



THE ELI HURVITZ CONFERENCE ON ECONOMY AND SOCIETY I 2025

THE ISRAEL DEMOCRACY INSTITUTE



May 27–28, 2025 | Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

Conference Chair: Prof. Karnit Flug | Conference Director: Daphna Aviram-Nitzan | President of the Israel Democracy Institute: Yohanan Plesner

Tuesday, May 27, 2025

09:15–9:45 Registration and Light Refreshments

9:45 Opening Remarks

Greetings from the President of the State of Israel, Isaac Herzog

Yohanan Plesner, President, Israel Democracy Institute

Prof. Suzie Navot, Vice President of Research, Israel Democracy Institute

10:00–12:30 Israel's Economy and Society – Where Are We Heading?

Session Chair: Prof. Karnit Flug

> State Budget: Where the Money Goes and How Priorities Are Set

Prof. Karnit Flug, William Davidson Senior Fellow for Economic Policy, Israel Democracy Institute; Hebrew University of Jerusalem; former Governor of the Bank of Israel

> Haredi Integration and Tax Payments – The Burden and the Potential

Gabriel Gordon, Researcher, Israel Democracy Institute

Maxim Rybnikov, Director and Lead Analyst, EMEA Sovereign & Public Finance Ratings, S&P Global Ratings

> Government Representatives

Prof. Avi Simhon, Chair, National Economic Council, PMO; Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Yogev Gardos, Budget Commissioner, Ministry of Finance

Shay Aharonovich, Director, Israel Tax Authority

Yali Rotenberg, Accountant General, Ministry of Finance

Dr. Shmuel Abramzon, Chief Economist, Ministry of Finance

Adv. Seffy Zinger, Chair, Israel Securities Authority

> Lead-Off Speakers

Prof. (Emeritus) Manuel Trajtenberg, Tel Aviv University; Senior Fellow, Mandel Leadership Institute

Prof. Zvi Eckstein, Head, Aaron Institute for Economic Policy, Reichman University

Prof. Yotam Margalit, Senior Fellow, Israel Democracy Institute; Head, School of Political Science, Tel Aviv University

Dr. Eyal Hulata, International Fellow, Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD); former National Security Advisor

MK Mansour Abbas, Chair, Ra'am Party

> Open Discussion

12:30 Governor of the Bank of Israel, Prof. Amir Yaron

12:50 Lunch

13:50–16:00 Growth Engines for the Economy

Session Chair: Daphna Aviram-Nitzan, Director, Center for Governance and Economy, Israel Democracy Institute and Conference Director

> Challenges and Opportunities for Advancing Growth Engines

Dr. Adi Brender, Director, Research Department, Bank of Israel

> Innovation as a Growth Engine

Entrepreneurs Panel led by Dror Bin, CEO, Israel Innovation Authority

Jack (Tato) Bigio, Co-Founder, UBQ Materials

Amir Shukron, Co-Founder and CEO, Bariks Health

Erez Freibach, Co-Founder and CEO, ZutaCore

> Israeli High-Tech – Where is it Going?

Prof. Eugene Kandel, Chair, Tel Aviv Stock Exchange; Chair, RISE Israel

> Challenges and Opportunities for Growth Across Sectors of the Economy

Dubi Amitai, Chair, Israeli Presidency of Business Organizations; Chair, Farmers Federation of Israel

Arnon Bar-David, Chair, Histadrut

Dr. Ron Tomer, President, Manufacturers Association of Israel

Yoav Har-Even, former CEO, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems

Roni Brik, President, Israel Builders Association

Shachar Turjeman, President, Federation of the Israeli Chambers of Commerce

> Government Representatives

Israel Uzan, Director General, Ministry of Labor

Hassan Tawafra, Head, Economic Development Authority for the Minority Sectors, Ministry for Social Equality

Kfir Battat, Deputy Director of the Budget Department, Ministry of Finance

> Session Summary: Steps to Encourage Growth

Michal Fink, Head of the Growth, Innovation, and Strategy Division at the Ministry of Economy and Industry

> Open Discussion

16:00–16:15 Break

16:15–16:30 On the Connection Between Art, Music, and Economics | Yair Nitzani

This performance is dedicated to the Lone Soldier Center in Memory of Michael Levin

16:30–17:45 The Public Service – Under Attack or on the Way to Reform?

Session Chair: Yohanan Plesner, President, Israel Democracy Institute

> Practical Tools for Improving Public Service

Adv. Rita Golstein-Galperin, Head, Civil Service Reform Program, Israel Democracy Institute

Dr. Libby Maman, Guest Researcher, Israel Democracy Institute

Adi Geva, Deputy CEO, JDC-ELKA

Adv. Guy Bossi, Expert in Constitutional, Administrative, and Party Law

Panel of Former Directors-General led by Adv. Rita Golstein-Galperin

Eli Groner, former Director General, Prime Minister's Office

Haim Shani, former Director General, Ministry of Finance; Co-Founder and General Partner, IGP Fund

Adv. Emi Palmor, former Director General, Ministry of Justice; The "Tachlith" Institute; Nir Oz Rehabilitation Project Manager

Tomer Lotan, former Director General, Ministry of Internal Security; Visiting Senior Fellow, Israel Democracy Institute

> Government Representatives

Shira Lev Ami, Head, National Digital Agency

Tamar Levy-Boneh, Deputy Budget Director, Ministry of Finance

Adv. Liron Hents, Deputy Director General for Governmental and Social Affairs, Prime Minister's Office

Omri Dagan, Director, Israeli National School for Leadership, Governance and Management, Civil Service Commission



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Wednesday, May 28, 2025

09:00–09:30 Registration and Light Refreshments

09:30–09:50 Opening Remarks

> National Challenges in Light of the War

Matanyahu Englman, State Comptroller of Israel

MK Benny Gantz, Chair, National Unity Party; former Minister of Defense

09:50–11:40 From Displacement to Revival – Economic Rehabilitation Challenges for Evacuees and Border Residents

Session Chair: Yohanan Plesner, President, Israel Democracy Institute

> Economic and Employment Status of Evacuees and Border Residents

Daphna Aviram-Nitzan, Director, Center for Governance and Economy, Israel Democracy Institute

MK Zeev Elkin, Minister at the Ministry of Finance responsible for Northern and Southern Rehabilitation

Yoav Ben-Tzur, Minister of Labor

> Government Representatives

Aviad Friedman, Head, Tkuma Directorate

CPA Einav Peretz, Interim Chief of Staff, Tnuva (Governmental Authority for Residents Returning to the North); Director, Northern District, Ministry of the Interior

Yehonatan Reznik, Senior Deputy to the Accountant General; Director, Social Ministries Division, Ministry of Finance

> Mayors Reporting from the Field

Asaf Lengelben, Head, Upper Galilee Regional Council

Michal Uziyahu, Mayor of the Eshkol Regional Council

> Proposed Policy Steps

Dr. Ami Appelbaum, Chairman, Ofir SouthUp Ventures Foundation

Lior Shilat, Executive Director, JDC–Tevet

Itzik Shmuli, Director General, UJA–Federation of New York, Israel Office

Dr. Dvora Abramzon Brosh, Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research

> Open Discussion

MK Yair Lapid, Leader of the Opposition; former Prime Minister of Israel

11:40–12:10 Break

12:10–13:20 Strengthening the Social Security of the Self-Employed in Times of Crisis

Session Chair: Daphna Aviram-Nitzan

Gilad Be'ery, Head, Economic Reform Program, Israel Democracy Institute

> Government Representatives

Gil Cohen, Senior Deputy Accountant General; Head of Finance, Debt, and Credit Division, Ministry of Finance

Yoray Matzlavi, Senior Deputy Director General, Ministry of Finance

Naomi Himeyn Raisch, Acting Director, Small and Medium Business Agency, Ministry of Economy and Industry

Nitza Kleiner-Kasir, Deputy Director for Research and Planning, National Insurance Institute

MK Naama Lazimi (The Democrats), Chair, Caucus for Self-Employed and Freelance Workers

> Lead-Off Speakers:

Roi Cohen, President, Lahav (Israel Chamber of Independent Organizations and Businesses)

Rami Beja, Producer; Chair, Forum of the Self-Employed, Histadrut

> Open Discussion

13:20–14:20 Lunch

14:20–16:00 From Education to Employment in the AI Era

Session Chair: Eli Hurvitz, CEO, Trump Foundation

> Speakers

MK Avigdor Lieberman, Chair, Yisrael Beiteinu Party; former Minister of Finance

> Those Left Behind: Intergenerational Mobility and the Poverty Trap in Israel

Prof. Yotam Margalit, Senior Fellow, Israel Democracy Institute

Zak Hirsch, Researcher, Israel Democracy Institute

> The Necessary Preparation of the Labor Market and Education System in the AI Era

Daphna Aviram-Nitzan

> The Role of the Education System in the Age of AI

Meirav Zarbiv, Deputy Director General, Head of the Innovation and Technology Administration, Ministry of Education

Avi Nathan, Head of "Yisrael Realit" Program, Ministry of Education; Former General Manager of Microsoft Israel

Shirin Natur-Hafi, Director of The Department of Arab Education, Ministry of Education

Moti Taubin, Program Director, Education, Yad Hanadiv Foundation

Dr. Tammy Hoffman, Head, Education Policy Program, Israel Democracy Institute

> Handling Manpower Challenges in the Education System

Ephraim (Effie) Malkin, Commissioner of Wages and Labor Agreements, Ministry of Finance

Amir Kochavi, Mayor, Hod Hasharon

> Open Discussion

The Preparation the Labor Market Needs – Panel led by Daphna Aviram-Nitzan

Ifat Citroen, Deputy Director General, Strategy and Policy Planning, Ministry of Labor

Einat Zinger-Dan, Co-Founder and CEO, Business Roundtable Israel; The Israeli Employer's

> Taskforce for Development of Human Capital

Adam Blumenberg, Deputy Director of the Economics and Policy Division; Director of the Trade Union Division, Histadrut

16:00 Conference Summary

Prof. Karnit Flug

Note: The Conference program is subject to change.