

Peace Index, June 2018

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This month, too, the Peace Index survey centered on the clashes between Israel and the Palestinians at the Gaza border. We also looked at the issue of the chances for the peace plan now being hatched at the White House, the question of IDF conscription in general and for haredim in particular, and the decision of the attorney-general to file an indictment against the prime minister's wife Sarah Netanyahu.

Targeting those who launch the incendiary kites and balloons: One of the issues on the agenda this month was whether the IDF should directly target those who are launching the incendiary kites and balloons at Israel. It turns out that a very large majority of the Jewish public is in favor of directly targeting them: 83% think it should be done. A segmentation by political camp shows that on the right 92% are in favor of directly targeting the kite and balloon launchers, in the center 80%, and on the left 43%. In the Arab public the picture is the opposite: 87.5% say they should not be directly targeted.

The IDF's and the government's success in dealing with the conflict along the Gaza border: The data show that a large majority of the Jewish public, but only a minority of the Arab public, gives the IDF a high grade for how it is contending with this ongoing challenge (Jews: excellent 38%, good 38%; Arabs: excellent 7%, good 3%). The government, however, gets low grades on this conflict from both the Jewish and Arab publics (Jews: not so good 36.5%, not good at all 20%; Arabs: not so good 21%, not good at all 59%). The Jewish public assigns the government a low grade across the political spectrum (the rates who think it is not dealing well with the conflict: 80% of the left, 57% of the center, 52% of the right). In other words, the public distinguishes between the tactical treatment of the problem and the policy or lack of policy toward it on the strategic level.

Civilian resolve: As the conflict continues, what do Israelis think about the relative degree of resolve shown by the Jewish residents of the Gaza-belt communities and by the Palestinian residents of Gaza? For the Jewish public the scale tilts in favor of the Jewish Gaza-belt residents:

46.5% think they have shown greater resolve, 23% say the two sides have demonstrated similar resolve, and 16% see the Gaza residents as more resolute. A different picture emerges for the Arab public: 64% estimate the resolve of the Gaza residents as greater, 13% regard both sides as showing similar resolve, while only 9% view the Jewish Gaza-belt residents as more resolute.

Achievements in the conflict on the Gaza border: Which side has garnered more achievements in the ongoing conflict along the Gaza border? It turns out that the public is divided on this question and the picture is rather hazy: 30% of the Jewish interviewees think the Israeli side has won more achievements, 27% that the Palestinian side has won more, and 22.5% see neither side with achievements. Another 8.5% believe the two sides have had similar achievements. A segmentation of the responses to this question by political camps shows that on the left, the highest rate (36.5%) says that the Palestinians have recorded the greater achievements, while on the right and in the center the highest rates see Israel as having scored greater achievements (32% and 31%, respectively). And what does the Arab public think? The highest rate (39%) considers that neither side has achievements to its name. Some 29% see more achievements on the Israeli side, 21% see more on the Palestinian side, while 3% say the two sides have reached the same achievements.

The chances of success for Trump's peace plan: Another issue we explored in the context of Israeli-Palestinian relations was the peace plan that is apparently taking shape in the corridors of the U.S. administration. Full of disappointment over plans that have not succeeded, the Israeli public is very skeptical about this plan's chances of success even before its details are widely known: 71% of the Jews and 85% of the Israeli Arabs see its chances of success as low or very low. A segmentation of the responses by political camp (Jews) showed that in all three camps, a majority of two-thirds or higher views the Trump plan's chances for success as low.

Trump's commitment to Israel and to the Palestinians: Another point of agreement between the Jews and the Arabs concerns President Trump's commitment to safeguarding Israel's interests. Among the Jews, 74% say that Israel's interests are moderately or very important to Trump; 94.5% of the Israeli Arabs think so as well. Only 30% of the Jews and just 3.5% (!) of the Israeli Arabs believe that the Palestinians' interests are moderately or very important to President Trump.

The Palestinian Authority representatives' refusal to meet with the Trump administration representatives: We asked the interviewees to indicate which of two explanations they agree with more: that the Palestinians are refusing to meet with Trump's envoys because they believe he is acting only on behalf of Israel's interests, or that the Palestinians are refusing to meet with Trump's envoys because they are not interested in reaching a peace agreement with Israel. A majority of the Jewish public (58%) agrees more with the second explanation whereas a majority of the Israeli Arab public (78%) agrees more with the first. A segmentation of the Jews' answers to this question by political camp shows that, on the left, the majority (61.5%) thinks the Palestinians object to meeting with Trump's representatives because of their ostensible pro-Israeli bias, while the center (51%) and the right (69%) prefer the explanation that the refusal stems from the Palestinians' lack of desire for peace.

From here we turned to two domestic issues: haredi conscription and the attorney-general's recommendation to put the prime minister's wife, Sarah Netanyahu, on trial.

The IDF as "the people's army": Asked whether the IDF is currently still the people's army, about two-thirds of the Jewish public answered positively. Among the right and the center about 70% say that the IDF is still the people's army today, while on the left only 47% think so. Only 16% of the Arab respondents see this definition of the IDF as fitting the current reality. Asked whether, then, compulsory conscription should continue or instead there should be a shift to the format of a professional army, a very large part of the Jewish public (39%!) thinks or is sure that the compulsory-conscription model should be replaced with a professional-army model (too many in the Arab public replied "Don't know" to allow an analysis of the responses).

Conscription of haredi young people: Despite the decline in the rate of supporters for the compulsory-conscription model, a large majority (70%) of the Jewish public is in favor of drafting haredi young people. Eighty percent of the secular and the traditional favor drafting haredim, 52.5% of the religious, and 11% of the haredim. To get a more in-depth view, we asked: "Although much is said about equalizing the burden, it is well known that many young people do not serve in the IDF because they get an exemption for health or other reasons. In light

of this, to what extent is it important or not important to fight to ensure that haredi young people are inducted into the army?" Here too we came up with a majority (66%) of the Jewish public who see the struggle for haredi conscription as important or very important despite the fact that many non-haredim, too, do not serve.

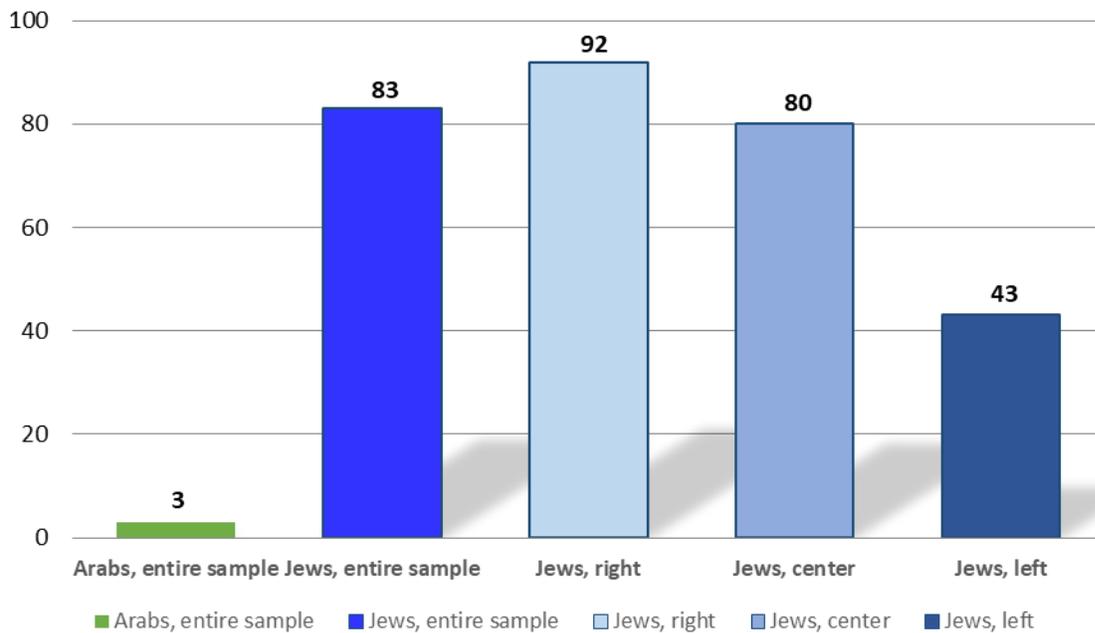
The model of conscription for haredim: We presented the interviewees with three possibilities for drafting young haredim. The first is to leave the present situation as it stands- that is, the large majority of haredim are not drafted into the IDF and only a small minority are drafted. The second possibility is that a small number of young haredim who excel at Torah studies will remain in the yeshivas while all the rest are drafted into the IDF at age 23 after they have completed their studies. The third possibility we presented was that a small number of young haredim who excel at Torah studies will stay in the yeshivas while all the other yeshiva students will be drafted at age 18. The last possibility received by far the largest support in the Jewish public (45%). The second possibility garnered the support of 23% of the respondents, while support for the first one came to 18.5%. In other words, the Israeli Jewish public is not happy with the existing situation when it comes to drafting haredim. A segmentation of the responses by political camp revealed a majority that favors the third possibility in the center and on the left (61% and 69%, respectively), while on the right 39% of the respondents favor this possibility and the rest are almost evenly split between the first two possibilities. A segmentation by religious self-definition revealed that the solution of leaving the situation as it is-with the large majority of haredim not being drafted and only a minority being drafted into haredi units-was supported by 7% of the secular, 14% of the traditional, 36% of the religious, and 66% of the haredim.

The attorney-general's decision to file an indictment against Sarah Netanyahu: In the Jewish public 42% think it was a proper decision while only a slightly smaller rate (37%) sees it as part of the political persecution of the prime minister and his family. In the Arab public a large majority (74%) thinks it was a proper decision. A segmentation of the Jews' responses by political camp reveals that a majority on the left and in the center views the decision as proper (89% and 62%) while on the right only 28% see it that way; about another one-fourth of the right (24%) chose "Don't know" as their answer.

Did Prime Minister Netanyahu know or not know? Half of the Jewish public believes that the prime minister knew about the illicit ordering of the meals to his house, compared to only 32% who believe he did not know about it (on the left 11% think Netanyahu did not know, in the center 19%, and on the right 42%; that is, in all three camps only a minority thinks the prime minister did not know). In the Arab public a large majority (77%) believes that the prime minister knew the orders were being made in contravention of the rules.

Negotiations Index: 40.9 (Jews 39.1)

Diagram of the month: Do you agree or disagree with the claim that the IDF should directly target those who are launching the incendiary kites and balloons from Gaza? (Percentage who are sure it should or think it should- Arabs; Jews by political camp)



The Peace Index is a project of the Evens Program for Mediation and Conflict Resolution at Tel Aviv University and the Guttman Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research of the Israel Democracy Institute. This month's survey was conducted by telephone and internet on June 26-28, 2018, by the Midgam Research Institute. 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. <http://www.peaceindex.org>