

## Peace Index - August 2011

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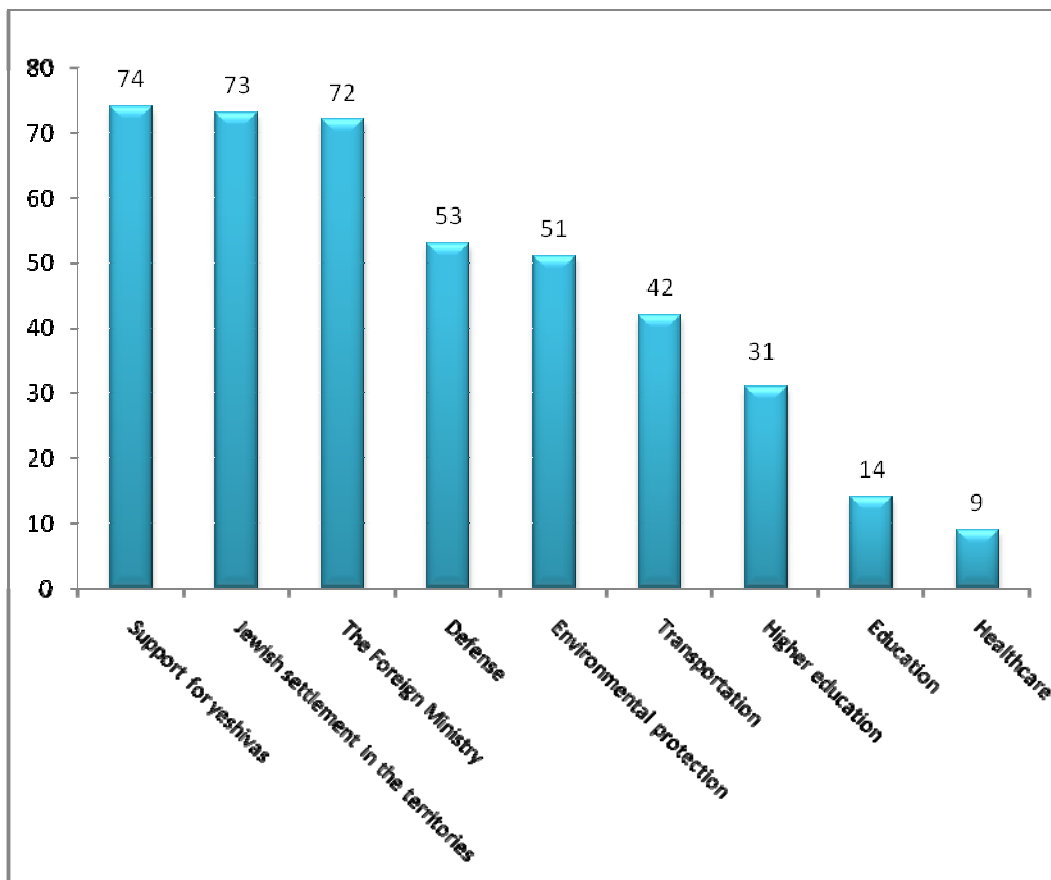
### Summary of the Findings

- **Will they ask for recognition?** Again we see a rise in the rate of those who think the chances are high that in the near future, the Palestinians will declare an independent state based on the 1967 borders even without an agreement with Israel, and will ask the UN General Assembly to recognize it: about two-thirds of respondents (all the data in this column refer to the Jewish public only) hold this position today, similar to the rate we measured in May (64%) and more than the number who held this view in June (58%) and July (53%)
- **Will there be a majority?** A similar trend was found on the question of whether there will be a large majority of states in the General Assembly that recognizes the Palestinian state. In June and July, 67% and 64% held this view respectively, while today 70% expect that there will be a majority, only slightly less than the rate found in May (75%).
- **Will Israel also have to recognize the Palestinian state?** The public is divided on the question of whether Israel can allow itself to refrain from recognizing the Palestinian state if such a state is declared and is recognized by the United Nations: a small majority (51%) believes Israel can allow itself to refrain from recognizing the state, while 43% say it cannot. The rate of those who think Israel can allow itself not to recognize the Palestinian state has declined since May, when it was 58%.
- **Do you support the socioeconomic protest?** About two months after the start of the socioeconomic protest, it continues to enjoy wide support (about 80%), though less than it did in July (91%).
- **Should a security threat put an end to the protest?** Despite the grave security incidents in the Negev, the majority (77%) supports the contention that even in situations of a security threat, protests of this kind are acceptable, because otherwise the socioeconomic issue will remain neglected. Only 20% currently support the counterclaim that in situations of security tension, socioeconomic protests are out of place.
- **Should budgets be transferred for funding welfare and reducing gaps?** Seventy-eight percent of respondents support the demand to transfer monies from the state budget to welfare and to reducing socioeconomic gaps (with 17% opposed). Likewise, when presented with a choice between stability and economic growth, on the one hand, and reducing socioeconomic gaps, on the other, the majority (63%) chooses the second goal and only a minority of 27% favors the first.

- Which areas to cut and which not to cut?** Out of nine areas of the state budget, the top “candidates for a cut” in the eyes of those who support transferring funds in order to support welfare and reduce socioeconomic gaps are: funding for yeshiva students (74% of respondents favor a cut), budgets for Jewish settlement in the territories (73% favor a cut), and budgets for the Foreign Ministry (72% favor a cut). Coming in considerably behind them are Defense Ministry budgets (supporters of a cut—53%) and environmental-protection budgets (supporters—51%). Conversely, among those who support transferring budgets for welfare and for reducing the gaps in principle, a majority opposes cuts in the budgets of: healthcare (89%), education (85%), higher education (68%), and development and transportation (55%). These findings may indicate that the national priorities as seen by the public (of which only one-fifth identify themselves as politically left-wing) is not identical to the government’s priorities as reflected in the state budget.

**Graph of the Month:**

**Percentage of supporters of a transfer of funds from the following budgets to the funding of welfare and reduction of socioeconomic gaps (among those who support budgetary transfers in principle):**



## The Findings in Detail

At the time of writing this column, the Palestinians are still saying that they will soon declare their independence and request UN recognition of an independent Palestinian state. Despite all the uncertainty over the declaration—whether it will happen, how the Palestinians will formulate the document they submit to the United Nations if they do—we again see a rise in the rate of those who think the chances are high that in the near future the Palestinians will declare an independent state based on the 1967 borders even without an agreement with Israel, and will ask the UN General Assembly to recognize it: about two-thirds of the respondents (all the data in this column refer to the Jewish public only) hold this position today, similar to the rate we measured in May (64%) and more than the number who held this view in June (58%) and July (53%).

A similar trend was found on the question of whether there will be a large majority of countries in the General Assembly that will recognize the Palestinian state. In June and July, 67% and 64% held this view respectively, while today 70% foresee a majority, only slightly less than the rate in May (75%). In this context, we also tried to gauge the Israeli public's view of the degree of friendliness of different European countries toward Israel. We presented respondents with five countries: Germany, Italy, France, Spain, and Norway. It turns out that the Israeli public sees Germany as the most friendly, with 60% defining it as friendly or very friendly. After Germany, the results in descending order are: Italy 52%, France 32%, and Spain 24%. At the bottom of the scale of friendliness toward Israel, in the eyes of the public, comes Norway, with only 15% of respondents defining that country as friendly.

The public is divided on the question of whether Israel can allow itself to refrain from recognizing the Palestinian state in the event that such a state is declared and is recognized by the United Nations: a small majority (51%) believes Israel can allow itself to refrain from recognizing the state, while 43% say it cannot. The rate of those who think Israel can allow itself not to recognize the Palestinian state has declined since May, when it was 58%.

On domestic issues, about two months after it began, the socioeconomic protest continues to enjoy wide support (about 80%), though less than it did in July (91%). A segmentation by political self-definition on the right-left spectrum shows that in all political camps, a large majority supports the protest, although the degree of support is lower among those who define themselves as right-wing—75%—as compared to 86% of those who define themselves as in the center and 93.5% of those who position themselves on the left. (Note that 52% of respondents defined themselves as right-wing, 26% as centrist, and only 14% as left-wing; the rest said that they did not know or refused to answer the question on their

place on the political spectrum.) A segmentation by education yields the very interesting finding that support for the protest declines as education rises: among those with less than a full high school education, the rate of supporters is 95.5%; among those who have completed high school, the rate of support is 90%; among those with partial academic education, the rate of support is 81%, and the rate of support among respondents with a full academic education is only 74%. A segmentation of support for the protest by income did not produce systematic findings.

It is often asked, and this question has been asked more frequently lately, whether a security threat should put an end to socioeconomic protest. Despite the grave security incidents in the Negev, the majority (77%) of the Jewish public supports the contention that even in situations of a security threat, protests of this kind are acceptable, because otherwise the socioeconomic issue will remain neglected. Only 20% of respondents currently support the counterclaim that in times of security tension, socioeconomic protests are out of place. A segmentation of the positions on this question by right-left self-identification indicates that support for the claim that protest is legitimate when the security situation is tense increases with movement to the left, although this is the more prevalent opinion across all the camps. Among those defining themselves as right-wing, 73% support the claim that socioeconomic protest is appropriate even in times of security threats, compared to 80% of those in the center and 91% of those on the left. The groups with the highest level of education— full academic education and partial academic education—agree more with the position that sees protest as appropriate during a time of security threat than groups with full or partial high school education: 79%, 80%, 75%, and 68% respectively. This also holds true for respondents with higher income as compared to respondents with lower income: support among respondents with income that is much higher than average is 84.5%, support among respondents with somewhat higher than average income is 82%, support among respondents with somewhat lower than average income is 77%, and support among respondents with much lower than average income is 72%.

Among their demands, the protesters were most vocal about transferring funds from various items of the state budget to welfare and the reduction of socioeconomic gaps. Of the entire Jewish public, 78% support the demand to transfer monies from the state budget to promoting welfare and reducing gaps (with 17% opposed). A segmentation by right-left political self-definition indicates a solid majority of support for a budgetary transfer in all the political camps, although it is a bit smaller on the right than in the center and on the left: 77%, 81%, and 87% respectively.

Likewise, when presented with a choice between stability and economic growth, on the one hand, and reducing socioeconomic gaps on the other, the majority (63%) favors the

second goal, and only a minority of 27% favors the first. Not surprisingly, here too there are disparities according to right-left political self-definition, although these differences are not linear: on the right, 61% favored the goal of reducing the gaps; in the center, 58% favored the reduction of gaps, and on the left, 72% favored the reduction of gaps. A segmentation by income revealed a result that is rather expected: respondents with the highest incomes are less enthusiastic about the idea of reducing gaps rather than fostering growth and economic stability than respondents with the lowest incomes, although in all the groups, a majority supports the goal of reducing socioeconomic gaps: those with incomes much lower than average—64%, somewhat lower than average—67%, somewhat higher than average—61%, and much higher than average—60% .

If budgets are to be cut, which areas should be cut and which not? Out of nine areas of the state budget, the leading “candidates for a cut” in the eyes of those who support transferring funds to support welfare and reduce gaps are: funding of yeshiva students (74% support a cut), budgets for Jewish settlement in the territories (73% support a cut), and budgets for the Foreign Ministry (72% support a cut). Coming in considerably behind them are Defense Ministry budgets (53% support a cut) and environmental protection budgets (51% support a cut). Conversely, among those who support transferring budgets to welfare and the reduction of gaps in principle, a majority opposes cuts in the budgets of healthcare (89%), education (85%), higher education (68%), and development and transportation (55%). As summed up in the table below, a segmentation of the positions on transferring funds from each of these budgets according to political self-definition reveals very large disparities between the camps, particularly when it comes to budgets for defense, higher education, and the environmental protection authorities, where the right-wing and left-wing majorities and minorities are the opposites of each other.

**Table: Percentage of supporters of a transfer of funds from each of the following budgets to the funding of welfare and reduction of socioeconomic gaps by self-definition on the right-left spectrum (among those who support such budgetary transfers in principle)**

	<b>Right</b>	<b>Center</b>	<b>Left</b>
Defense budgets	45%	55%	78%
Budgets for Jewish settlement in the territories	63%	76%	97%
Education budgets	16%	11%	7.5%
Health budgets	11%	9%	1.5%
Budgets for support of yeshiva students	68%	78%	85%
Budgets for higher-education institutions	70%	41%	35%

Foreign Ministry budgets	79%	64%	67%
Budgets for development and transportation	48%	39%	25%
Budgets for the environmental-protection authorities	56%	49%	32%

Despite the disparities between the different political camps, these findings may indicate that the national priorities as seen by the public (of which only about one-fifth identify themselves as politically left-wing) is not identical to the government's priorities as reflected in the state budget.

**Negotiation Index: Jewish sample: 49.8**

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*The Peace Index is a project of the [Evans Program for Conflict Resolution](#) at Tel Aviv University and [the Israel Democracy Institute](#). This month's survey was conducted by telephone on August 23-24, 2011 by the Dahaf Institute. The survey included 613 respondents, who constitute a representative sample of the adult Jewish population of Israel. The measurement error for a sample of this size is 4.5%; statistical processing was done by Ms. Yasmin Alkalay.*