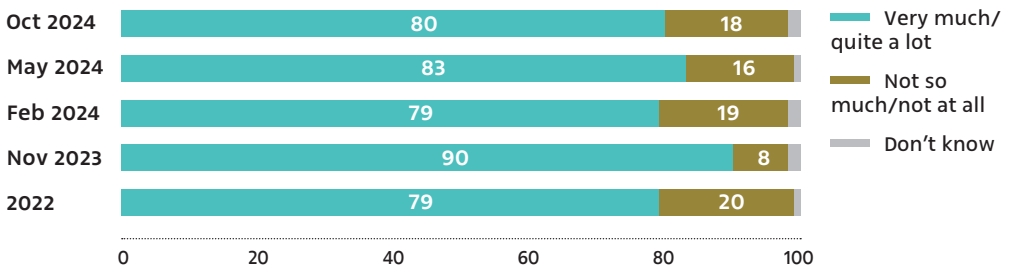
A plurality of both Jewish and Arab respondents cited a full-scale multi-front war as the greatest external existential threat to the state of Israel. International isolation and boycotts was the second most popular response in the Jewish sample, while the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ranked second in the Arab sample.

## What is the greatest internal existential threat to the State of Israel? (Jews and Arabs; %)



For Jewish respondents, the most serious internal threat to Israel is posed by differences of opinion over the appropriate balance between Israel as both a Jewish and democratic state, while Arab respondents identified tensions between Jews and Arabs in Israel as the greatest internal existential threat.

## To what extent do you feel part of the State of Israel and its problems? (total sample; %)



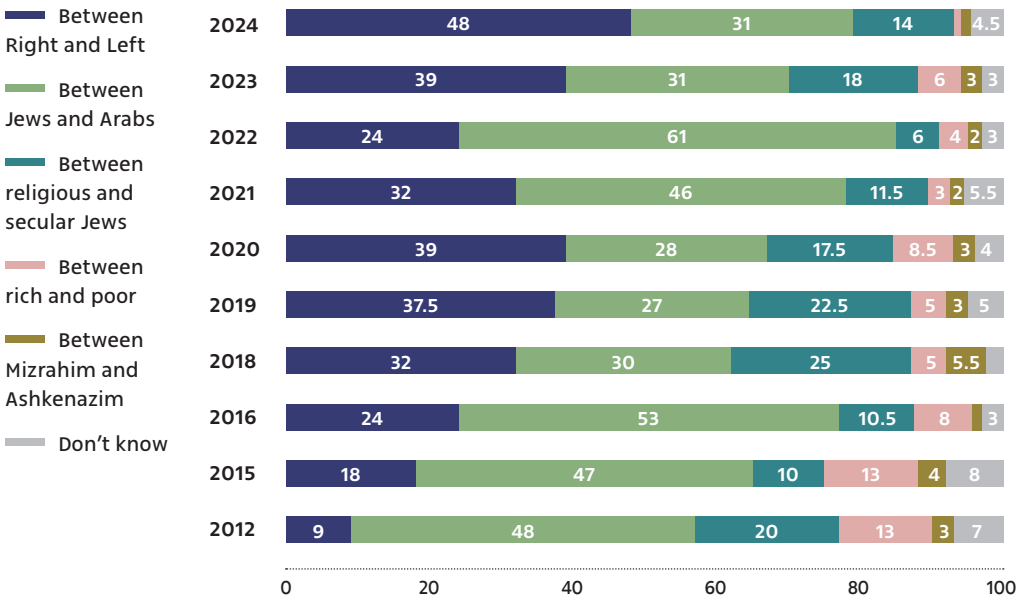
A large majority of respondents feel “part of the State of Israel and its problems.” The share of Arabs who report feeling this way is lower than the share of Jews, though they still constitute a majority (May 2024 — Jews, 86%; Arabs, 66%; October 2024 — Jews, 84%; Arabs, 59%).

## Tensions in Israeli Society

This year has seen a steep rise in the percentage of respondents who view the most acute social tension in Israeli society as that between Right and Left. This follows a period in 2021-22 in which tensions between Jews and Arabs was seen as the most acute social tension, which fell to second place at 31% in the last two years.

A breakdown of the 2024 survey results by political orientation (among Jews) reveals that the tension between Right and Left is seen as the most acute by all three camps, though the share who hold this opinion is highest on the Left (Left, 64%; Center, 49.5%; Right, 53%).

### Which of the following is the most acute social tension in Israel today? 2012–2024 (total sample; %)

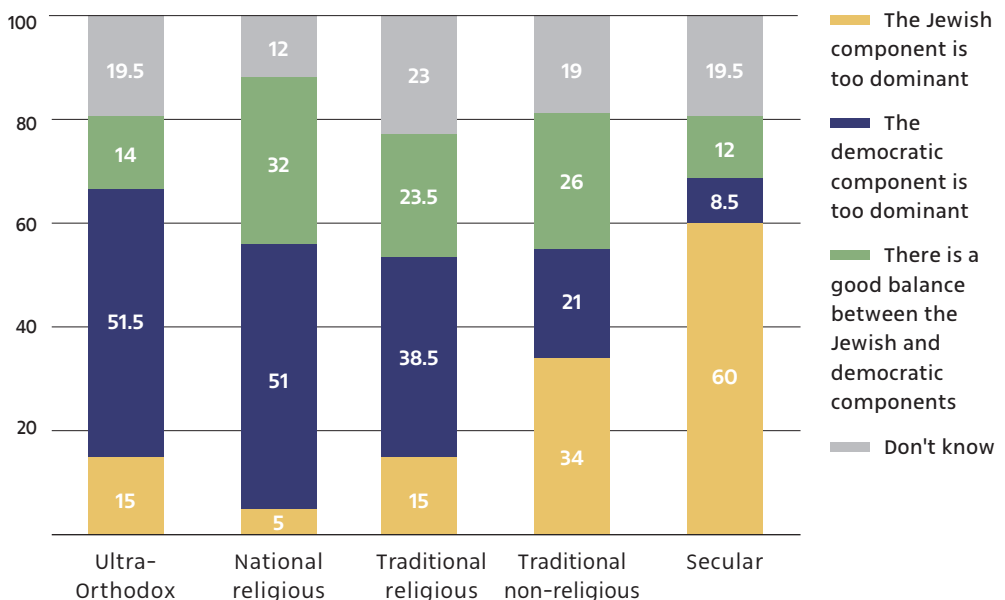




## Religion and State

As in previous years, the most common view given by Jewish respondents this year was that the Jewish component is too dominant (approximately 40%). Around a quarter think that the democratic component is too dominant, while around a fifth believe there is a good balance between the two components.

**Israel is defined as a Jewish and democratic state.**  
**Do you feel there is a good balance today between the Jewish and the democratic components?** (Jews; %)

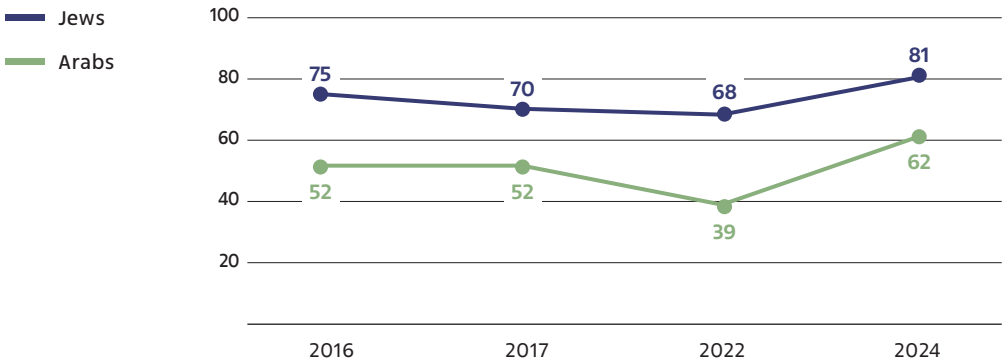


A majority of secular Israelis believe the Jewish component is too dominant, while among ultra-Orthodox and national religious Israelis, the majority believe the democratic component is too dominant.

## Social Solidarity

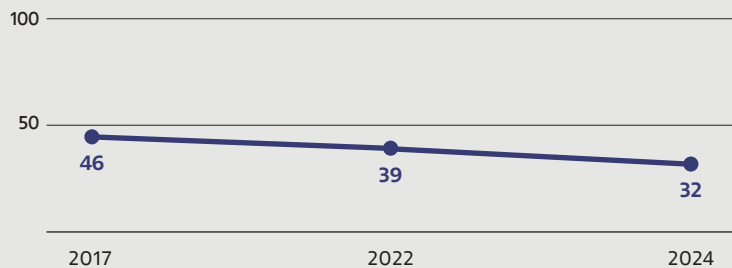
The percentage of Israelis who agree with the statement that Israelis can always count on their fellow Israelis in times of trouble was higher this year than in the past in both the Jewish and Arab samples (Jews, from 68% in 2022 to 81% in 2024; and Arabs, from 39% in 2022 to 62% in 2024).

### Agree that Israelis can always count on their fellow Israelis to help them in times of trouble, 2016–2024 (Jews and Arabs; %)

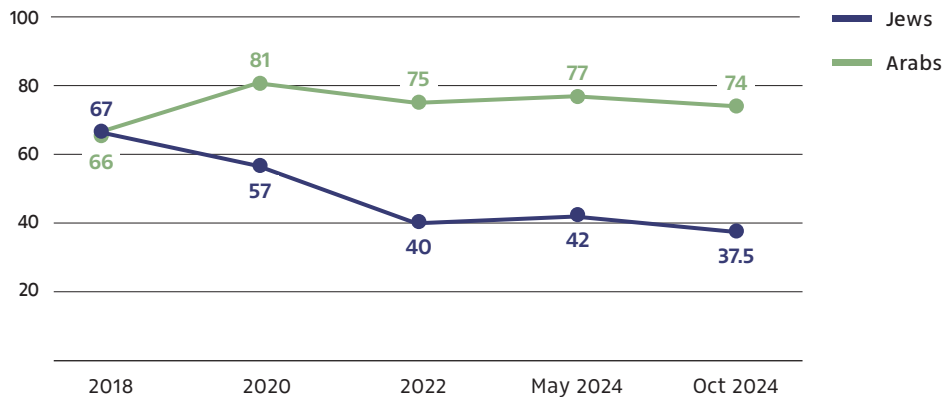


At the same time, the share of Israelis who believe they can rely on the state to come to their aid in times of trouble has continued to decline.

### Agree that citizens of Israel can always rely on the state to come to their aid in times of trouble, 2017–2024 (total sample; %)



## Agree that most Arab citizens of Israel want to integrate into Israeli society, 2018–2024 (Jews and Arabs; %)



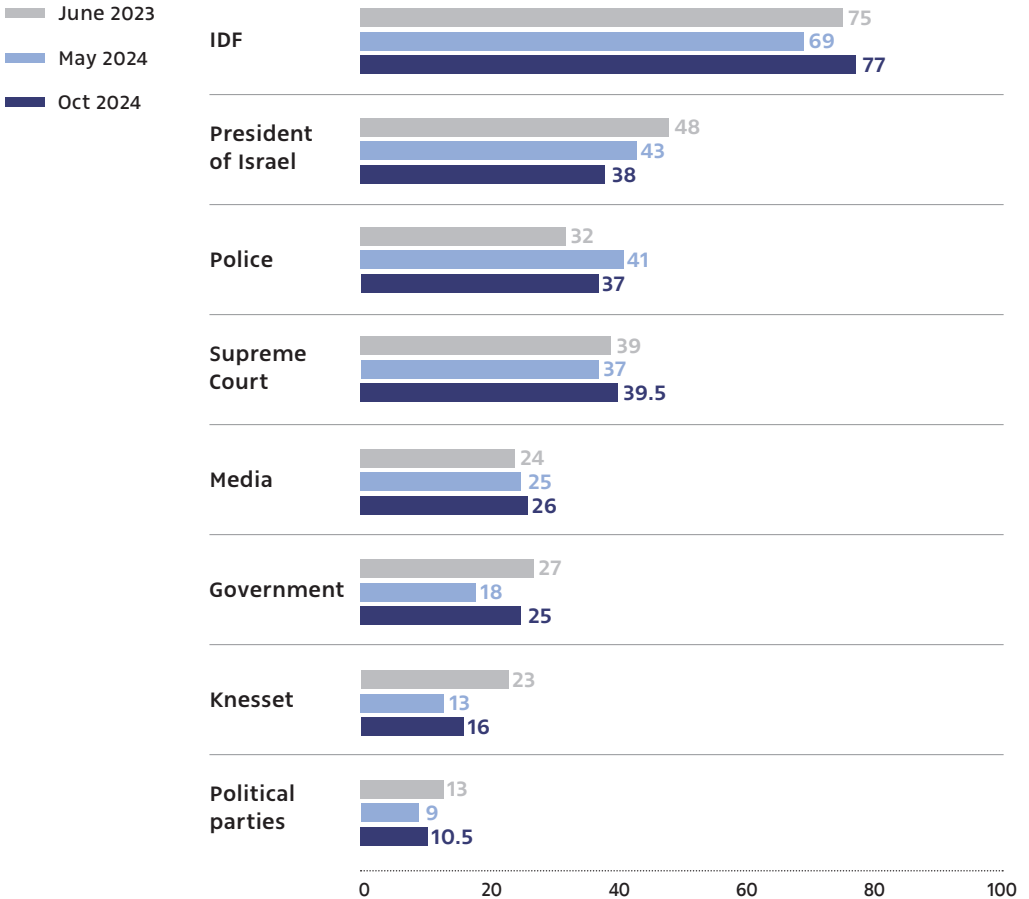
While the majority of Arab interviewees have always responded to this question in the affirmative, the Jewish samples show a continuing decline in the share of respondents who think that most Arab citizens of Israel want to integrate into Israeli society.

The October 2024 validation (Jewish sample) found the following levels of agreement with the statement that most Arab citizens of Israel want to integrate into Israeli society: Left, 79.5%; Center, 53%; Right, 21%.

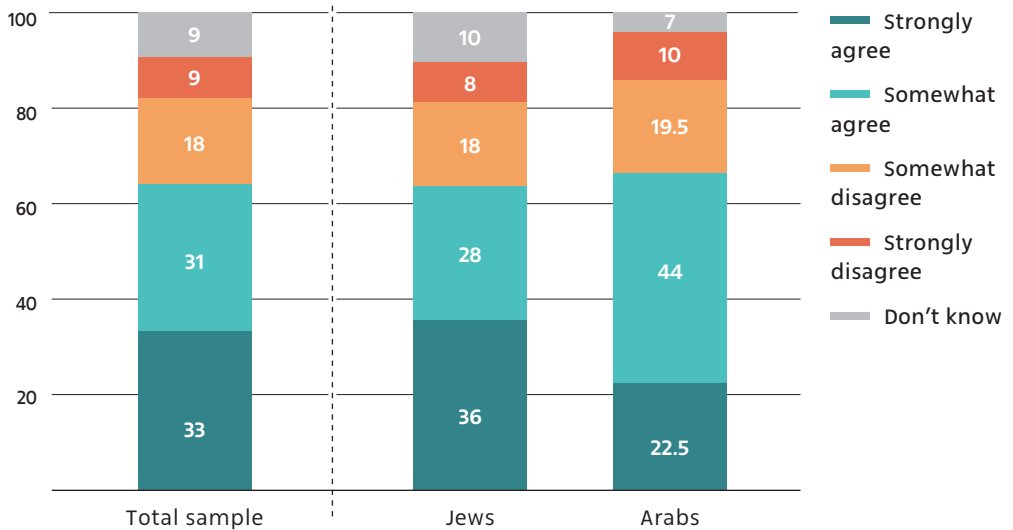
## Trust in Institutions

The trust rankings of the institutions surveyed barely changed in 2024 relative to 2023. Between the May and October surveys this year, not only did the rankings remain similar, but the differences in the ratings for the various institutions were also small. In both measurements, significant gaps were found between Jews and Arabs in the data on trust in institutions. In all cases, trust is higher among Jews than among Arabs.

### Trust each of the following institutions (total sample; %)



## Agree/disagree that civil society organizations serve Israeli society better than state institutions do (%)



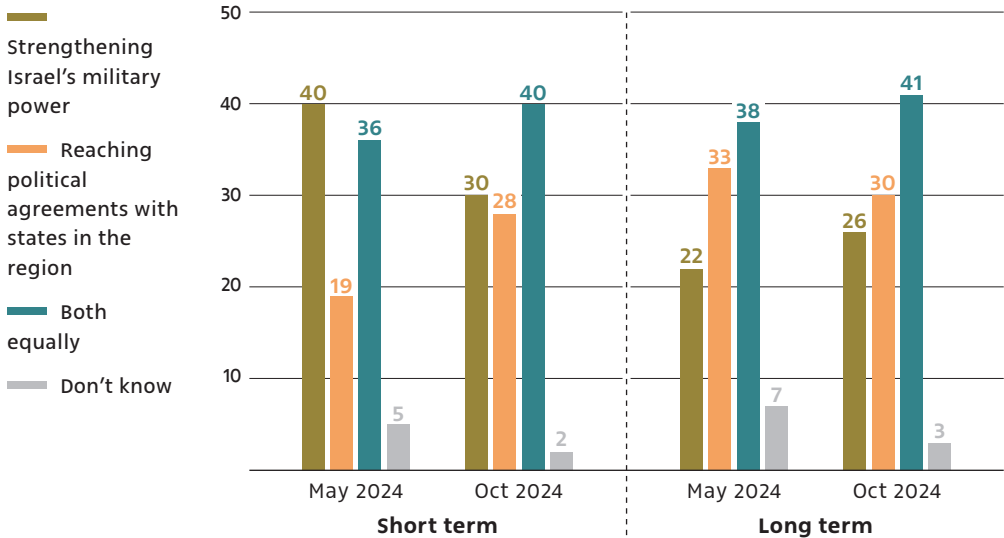
Since the outbreak of war on October 7, civil society organizations in Israel have made an enormous impact. In the total sample, as in both the Jewish and Arab samples, around two-thirds of respondents agree that civil society organizations serve Israeli society better than state institutions do.

In both 2024 surveys, around two-thirds of the total public said they think that civil society organizations serve Israeli society better than state institutions do.

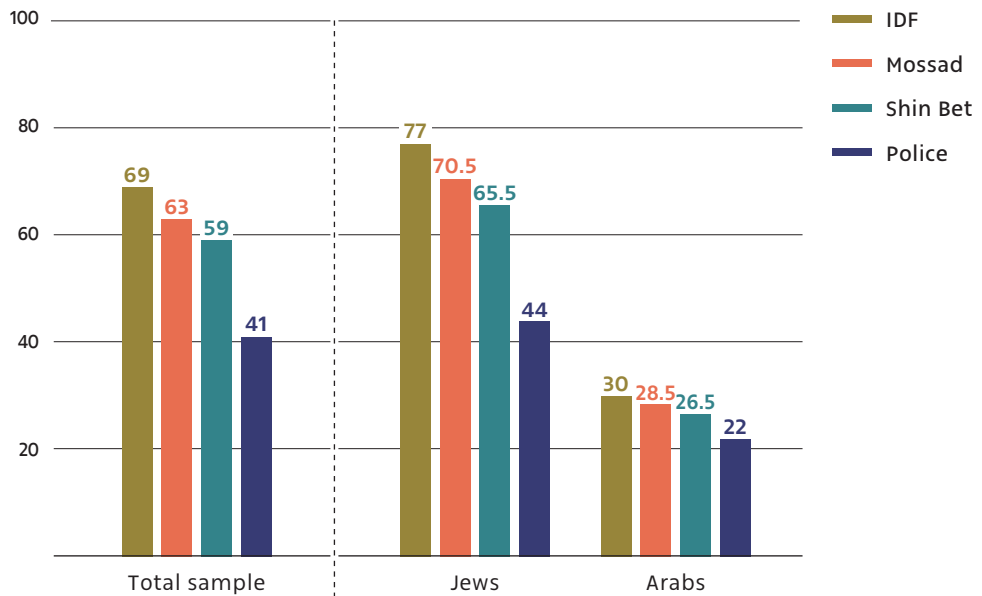
# National Security and the Security Forces

In the total sample, there was a drop over recent months in the percentage of respondents who think that strengthening Israel’s military power will best ensure its security in the short term, from 40% in May 2024 to 30% in October 2024. Conversely, there was an increase in the percentage of those who identify diplomatic solutions as the better option, from 19% in May to 28% in October. For the long term, in both May and October the highest percentage of respondents said that both military and political options equally will best ensure the future of Israel’s security.

## What will best ensure Israel’s future security in the short and the long term? (total sample; %)












## Trust the IDF, the police, the Shin Bet, and the Mossad (%)



Overall, trust in the security forces is much higher among Jews than among Arabs (average of 64.3% among Jews and 26.8% among Arabs). In both the Jewish and Arab samples, the trust ranking is as follows: the IDF, the Mossad, the Shin Bet, and (at a considerable distance behind), the police. In the Arab sample, the differences between the trust ratings of the various security forces (all of which are low) are relatively minor.




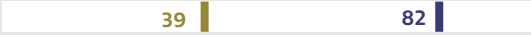


# Israel and the World

	Israel's score on international indicators (percentile)	The Score for Israel this year	Change in score in comparison to last year
<b>Democratic rights and freedom</b>			
<b>Political rights</b> (Freedom House)	 18 70-73	85.0	=
<b>Civil liberties</b> (Freedom House)	 8 59-60	66.7	↓
<b>Freedom of the press</b> (Reporters without Borders)	 8 44	53.2	↓
<b>Democratic process</b>			
<b>Voice and accountability</b> (The World Bank)	 13 69	62.8	=
<b>Political participation</b> (Economist Intelligence Unit)	 92 98	94.4	=
<b>Egalitarian democracy</b> (V-DEM)	 16 72	76.2	↓
<b>Participatory democracy</b> (V-DEM)	 16 72-73	60.3	=
<b>Deliberative democracy</b> (V-DEM)	 16 64	75.9	↓
<b>Democratic political culture</b> (Economist Intelligence Unit)	 26-50 75-86	68.8	=
	0 Lowest ranking	100 Highest ranking	

■ Percentile— all countries surveyed

■ Percentile— OECD countries



	Israel's score on international indicators (percentile)	The Score for Israel this year	Change in score in comparison to last year
<b>Governance</b>			
<b>Functioning of government</b> (Economist Intelligence Unit)		75.0	↓
<b>Rule of law</b> (The World Bank)		65.6	↓
<b>Corruption</b>			
<b>Control of corruption</b> (The World Bank)		66.6	=
<b>Perception of corruption</b> (Transparency International)		62.0	=
<b>Regulation</b>			
<b>Regulatory quality</b> (The World Bank)		72.4	↓
<b>Economic equality</b>			
<b>Equal distribution of resources (V-DEM)</b>		79.0	↓
	0 Lowest ranking	100 Highest ranking	

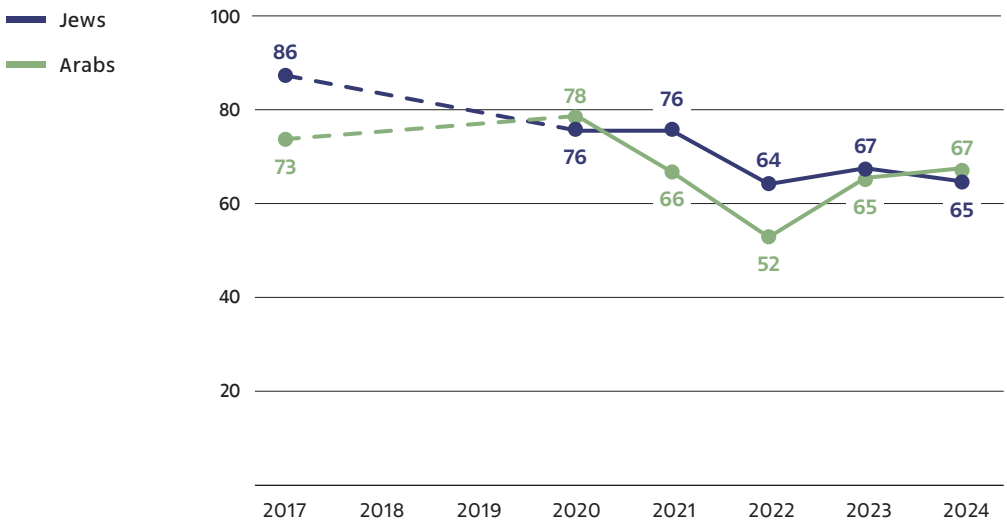
Compared with 2022, we saw a decline in Israel's scores in eight indicators: civil liberties, freedom of the press, egalitarian democracy, deliberative democracy, functioning of government, rule of law, regulatory quality, and equal distribution of resources. The remaining seven indicators remained largely stable, or registered very slight changes.

## Is Israel a Good Place to Live?

About two-thirds of both Jews and Arabs agree that Israel is a good place to live.

### Agree that Israel is a good place to live, 2017-2024

(Jews and Arabs; %)





**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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