



## Peace Index, April 2019

- **Half of the Jewish public would like the Likud to include the Blue and White party in the coming government. There is no agreement about the main issue that must be dealt with by the new government.**
- **However, the security-political consideration was central among rightists when they chose for whom to vote, while among the moderate right and the Arab public, the economic-social issue was salient. In contrast, among centrists and leftwing voters, the leading consideration was the desire to replace Netanyahu.**
- **About a fifth of the Jewish public voted for a party that they did not prefer for strategic reasons.**
- **The Jewish public is divided almost equally between those who believe that, if the attorney general decides to issue an indictment against Netanyahu, he should continue in his role as prime minister, and those who believe that he should resign. A small majority among those who believe that he should remain as prime minister, favor not bringing him to trial while he is serving in that role.**
- **Similar to last month, the Jewish public is dissatisfied with maintaining the present situation in the conflict with the Palestinians but has difficulty in indicating an agreed-upon solution and tends to believe that the present situation will continue. There is slightly more support for the opinion that annexation of the occupied territories by Israel is likely to be realized.**
- **About a fifth of the Jewish public and about a third of the Arab public have not as yet formed an opinion about Trump's plan for a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Among opinion holders in the Jewish public, a bit more believe that the plan will harm Israel's vital interests.**



- **About half of the Jewish public support military action leading to the collapse of the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip. This is in contrast to the two-thirds of the Arab public who support a long-term agreement with the Hamas administration in Gaza to achieve calm. A miniscule percentage support continuing the present situation.**

### **Prof. Ephraim Yaar and Dr. Nimrod Rosler**

As expected, the Peace Index taken after the elections, related in part to subjects connected to the recent Knesset elections. In addition, we examined the public's positions on possible solutions to the conflict with the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. Finally, we asked about the effects on Israeli interests of the "deal of the century" announced by Trump.

### **The Knesset Elections**

**Considerations and preferences during the election campaign :** Among the Jewish public, the answers to the question "Which issue influenced you most in determining your vote in the recent elections?" indicated that there is a wide distribution between four issues that were presented; 32% noted the social-economic consideration, 27% specified the security-political consideration, 19% expressed the desire to replace Netanyahu, and 15% cited the desire to continue the Netanyahu government. The desire to replace Netanyahu was the preferred consideration for voters from the political center (43%), and from the moderate left (35%). The security-political consideration was preferred (44%) by rightwing voters and by the moderate right (39%). Arab voters preferred the social economic consideration (30%).



As the recent elections have indicated that there were people who did not vote for their preferred party, we tried to clarify how many voters this involved and what their reasons were. We will begin with the fact that the rate of people who indicated that they voted for their preferred party was 73% among Jewish voters and 54% among Arab voters. Among Jewish participants, 11% stated that they did not vote for their preferred party because it was more important for them to vote for one of the two large parties, 9% believed that their preferred party would not pass the election threshold needed to enter the Knesset and 3% were afraid that their preferred party would recommend a leader they did not want. Thus, about a fifth (21%) of the Jewish public made “strategic” calculations when choosing for whom to vote. This tendency was similar among voters from the political center (25%) and from the right (22%), in contrast to the moderate right (16%) and the left (5%) where this trend was less salient. Interestingly, a large proportion of Arab participants (about 30%) chose not to answer questions about their considerations and preferences during the elections, which may testify to their fears about expressing an opinion about voting matters.

**The preferred government:** Against the backdrop of the elections, we asked which type of government participants would like to emerge following the coalition negotiations and we proposed three alternatives: Among Jewish voters, 34% preferred a government led by the Likud which does not include the Blue and White party, 31% preferred a national unity government including Blue-and-White and the Likud, and 19% were in favor of Likud government with the participation of Blue-and-White.

These findings indicate that half of the Jewish public prefer that the Likud include Blue-and-White in their government; there is a majority of support for these two answers among voters from the political center (58%) and from the moderate right (54%). In contrast, leftwing voters preferred this alternative less (48%). Among rightwing voters, a majority prefer a government



without Blue-and White (60%) while half of Arab participants would prefer a different government to the alternatives we presented for this question.

**What is the main issue that the coming government must focus on from among the proposed possibilities?** : The answers indicate that, from among the six issues that we presented, there is no one issue that is salient in importance for the Jewish public. About 17% chose strengthening of the Israeli Defense Forces and security as most important, and a similar percentage cited improvement of the economic situation, 15% chose closing social gaps, 9% selected eliminating corruption in the government and 8% picked strengthening national unity as the main issue. About 30% responded that all of the issues were equally important. A similar percentage among the Arab public chose improving the economic situation (17%), and closing social gaps (17%), while 18% cited achieving a peace agreement with the Palestinians as the main issue facing the new government, in contrast to only 3% of the Jewish public who chose this issue.

**Netanyahu's future and the new government when considering possible decisions by the attorney general:** We returned to a question similar to one we asked last month: "With the assumption that the two following situations will take place: First – after the elections Netanyahu will succeed in forming a coalition. Second- The attorney general will decide, after a hearing, to indict Netanyahu. Which of the following should prevail: a continuation of Netanyahu's term of office or Netanyahu's resignation. The answers show that the Jewish public is divided almost equally between supporters of a continuation of Netanyahu's term (44.7%) and his resignation (46.5%). The rest (9%) did not reply. A decisive majority among voters on the left (83%) and the center (81%) think that Netanyahu should resign if an indictment is issued against him, while a small majority among the moderate right (52%) and a large majority of rightist voters (75%)



prefer that he continue to serve in this situation. In contrast, about two-thirds (65%) of the Arab public feel that Netanyahu must resign in such a situation. Notably, about half of those who support continuation of his term prefer that he doesn't stand trial while he is serving as prime minister, similar to the idea of the "French Law". Another 45% think that Netanyahu should stand trial but that he should be able to serve until his guilt has been proven. Supporters of his resignation if and when he is indicted were asked to choose between three alternatives: Half (51%) prefer that a new government be formed under Ganz, and the other participants are divided between supporters of a government under the Likud without Netanyahu and those who support new elections (23% for each of the two possibilities).

### **The conflict with the Palestinians**

**Desired and possible solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.** Similar to last month, we investigated the public's positions regarding four possible solutions to the conflict. The solution of establishing an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel was supported by 40% and rejected by 53% of the Jewish public compared to 68% support and 22% opposition among the Arab public. Creation of a bi-national state was supported by 10% and rejected by 83% of the Jewish public, but received the support of 59% of the Arab participants, while 27% of the Arabs were opposed. Annexation of the territories was supported by 34% and rejected by 60% of the Jewish public, in comparison to 13% of support and 70% rejection among the Arab public. Continuing the present situation received 31% of support among the Jewish participants and while 59% were in opposition. Among the Arab public, 8% supported continuation and 72% were opposed. This means that none of the four solutions received a majority among the Jewish



public, but importantly, the rate of support for a solution involving two independent states received the highest of the four, similar to last month.

Regarding solutions that have the greatest chance of being realized in the foreseeable future, 43% of the Jewish public believes that the present situation will continue, and following that, in descending order, the creation of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel (22%), annexation of the territories with limited rights for Palestinians (20%), and establishment of a bi-national state (4%). Interestingly, although there was no rise in preference for the idea of annexation compared to last month, it is possible that Netanyahu's statements about the issue and the American recognition of the annexation of the Golan Heights, led to a small increase of 5% among Jews and a sharp rise of 20% among Arabs who believe that annexation of the territories may take place in the foreseeable future. In summary, in an appraisal of the chances for possible solutions as well, the public believes that there is no one solution that has a chance of being realized. In addition, a comparison between answers to the two questions shows that there are significant gaps between the rate of support or opposition to the various solutions and an estimation of the chances of their being realized, except for the solution of a bi-national state.

**How should Israel deal with the situation in the Gaza Strip?** We returned to the question that was measured two months ago regarding the preferred ways to deal with the situation in Gaza. Similar to the replies that we received two months ago, 52% of the Jewish public would rather that Israel use military means to cause a collapse of the Hamas government in Gaza while 35% (in comparison to 31% two months ago) prefer that Israel act to achieve a long-term agreement with Hamas in Gaza in return for an improvement in the Gaza economic situation, for example, the creation of a seaport. Only 3% (as opposed to 7% two months ago) support continuing the existing situation, that is, continuing to transfer Qatari funds to the Gaza Strip in addition to





military reactions to shelling from Gaza. As expected, most right-wing supporters (73%) and the moderate right (51%) prefer the alternative of using military power, in contrast to most supporters of the left (66%) and the center (60%) who prefer a resolution. The Arab public clearly prefers a long-term agreement with Hamas in Gaza (66%) in return for an improvement in the economic situation, for example, establishing a seaport, compared with maintaining the present situation (8%) and a military action (6%), while 20% did not answer this question.

**The possible effects of Trump's "deal of the century" on Israeli vital interests:** In the Jewish public there is no uniformity in answering this question, although the number of those who believe that the "deal" will harm Israeli vital interests (32%) is higher than both those who believe that it will advance Israeli interests (24%) and those who think that it will not effect Israeli vital interests (22%). The most common answer among rightwing supporters (40%) and the moderate right (32%) was that the deal would harm interests, while among supporters of the center (31%) and the left (34%), the most common answer was that the deal would advance Israeli interests. Considering the fact that the details of the deal have not as yet been publicized, it is not surprising that a relatively high number of Jewish participants (21%) and Arab participants (35%) did not answer this question.

### **Negotiation Index:**

General sample: 44.1 (An increase of 1.4 points in comparison to last month).

Jewish sample: 42.5 (An increase of 0.2 points in comparison with last month).

The negotiation index is calculated by a weighing two questions: Level of support for negotiation with the Palestinian Authority, and level of trust that negotiation with the Authority will lead to peace in the coming years.



יעוץ ומחקר בע"מ

*The Peace Index is conducted by the Evens Program in Mediation and Conflict Management at Tel Aviv University and the Midgam Consulting and Research Institute under the authority of Mano Geva and Dr. Mina Zemach. The survey was conducted by telephone and internet on 14-15 April 2019, among 600 respondents, a representative sample of the entire adult population (ages 18 and over) in Israel. Maximum margin of error for the entire sample is +/-4.1% at a confidence level of 95%. Statistical analysis: Ms. Yasmin Alkalay.*

**Diagram of the month: Against the backdrop of the elections results, which government would you prefer?**

