

## Peace Index, September 2017

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The September Peace Index survey focused on three issues: the public's personal mood, view of the state of the country at present, and expectations about the new year in various spheres: the public's degree of trust in major institutions and personalities in the country; and the closeness or distance between different sectors of Israeli society.

**Personal mood at the start of the new year:** As the old year ends and the new one begins, the personal mood of a large majority of the Jewish population (87%) is very good or moderately good. Here only small differences were found between the responses according to the age, degree of religiosity, or political stance of the Jewish interviewees in the survey. In the Arab population a clear majority, though smaller (70%) also defines their personal mood positively at this time.

**Israel's general situation:** On this question, too, the tendency is positive though less than on the personal level. Among the Jewish population, 45% see the general situation today as very good or moderately good, 38% as "so-so," and only 15% view it as poor or very poor. A comparison to the findings from last year shows that the assessments have remained the same, with a certain decline in the rate of those defining the general situation as poor (from 19% to 15%).

On this question significant differences emerged between the political camps. On the "hard" right and on the moderate right, a majority defines the country's situation as good or moderately good. In the center and on the moderate left, the largest proportion defines it as "so-so," while on the "hard" left the majority defines the situation as moderately poor or very poor. Similar to the corresponding finding in the 2017 Democracy Index Survey, the Arab population's overall assessment of the state of the country is indeed slightly more positive than that of the Jewish population as a whole.

**What does the future hold for us?:** In the Jewish public, the majority (54%) believes that the situation will remain more or less the same this year as in the year that has passed, with the rest divided between those who think it will be much or a little better (28%) and those who think it

will worsen (13%). In other words, the rate of optimists is more than double the rate of pessimists, and that too is very similar to the findings for last year. Again, in the Arab public the outlook for the coming year is *more* optimistic than in the Jewish public.

As for expectations about the situation in specific domains regarding the year that is now beginning compared to last year, the majority likewise thinks things will remain as they are. Among those who believe the situation will change, however, there are considerable disparities between the rates of optimists and pessimists. The rate of optimists exceeds that of pessimists in the military-security domain (28.5% vs. 12%) and in the political-diplomatic domain (20% vs. 18%). However, in the socioeconomic domain the rate of optimists is lower than the rate of pessimists (19% vs. 25%). A similar pattern, but with larger gaps, emerges in the domain of the disagreements and rifts between different parts of the population, with only 11% believing that the situation will improve compared to 37% who expect it to get worse.

**Willingness to give to the country in the past and today:** We asked the interviewees to express agreement or disagreement with the claim that “Once the Israelis were prepared to give the country much more than they are prepared to give now” A large majority (61%) of the Jewish public agreed with the claim while 34.5% disagreed. The rate of those agreeing with this statement is considerably higher on the left than on the right, though there too a majority agrees. As for the Arab public, the rate of those who did not answer this question (24%) prevents us from drawing any conclusion.

**The state’s concern for the disadvantaged then and now:** And what is the public’s opinion about the state’s degree of concern for the disadvantaged groups in the past and the present? A majority (52%) of the Jewish public disagrees with the claim that the state of Israel used to look out for the disadvantaged groups more than it does today. A segmentation of the responses by political camp shows that among those locating themselves on the right, over 60% disagree with that assertion, while among those locating themselves on the left a majority, though slightly smaller, agrees with it. In the Arab public as well, a majority (54%) agrees that in the past the country took better care of the disadvantaged, perhaps influenced by positive memories of the



between the ranking of the groups on the two scales of belonging. In two cases of groups with a similar characteristic—immigrants from the former Soviet Union and immigrants from Ethiopia—the Jewish public’s assessment is that these groups are viewed by others as part of Israeli society more than they think so themselves. As for left-wing voters and haredim, the picture is the reverse: according to the survey responses, the assessment is that they consider themselves part of Israeli society more than others see them as belonging to it.

Interestingly, the rate of Arabs who say that their group feels part of Israeli society is more than double the corresponding rate in the Jewish public (34.5% vs. 13%). However, the Arab respondents are realistic about the attitude toward them: only 21% think their group is perceived by the Jewish public as part of the society (the rate that see them as part of it according to the Jewish respondents is 14%). For the haredim the dissonance is even greater than for the Arabs: whereas 61% of them claim that their group feels itself to be part of the Israeli whole, only 35% of the entire Jewish sample see it that way. Moreover, whereas 42% of the haredi respondents think that the whole sees them as part of Israeli society, only 30% of the entire Jewish sample believes that to be the case. In any case, the conclusion that emerges is that in Israeli society at present, there is a clear, and not egalitarian, hierarchy of belonging.

