

Peace Index - October 2011

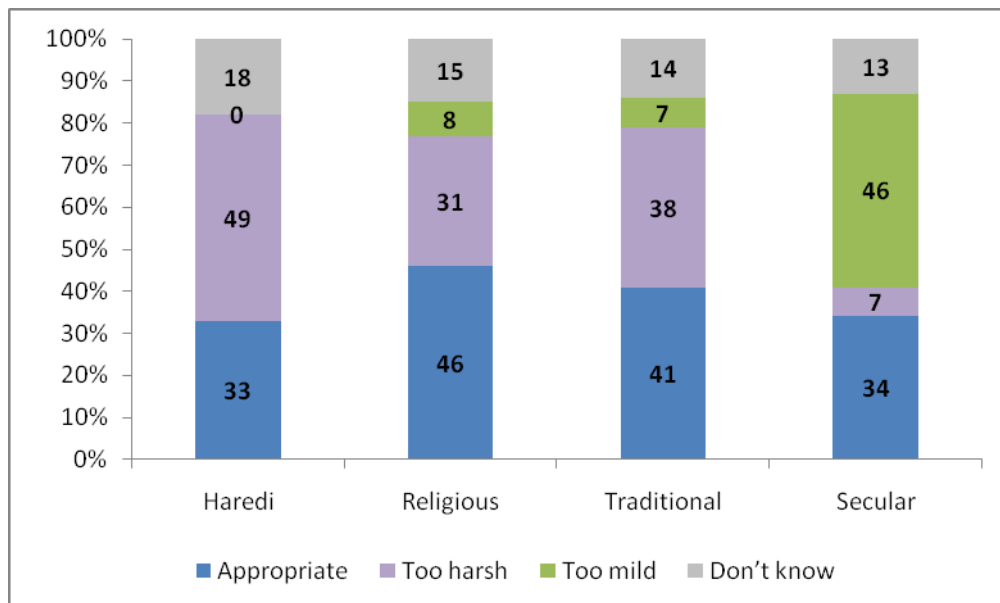
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Summary of the Findings

- **The Shalit deal—a smart move?** Even after the Shalit swap was carried out and after the attendant public debate, an overwhelming majority of the Jewish and Arab public (78%) thinks the exchange was the right thing to do. And despite the assessments of various experts, 60% of the Jews and half of the Arabs think the deal has not weakened Israel's deterrence. In the same spirit, a majority (70% of the Jews and 54% of the Arabs) sees no connection between the increased fire from Gaza and the Shalit deal. Even among those who do think the deal weakened Israel, a majority supports the deal; not surprisingly, however, this majority is smaller than the majority among those who do not believe the deal weakened Israel (57% compared to 91% of the Jewish public). A similar pattern was found in response to a question on the link between the deal and increased fire from Gaza.
- **Should Israel respond to the stepped-up fire from Gaza?** About two-thirds of the Jewish public favors a very strong response, including a wide-scale military operation. A segmentation of respondents by self-definition in terms of right-left political affiliation shows that 79% of respondents on the right support a military response, 62% in the center, and only 26% on the left. Yet, at the same time, a majority (54%) says Israel's restraint is justified so as not to endanger the fragile relationship with Egypt. Of those justifying restraint for this reason, 43% are on the right, 65% are in the center, and 73% are on the left. In the Arab public, the large majority (73%) opposes a harsh military response, with 54% basing this position on the desire to avoid damage to relations with Egypt.
- **Price tag?** A very large majority of the Jewish public (88%), which crosses political camps, opposes retaliatory "price tag" actions against Palestinians. As expected, the opposition to price tag actions against the IDF is even greater (93.5%). Still, it should be noted that 9% of respondents openly express support for such actions against the Palestinians and 3% even express support for such actions against the Israeli army. The Jewish public is, however, divided on how the security forces and enforcement authorities have responded to such actions: the highest rate (38%) sees the response as appropriate, 35% as too mild, and 13% as too harsh. A segmentation by the degree of religiosity of the respondents, however, reveals significant disparities: among those defining themselves as haredi, the highest rate (49%) thinks the response is too harsh; among the religious and the traditional, the highest rate (46% and 41%, respectively) views the response as appropriate, while the most common answer among secular respondents (46%) is that the response of the authorities is too mild.

- Should female and male soldiers in the IDF be segregated?** Two-thirds of the Jewish public opposes holding separate events for female and male soldiers in the IDF. Not surprisingly, there is a strong connection between such opposition and degree of religiosity: among the ultra-Orthodox—0% oppose this proposal, among religious—47.5% oppose, among traditional—67% oppose, and among secular—81% oppose. At the same time, the public as a whole is evenly split (45%-45%) on whether female soldiers should be kept out of units of haredi soldiers so as to enable ultra-Orthodox soldiers to serve in the IDF. This indicates that positions on the issue of gender segregation depend on its purpose; opposition to gender separation declines if the separation is intended to encourage haredi enlistment.
- And what about the social protest?** A large majority (75% of the Jewish public and 82% of the Arab public) favors continuing the social protest. A small majority of the Jewish public (54%) and a large minority of the Arab public (40%) think that the social protest has not scored any significant achievements so far. But even among those who hold this view, the large majority wants the protest to continue.

Graph of the week: Assessing the response of Israeli authorities to "price-tag" actions (by religiosity)



The Findings in Detail

In recent years, an almost constant majority of over three-quarters supported a deal for Gilad Shalit even if it meant freeing a large number of Palestinian prisoners. The voices against such a deal were few and the media gave them little space. In a certain sense, the situation changed once the deal had been carried out; at that point, the various media gave experts and other opponents a chance to speak their minds, and the pro-and-con debate heated up after the fact. Yet, on the level of public opinion, even after the deal, and despite the recent rocket attacks, an overwhelming majority of the Jewish and Arab public (78%) still thinks it was the right move. Interestingly, the rate of support for the deal is lowest among the haredi public, though here too the majority is in favor of the deal: among haredi respondents—64% favor the exchange, among religious and traditional Jews—80%, and among secular—78%. A segmentation of respondents by their self-definition on the right-left political spectrum revealed a considerable majority supporting the deal in all the camps, though with disparities: on the right—71% support the deal, in the center—83%, and on the left—89%.

Again, in contrast to the assessments of various experts, 60% of the Jews and half of the Arabs believe that the deal did not weaken Israel's deterrence. In the same spirit, a majority (70% of the Jews and 54% of the Arabs) sees no connection between the increased fire from Gaza and the Shalit deal. Even among those who do think the deal weakened Israel, a majority supports it; however, not surprisingly, this majority is smaller than the majority among those who do not believe the deal weakened Israel (57% compared to 91% of the Jewish public). A similar pattern was found on the question of the link between the deal and the increased fire from Gaza. As for how the Shalit deal affected Israel's deterrence, a segmentation by political camps shows a very large group on the right—47%—who say the deal weakened Israel, compared to 33% in the center and 20% on the left. As for whether the deal encouraged the increased fire from Gaza, here too there were political gaps: while the majority in all the camps does not think the deal led to increased fire from Gaza, the rates differ. One-third of the right thinks the deal encouraged the increased fire and one-quarter of the center, while on the left only 13% see such an effect .

The intensified fire from Gaza again raised the issue of the appropriate Israeli response. On this issue, the Israeli Jewish public turns out to be very hawkish: about two-thirds favor responding with great severity, including a wide-scale military operation. A segmentation by self-definition on the right-left political spectrum shows a majority for such a move on the right (79%) and in the center (62%), but not on the left, where only 26% support a major military campaign. Yet, at the same time, a majority (54%) says

Israel's restraint is justified so as not to endanger the fragile relationship with Egypt. The rates of those justifying restraint for this reason are 43% on the right, 65% in the center, and 73% on the left. In the Arab public, the large majority (73%) opposes a harsh military response, with 54% basing this desire on not wanting to damage relations with Egypt. Lately there has been a spike in retaliatory "price-tag" actions by settler groups against Palestinians, Israeli Arabs, and even against IDF soldiers and military property. This month's survey reveals that a very large majority of the Jewish public (88%)—across political camps—opposes price-tag actions against Palestinians. Not surprisingly, the opposition to price-tag actions against the IDF is even greater (93.5%). Still, it should not be ignored that 9% of respondents openly expressed support for actions against Palestinians and 3% even for actions against the Israeli army. The highest rate of support for price-tag actions (9.5%) was found among haredi respondents .

The Jewish public is, however, divided on how the security forces and enforcement authorities have responded to such actions: the highest rate (38%) sees the response as appropriate, 35% as too mild, and 13% as too harsh. A segmentation by the degree of religiosity of respondents, however, turns up significant disparities: among those defining themselves as haredi, the highest rate (49%) thinks the response is too harsh; among the religious and the traditional, the highest rate (46% and 41%, respectively) views the response as appropriate, while the most common answer among secular respondents (46%) is that the response of the authorities is too mild. A segmentation by political position shows that, on the right, 18% see the response as too harsh, in the center—8.5%, and on the left—5%. The response of the authorities is considered too mild by 23% on the right, 45% in the center, and 66% on the left .

Recently the issue of gender separation in the army has been in the headlines. Male and female soldiers were separated for Simchat Torah celebrations, and religious soldiers walked out of events in which women's singing could be heard. It turns out that such separations do not reflect a taboo among the Jewish public: two-thirds oppose holding separate events for female and male soldiers, though one-third justify it. Not surprisingly, there is a strong correlation between the degree of religiosity of respondents and opposition or support for segregation: among the ultra-Orthodox—0% oppose separation, among the religious—47.5%, among traditional Jews—67%, and among secular respondents—81%. At the same time, however, the public as a whole is evenly split (45%-45%) on whether female soldiers should be kept out of units of haredi soldiers so as to enable ultra-Orthodox Jews to serve in the IDF. One hundred percent of the haredim favor separation under such circumstances, 47.5% of religious respondents, and 30% of the traditional and secular. This indicates that positions on the issue of separation depend

on the purpose of the separation; opposition to gender segregation declines if it is done to encourage haredi enlistment .

And what about the social protest? A large majority (75% of the Jewish public and 82% of the Arab public) favors continuing the social protest. A small majority of the Jewish public (54%) and a large minority of the Arab public (40%) think that the protest has not scored any significant achievements so far. But even among those who hold that view, the large majority wants the protest to continue.

The Negotiations Index for October, 2011

The Peace Index project includes ongoing monitoring of the Israeli public's attitudes towards peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The monthly Negotiation Index is comprised of two questions, one focusing on public support for peace negotiations and the other on the degree to which the public believes that such talks will actually lead to peace. The aggregated replies to these two questions are calculated, combined, and standardized on a scale of 0-100, in which 0 represents total lack of support for negotiations and lack of belief in their potential to bear fruit, and 100 represents total support for the process and belief in its potential. Each month, the Negotiations Index presents two distinct findings, one for the general Israeli population and the other for Jewish Israelis.

Negotiations Index: General sample: 50.0%; Jewish sample: 49.8%

The Peace Index is a project of the [Evens Program in Mediation and Conflict Resolution](#) at Tel Aviv University and the [Israel Democracy Institute](#). This month's survey was conducted by telephone on October 31 and November 1 by the Dahaf Institute. The survey included 606 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.