



JPPI Israeli Society Index

A Hostage Deal; Confidence in Trump, Israeli Leadership, and Victory

» Main Finding

The Jewish People Policy Institute's monthly Israeli Society Index for January 2025 examined a possible hostage deal. Most Israelis favor "agreeing to the demands of Hamas and returning the hostages." However, most Jewish Israelis are against a partial deal, against a deal that allows Hamas to remain in power, and against a deal that requires IDF withdrawal from the entire Gaza Strip.

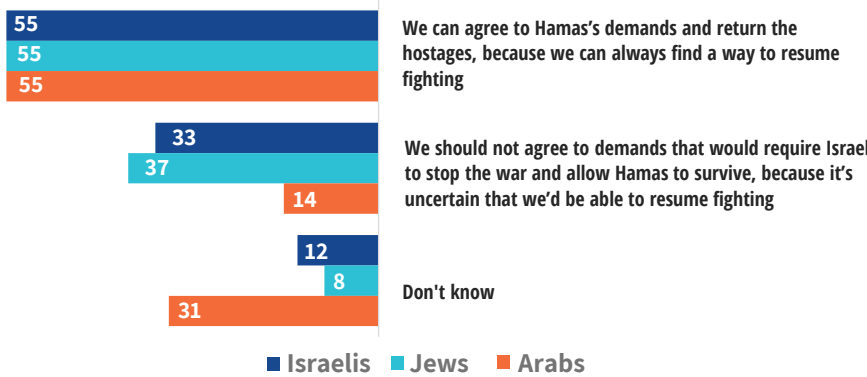
The report has four main parts: a possible hostage deal, confidence in the incoming US president, confidence in Israel's leadership and victory, and questions about values and the judicial system.

Additional Findings

- As his reentry into the White House approaches, most Israelis are pleased that Donald Trump is going to be president of the United States.
- A fifth of Israelis have "a great deal of confidence" that Trump will do "the right thing" in dealing with Iran.
- Most Jews have confidence (a great deal/somewhat) that Trump will act appropriately on the Israeli-Palestinian issue; most Arabs have no confidence in Trump on this matter.
- Right-wing Israelis have relatively low confidence in the IDF senior command.
- A large majority of the Israeli public, Jews and Arabs, have little confidence in the government or the prime minister.
- Half of Israelis oppose dismissal of the attorney general, while a third support her dismissal.
- An overwhelming majority would be unwilling to sacrifice democracy in favor of a government with which they agree.
- A large majority of respondents disapprove of the actions attributed to Sara Netanyahu in the political arena.
- A certain decline was detected in the importance Jewish Israelis attach to compromise and unity.

A Possible Hostage Deal

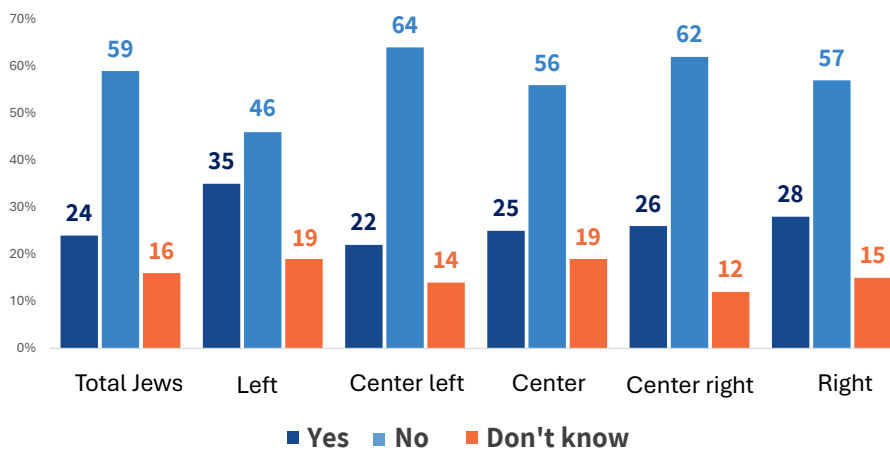
Of the following positions regarding the negotiations for the return of the hostages, which position is closest to yours? (all Israelis, %)



This month, amid reports of progress in the hostage negotiations, we looked at the views of Israelis regarding a deal. Slightly more than half of Israelis, Jews and Arabs (55%), agree with the view that “We can agree to Hamas demands and return the hostages, because we can always find a way to resume fighting.” Slightly more than

a third of Jews (37%) and a small minority of Arabs (14%) prefer the view that “We should not agree to demands that would oblige Israel to stop the war and allow Hamas to survive, because it’s uncertain that we’d be able to resume fighting” (a third of Arab Israelis did not express an opinion).

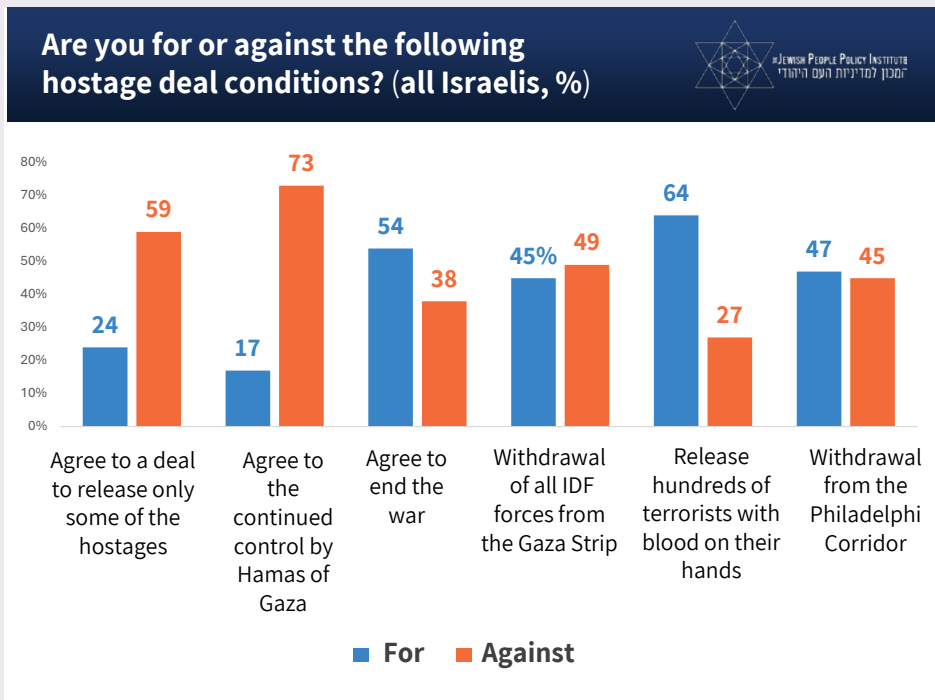
Would you agree to a deal for the release of some of the hostages? (Jewish Israelis, %)



The data indicates general support among the Israeli public for a hostage deal that involves acquiescing to the demands of Hamas. Within the Jewish public, however, there is opposition to several major points that could affect the willingness to agree to a hostage deal. Especially striking is the broad opposition among Jewish Israelis (59%) to “a deal

for the release of only some of the hostages.” Opposition to a partial deal is shared by the voters of all parties and transcends ideological camps.

Within the Jewish public there is agreement to some of the terms mentioned regarding a hostage deal of any kind, including the agreement of a significant majority (64%) to Israel's release of Arab prisoners with "blood on their hands," and "agreement to end the war." However, in this context it must be noted that such agreement is based on the assumption that "we'll be able to resume fighting." That is, agreement to ending the war is tactical, not substantive.



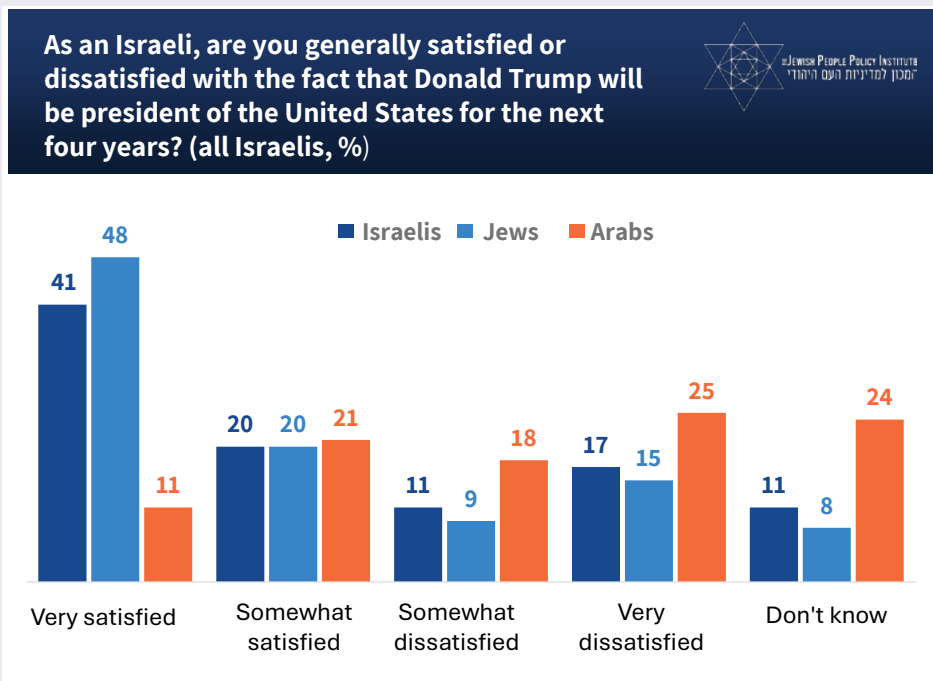
Other points of a potential deal opposed by a majority of Jewish Israelis include the possibility of consenting to Hamas retaining control of Gaza. This possibility is opposed by a very large majority and transcends party lines and in fact encompasses a majority (with various differences) of the supporters of all Jewish political parties. When the results are broken down by ideological camp per

self-definition, only within the left-wing Israeli cohort (5% to 7% of all Jewish Israelis) is there support for Hamas remaining in power in exchange for a hostage deal (43%, versus 35% opposition). Among the center-left to right-wing cohorts, a solid majority oppose to this option.

A smaller majority of "center-right" and "right-wing" Jewish Israelis – the overall majority in Israeli society – oppose withdrawing all IDF forces from Gaza. The option of IDF forces withdrawing from the Philadelphi Corridor is supported by a small majority; in this instance as well, a majority of center-right and right-wing respondents oppose such a withdrawal, while in the other cohorts (center, center-left, left) there is support for the withdrawal of forces from the Corridor.

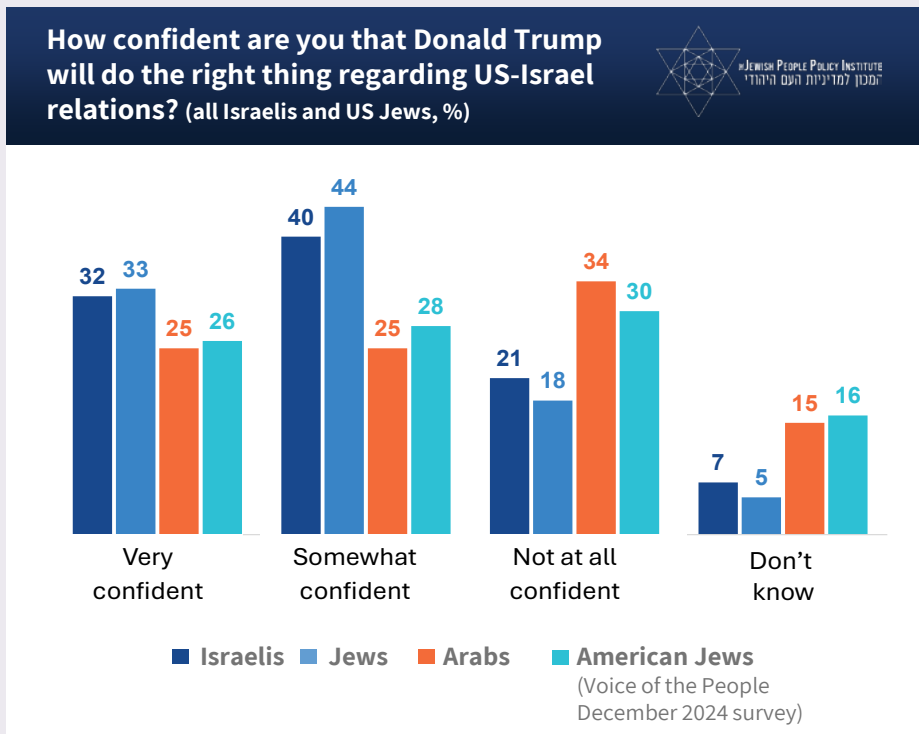
Confidence in Trump

This month's Israeli Society Index appears on the eve of Donald Trump's inauguration as president of the United States (January 20). The survey included a number of questions meant to assess Israelis' levels of satisfaction with, and confidence in, the incoming president. Some of this survey's findings were compared to those obtained from similar questions posed to the respondent panel of American Jews in last month's Voice of the Jewish People survey.



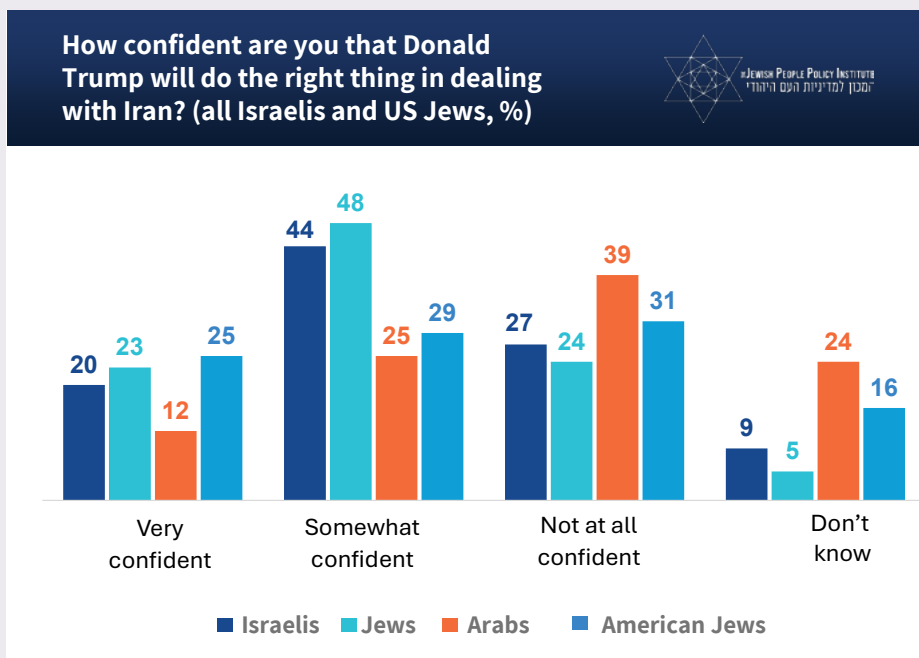
Most Israelis (61%) are satisfied (very satisfied + somewhat satisfied) that Donald Trump is going to be president of the United States for the next four years. By contrast, 28% are dissatisfied (somewhat dissatisfied + very dissatisfied) with this situation. The satisfaction level among Jewish Israelis is significantly higher than among Arab Israelis. Broken down by ideology,

the vast majority (96%) of the "right-wing" cohort is satisfied (very satisfied + somewhat satisfied) with the imminent Trump presidency. This is also majority, albeit smaller, in the center-right and centrist cohorts. Most respondents (76%) in the "left-wing" cohort are dissatisfied (very dissatisfied + somewhat dissatisfied) with the fact that Trump will again be president, as is a smaller majority (63%) in "center-left" respondent cohort.



A third of Israelis (32%) say they are “very confident” that Trump will “do the right thing” regarding US-Israel relations, 40% are somewhat confident, and a fifth of Israelis say that they are not at all confident in the incoming president with regard to Israel-US relations. Confidence among Jewish Israelis is higher than among Arab Israelis or American Jews. Most of the “right-wing” respondent cohort (55%) is very confident that Trump will

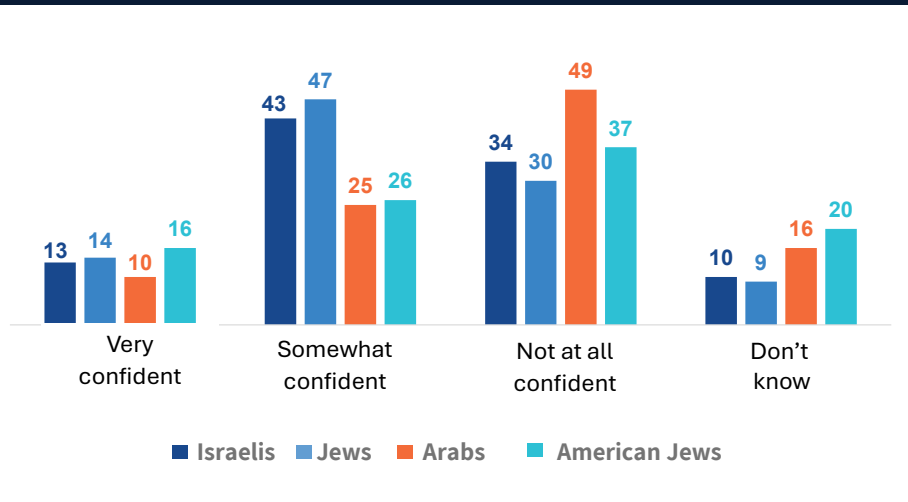
act appropriately with regard to US-Israel relations, while most of the “left-wing” cohort (55%) is not at all confident in Trump in this arena.



In regard to dealing with Iran, a fifth (20%) of all Israelis are “very confident” that Trump will do the right thing; 44% are “somewhat confident,” and a quarter (27%) say they are not at all confident. On the Iran issue, a similar percentage of Israeli and “connected” American Jews say they are very confident in Trump. The further one moves on the ideological and religious spectrums from liberal to

conservative, the higher the level of confidence that Trump will do the right thing in contending with Iran.

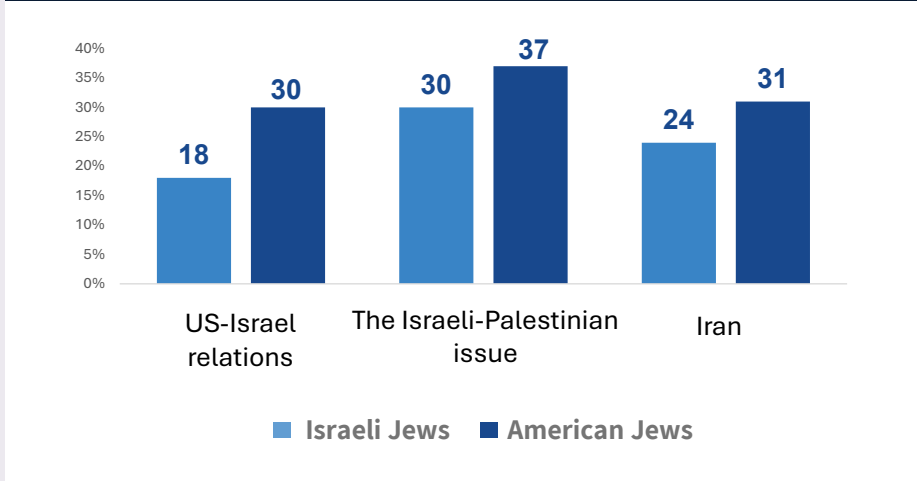
How confident are you that Donald Trump will do the right thing on the Israeli-Palestinian issue? (all Israelis and US Jews, %)



On the Israeli-Palestinian issue, a third (34%) of Israelis say they are not at all confident that Trump will do the right thing, while 43% say they are somewhat confident, and only an eighth (13%) are very confident in Trump in this regard. Here too, Arab Israelis are less confident than their Jewish counterparts. Among Likud voters (in the 2022 elections), a third (32%) are very

confident that Trump will do the right thing with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian issue, while over half (51%) are “somewhat” confident. Among US Jews, confidence in Trump on this issue is similar to that of Jewish Israelis.

"I have no confidence that Donald Trump will do the right thing regarding..." (Israeli and US Jews, %)

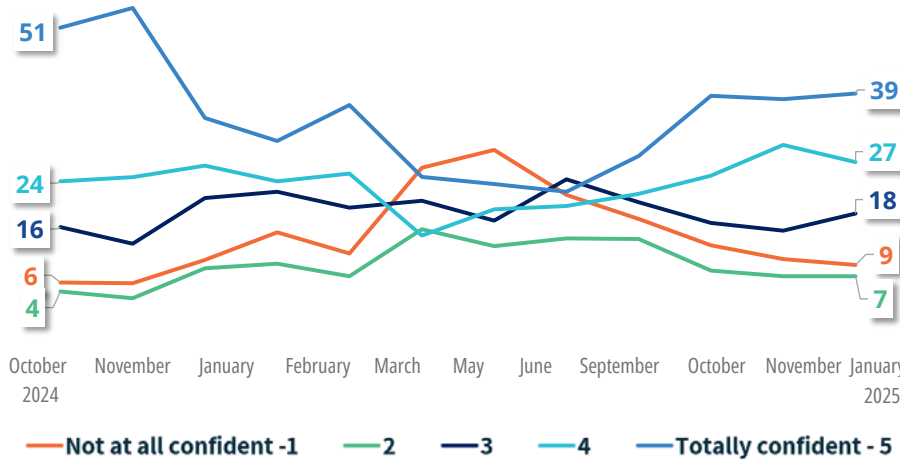


On the three issues examined, a higher percentage of American Jews responded that they are “not at all confident” that Trump will do the right thing. The greatest response disparity between connected American Jews (the group assessed in the Voice of the Jewish People survey) and Israeli Jews was found on the US-Israel relations issue.

While nearly a third (30%) of American Jews said that they are “not at all” confident that Trump will do the right thing with respect to relations between the two countries, less than a fifth (18%) of Israeli Jews concurred.

Confidence in the Country's Leadership and in Victory

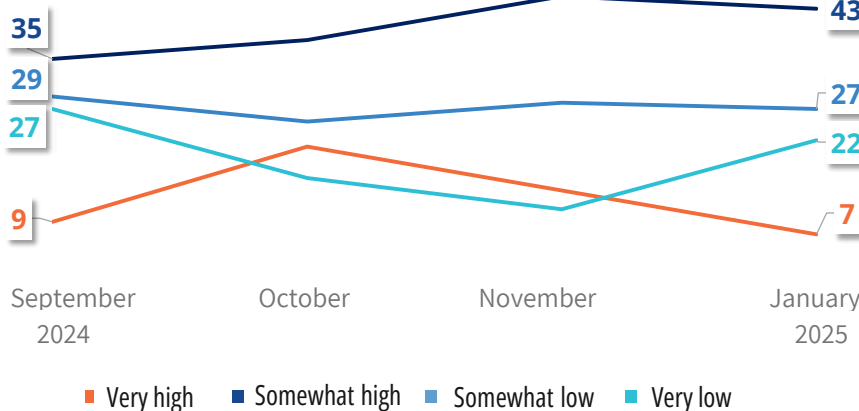
How confident are you that Israel will win the war? (Jewish Israelis, %)



The confidence level among Jewish Israelis that Israel will win the war exhibited no significant change this month. It remained similar to that of two months ago, and was higher than in the survey conducted six months ago. In terms of the broader context, the January survey was conducted after a month when missiles were fired at Israel from Yemen, the IDF

took over the Syrian Hermon, the ceasefire with Lebanon held, and the fighting in Gaza continued. As of this month, 33% of the “left-wing” respondent cohort, 61% of the “centrist” cohort, and 81% of the “right-wing” cohort are confident (ratings 4 + 5) that Israel will win the war.

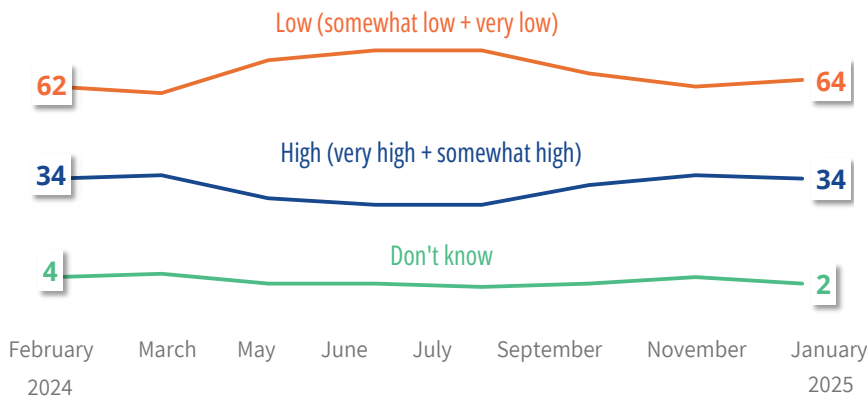
Confidence in the IDF Senior Command (Jewish Israelis, %)



A drop in Jewish Israeli confidence in the IDF senior command was detected this month. The January confidence level is similar to that found six months ago, and among the lowest recorded over the past year. Half of Jewish Israelis say their level of confidence in the IDF senior command is high (very high +

somewhat high), and half say that their confidence level is low (somewhat low + very low). Most of those in the centrist (73%) and left-wing cohorts say that their confidence in the IDF senior command is high (very high + somewhat high), while most of those belonging to the “right-wing” (71%) and “center-right” (51%) cohorts say their confidence in the senior command is low (somewhat low + very low). In November, 41% of the “right-wing” cohort said their degree of confidence in the IDF senior command was high, while this month only 27% gave this response.

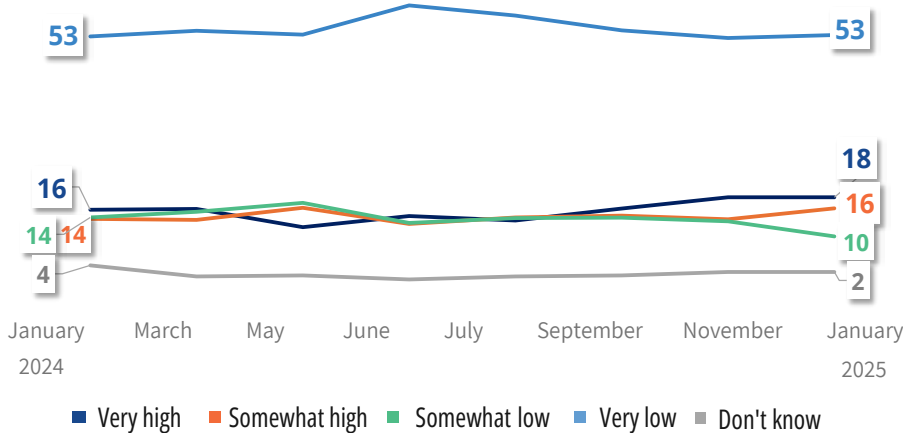
Level of Confidence in the Government (Jewish Israelis, %)



Most Jewish Israelis say their confidence in the government is low (very low + somewhat low), and a third say that their confidence level is high (very high + somewhat high). Half (52%) of all Israelis, Arabs and Jews, say their level of confidence in the government is “very low,” versus 10% who say that it is “very high.” Recent months have seen a

small but continuous rise in the Arab population’s confidence in the government. As of this month, a fifth of Arab Israelis (18%) say their confidence level is high (very high + somewhat high), while three-fourths (75%) say their degree of confidence in the government is low (somewhat low + very low).

What is your level of confidence in Prime Minister Netanyahu? (all Israelis, %)

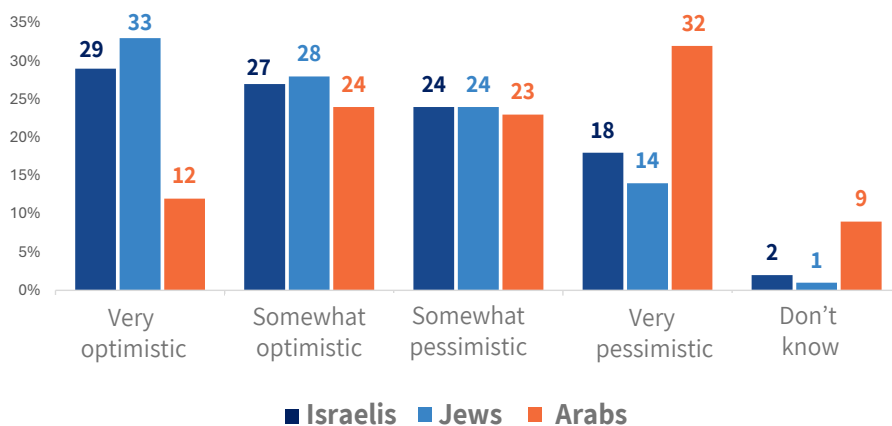


About two-thirds of Israelis say that their level of confidence in Prime Minister Netanyahu is low (very low + somewhat low), while a third attest to high confidence in the prime minister (very high + somewhat high). This remained stable throughout 2024. Most of the secular cohort (78%) say that their confidence in Netanyahu is

low, while most religious Jews (Datiim – 58%) say that their confidence in him is high. Fifteen percent of those who voted Likud in the 2022 elections say that their confidence in the prime minister is low.

The Future of the State

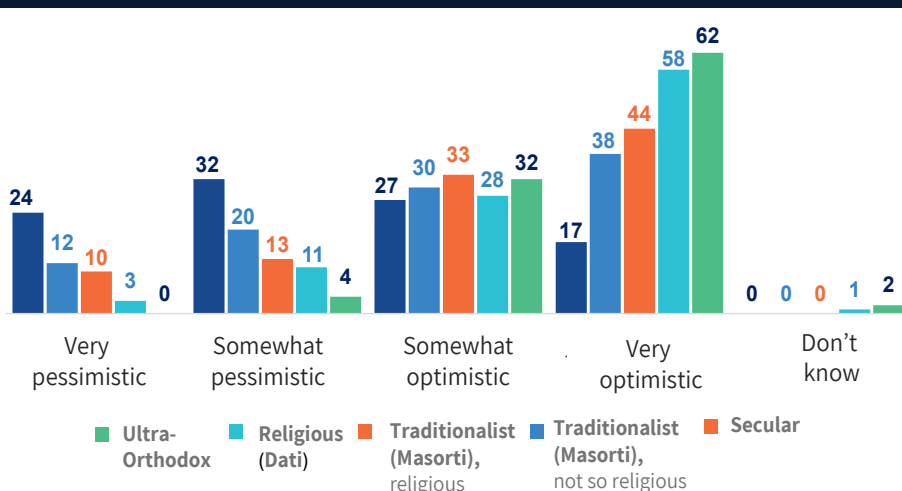
Generally, are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of the State of Israel? (all Israelis, %)



A small majority of Israelis (56%) are optimistic about the future of the State of Israel (very optimistic + somewhat optimistic), and 42% are pessimistic about the country's future (very pessimistic + somewhat pessimistic). The Jewish population expresses greater optimism than the Arab population, 36% of which is optimistic and 55%

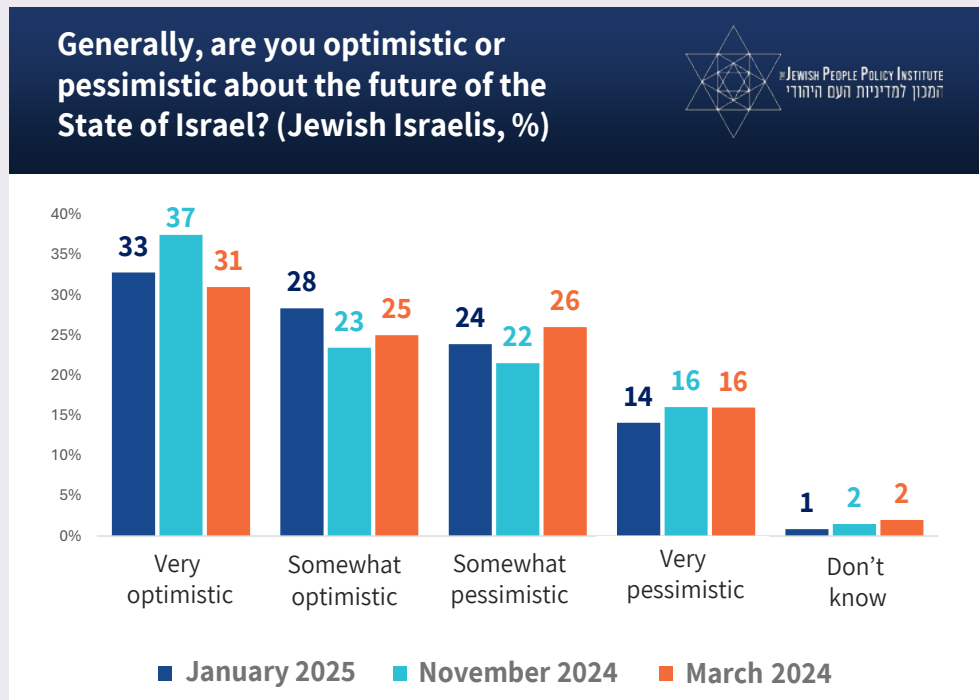
pessimistic. Seventy-three percent of those who self-identify with the left-wing cohorts (left + center-left) and half of those who self-identify as centrist are pessimistic about Israel's future. By contrast, 74% of those who self-identify as center-right and 88% of those who self-identify as right-wing are optimistic about the future of the state. In a breakdown by religiosity level, most of the secular are pessimistic

Generally, are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of the State of Israel? (Jewish Israelis, %)

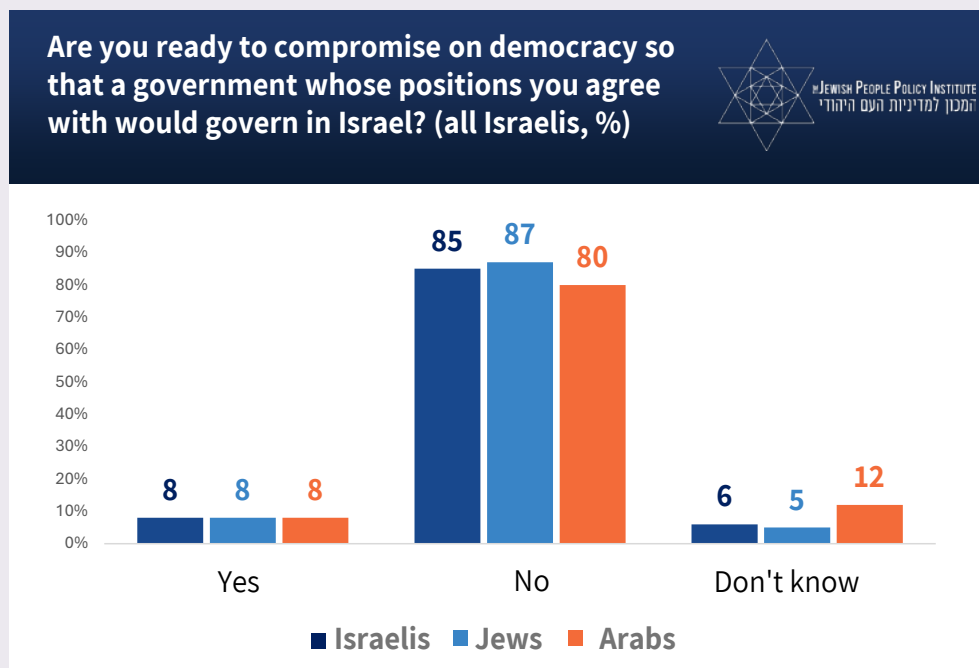


about Israel's future, while most in the other respondent cohorts are optimistic.

The optimism level of Israeli Jews remained relatively stable over the past year.



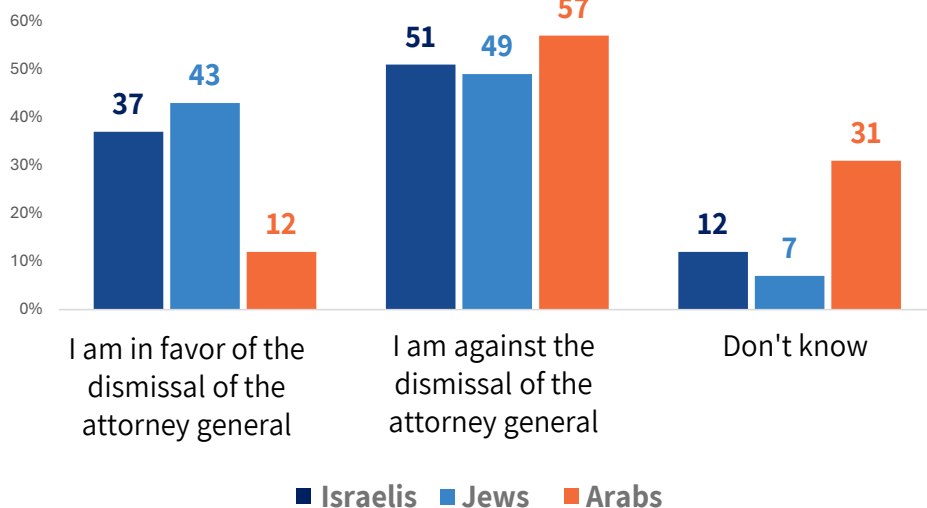
Democracy and the Judicial System



A very large majority of Israelis (85%) would be unwilling to compromise on democracy so that a government whose positions they agree with might govern. Eight percent of the Jewish and the Arab populations would be prepared for such a tradeoff. A fifth of Religious Zionist Party/ Otzma Yehudit voters

(18%) responded that they would be willing to compromise on democracy for such a government.

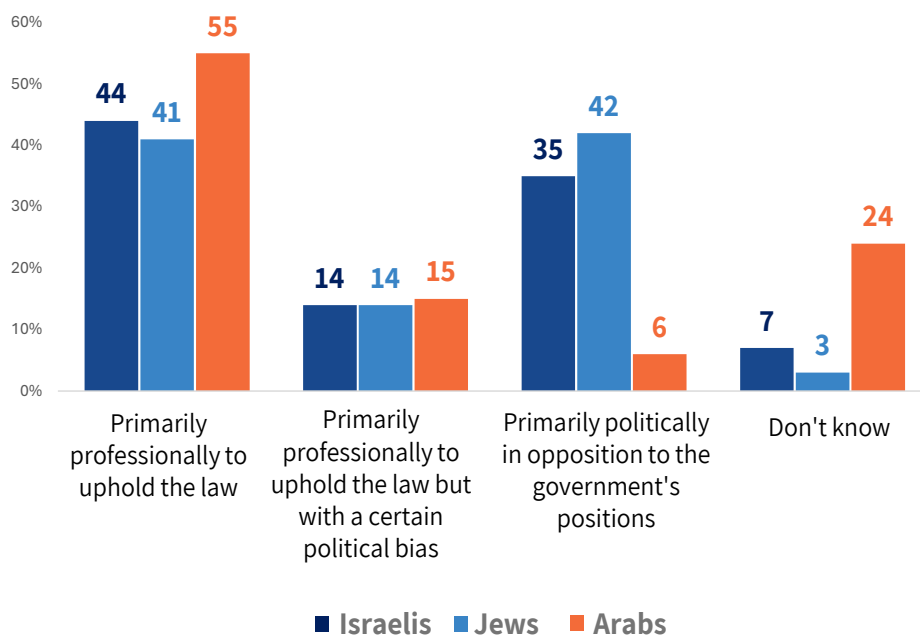
Voices in the government are calling for the dismissal of the attorney general. What is your position? (all Israelis, %)



Half of Israelis (51%) oppose the dismissal of Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara, while 37% of Israelis say they are in favor of her dismissal. Within the Arab population, only an eighth (12%) support her ousting, while 43% of the Jewish population supports such a move. As expected, support for the attorney general's dismissal is higher in the right-wing cohorts.

Among those in the centrist respondent cohort, 83% oppose Attorney General Baharav-Miara's dismissal, and only 11% support it.

From the following options, do you think the attorney general acts... (all Israelis, %)

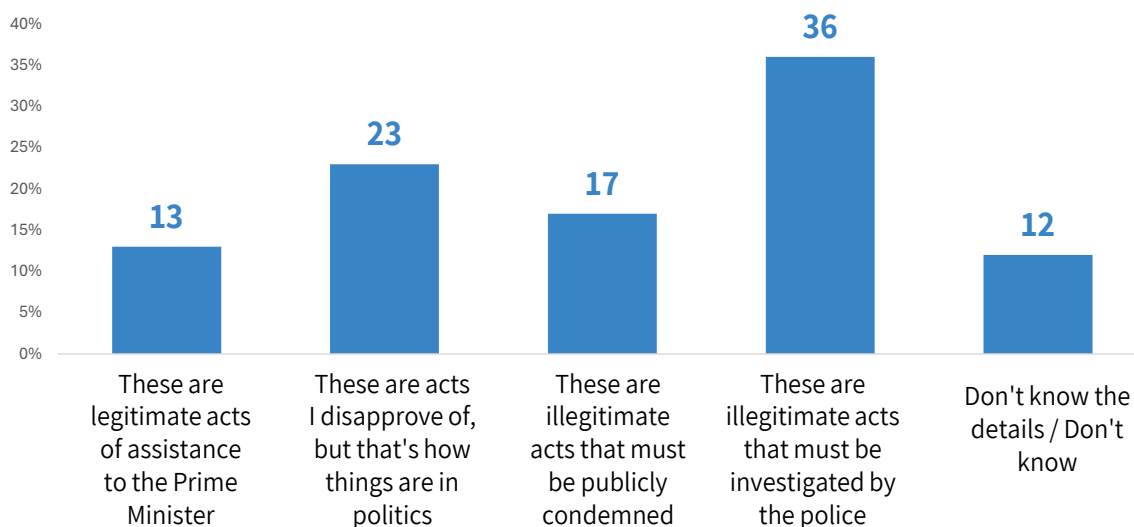


In a separate question pertaining to the attorney general's actions, we aimed to determine public attitudes regarding the motivations behind her decisions. As one might expect, there is no consensus among Israelis with respect to her motivations. Forty-four percent of Israelis believe that she operates primarily on a professional basis, to

uphold the law; 35% think she operates mainly on a political basis, in opposition to the government’s views, and 14% of Israelis believe that the attorney general operates mainly on a professional basis, to uphold the law, but with “a certain degree of political bias.” Most (55%) of the Arab population thinks the Attorney General operates primarily on a professional basis, to uphold the law. Most secular Jews (66%) also feel this way, while most religious Jews (Datiim – 66%) believe she operates mainly on a political basis, in opposition to the government’s views.

The survey was conducted not long after the broadcast of a segment of Channel 12’s Uvda (Fact, in English) program which presented viewers with an exchange of messages between the prime minister’s spouse, Sara Netanyahu, and several aides who assist the prime minister in the political arena. We posed a few questions about Sara Netanyahu’s actions as depicted in the program. More than a third (36%) of Jewish Israelis feel that her actions are not legitimate and warrant a police investigation. Nearly a quarter (23%) say that they disapprove of Mrs. Netanyahu’s actions, but “that’s how things are in politics.” Seventeen percent believe that “These are illegitimate acts that should be publicly condemned.” Only 13% of the Jewish public thinks that the actions presented were “legitimate acts of assistance to the prime minister.”

An extensive investigation was recently published on the involvement of the prime minister’s wife, Sara Netanyahu, in the public-political arena. Of the following options, what do you think of her actions? (Jewish Israelis, %)




Among Likud voters, a quarter say the acts in question were legitimate acts of assistance, while a third said that they were actions “I disapprove of” but “that’s how things are in politics.” Overall, among the right-wing respondent cohort there is a small majority who chose one of these two responses (which express a degree of rationalizing the actions at issue); in the center-right cohort nearly half chose one of these two options (35% chose the option of disapproval but “that’s how things are in politics”), while in the other cohorts (from the center leftward) a large majority condemn the actions of the prime minister’s spouse with no degree of rationalization.

The Importance of Values

This month, as part of our regular monitoring of how values are ranked in Israeli society, we again assessed the degree of importance that all Israelis attach to a variety of issues (rated on a scale of 1 to 10): equality of economic opportunity is the issue respondents rated highest (8.4), followed by upholding minority rights (7.9), the aspiration to compromise and unity (7.5), and finally the connection with global Western culture (6.7). The Jewish population attached a higher degree of importance to equality of economic opportunity for all, and to the connection with global Western culture, while the Arab population attached greater importance to compromise and unity, and to the upholding of minority rights. Compared with an identical question posed last year, there was a certain decline in the importance Israeli Jews attach to the aspiration of compromise and unity – last year this value received an importance rating of 7.8, while this year it garnered a rating of 7.3.

Rate on a scale from 1 to 10.




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	How important to you is equal economic opportunity for all?	How important to you is striving for compromise and unity?	How important to you is upholding the rights of minority groups?	How important to you is the connection to global Western culture?
Israelis	8.4	7.5	7.9	6.7
Jews	8.6	7.3	7.7	7.1
Arabs	7.7	8.3	8.7	5.5

We questioned Jewish respondents on two additional topics: Most Jews rated the importance they attach to the state’s Jewish character and to the relationship with Diaspora Jewry as high (7.9 and 7.8, respectively). Compared with last year, no change was found in the degree of importance Jewish Israelis attach to the Jewish character of the state, while the degree of importance they attach to the relationship with Diaspora Jewry declined slightly.

Rate on a scale from 1 to 10.



	How important to you is the Jewish character of the state? (Jews)	How important to you is the connection to Diaspora Jews? (Jews)
2024	7.9	8.0
2025	7.9	7.8

The Jewish People Policy Institute’s January Israeli Society Index survey was administered between January 2 and 6, 2025 to 833 respondents. Data was collected by theMadad.com (633 Jewish-sector respondents via an online poll) and by Afkar Research (200 Arab-sector respondents, half online and half by phone). Data was analyzed and weighted by political affiliation and religiosity level to represent Israel’s adult population. Shmuel Rosner and Noah Slepko compile the JPPI Israeli Society Index; Professor David Steinberg serves as statistical consultant.