

[Peace Index](#) – Tel Aviv University

A longitudinal research project which uses monthly surveys of Jews and Palestinians to measure trends on their feelings toward each other and the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Is Conflict Religious?

In 2011, found this:

Among the possibilities, what in your opinion is the main description that describes the current conflict between Israel and the Palestinians? (Peace Index, June 2011)

	General Public	Jews	Arabs
Mainly a political conflict	13.7%	13.0%	17.8%
Mainly a religious conflict	13.0%	14.1%	6.7%
Mainly a territorial conflict	22.4%	20.1%	35.6%
All three to the same extent	45.1%	47.4%	32.2%
None of them	2.6%	1.9%	6.7%
Don't know/Refused to answer	3.2%	3.5%	1.1%

Is Two-state solution dead? (See Palestinian polls too)

From September, 2015

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement that the idea of two states for two peoples is dead?

	% Jews	% Arabs	% General Public
Strongly agree	22.8	34.3	24.7
Moderately agree	23.3	22.8	23.2
Don't agree so much	29.4	10.6	26.3
Don't agree at all	20.6	24.5	21.3
Don't know/Decline to answer	3.9	7.7	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Tension between wanting peace and not believing it's possible

From January, 2016

1. What is your position on conducting peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority?

	% Jews	% Arabs	% General Public
Strongly in favor	26.3	59.6	31.8
Moderately in favor	30.6	27.1	30.0
Moderately opposed	19.7	1.0	16.5
Strongly opposed	19.0	2.9	16.3
Don't know/Decline to answer	4.5	9.4	5.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

2. Do you believe or not believe that negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority will lead in the coming years to peace between Israel and the Palestinians?

	% Jews	% Arabs	% General Public
Strongly believe	5.2	10.4	6.1
Moderately believe	20.5	35.2	23.0
Moderately do not believe	27.7	14.6	25.5
Do not believe at all	43.3	36.6	42.2
Don't know/Decline to answer	3.3	3.3	3.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

ISIS

An overwhelming majority of 88% believes that ISIS is a radical group that does not represent true Islam and 7% believe it does represent true Islam. 5% are not sure or do not know. In the Gaza Strip, 10% (compared to 5% in the West Bank) say ISIS represents true Islam. 77% support and 20% oppose the war waged by Arab and Western countries against ISIS.

Stabbing Attacks

We also asked the public in an open-ended question about the motivation of the little school girls who participate in stabbing attacks: 41% said they believe they are driven by national motivation; 26% said the motivation was personal; and 16% said the motivation was religious. 11% said it was a combination of national and religious motivations.

Religious fears

An overwhelming majority believes that al Haram al Sharif is in grave danger: 51% believe that Israel intends to destroy al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock and replace them with a Jewish temple; 17% believe that it intends to divide the plateau on which the two mosques sit so that Jews would have a synagogue alongside the Muslim holy places; and 9% believe that Israel intends to change the status quo prevailing in the plateau since 1967 by allowing Jews to pray there. Only 11% believe that Israel is interested in maintaining the status quo without change.

Peace Process and two-state solution:

- In the absence of negotiations, 60% support return to an armed intifada and an identical percentage supports peaceful popular resistance.
- Support for a two-state solution continues to decline, standing today at 45%.
- 65% believe the two state solution is no longer practical due to settlement construction and 75% believe that the chances for the creation of a Palestinian state during the next five years are slim to non-existent.

16 Poll No. 200

Nov

The latest poll on the Palestinian public opinion, prepared by Dr. Nabil Kukali, revealed the following key results:

- (62.3%) of the Palestinian public oppose the resumption of the peace negotiations with Israel.
- (68.5%) oppose the Russian intervention in Syria.
- (43.5%) are optimistic about the perspective of an eventual reconciliation between the two major movements, Fatah and Hamas.
- (58.9%) are to various degrees discontent with the performance of the PA-president Mahmoud Abbas.
- (50.1%) are of the opinion that the media coverage in the Palestinian Territories is not inflated.
- (50.4%) are in favor of an outbreak of a third uprising (Intifada).
- (42.1%) are in favor of a violent uprising, whilst (29.9%) favor, however, a peaceful, popular uprising.
- (47.8%) call for the resignation of the President Mahmoud Abbas.

27 Poll No. 199

Jul

The latest poll on the Palestinian public opinion, prepared by Dr. Nabil Kukali, revealed the following key results:

- (37.7%) of the Palestinians support the two-state solution, while (19.6 %) support the one-state solution.
- (48.3%) are to various extents content with the performance of the Palestinian president, Mr. Mahmoud Abbas.

Religion & Creation of State?

- Theodore Herzl in 1897 – cultural, national, not religious
- Though, to be fair, there had been contemporary aspirations & movements based on religious & situational motivations, including Hovevei Zion, some twenty years before (Montifore using Tuoro's will money). Though this too was primarily agricultural-based on the surface.

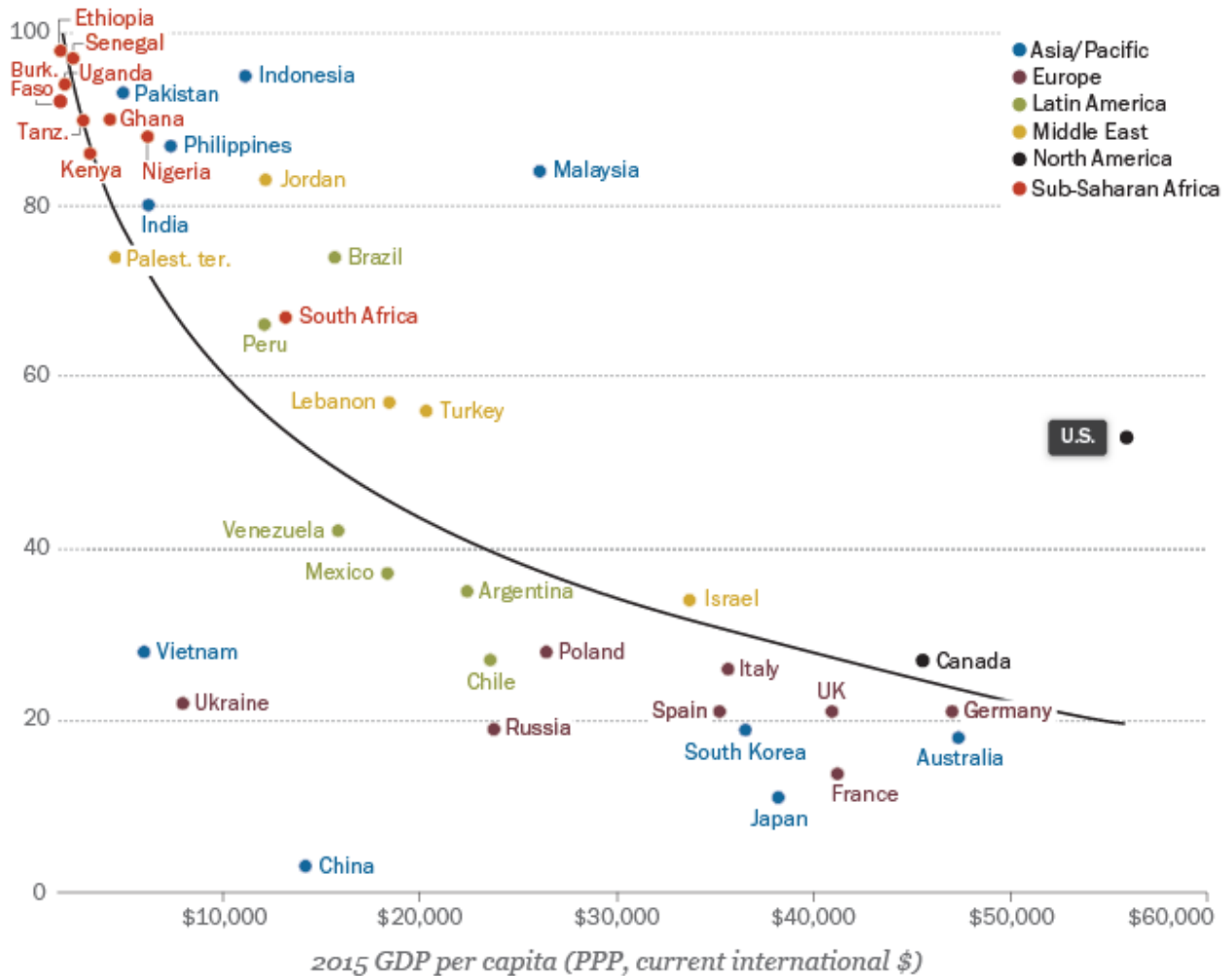
Contemporary Zionism which led to the nation-state of Israel today was founded primarily on nationalist, not religious, aspirations borne out of anti-Semitism & persecution, though to be sure spiritual aspirations were tied up in the idea of Israel being the location for movement. Though this was NOT about fulfilling mitzvot. It was about creating settlements of Jewish autonomy in Jews' ancient land.

Argument: religiosity of Americans are responsible for conflict

[Study from Pew](#) shows US to be wild outlier amongst Western nations and on wealth/poverty expectation curve:

Generally, poorer nations tend to be religious; wealthy less so, except for U.S.

% who say religion is very important in their lives



Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Data for GDP per capita (PPP) from IMF World Economic Outlook Database, October 2015, accessed Oct. 29, 2015. Data for Palestinian territories GDP per capita (PPP) is for West Bank and Gaza from World Bank, 2014, accessed Oct. 29, 2015.

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Interestingly, Palestinians are slightly below curve based on expectations, and Israelis slightly above.

[Anshel Pfeffer](#) vs. [Noam Shiezf](#) on role of religion in conflict

Religion having disproportionate influence in Israeli politics

Likud party formed the coalition with [the Jewish Home](#), [United Torah Judaism](#), [Kulanu](#), and [Shas](#), with the bare minimum 61 seats.

← 2013	17 March 2015	Next →		
Turnout	72%			
Party	Leader	%	Seats	+/-
Likud	Benjamin Netanyahu	23.40%	30	+12
Zionist Union	Isaac Herzog	18.67%	24	+3
Joint List	Ayman Odeh	10.54%	13	+2
Yesh Atid	Yair Lapid	8.81%	11	-8
Kulanu	Moshe Kahlon	7.49%	10	New
The Jewish Home	Naftali Bennett	6.74%	8	-4
Shas	Aryeh Deri	5.73%	7	-4
Yisrael Beiteinu	Avigdor Lieberman	5.11%	6	-7
United Torah Judaism	Yaakov Litzman	5.03%	6	-1
Meretz	Zehava Gal-On	3.93%	5	-1

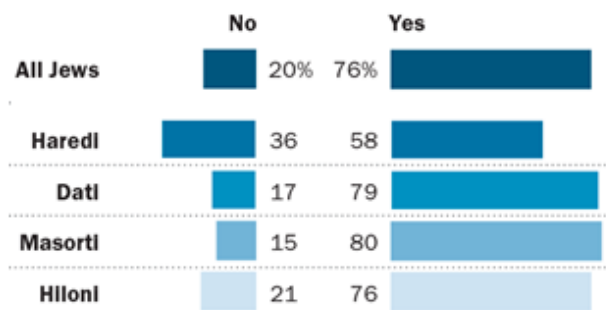
Pew Israel Society Study

Jews think Democracy Should Trump Jewish Law, but Jews should be preferred...

Exhibit A: Democracy over Judaism

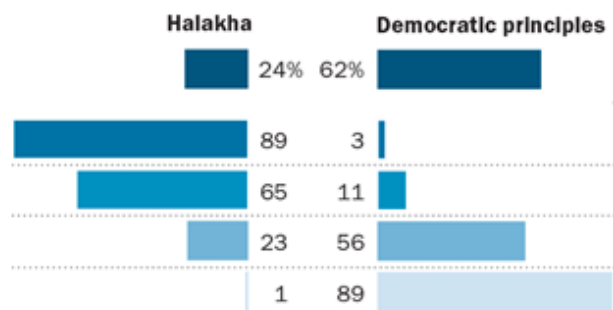
Israeli Jews see democracy as compatible with Jewish state ...

% of Israeli Jews who say Israel can be both a democracy and a Jewish state



... but are divided on whether democratic principles or religious law should take priority

% of Israeli Jews who say ... should be given preference if there is a contradiction between the two



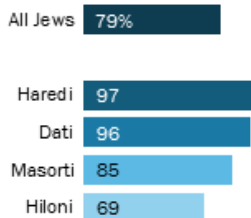
Source: Survey conducted October 2014-May 2015. Neither/Both/Don't know/refused responses not shown.

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Exhibit B: Jews should get preferential treatment

Most Jews say Israel should give preferential treatment to Jews

% of Israeli Jews who agree/strongly agree that Jews deserve preferential treatment in Israel

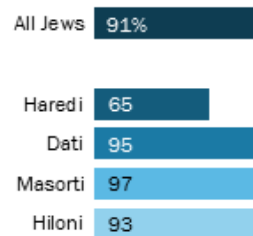


Source: Survey conducted October 2014-May 2015.

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Most Jews say Israel necessary for long-term survival of the Jewish people

% of Israeli Jews who say a Jewish state is necessary for long-term survival of the Jewish people



Source: Survey conducted October 2014-May 2015.

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Arabs (Christian/Muslim): Democracy should trump Jewish Law, but ...

The survey shows that Israeli Arabs generally do *not* think Israel can be a Jewish state and a democracy at the same time. This view is expressed by majorities of Muslims, Christians and Druze. And overwhelmingly, all three of these groups say that if there is a conflict between Jewish law and democracy, democracy should take precedence.

But this does not mean most Arabs in Israel are committed secularists. In fact, many Muslims and Christians support the application of their own religious law to their communities. Fully 58% of Muslims favor enshrining sharia as official law for Muslims in Israel, and 55% of Christians favor making the Bible the law of the land for Christians.

- 1) Existential fears as precipitating factor
- 2) US religiosity