



Peace Index, October 2019

This peace index is dedicated to the memory of Yasmin Alkalay who, as a statistical analyst, accompanied the peace index with talent, love and great devotion from its establishment in 1994. She passed away this month.

- **After the mandate for establishing a coalition government has been assigned to Ganz, more than half of the Israeli public want him to succeed in his task. Most of the public prefers that he establish a government without the ultra-Orthodox parties and about half support forming a coalition with the Likud, including Netanyahu.**
- **If a third election is to take place, a clear majority feel that they will vote for the same bloc that they voted for in the last elections.**
- **If the attorney general decides to serve an indictment against Netanyahu, about half of the public feel that he should be brought to trial like any other citizen, and a small minority support a plea bargain.**
- **A decisive majority consider that a continuation of the conflict with the Palestinians harms Israel. Three quarters of the public feel that decision makers in Israel are not doing everything they can to prevent another round of fighting. As such, a large majority supports legislation that will obligate decision makers to develop and deeply examine political alternatives for both routine and emergency periods.**
- **Among the Jewish public, there are signs of a change in support for solutions to the conflict with the Palestinians. Support for maintaining the existing situation is becoming a bit stronger at the expense of support for annexation. Similarly, the percentage of those who think that the solution with the greatest chances of being realized is continuing the existing situation has also grown at the expense of annexation.**

Prof. Ephraim Yaar and Dr. Nimrod Rosler

This month, the peace index naturally begins with questions about forming the coming coalition government. In addition, we asked about the continuing effect of the conflict with the Palestinians on Israel and about the relevant existing and desired policies.



The Political System

The composition of the next government: After Netanyahu did not succeed in forming a coalition in the required time, the Israeli President, Rubi Rivlin, assigned the mandate to Benny Ganz to attempt to form a government. By law, he has 28 days to negotiate. We asked: “Do you want Ganz to succeed in forming a government in the time permitted or not? Among the general public, 54% answered that they want him to succeed while 33% do not want him to succeed, and the others do not know. Among the Jewish public, moderate right-wingers, center supporters and left-wingers expressed a clear majority (52%, 79% and 91%, respectively) of those who want Ganz to succeed. In contrast, only a minority among right-wingers (23%) want him to succeed. Among the Arab public, more than half of the respondents want Ganz to succeed (55%), a small minority do not (17%) and about a quarter (27%) do not know. In summary, a clear majority prefers to have Ganz succeed in forming a government.

We also asked: Assuming that Ganz succeeds in forming a government, what kind of government would you like that to be? The broad distribution of replies indicates great dispersal in the following order: a government with the Likud including Netanyahu and the ultra-Orthodox – 29%; a government with the Likud, but without Netanyahu and without the ultra-Orthodox – 20%; a government of the center, the left and Lieberman which is supported from without by the Arab Joint List – 19%; a government with the Likud including Netanyahu without the ultra-Orthodox – 18%; a government with the Likud but without Netanyahu, with the ultra-Orthodox – 3%. The above were the general results among the Israeli public. As expected, among the Jewish respondents, there is a clear majority of right-wingers who prefer a government with the Likud (Netanyahu and the ultra-Orthodox – 59%). This also reflects the opinion of the moderate right, but by a much smaller percentage (38%). Among centrists, the preferred government is one with the Likud but without Netanyahu and without the ultra-Orthodox (40%) while, among left-wingers, the preferred choice is a center-left government (43%) and a government with the Likud but without Netanyahu and without the ultra-Orthodox (36%). As a backdrop to these findings, it should be added that almost two-thirds of the Jewish public define themselves as “right-wing” (29%) or moderate right (35%) in the political-security realm. Thus, trends arising from the replies among the Jewish public can be summarized as:

1. More than half (56%) prefer a government headed by Ganz and including the Likud and Netanyahu.
2. A similar percentage (53%) prefer a government headed by Ganz but without the ultra-Orthodox parties.

Among the Arab public, there is a clear preference for a center, left and Lieberman government, supported from outside by the Joint List.



We then asked: If no candidate succeeds in forming a government and Israel has a third round of elections, will you vote for the same party you voted for in the last elections or for a different party? A decisive majority (68%) answered that they would vote for the same party, while almost 7% thought that they would vote for a different party from the same bloc. Only 2% intend to vote for a party from a different bloc. In other words, what has been will continue to be. In is interesting to note that, among the Jewish public, a similar percentage of right-wingers, centrists, and left-wingers (74%, 73%, 76% respectively) said that they would vote for the same party, but only 59% of the moderate right answered similarly.

Netanyahu's legal status: As noted above, most of the Jewish public wants Netanyahu to be included in a coalition formed by Ganz if he does succeed in forming one. Against this backdrop, we asked: After Netanyahu's hearing has been completed, if the attorney general decides to issue an indictment against him, in your opinion should or shouldn't he offer Netanyahu plea bargaining in which Netanyahu would resign from all of his political positions and in return, there would be a significant reduction in the seriousness of the indictment? Only a small minority (13%) answered positively while more than half (54%) feel that Netanyahu must stand trial if he is indicted, like any other citizen. In other words, among those who expressed support for the decision of the attorney general, a decisive majority feel that Netanyahu should not be accorded legal shortcuts.

The Israel-Palestinian Conflict

Solutions to the conflict: As we have done in every month this year, we tried to clarify what public positions were regarding the conflict with the Palestinians and what the level of support or opposition was for each of four possible conflict solutions. This month, we will present the measure of change in contrast with the previous index (the August Index), which took place before the elections, among the Jewish public. The measure of support for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside the state of Israel, remained almost without change (41% compared to 39% in the previous index). Support for a binational state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea with full and equal rights for Jews and Palestinians remained low, in comparison, and almost without change from the August index (12% compared to 15%). The percentage of support for continuing the present situation, in contrast, went up in relation to the previous index (36% compared to 27%). The percentage of support for annexation and the establishment of one state under Israeli rule with limited rights for Palestinians fell by about 4.5% (34% compared to 29.5%).

Similar results to this change in direction when compared to the previous index also appeared in answers to the question: Which of these solutions has the best chance of being realized in the near future? The percentage of those who feel that the expected solution is two states remained



identical (19%). In addition, an insignificant percentage considered that the expected solution would be a binational state, remaining similar to the result of the August index (4% in comparison to 3% respectively). However, the percentage of those who believe that the existing situation will continue rose by 8% (56% in comparison to 48% respectively) and the percentage of those who think that there will be annexation fell by a similar rate (11.5% in comparison to 19% respectively).

Among the Arab public there was no change as the preferred solution is still the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside the state of Israel (59%) and following that, a binational state (52%). However, a clear majority of this public believes that the existing situation will continue (62%).

Against the backdrop of the public's positions regarding the possible solutions to the conflict, we presented the following questions:

1. **In your opinion, to what extent does the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians harm or not harm Israel?** The replies indicate that, among the Jewish public, there is almost full agreement (82.5%) that the conflict greatly harms or harms Israel to a certain extent, while only 13% think the opposite. Most of the Arab public (53.5%) also think that the continuing conflict harms Israel, but about a third (35%) believe that the conflict does no harm to Israel.
2. **In your opinion, do decision makers in Israel do everything that they can to prevent the next round of fighting?** Among the Jewish public, 20% replied that they do everything they can, while 54% believe that they make some effort, but not enough and 21% feel that decision makers are not doing anything to prevent the next round. Among the Arab public, only 16% replied that they are doing everything they can, in contrast to 24% who believe that they do not do enough and 46% who feel that they are not doing anything. In other words, a decisive majority in Israel believe that decision makers do not do everything they could to prevent another round of fighting.
3. In light of the fact that the state comptroller and experts knowledgeable about government functioning report that there has not been a fundamental and professional investigation seeking political alternatives that could prevent war, a bill has been proposed, the Political Alternatives First proposal. This provides the background for the question: **Do you support or oppose legislation determining that decision makers will be required to develop and deeply examine political alternatives on a routine basis and during emergencies?** The replies indicate that a great majority (60%) of the Israeli public greatly support such legislation or support it to a certain extent, while only 20%



oppose such legislation and another 20% did not have an opinion. These findings are congruent with the criticism of decision makers, as we have seen in the responses to the previous question.

In addition, we asked whether the Israeli public sees the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as unique. Thus, our question was, **“In comparison to other serious disputes in the world, such as the conflict between Turkey and the Kurds, to what extent do you believe that the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is similar to others or is it unique?”** Most of the public believes that this conflict is different from other difficult conflicts (59%) while about a quarter (23%) saw similarities with other conflicts. The rest (18%) were not able to answer. In keeping with the example that appeared in the previous question, we then asked, **In your opinion, will Trump’s decision not to intervene in the Turkish army invasion of the Kurdish zone have implications for his policy towards Israel?** The most common response (42%) is that Trump’s decision will have no effect. Among the other replies, a quarter consider that his decision will have a negative effect, reducing his obligations to Israel, while only 8% believe that it will have a positive effect, deepening his obligations to Israel. A relatively high percentage (24%) do not know what effect his decision will have.

Finally, in light of the recent events in which soldiers and officers of the IDF were attacked by the “hilltop youth” a number of times from the settlement of Yitzhar in Samaria, we asked: **What is your opinion of the reaction by the security forces to these attacks?** The answer which appeared most often (39%) was that the reaction was too slight, while 9% considered that it was too harsh, a quarter (26%) thought that the reaction was suitable, and an identical percentage did not reply to the question. So the percentage of people who thought that the reaction was too slight was four times greater than those who thought that it was too harsh.

Negotiation Index:

General sample: 45.5 (an increase of 2.9 points from last month)

Jewish sample: 42.5 (an increase of 2.9 points from last month)

The negotiation index is calculated by 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.



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 headed by Mano Geva. The survey was conducted by telephone and internet on 27-28 October 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%.

The diagram of the month: In your opinion, to what extent does the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians harm or not harm Israel?

