



## Peace Index, January 2019

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- **Netanyahu should resign from the leadership of the Likud if an indictment is issued against him before the elections, says most of the Jewish public; those disagreeing are primarily Likud voters and the haredi parties.**
- **A majority of the Jewish public favors a government of a right-wing nature after the elections and also believes such a government will be formed.**
- **Gantz and Lapid are perceived by the Jewish public as center-left, while the political-security identity of Ashkenazi and of Levy-Abekasis is a riddle for many.**
- **The preferred candidates to form a united center party are Gantz, Lapid, Ashkenazi, Ya'alon, and Levy-Abekasis. Most of the right-wingers and most of the Israeli Arab public are not interested in such a party.**
- **More than half of the Jewish public favors a military operation to topple the Hamas regime in Gaza, but a large majority says avoiding harm to Palestinian civilians must be taken into account.**
- **A decisive majority of the public thinks the Ethiopians suffer from discrimination. After them, by a considerable margin, Arabs and women are also perceived as discriminated against.**

At the center of the public agenda in January stood the election campaign, and, naturally, most of this month's Peace Index survey explored different aspects related to it. We also looked into the public's positions on the desirable Israeli



policy toward the Gaza Strip, as well as public's attitude toward the problem of discrimination against certain groups in Israeli society.

**What government do people want and think will be formed after the next elections?** 33% of the Jewish public wants a right-wing government to be formed, 26% prefer a center-right government, and 21% favor a centrist government. The combined support for a center-left or left-wing government comes to only 12%, with the rest not answering or declining to answer.

In other words, a majority (about 60%) of the Jewish public wants a government of a right-wing nature to be formed, with a preference for a government based on the right over one that combines the right and the center. These findings accord with the Jewish public's self-definition in the political-security domain, with 63% defining themselves as right-wing (28%) or center-right (35%). Against this backdrop, it comes as no surprise that a majority of the public (74%) believes that the government to be established will be of a right-wing nature. However, the rate of those who see more of a chance of a center-right government (39%) is somewhat higher than the rate of those who believe a right-wing government will emerge (35%), while another 11% believe a centrist government will be established.

As expected, in the Arab public the order of preferences for the desired government is the reverse: 12% want a right-wing or center-right government, 18% a centrist one, and 43% desire a left-wing or center-left government. The rest (27%) do not know or decline to answer. On the question of which government has more of a chance of being formed, in the Arab public, too, the prevailing answer (46%) is that it will be a government of a right-wing nature.

**The political-security image of some prominent politicians in the public arena:**

The list of politicians we chose includes seven figures whose names appear frequently in the context of forming a united list headed by Benny Gantz and/or



Yair Lapid. For brevity's sake, the political-security scale presented to the interviewees was divided into three categories: right, center, and left, along with don't-know. The list of names was presented to the respondents in changing order so that there would be no significance to the order in which they were presented. As Table 1 shows, the Jewish public perceives **Benny Gantz** to an equal extent as left (33%) or as center (32%), while only 17% identify him as right and 18% do not know where to position him. This distribution does not accord with the image Gantz apparently wants to present to the public; at least in light of his statements, he wants to position himself in the center of the political map. It seems, then, that the Likud has succeeded to a large extent in convincing the public that Gantz is closer to the left than the right. **Yair Lapid** is indeed identified by 40% as center, as he presents himself; however, similar to Gantz, the rest of the interviewees identify him much more as left (33%) than as right (15%). Unlike these two, the prevailing image of **Moshe Ya'alon** is of someone on the right (37%), and after that, with a small gap between the two figures, as center (24%) and as left (21%). It appears, then, that Ya'alon's joining of the Israel Resilience party serves Gantz's declared aim of forming a list that is in the center of the map; Gantz has thereby included a figure who is perceived as more right-wing than he is. **Tzipi Livni** is perceived by a large majority (60%) as left, apparently in light of her repeated statements about compromises on the Palestinian issue. 19% identify her as center and a tiny minority (8%) as right. A similar pattern was found for the image of **Avi Gabbay**, whom 54% identify as left (a lower rate than for Tzipi Livni) while the rest perceive him as center (18%) or right (7%). Interestingly, the prevailing response for **Orly Levy-Abekasis** is that her identity from a political-security standpoint cannot be known—33% gave that response for Levy-Abekasis and 32% for Ashkenazi. The second most common answer for each of them is that 29% identify Levy-Abekasis as right while 31% identify Ashkenazi as center. The overall picture that emerges from these data is that,



when it comes to their images among the Jewish public, most of the figures we asked about (apart from Ya'alon and Levy-Abekasis) are not perceived as right-wingers; hence it is doubtful that they will be able to attract potential voters among this group.

**The desired roster of people to be included in a united list that will run against the Likud:** The Peace Index data indicate that the two most desired individuals are Benny Gantz (44%) and Yair Lapid (40%); after them come, with almost identical rates of preference, Gabi Ashkenazi (33%), Moshe Ya'alon (32%), and Orly Levy-Abekasis (31%). Considerably behind these are Tzipi Livni (22%) and Avi Gabbay (12%). It appears, then, that the "ideal" united list includes those ranked in the first five, with Benny Gantz enjoying a slight lead over Yair Lapid as the candidate to head the list. As expected, over half (55%) of the right-wingers express a lack of interest or opposition to the list (40%), or had no opinion (50%) about it; and the same is true for the Israeli Arabs, 33% of whom have no opinion about this list while 28% express disinterest or opposition toward it.

**What should Netanyahu do if Mandelbit decides before the elections to issue an indictment pending a hearing?** The responses indicate that in that case a considerable majority of the Jewish public, 57%, is sure or thinks Netanyahu should resign from the leadership of the Likud, while 35% are sure or think he should not resign and the rest do not know. Not surprisingly, among supporters of the center and the left 84% are sure or think he should resign while only 11% think or are sure he should not; even among the supporters of the right, however, a considerable minority (43%) thinks or is sure that he should resign in that scenario, while a slightly higher rate (48%) thinks or is sure that he should not. It is interesting to note that only among the voters for the Likud (60%) and the haredi parties (81%) does a clear majority consider that Netanyahu should not resign.



**Against which groups is there discrimination in Israel?** In the eyes of the Jewish public, the Ethiopians are the most discriminated-against group (76% think there is discrimination against them compared to 19% who think there is not and 5% who do not know); after them come the Israeli Arabs (57%, 38%, and 5%, respectively), women (53%, 42%, and 5%, respectively), and haredim (43%, 53%, and 4%, respectively). These data show, first, that the protest by the Ethiopians gets a tailwind from the Israeli public, which is aware of the discrimination against them. Second, the haredim are apparently the only group for which the rate who think it is not discriminated against is higher than the rate who think that it is; and third, a large minority underestimates or ignores the discrimination that exists against Arabs and women in Israel. Among women, haredim, and Arabs, as could be anticipated, a large majority sees their group as subject to discrimination. On this issue an interesting trend emerges of intergenerational differences: young people aged 44 and under respond to a greater extent that there is discrimination against each of the groups than do older people aged 45 and over, with different disparities for each group.

**The desired policy toward the Gaza Strip:** To the question “How should Israel deal with the situation in Gaza?” a majority of the Jewish public (53%) responds that it should use military means aimed at toppling the Hamas regime there, while 31% say it should work for a long-term agreement with Hamas in return for an improvement in Gaza’s economic situation—to include, for example, the building of a seaport. Only a tiny minority (7%) thinks the existing policy should be continued and the Qatari money should be funneled to Gaza, with military responses to fire from Gaza. There are almost no disparities in the meager support—right (8%), center (6%), left (5%)—for the policy toward Gaza that Netanyahu is currently conducting. The gaps in the extent of support for the other two solutions reflect the perceptual gaps between these different ideological groups: whereas a military operation is favored by about two-thirds of the right-wingers (69%), a third of the centrists (33%), and only 9% of the left-wingers, a



long-term agreement is overwhelmingly favored by the left (79%), about half of the centrists (49%), but by only 16% of the right. A further question in this context was formulated as: "When Israel plans and implements its policy toward Gaza, to what extent should it or should it not take into account the issue of harming the Palestinian civilian population?" Only a small minority (14%) thinks it should not take the issue into account at all, 63% think it should take it into account but not as a top-level concern, while 18% assert that it should make this a top-level consideration. In other words, a majority of the Jewish public wants to act militarily against Hamas in Gaza while taking to some extent a humanitarian approach.

As expected, the large majority of the Arab public favors a long-term agreement with Hamas in return for an improvement of the economic situation in Gaza, and also says Israel should make the issue of harming the civilian population a top-level concern in the policy it plans and implements toward Gaza.

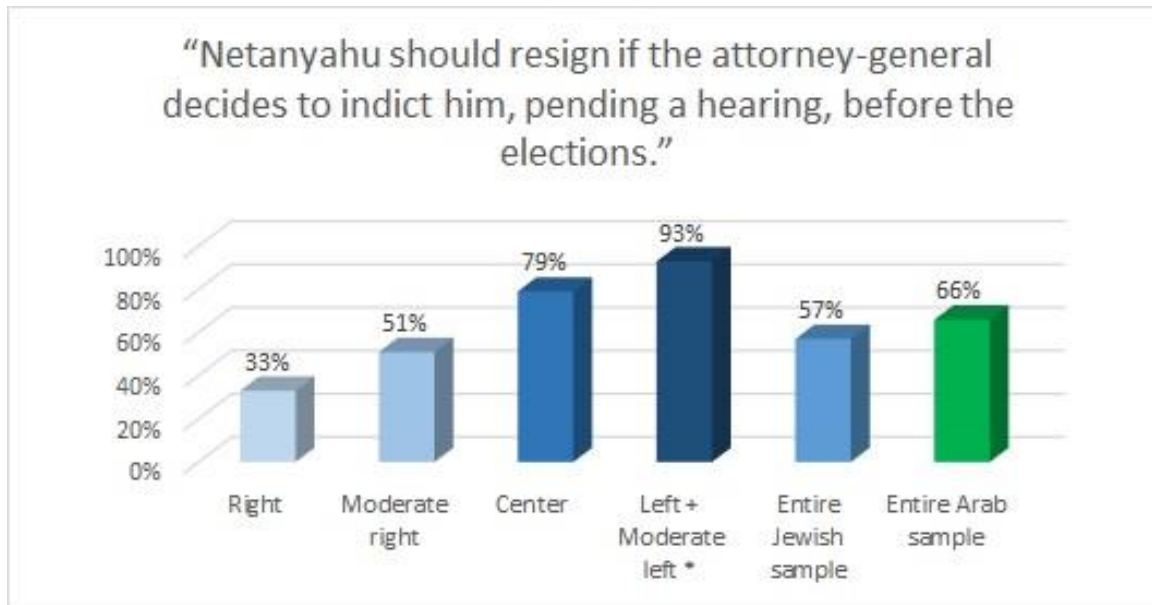
### Negotiation Index: 45.5 (Jewish sample—42.5)

Table 1: From a political-security standpoint, how would you define each of the following figures? (Jewish sample)

	Right	Center	Left	Don't know/Decline to answer	Total
<b>Benny Gantz</b>	17%	32%	33%	18%	100%
<b>Yair Lapid</b>	15%	40%	33%	12%	100%
<b>Moshe Ya'alon</b>	37%	24%	21%	18%	100%
<b>Orly Levy-Abekasis</b>	29%	25%	13%	33%	100%
<b>Gabi Ashkenazi</b>	18%	31%	19%	32%	100%
<b>Avi Gabbay</b>	7%	18%	54%	21%	100%
<b>Tzipi Livni</b>	8%	19%	60%	13%	100%



## Diagram of the month



\* No gaps were found between the groups.

*The Peace Index is a project of the Evens Program for Mediation and Conflict Resolution at Tel Aviv University and the Midgam Consulting and Research Institute. This month's survey was conducted by telephone and internet on February 2-3, 2019. The survey included 600 respondents, who constitute a representative national sample of the adult population of Israel aged 18 and over. The maximum measurement error for the entire sample is  $\pm 4.1\%$  at a confidence level of 95%. Statistical analyses were done by Ms. Yasmin Alkalay.*