2015 Israel Religion and State Index
Report #7

September 2015
Elul 5775

Pollsters:
Rafi Smith
Olga Paniel

Satisfaction with government activities on matters of religion and state
The general Jewish public

- Very satisfied: 4%
- Quite satisfied: 16%
- Not very satisfied: 28%
- Not satisfied: 52%

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Translation: David Bogomolny
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Message from Hiddush Leadership

Dear Readers,

Hiddush is pleased to present the findings of the 2015 Israel Religion and State Index. The good news, illuminated by the Index, is the continually increasing Israeli public support for freedom of religion and equality of burden. The bad news is the gaping divide between the public’s will on matters of religion and state and the Government’s coalition agreements. 79% of the Jewish public oppose the Coalition’s intention to increase the budgets for yeshivas and yeshiva student benefits. 82% of the Israeli public, contrary to these agreements, support the mandatory implementation of core curricular studies in all ultra-Orthodox schools.

Hiddush’s annual Israel Religion and State Index is the most systematic and comprehensive public opinion research poll on matters of religion and state in Israel. It has been conducted by the Rafi Smith Polling Institute for Hiddush ever since its inception in 2009. The Index has been used by the media, decision makers, community leaders and public opinion molders in Israel and the Diaspora, as well as civil society organizations. Nothing compares to the Index when it comes to monitoring and analyzing the public mood on matters of religious freedom and equality of burden.

The gap between the public's views and the government’s policies is also illustrated by the polling results on questions related to freedom of marriage and divorce. 64% of Israelis favor recognizing all types of marriage, including civil, Reform and Conservative. This is not a purely theoretical figure, for 70% of secular Jews and 67% of immigrants indicated their preference for a non-Orthodox framework for marriage, were one available. Another significant finding: 64% of Israeli Jews, the highest figure ever, expressed their support for full recognition of marriage or civil unions for same-sex couples.

The challenge for those who desire change is reflected in the following statistic: Only 58% of secular Israeli Jews favor the view that the secular parties should make support for civil marriage and divorce a condition for entering the Coalition. 62% of the public is opposed. In order for the politicians to feel enough public pressure to legislate freedom of civil marriage, organizations such as Hiddush that advocate religious freedom must convince the traditional and moderate Orthodox public that the issue of marriage freedom is not merely theoretical but must become an important, central facet of Israel’s political agenda. This also highlights the
importance of Diaspora Jewish partnership with Israelis in advocating for marriage freedom, as it impacts them as well, and their participation will greatly strengthen the forces for change.

The public’s disgust with the Chief Rabbinate’s monopoly, which perpetuates ultra-Orthodox religious coercion, is clearly illustrated by the following polling data: 73%, almost three-quarters of the Jewish public, support doing away with the Rabbinate’s monopoly over Kashrut certification, and 67% oppose making kashrut certification conditional upon Sabbath observance. Hiddush achieved a significant victory in this field by threatening legal action against the Chief Rabbinate for its illegal hotel kashrut regulations, which were revised as a result, to allow the use of musical instruments, video projection and photography during private events on Saturdays, as well as rescinding the demand that no non-Jewish symbols be displayed during the New Year’s/Christmas season. Unfortunately, we may be forced to launch another battle against the Rabbinate, for they seem to be resistant to upholding their own newly issued Kashrut regulations.

One encouraging finding is that support for freedom of religion has reached peak levels in the 2015 Index. 86% of the Jewish public supports freedom of religion and conscience in Israel. Also encouraging is the increase in support that has occurred among the ultra-Orthodox public, which has risen from only 40% support for freedom of religion and conscience in the previous Index to 56% support this year. However, this finding may indicate that some ultra-Orthodox respondents were only expressing support for freedom of religion for themselves, not for others, whether Jewish or not. 59% of the ultra-Orthodox public continues to support denying Christians the right to pray in the Room of the Last Supper, compared to only 11% among the general public. 24% of ultra-Orthodox Jews believe that we need not deal with the extremists who spit at Christian clergymen, responding that “this is not a crime and not a problem.”

Israel’s Declaration of Independence promised its citizens freedom of religion and equality. Unfortunately, freedom of religion and equality in shouldering the civic burden repeatedly fall victim to the political parties’ and politicians’ conviction that they will pay no political price should they ignore the public’s will. The Religion and State Index shows how new Government policies and the new state budget move us further away from these important values, and exposes the cynicism of Israel’s political system that disregards the public’s will. It is possible and critical to fight against this bad budget and prevent its passage. The clearer it becomes that the public objects to carrying out the sweeping concessions made in the coalition agreements, the greater the chance that MKs will be emboldened to thwart them.

The previous government created an important window of opportunity for civil revolution in Israel. Unfortunately, it only managed to make a few, limited changes, and the new coalition intends to reverse even these. A civil government can and should be reestablished, in the hopes that the opportunity will not be missed next time. 65% of the Jewish public expressed the preference for a government without the ultra-Orthodox parties! In order for this to happen, it
is essential that the public speak up loud and clear, for only a strong and un-equivocal expression of the public rejection of a Haredi-based coalition government can bring our elected officials to listen and heed.

The supporters and leaders of Hiddush have been committedly striving to strengthen Israel, and have worked diligently to build a strong and lasting relationship between Israel and the American Jewish community. As time passes, we are more and more concerned about the crippling effect of the unholy alliance between religion and state.

The findings of the new 2015 Religion and State Index demonstrate that one cannot exaggerate the necessity to finally break this union so that Israel can truly be the “home for all Jews,” as Prime Minister Netanyahu has repeatedly declared in recent times. We sincerely believe that for Israel to remain strong, the advancement of religious freedom is no less important than the strengthening of its economy and defense.

Stanley P. Gold
U.S. Chairman

Rabbi Uri Regev, Esq.
President

This publication is made possible by a generous gift from Stanley and Marion Bergman and family.
Executive Summary

Opposed to increasing funding for yeshivas: 79% of the Jewish public, nearly 4 in 5 respondents, oppose the coalition's intention to increase the budget for yeshivas and yeshiva student benefits. 81% of Likud voters oppose this, among Kulanu voters - 87%, and among Jewish Home voters - 69%.

Dissatisfied with the government: 80% of respondents are dissatisfied with the government's policies on matters of religion and state. It is important to note that both secular Jews (95%) and ultra-Orthodox Jews (81%) are dissatisfied.

Mystics should not function as advisors: 81% of the Jewish public oppose elected officials, business leaders and senior law enforcement officials consulting with mystics, such as Rabbi Abuchatzeira and Rabbi Pinto.

Protect the Finance Committee: 65% of the Jewish population and 71% of the non-Haredi public prefer a government without the ultra-Orthodox parties. 65% of respondents and 72% of the non-Haredi public oppose giving chairmanship of the Knesset Finance Committee to a representative of the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism party.

Support for same-sex marriages soars: 64% of Israeli Jews favor official recognition of civil marriage or civil unions for same-sex couples, an increase of 8% from last year! For the first time, a majority of immigrants from the former Soviet Union (53%) expressed their support for such unions.

Ultra-Orthodox support for religious freedom: 86% of the Jewish public support freedom of religion and conscience in Israel, a record high! There has also been a significant increase in ultra-Orthodox support, up from 40% in the previous Index to 56%.

Enough with the monopoly: 73%, nearly three-quarters of the Jewish public, favor ending the monopoly of the Chief Rabbinate on kashrut. 67%, two-thirds of the Israeli Jewish public, oppose making kashrut certification conditional upon Sabbath observance.

Transportation on Saturdays, please: 72% of the Jewish public support the operation of public transportation on Shabbat, including 61% of Jewish Home voters.

Spitting? What's the problem? 59% of the ultra-Orthodox public favor denying Christians the right to pray in the “Room of the Last Supper,” compared to only 11% of the general Jewish public. 24% of ultra-Orthodox Jews believe there is no need to deal with the extremist ultra-Orthodox individuals who spit at Christian clergymen, responding, “This is not a crime and not a problem.”

Voters like the ring of it: 70% of secular Jews and 67% of immigrants would choose a non-Orthodox wedding, had such an alternative been available to them. Currently though, 63% of respondents would choose an Orthodox wedding, and 37% would not.
**No core curriculum? No funding:** There has been a significant increase in public support for denying government funding to ultra-Orthodox schools that refuse to implement the core curriculum, up from 61% in 2014 to 66% this year.

**Mizrahi Reform Jews:** 9% of Israeli Jews define themselves Jewishly as either Reform (5%) or Conservative (4%). 9% of respondents with ethnic roots in Asia or Africa identified with the liberal denominations, compared to 8% of those with ethnic roots in Europe.
86% of the Jewish public support freedom of religion and conscience in Israel, higher than in all previous Indices, with a former peak of 81% back in 2010. This represents a significant increase in support, particularly among the ultra-Orthodox population, up from 40% last year to 56% in this year’s Index. Further, among those who voted for the ultra-Orthodox parties, support for religious freedom has increased from 40% to 65%.

These results may suggest to us that support for freedom of religion and conscience is a given. Unfortunately, this is not the case, and there are concentrations of opposition. 44% of the ultra-Orthodox and 27% of the Zionist Orthodox populations are opposed to freedom of religion and conscience in Israel. 21% of Likud voters and 24% of Jewish Home voters also oppose freedom of religion and conscience. Further, 23% of those who identify as right-leaning believe that Israel should not allow freedom of religion and conscience, compared to 8% of those who identify as centrists and 2% of left-leaning Israeli Jews.

23% of those who identify as right-leaning believe that Israel should not allow freedom of religion and conscience, compared to 8% of those who identify as centrists and 2% of left-leaning Israeli Jews
Support for the separation of religion and state remains stable at 61% like last year. It should be noted that this represents a peak level of support, after the previous peak of 56% in 2011.

As we note in every Index, we believe that a major reason for the lower level of support for the separation of religion and state in Israel, is the perception that such separation means separation between Judaism and the State of Israel. They may be thinking of the full separation of religion and state enforced in France and the USA, which would strip Israel of its Jewish characteristics, including such widely acceptable norms as Bible study in schools, state subsidies for religious services on par with culture and sports, and kashrut standards and Shabbat observances in public institutions.

89% of secular Jews support the separation of religion and state in Israel, as do 83% of immigrants and 64% (nearly two-thirds) of the non-Haredim. 15% of the ultra-Orthodox public support the separation of religion and state, but 85% of ultra-Orthodox Jews and 80% of Zionist Orthodox Jews oppose it. 82% of Zionist Camp voters and 84% of Yesh Atid voters expressed their support, but 57% of Likud voters and 54% of Kulanu voters are opposed to separation of religion and state. The point stressed above is clearly at play when it comes to Kulanu voters, 95% of whom support freedom of religion and conscience! 96% of left-leaning voters are in support, as opposed to 68% of right-leaning voters who oppose it.
For years, the conflict between the ultra-Orthodox and secular was identified in the Indices as the most severe domestic tension in Jewish society. But this year, for the first time, the divide between political left and right surpassed it. 40% of respondents said the tension between the right and left is the most severe, whereas 30% considered the secular-Haredi conflict to be most severe. 62% responded that the tensions between left and right are either the most severe or second most severe in Jewish society, whereas 59% responded that the rift between secular and ultra-Orthodox is either the most severe or second most severe. By comparison, in the 2013 Index, 74% responded that the tension between secular and ultra-Orthodox is the most severe or second most in Jewish society, and only 47% responded likewise about the tensions between the political left and right. Significantly, another social conflict (between the rich and the poor), which was once at the center of the public and media discourse during the Tent Protests of a few years ago, is now considered by only 24% of respondents to be the harshest societal tension: this is the lowest response recorded since the inception of the Index.

Only 41% of ultra-Orthodox respondents noted religious tensions as one of the two most severe in Jewish society, compared to 62% of secular Jews and 69% of the Zionist Orthodox community. In last year’s Index, 81% of ultra-Orthodox Jews indicated that the religious tension is one of the two most notable. It seems that having the ultra-Orthodox parties back in the governing coalition has made the conflict between secular and ultra-Orthodox seem less significant to them. Still, even among secular Jews, only 62% responded that religious tensions were among the top two most severe, compared to 68% in the 2014 Index. One commonly accepted interpretation of these findings is that following the term of the previous government, which did not include the ultra-Orthodox parties, the public now attaches a decreased sense of importance to issues of religion and state. However, this assumption cannot be tested because the Religion and State Index was only established in 2009, several years after the last time that the ultra-Orthodox parties returned to the government in 2006 (the end of the term of office of the Sharon-Shinui Government).

75% of Yesh Atid voters perceive the conflict between ultra-Orthodox and secular as one of the two most severe, as do 64% of Zionist Camp voters. However, only 50% of Israel Beiteinu voters considered the religious conflict to be one of the most severe, despite the prevailing view that this party’s voters should be very interested in matters of religion and state.
The harshest tensions

A comparison over time (the two harshest tensions in aggregate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between political left and right</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between ultra-Orthodox and Secular</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two-thirds want a government without ultra-Orthodox parties

80% of Index respondents are dissatisfied with government policies in matters of religion and state. This is a small increase from 78% in the 2014 Index, which was conducted and analyzed during the reign of the previous government, which did not include the ultra-Orthodox parties. It therefore seems that a large segment of the Jewish public, especially the secular, feel consistently alienated by the Israeli government’s activities in matters of religion and state and were disappointed with the limited progress in those matters achieved even during the previous government coalition. However, it is important to note that both secular Jews (95%) and ultra-Orthodox Jews (81%) are very dissatisfied in these matters. Traditional Jews (70%) and the Zionist Orthodox community (51%) are less dissatisfied. It’s quite clear that the secular and the ultra-Orthodox are dissatisfied for different reasons.

The entry of the ultra-Orthodox parties into the current government and the exit of the civil Yesh Atid party have affected the degrees to which different sectors expressed dissatisfaction. According to the 2014 Index, during the previous government only 2% of ultra-Orthodox Jews were satisfied, and this year 19% of that sector expressed their satisfaction. In
the previous Index, 15% of secular Jews expressed satisfaction, compared to only 5% this time.

The degree of satisfaction with the government on issues of religion and state increases among more right-leaning voters. Among left-leaning voters, only 1% are satisfied, 12% of centrists expressed their satisfaction, as well as 36% of right-leaning voters (although 64% remain dissatisfied, representing almost two-thirds). Even among those who voted for the parties in the Coalition, many are dissatisfied with this government in this arena. 65% of Likud voters and 93% of Kulanu voters are unhappy, as well as 64% of voters for the ultra-Orthodox parties.

65% of the Jewish population and 71% of non-Haredi Jews would prefer a government without the ultra-Orthodox parties. This figure remains stable; in the 2013 Index, 64% responded that they favor a government without the ultra-Orthodox, and in the 2014 Index 66% of respondents did as well. Among secular Jews, 89% prefer a government without the ultra-Orthodox parties, as do 83% of immigrants from the former Soviet Union. However, most of the Zionist Orthodox sector support a government with the Shas and United Torah Judaism parties, as does 97% of the ultra-Orthodox community.
Support for a government without the ultra-Orthodox parties by vote in the 2015 elections (coalition)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Support (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likud</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kulanu</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jewish Home</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ultra-Orthodox parties</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Support for a government without the ultra-Orthodox parties by vote in the 2015 elections (opposition)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Support (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Zionist Camp</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yesh Atid</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meretz</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yisrael Beiteinu</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Among voters for the various political parties, the situation is more complex. 71% of all voters would prefer a government without the ultra-Orthodox parties, as would 61% of Jewish Home voters(!). The gap between the positions of the Zionist Orthodox community and voters for the Jewish Home party is likely due to the fact that 42% of the party’s voters are not religious but either traditional or secular. However, among Likud voters, 55% would prefer a government with Shas and United Torah Judaism. Also notable were the responses of left-leaning and centrist voters, whose political leaders consistently strive to keep open the possibility of leading a coalition government that includes the ultra-Orthodox parties. Yair Lapid, head of the centrist Yesh Atid party even courted them publicly early this summer. As far as the voters are concerned, the picture is different: 86% of Zionist Camp voters, 83% of Yesh Atid voters, (and 95% of Meretz voters) would prefer a government without the ultra-Orthodox parties.

The public opposes not only having Shas and United Torah Judaism in the Government Coalition. Ever since 1977, every Coalition Government that included the United Torah Judaism party (or its predecessor Agudat Yisrael) gave this party the chairmanship of the Knesset Finance Committee. This is the most powerful and important committee in the Knesset, and during the most recent coalition negotiations, Moshe Kahlon, head of the civil Kulanu party, demanded that a Kulanu member become the committee’s Chairperson. Nevertheless, he ultimately rescinded his demand, and control of the committee once again returned to a member of United Torah Judaism.
Opposition to handing chairmanship of the Knesset Finance Committee to the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism party by vote in the 2015 elections (coalition)

- Likud: 58%
- Kulanu: 73%
- The Jewish Home: 52%
- Ultra-Orthodox: 10%
- Total: 65%

Opposition to handing chairmanship of the Knesset Finance Committee to the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism party by vote in the 2015 elections (opposition)

- The Zionist Camp: 82%
- Yesh Atid: 88%
- Meretz: 87%
- Yisrael Beiteinu: 90%
- Total: 65%
65% of all respondents and 72% of non-Haredi respondents oppose a representative of United Torah Judaism chairing the Finance Committee. Among secular Jews, 89% are opposed, and among immigrants, 88% expressed their opposition. 100% of the ultra-Orthodox community supports handing the Finance Committee’s chairmanship over to United Torah Judaism, as do 61% of Zionist Orthodox Jews. A majority of voters for the non-Haredi coalition parties oppose this appointment, including the rest of the Coalition parties’ supporters(!): 58% of Likud voters, 73% of Kulanu voters, and 52% of Jewish Home voters. Voters for the Opposition parties are naturally opposed: 82% of Zionist Camp voters and 88% of Yesh Atid voters.

In recent years, various criminal cases and other scandals have broken out around the association of politicians, leading business people and high ranking police officers with mystics, such as Rabbi Yoshiyahu Pinto and Rabbi Ifergan. The vast majority of the public thinks this is highly inappropriate. 81% of the Jewish public opposes elected officials, business leaders and senior law-enforcement officials consulting with mystics like Pinto and Ifergan. 93% of secular Jews oppose this, as do 78% of Zionist Orthodox and 55% of ultra-Orthodox Jews. Among traditional Jews, 32% support such consultations with mystics, and 68% are opposed to them. Notably, a greater percentage of the Zionist Orthodox sector opposes consultations with mystics than among traditional Jews. 24% of women support such consultations, compared to 15% of men.

The only voting group in which a majority does not oppose politicians consulting with mystics is the group that voted for the ultra-Orthodox parties. However, even among these voters, fully half (50%) are opposed to such consultations. Among those who identify as right-leaning, 36% support allowing politicians to consult with mystics, whereas only 4% of those who identify as left-leaning support this.
64% support state recognition of same-sex partnerships

64% of Israeli Jews (almost two-thirds) favor official state recognition of civil marriage or civil unions for same-sex couples. This is a dramatic increase from 56% when this question was last asked in the 2013 Index, and in the 2009 Index support among Israeli Jews was at 53%. This year, the Jewish public was equally supportive of same-sex marriage, as it was of legalizing all types of marriage (64%).

It seems that the ruling of the US Supreme Court to recognize same-sex marriage and the results of the Irish referendum may have influenced Israeli public opinion. It should be emphasized that polling for the 2015 Index was conducted before the stabbing attack at the Jerusalem Pride Parade. Therefore, the incident did not affect the findings.

Surprisingly, for the first time, a majority of immigrants from the former Soviet Union supported recognition of same-sex marriage: 53% support versus 47% opposed. This group is considered conservative, especially on same-sex relationships. In 2013 when this question was last asked, 49% of immigrants supported same-sex
unions. 100% of Meretz voters, 85% of Zionist Camp voters, 53% of Likud voters and 44% of the Jewish Home voters expressed their support. The figure for the Jewish Home voters is particularly notable given that the party’s candidates made statements against same-sex marriage. It should be attributed, in part, to the fact that many of the party’s voters are secular, and support it for its positions on security and settlements.

64% of Israelis favor recognizing all types of marriage, including civil, Reform and Conservative. This is a slight decrease compared to 66% in the previous Index, but is still one of the highest results in the history of the Index (59% in 2012). It may also be attributed to the margin of error in such polling. 90% of secular Jews and immigrants expressed support for recognizing all types of marriage and the non-Haredi population was 69% in favor. Among the Zionist Orthodox, 78% were against and 22% were in favor. Like many other issues in the arena of religion and state, support for the recognition of all types of marriage increases as one’s political outlook moves to the left. 42% of those who define themselves as right-leaning support recognition of all types of marriage, as do 73% of centrist and 97% of those who identify as left-leaning.

58% of secular Jews believe that the civil parties should make support for full state recognition of civil marriage a precondition for entering the Coalition. Among Zionist Camp voters and Israel Beiteinu voters 50% responded in favor of making support for civil marriage a condition for entering the Coalition as did 58% of Yesh Atid voters. Unfortunately, among voters for the coalition parties, the situation is different: 73% of Likud voters oppose the civil parties setting such terms, as do 84% of Kulanu voters.
Support for recognition of all types of marriage by vote in the 2015 elections (coalition)

- Likud: 54%
- Kulanu: 75%
- The Jewish Home: 30%
- Ultra-Orthodox parties: 4%
- Total: 64%

Support for recognition of all types of marriage by vote in the 2015 elections (opposition)

- The Zionist Camp: 87%
- Yesh Atid: 85%
- Meretz: 100%
- Yisrael Beiteinu: 93%
- Total: 64%
Support for accepting the legalization of civil marriage and divorce as a requirement for entering the coalition by religiosity

- Secular: 58%
- Traditional: 26%
- Zionist Orthodox: 10%
- Ultra-Orthodox: 6%
- Total: 38%

Support for accepting the legalization of civil marriage and divorce as a requirement for entering the coalition (coalition) by vote in the 2015 elections

- Likud: 27%
- Kulanu: 16%
- The Jewish Home: 22%
- Ultra-Orthodox: 6%
- Total: 38%
Civil marriage is considered to be of special, significant interest to the immigrant population, but only 48% of immigrants support setting such a condition for entry into the coalition, whereas 52% oppose this. 72% of those who identify as left-leaning support this potential precondition for entry into the coalition. This bears noting in light of the prevailing readiness of the left wing political parties to cede matters of religion and state to the religious parties in order to form a center-left Government Coalition. 77% of right-leaning respondents and 65% of those who identify as centrists oppose this potential precondition for entry into the Government Coalition.

Overall, 62% of the Jewish public oppose making this a precondition for entering the Coalition, and only 38% support this. Because this is a question that pertains to the civil parties, the views of the general public are of less relevance. However, the fact that only a small majority of secular Jews would like to see such a precondition set for joining the Coalition, reflects one of the greatest challenges facing supporters of marriage freedom who hope for the passage of a civil marriage bill. Namely, the many who support freedom of marriage do not see this as an important enough issue that should become a deal breaker when negotiating entering into a Coalition Government.

76% of those who identify with the Reform denomination would choose to have non-Orthodox wedding ceremonies if given a choice. However, 75% of those who identify with Conservative Judaism would prefer an Orthodox ceremony. This is a finding of great interest, which we could identify in this year’s Index, since we have now included for the first time the question of denominational identification as one of the background questions. It’s well known that Conservative Jews, even more so in Israel, tend to be much more traditional than Reform Jews. Nevertheless, the fact that 3 in 4 who identify with Conservative Judaism in Israel would prefer an Orthodox wedding ceremony is surprising. in Israel. Only 25% of those who define themselves as Conservative would choose a Conservative, Reform or civil wedding, compared with 45% of those who identify as Reform. We need to bear in mind that we are discussing a hypothetical situation, namely – the eventuality that such weddings were recognized by the state, which is not the case currently. It must also be noted that the sample sizes are relatively small because only a relatively small percentage identify at present with Reform or Conservative, but given this caveat - there is a very significant difference in responses of the two groups. Another interesting difference: 31% of Reform Jews would choose cohabitation without marriage versus 0% of Conservative Jews.

70% of secular Jews and 67% of immigrants would prefer to have a non-Orthodox wedding if such were available. Among secular Jews, this marks an increase of 3% compared to the last time this question was asked in the 2013 Index. Among immigrants, this marks an increase of 4%. However, 87% of traditional Jews would prefer an Orthodox wedding ceremony, representing a significant increase from 78% in 2013. Overall 63% of Israeli Jews would opt for an Orthodox wedding, and 37% would prefer to marry outside the Orthodox
established Rabbinate or would choose to cohabite without marriage (a slight decrease from 39% in the 2013 Index). It seems that while a large portion of the non-secular Jewish public supports allowing marriage freedom, it is not a high priority for them, as they themselves would still choose to marry Orthodox.

Desirable framework for marriage
Secular Jews in comparison to the general Jewish public

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>General Public</th>
<th>Secular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative or Reform</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil marriage</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohabitation without marriage</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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</tbody>
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Desirable framework for marriage
by liberal denomination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Reform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative or Reform</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil marriage</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohabitation without marriage</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
53% of Zionist Camp and Yesh Atid voters would prefer non-Orthodox weddings. However, 83% of Likud voters elect to have Orthodox ceremonies. 65% of residents in the Jerusalem area would choose an Orthodox ceremony, but 63% of the Sharon Plain region would prefer liberal ceremonies, civil marriage or cohabitation. 86% of those who identify as right-leaning would prefer to have Orthodox weddings, but 79% of left-leaning voters prefer not to.

Photo of the Chief Rabbis: Yaakov Naomi, Flash 90

64% (almost two-thirds) of Israelis support the recognition of all forms of religious conversion, including Reform and Conservative conversions. In the 2014 Index, the level of support was also at 64%, following four years at which support for recognition for all forms of religious conversion was only at 60-61%. More than half of those who support recognition of all religious conversions (34%) also support the recognition of secular conversion (Jewish studies and a non-religious ceremony). Among secular Jews, 90% support recognizing all forms of religious conversion (53% would also recognize secular conversion). Among immigrants, support was at 82%, and among the non-Haredi population support was at 70%. 100% of the ultra-Orthodox community is in favor of recognizing only Orthodox conversions.
100% of Meretz voters, 90% of Zionist Camp voters, 85% of Israel Beiteinu voters and 83% of Yesh Atid voters favor recognizing religious conversions of all streams. Even among those who voted for the civil coalition parties, a majority support recognizing religious conversions of all streams: among Kulanu voters - 73%, and among Likud voters - 55%. However, 68% of Jewish Home voters and 94% of those who voted for the ultra-Orthodox parties favor recognizing only Orthodox conversions. 97% of those who identify as left-leaning, and 77% of those who identify as centrists support the recognition of religious conversions of all streams, but 58% of those who identify as right-leaning only support recognizing Orthodox conversions.
Reform and Conservative Jews – 9%, just like the ultra-Orthodox

9% of Israeli Jews identify with the Reform and Conservative denominations, of which 4% are Conservative, and 5% are Reform. This is the first time that this question was included in the Israel Religion and State Index. This percentage is equal to that of those who identify as ultra-Orthodox and Zionist ultra-Orthodox (Charedi).

It should be noted, though, that the intensity and commitment level of those who identify as ultra-Orthodox may be usually greater than in the case of Reform and Conservative. There is no doubt that the two liberal streams, which have suffered serious challenges of legitimacy and acceptance in Israel for decades, have overcome some of them and today they enjoy broad public support. In the past it was said that “the synagogues that secular Israelis didn’t go to had to be Orthodox”, but it seems that this assessment is no longer valid, and today a large portion of secular and traditional Israeli Jews do elect to go to liberal synagogues when they want religious services.

57% of those who define themselves as Reform or Conservative identified themselves as secular, 35% identified themselves as traditional, and 8% described themselves as religious. It is thought that the liberal denominations are strong among Jews with European ethnic

It is commonly thought that the liberal streams are stronger among Jews of European ethnicity than Asian and African ethnicity. However, 9% of Asian and African Jews, and 8% of European Jews associated with the liberal streams.
roots, and much weaker among Jews with Asian and African ethnic roots, but the 2015 Index paints a different picture. 10% of those born in Israel identify as Reform and Conservative, as do 9% of those with Asian and African ethnic roots and 8% of respondents with European ethnic roots (Ashkenazi - natives of Europe and America or second generation in Israel). 9% of veteran Israelis identify with the liberal streams, as do 11% of immigrants.

It turns out that identification with the liberal streams has grown along with support for the political center, perhaps because identifying with the liberal streams is considered a centrist choice between Orthodoxy and secularism. 15% of those who define themselves as political centrists identify with the Reform and Conservative streams, but only 6% of right-leaning and 9% of left-leaning respondents identify with the liberal streams.

76% of those who identify with the Reform denomination would prefer a non-Orthodox marriage, if such were available to them. However, 75% of those who identify with the Conservative denomination prefer Orthodox wedding ceremonies. Conservative Jews are very similar to moderate Orthodox Jews, and they are much more conservative than Reform Jews. Nevertheless, it is surprising that 3 in 4 who identify with the Conservative movement would choose an Orthodox wedding ceremony, partly because Conservative rabbis cannot conduct legally recognized weddings in Israel. Only 25% of those who define themselves as Conservative would prefer civil, Conservative or Reform wedding ceremony, compared with 45% of those who identify as Reform. It must
be noted that the sample size is not very big, but the results are quite dramatic. Another interesting difference: 31% of Reform Jews would choose to cohabit without getting officially married, vs 0% of Conservative Jews.
Two-thirds against making kashrut certification conditional upon Shabbat observance, and almost three-fourths support operating public transportation on Shabbat.

73% (almost three-quarters) of the Jewish public favor ending the monopoly of the Rabbinate on kashrut supervision. Of these, 49% favor opening the kashrut certification market to competition among professionals representing all religious streams of Judaism, and 24% favor only allowing Orthodox kashrut professionals to compete in the market. In both cases, the state would function as a regulator. Among the general Jewish population, 79% of non-Haredim favor ending the Rabbinate’s monopoly, as do 65% of traditional Jews.

The growing rift between the Rabbinate and the Zionist Orthodox community was expressed by a slight majority (53%) of that community who expressed support for breaking the Rabbinate’s monopoly.

The best solution for kashrut supervision

The general Jewish public

- Open the market to other professional authorities: 49%
- Open the market to other Orthodox authorities: 24%
- Maintain the official Rabbinate’s monopoly: 27%

The growing rift between the Zionist Orthodox community and the Rabbinate was expressed by a slight majority (53%) of that community who expressed support for breaking the Rabbinate’s monopoly.
not trust the Rabbinate’s kashrut standards. For them, the Rabbinate only serves as an administrator to ensure that religious services for the general public are kept within the “Orthodox family”, but not as a true and binding Torah authority.

96% of Zionist Camp voters favor opening the kashrut certification market to parties outside the Rabbinate, as do 91% of Yesh Atid voters, 88% of Israel Beiteinu voters, 62% of Likud voters, and 53% of the Jewish Home voters. Also of interest: 78% of men support breaking the Rabbinate’s monopoly, but only 68% of women. 81% of Jews with ethnic roots in Europe support breaking the Rabbinate’s monopoly, but only 64% of those with ethnic roots in Africa and Asia support this.

67% (two-thirds) of the Jewish population is opposed to making kashrut certification conditional upon Shabbat observance. 93% of secular Jews, 57% of traditional Jews and 73% of non-Haredi Jews are opposed. However, 95% of the ultra-Orthodox community and 71% of Zionist Orthodox Jews support making kashrut certification conditional upon Shabbat observance. There is an increase of 7% over the results of the 2014 Index regarding the general public’s rejection of the Rabbinate’s policies (60%), but we must note that the wording of the question was slightly different. Interestingly, 56% of Jewish Home voters oppose making kashrut certification conditional upon Shabbat observance, which once again demonstrates the religiously mixed support base of the Jewish Home party.
Opposition to making kashrut certification conditional upon Shabbat observance by religiosity

- Secular: 93%
- Traditional: 57%
- Zionist Orthodox: 29%
- Ultra-Orthodox: 5%
- Total: 67%

Support for operating public transportation on Shabbat by religiosity

- Secular: 96%
- Traditional: 68%
- Zionist Orthodox: 34%
- Ultra-Orthodox: 5%
- Total: 72%
Support for public transportation on Shabbat continued to increase in the 2015 Index. 72% of the Jewish public now supports the operation of public transportation on Shabbat, of which 45% support the operation of limited public transport and 27% support full-scale operation. This is a slight increase compared to the previous Index (70%), but it represents a very significant increase compared to the first time this question was asked in January 2010 (58%).

78% of the non-Haredi Jewish population supports the operation of public transportation on Shabbat, including 96% of secular Jews, 90% of immigrants, and 68% of traditional Jews. 66% of The Zionist Orthodox respondents were opposed to the operation of public transportation on Shabbat, as were 95% of ultra-Orthodox respondents. An interesting data point: opposition to operating public transportation on Shabbat among respondents with below average incomes stands at 38%, compared to 18% opposition among those with above average incomes. Generally, support for religious freedom is higher among those with higher incomes, however low-income earners are expected to be the main beneficiaries of public transport on Shabbat. One explanation for this result is the high percentage of low-income earners in the ultra-Orthodox community.

61% of Jewish Home voters support operating public transportation on Shabbat, as do 68% of Likud voters and 88% of Kulanu voters. Only a majority of voters for the ultra-Orthodox parties are opposed: 90%. In all regions of the country, a large majority of the Jewish public supports the operation of public transportation on Shabbat, but while 93% of voters in the Sharon Plain region were in support, only 66% of Jerusalem residents expressed their support for this initiative.
86% of the Jewish public supports requiring yeshiva students to do military or national service. Of these, 35% believe all yeshiva students should be enlisted for full regular service, 16% believe that a limited number of exemptions should be allowed and majority of yeshiva students should be enlisted, and 35% would settle for only requiring national service. Support for compulsory service for yeshiva students rose by 4% from 82% in the 2013 Index (this question was not asked in the 2014 Index). However, it is doubtful whether this increase indicates a significant shift in public opinion. The level of support for compulsory service for yeshiva students has consistently stood at 80% or higher since the Index was established in 2009.

Among secular Jews, 96% support mandatory service for yeshiva students, as do 93% of immigrants and 80% the Zionist Orthodox. Unlike other issues of religious freedom that find much greater support among left-leaning voters than right-leaning voters, the issue of equality of burden finds much broader support throughout the Jewish community. 92% of left-leaning voters support mandatory service for yeshiva students (in contrast to Meretz’s vague stance on this issue), as do 94% of centrists, and 80% of right-leaning voters. 90% of Likud voters and 87% of Jewish Home voters also support mandatory service for yeshiva students.
Support for obligatory service for yeshiva students
Ultra-Orthodox / non-Ultra-Orthodox

Total

Ultra-Orthodox

non-Ultra-Orthodox

Support for obligatory service for yeshiva students
Ultra-Orthodox / non-Ultra-Orthodox

Total

Ultra-Orthodox

non-Ultra-Orthodox

Implementation of sanctions if enlistment targets are not met
The general Jewish public

General sanctions 46%
No sanctions at all 30%
Criminal sanctions, including imprisonment 24%
46% of the Jewish public favor economic sanctions against yeshiva students if recruitment targets are not reached, and only 24% favor criminal sanctions, including imprisonment. The public clearly prefers the framework of economic sanctions that Justice Minister Shaked proposed under the last government, when instead criminal sanctions were legislated because of the demand made by the Yesh Atid party leadership. Among Yesh Atid voters, 59% support economic sanctions and only 35% support criminal sanctions.

Overall, 70% of respondents replied that if recruitment targets are not reached, sanctions should be imposed (economic or criminal) against yeshiva students. Among non-haredi respondents, 77% support sanctions and 97% of ultra-Orthodox respondents oppose it. 70% of Likud voters support sanctions and 94% of Yesh Atid voters do as well.

51% oppose the transfer of authority to set recruitment targets to the Defense Minister, which will allow him to effectively undermine the imposition of sanctions on yeshiva students. 49% support it. This is a very narrow margin, meaning that there is almost a balance between those opposing and those supporting this key provision in the new draft law proposed by the coalition, at the demand of the ultra-Orthodox parties. This initiative is an attempt to prevent mandatory enlistment of yeshiva students, and is based on the Minister’s public statements that he does not support enforced enlistment of yeshiva students. Among the secular 67% oppose, but 67% of traditional Jews support this.

It seems that the responses to this question were greatly affected by the way the respondents voted: 59% of Likud voters support the proposal, as do 56% of Kulanu voters and 62% of the Jewish Home voters. In contrast, 68% of Zionist Camp and Meretz voters and 55% of Yesh Atid voters oppose it.
Opposition to transferring authority to set enlistment targets for yeshiva students to the Minister of Defense by vote in the 2015 elections (coalition)

- Likud: 41%
- Kulanu: 44%
- The Jewish Home: 38%
- Ultra-Orthodox parties: 16%
- Total: 51%

Opposition to transferring authority to set enlistment targets for yeshiva students to the Minister of Defense by vote in the 2015 elections (opposition)

- The Zionist Camp: 68%
- Yesh Atid: 55%
- Meretz: 68%
- Yisrael Beiteinu: 60%
- Total: 51%
79% oppose increasing budgets for yeshivas and yeshiva student benefits

79% of the Jewish public (nearly 4 in 5 respondents), opposes the coalition’s plan to increase the budget for yeshivas and yeshiva student benefits. This strong objection comes despite the ultra-Orthodox parties’ claims that they are merely restoring cuts (this claim was actually specified as part of the question). Among non-haredi respondents 86% oppose and 14% support. Among the secular, 96% oppose, as do 85% of traditional Jews and 53% of the Zionist Orthodox. Ultra-Orthodox respondents voiced 100% support for increasing the budget for yeshivas and yeshiva student benefits.

Opposition to increasing the budget for yeshivas and yeshiva student benefits cuts across voters of all the coalition parties except for those who voted for the ultra-Orthodox parties. Among Likud voters - 81% oppose, Kulanu voters - 87% and Jewish Home voters - 69%.

82% of Israelis favor requiring ultra-Orthodox schools to teach core curricular studies, including English, mathematics and civics, which they refuse to do. This is a very slight increase from 81% in the 2014 index but marks the highest score of all Indices (in the 2012 Index, the result was 75%). 95% of secular Jews, 86% of traditional Jews, 65% (nearly two thirds) of the Zionist Orthodox and 13% of the ultra-Orthodox support enforcing the teaching of core curricular studies. 87% of ultra-Orthodox respondents are opposed to this
measure. The finding that one in seven ultra-Orthodox Jews supports the core curriculum is consistent with previous Indices. In the 2014 Index, their support was at 14%.

Support for mandating implementation of the core curriculum in ultra-Orthodox schools by vote in the 2015 elections, select parties

Support for elimination of funding for ultra-Orthodox schools that do not implement the core curriculum A comparison over time
Support for the requirement to teach the core curriculum in all ultra-Orthodox schools cuts across all Coalition party voters, other than those who voted for the ultra-Orthodox parties. 81% of Likud voters are in favor of the requiring core curricular studies, as are 91% of Kulanu voters and 74% of the Jewish Home voters. No less interesting: 28% of voters for the ultra-Orthodox parties support require the ultra-Orthodox schools to implement mathematics, English and civics.

There has been a significant increase in the percentage of those who support denying state funding to ultra-Orthodox schools that do not teach core curricular subjects, up from 61% in 2014 to 66% this year. This marks the highest result since the Index was established in 2009. In July 2013 the second highest level of support was 63% and the lowest (in 2012) was 57%. Of the 66%, 25% hold that besides the denial of funding, fines should also be imposed on schools that refuse to teach core subjects. This is particularly significant because, according to Coalition agreements, the government intends to take the opposite action - cancellation of the previous government’s decision to reduce funding for schools that do not implement core curricular studies.

Among secular Jews, 85% support denying funding to ultra-Orthodox schools that do not teach the core curriculum, as do 72% of non-Haredim, and 65% of traditional Jews. However, 61% of Zionist Orthodox and 98% of ultra-Orthodox are opposed to the denial of funding. A majority of the voters for all the secular parties support the denial of funding from schools that do not teach core subjects. For example, in the Likud - 56%, the Zionist Camp - 81%, Yesh Atid - 87% and Israel Beiteinu - 81%.

82% of the Jewish population and 87% of the non-Haredi public supports making housing benefits conditional upon families that attempt to realize their earning potential and both spouses seek work. This is in contrast to the position of the ultra-Orthodox coalition parties who have undertaken to cancel such conditions to benefit yeshiva students who do not work and rely on State subsidies and their wives’ incomes. The only demographic whose majority does not support making housing benefits conditional upon realizing earning potential is that of the ultra-Orthodox (only 22% support, and 78% oppose).

This question was asked using slightly different language in each of the last three Indices, and support for setting such a condition has ranged from 80-83%. In this matter, the gap between right-leaning and left-leaning voters is not great. Among those who identify as right-leaning, 78% support making housing benefits conditional upon trying to realize earning potential, among centrists – 87%, and among those who identify as left-leaning – 88%.
Support for making housing benefits conditional upon maximizing earning potential by religiosity

- Secular: 91%
- Traditional: 87%
- Zionist Orthodox: 74%
- Ultra Orthodox: 22%
- Total: 82%
How to deal with extremist ultra-Orthodox Jews spitting at Christians
the general Jewish public

- Yes, should be dealt with as a crime with high priority: 54%
- No need to deal with it - not a problem, not a transgression: 6%
- Yes, need to deal with it as a crime, but minor: 40%

How to deal with extremist ultra-Orthodox Jews spitting at Christians
the ultra-Orthodox public

- Yes, should be dealt with as a crime with high priority: 28%
- No need to deal with it - not a problem, not a transgression: 24%
- Yes, need to deal with it as a crime, but minor: 48%
The Index examined the relation of Jews towards Christianity and Christian clergy, and uncovered some very worrisome findings among the ultra-Orthodox public. In Jerusalem there is a widespread phenomenon of ultra-Orthodox extremists spitting at Christian clergy as they walk by. 24% of ultra-Orthodox respondents believe that there is no need to deal with such spitting, claiming that “this is not a crime and not a problem.” This is also the position of 10% of the Zionist Orthodox community and 15% of traditional religious Jews (traditional Jews who are religiously inclined). Among secular and traditional secular Jews (traditional Jews who are not religiously inclined), almost nobody accepts such behavior.

12% of those who identify as right-leaning believe that there is no reason to deal with this hateful spitting, and that it is not a problem and not a crime, compared to only one percent of those who identify as left-leaning. Another alarming result: 9% of Jerusalem area residents believe that this phenomenon is not a problem, compared to only 3% of Tel Aviv residents. Recall that this is primarily a Jerusalem phenomenon.

Overall, 54% of the Jewish public believe that we must deal with the ultra-Orthodox extremists spitting at Christian clergy, and that it should be a high priority to handle it as a criminal offense. 40% think that such spitting should be addressed as only a mild offense, and 6% responded that there is no need to address this, and that spitting at Christian clergy is neither a crime, nor a problem. 58% of Likud voters believe that such spitting should be handled as a high priority offense, as do 68% of all voters. However, only 49% of Jewish Home voters and 35% of the voters for the ultra-Orthodox parties believe this phenomenon should be considered a high-priority crime.
The Room of the Last Supper is a Christian holy site located above the Tomb of David on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. The room is not holy to the Jewish faith. Today, Christian prayers are allowed there only a few times a year. The government was considering expanding the rights of Christians to pray in the Room of the Last Supper, and a counter Orthodox Jewish battle developed against this move.

61% of the Jewish population and 65% of the non-Haredi population support allowing Christians to pray freely in the Room of the Last Supper above the Tomb of David. 28% think that Christian prayer should be allowed on a limited basis, just like today, and 11% support denying Christians the right to pray there entirely.

Among the ultra-Orthodox, 59% oppose any Christian prayers at this site (compared to only 22% of Zionist Orthodox Jews). On the other hand, 82% of secular Jews support allowing Christians to pray there freely.

Unlike most Index questions, the responses to this particular question highlighted a significant gap between secular Jews and immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Only 64% of immigrants support free prayer for Christians at this site (however, 0% of immigrants support not allowing Christians to pray there at all).
The divide on this issue between the right and left is particularly wide. 96% of those who identify as left-leaning and 69% of centrists support allowing Christians to pray freely at this holy Christian site, but only 44% of those who identify as right-leaning support this. 22% of right-leaning respondents were opposed to any Christian prayer services at the site, compared to 0% of those who identify as left-leaning. 17% of Likud voters, 14% of Jewish Home voters and 54% of the voters for the ultra-Orthodox parties support entirely preventing Christians from praying in the Room of the Last Supper. Among voters for the opposition parties, only 0-2% oppose allowing Christians to pray there.
The 2015 Israel Religion and State Index: explanations

The Israel Religion and State Index is an annual public opinion research poll conducted by the Rafi Smith Polling Institute for Hiddush – Freedom of Religion for Israel. The Index tracks public opinion of Israeli Jews on issues of religion and state and its changes. It serves as a tool for policy makers, nongovernmental organizations, researchers, communal leaders, the media and the general public in Israel and in the Diaspora. It is based on a larger than usual sample size of 800 people representing the adult Jewish population (aged 18 and over). This year the Index included 25 questions and additional 13 background questions. The 2015 Index is based on a telephone survey conducted from July 27th to 29th 2015. The margin of error may be 3.5%.

As usual the two most important demographic markers in the analysis were the respondents’ levels of religiosity and how they voted in the 2015 Knesset elections. The distribution of respondents by level of religiosity was as follows, based on categories established by the governmental Central Bureau of Statistics: Secular - 49%, not religiously inclined traditional Jews (“traditional – not so religious”) - 16%, religiously inclined traditional Jews (“traditional - religious”) - 14%, Zionist Orthodox (“national religious”) - 12%, and the ultra-Orthodox (“haredi”) - 9%. Distribution by seniority in the country: veteran Israelis - 85%, immigrants from the former Soviet Union who immigrated since 1989 - 15%. In this analysis, we generally referred to all traditional Jews as one group. Another demographic marker that was central to our analysis was the...
respondents’ political worldviews: very right-leaning + right-leaning - 37%, right-leaning centrists - 19%, centrists - 19%, left-leaning centrists - 12%, and very left-leaning and left-leaning - 13%.

In this year’s Index, for the first time, we included a question about the respondents’ affiliations with different streams of Judaism, which served as the basis for the chapter on the Reform and Conservative denominations and the positions held by their members. The distribution of Jewish streams was as follows: ultra-Orthodox - 8%, Zionist ultra-Orthodox Institute - 1%, Zionist Orthodox - 21%, Conservative - 4% Reform - 5%, other - 11%, no affiliation - 50%. It is important to note that 45% of those who identify with Zionist Orthodoxy see themselves as traditional rather than Zionist Orthodox.

The Israel Religion and State Index began six years ago and this is the eighth study published as part of this project. In the summer of 2009, with the establishment of Hiddush, we published a comprehensive initial study, in preparation for the Religion and State Index and in order to guide us in shaping the directions Hiddush would pursue. The two polls included in the first Index were conducted in the winter and summer of 2010. Thereafter, it was decided to transition to an annual poll. The 2015 Index included 25 questions, 11 of which are fixed and asked in every Index (almost), nine are new, and five were asked in the past but not annually. Responses to questions asked in the past have been compared to those of earlier Indices. The new questions primarily related to the coalition agreements signed between Likud and the Orthodox parties, as well as to attitudes relating to the Christian community.

The analysis of the Index for each question was based upon nine demographic markers (religiosity, veteran / immigrants, votes in the 2015 elections, age, country of origin, income level, political worldview, gender and geographic location). The two most useful demographic markers from the perspective of religion and state were religiosity and votes in the last elections. In some cases, we also distinguished the respondents by affiliation with different streams of Judaism and gender.

Due to the relatively small number of respondents who voted for Shas and United Torah Judaism, we consolidated them into one category of voters for the two ultra-Orthodox parties. In contrast, the Labor Party, which had been included in one category with Meretz until the 2012 index, was categorized separately in the last three Indices. Meretz and Israel Beiteinu were categorized separately, despite receiving the least number of Knesset seats, for there was no relevant party to categorize them with (we wanted to preserve the Zionist camp as a separate unit). It is worth noting: the sample size for these parties’ voters was small so one should note their trends, rather than their precise data.
Appendix: the Questionnaire for the 2015 Index

1. **Permanent Question:** In Israeli Jewish society there are many tensions and conflicts. Which of the following seems the most acute to you? (read in varying order)
   a. Between Jews of Asian and African ethnicity and Jews of European ethnicity (Mizrahi and Ashkenazi)
   b. Between political left and right
   c. Between ultra-Orthodox and secular
   d. Between immigrants and veteran Israelis
   e. Between rich and poor
   f. None of these / all of these / no opinion (not read aloud)

2. **Permanent Question:** And what is the second most acute? (same list as the first question)

3. **Permanent Question:** Do you agree or disagree that in Israel freedom of religion and conscience should be realized, namely freedom of choice and behavior for secular Jews and religious Jews, according to their worldviews?
   a. Very much agree
   b. Somewhat agree
   c. Somewhat disagree
   d. Very much disagree
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

4. **Permanent Question:** Do you support or oppose separation of religion and state?
   a. Very much support
   b. Somewhat support
   c. Somewhat oppose
   d. Very much oppose
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

**Marriage, conversion and Rabbinate section:**

5. **Permanent Question:** Today, Jewish marriage and divorce in Israel are conducted according to Orthodox Jewish law. Do you support or oppose Israel recognizing all forms of marriage, including Conservative, Reform and civil?
   a. Very much support
   b. Somewhat support
   c. Somewhat oppose
   d. Very much oppose
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

6. **New Question:** In your opinion, should the secular parties make joining the Government Coalition conditional upon support for passing a Law of Civil Marriage and Divorce or civil unions?
   Clarification: civil union is not marriage, but grants similar rights and obligations as marriage.
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. No opinion (not read aloud)
7. Included in the preliminary 2009 poll, the 2013 Index, and the May 2015 Omnibus poll: If you or one of your children were getting married, what framework for marriage would you select (assuming that all of these options are available and equally recognized according to the law)?
   a. Orthodox
   b. Conservative or Reform
   c. Civil marriage
   d. Cohabitation without official marriage
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

8. Included in the preliminary 2009 poll, the 2011 Index, and the 2013 Index: In your opinion, should civil marriage or civil unions be available to same-sex couples?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. No opinion (not read aloud)

9. Permanent Question: In your opinion, which of these forms of conversion should be recognized by the State of Israel?
   a. Only Orthodox conversions, or
   b. All forms of religious conversions performed in Israel and/or Jewish Diaspora communities, including Reform and Conservative, or
   c. All forms of conversion, including secular conversion (Jewish studies and secular ceremony of acceptance into the Jewish People)
   d. No opinion (not read aloud)

10. New Question: The Chief Rabbinate and the Shas party fought the attempts of restaurants across the country to receive private kashrut certification. Which option regarding kashrut certification do you support?
    a. Maintain the Chief Rabbinate’s monopoly, or
    b. Open the kashrut certification market to all Orthodox professionals, and the government will serve as a regulator, or
    c. Open the kashrut certification market to professionals of all religious streams, and the government will serve as a regulator
    d. No opinion (not read aloud)

11. New question: The Chief Rabbinate has historically made kashrut certification for hotels conditional upon them not allowing guests to make use of music and video equipment on Shabbat. After a legal battle, the Rabbinate was forced to change its regulations. Do you support or oppose making kashrut certificate conditional upon enforcing such Shabbat observances?
    a. Very much support making kashrut certification conditional upon enforcing Shabbat observance
    b. Somewhat support
    c. Somewhat oppose
    d. Very much oppose
    e. No opinion (not read aloud)
12. **From previous Indices:** There is a public debate regarding the operation of public transportation on Shabbat. Which of these alternatives should the government implement?

   a. Maintain the current policy of almost no public transportation on Shabbat
   b. Cancel the limited public transportation currently available on Shabbat
   c. Make limited public transportation available on Shabbat (main bus lines and use of minibuses)
   d. Make unlimited public transportation available on Shabbat (just as it is during the rest of the week)
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

13. **Permanent Question with adjustments:** A growing percentage of IDF annual conscription cohort are studying in yeshivot and refuse to serve. Which of the following statements reflects your opinion?

   a. I accept this because they dedicate their time to the study of Torah, or
   b. It is necessary to obligate yeshiva students to at least perform national services, or
   c. It is necessary to establish a limited quota of exemptions and enlist the rest, or
   d. It is necessary to enlist all of them into full, regular service
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

14. **New Question:** The previous government set enlistment targets for ultra-Orthodox recruits. What do you think should be done if the targets are not achieved and the yeshiva students refuse to enlist?

   a. Use economic sanctions against the yeshiva students
   b. Use criminal sanctions against the yeshiva students, including imprisonment
   c. Don’t apply any sanctions, only voluntary enlistment
   d. No opinion (not read aloud)

15. **New Question:** The coalition intends to transfer authority to set enlistment targets for ultra-Orthodox recruits to the Defense Minister. This would mean that he could unilaterally reduce the targets to avoid use of sanctions. Do you support or oppose this change?

   a. Very much support
   b. Somewhat support
   c. Somewhat oppose
   d. Very much oppose
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

**Education and employment section:**

16. **New Question:** The coalition intends to increase the budgets for yeshivas and yeshiva student benefits, explaining that this is a reversal of the budget cuts from the previous Government. Opponents argue that this will discourage Haredi men from seeking work. Do you support or oppose increasing the budgets for yeshivas and yeshiva student benefits?

   a. Very much support
   b. Somewhat support
   c. Somewhat oppose
   d. Very much oppose
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)
17. **Permanent question from recent Indices:**
In your opinion, should ultra-Orthodox schools be required to teach core curricular subjects including math, English, science and civics?
   a. They should be obligated
   b. They should not be obligated
   c. No opinion (not read aloud)

18. **Permanent question from recent Indices:**
In your opinion, what is the right way to enforce core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox schools?
   a. Deny funding to schools that do not teach the core curriculum, or
   b. Deny funding and view such refusal as a violation of the law punishable by high fines, or
   c. Provide partial funding to schools that do not fully teach the core curriculum, as is the norm today
   d. The core curriculum should not be mandatory
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

19. **A change in circumstances brought about changes in the 2014 Index question:**
   The previous Government established preference in providing housing and daycare benefits to those working or seeking work (referred to as “realizing earning potential”). Due to the Haredi parties’ demand, the current Coalition plans to reverse this to as to provide benefits to non-working yeshiva students. Do you think:
   a. Priority for housing and daycare benefits should be given to those who work or are seeking work, or

20. **Permanent question from recent Indices:**
To what extent are you satisfied with the Government’s policies in matters of religion and state?
   a. Very satisfied
   b. Somewhat satisfied
   c. Somewhat dissatisfied
   d. Very dissatisfied
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

21. **Question from the previous Index, with slight changes to reflect the current political situation:**
In most of the Coalitions in the last several decades, the ultra-Orthodox parties were members of the Coalitions and enjoyed great influence in matters of religion and state, including in the current Government. Do you support oppose a Government without the ultra-Orthodox parties?
   a. Very much support
   b. Somewhat support
   c. Somewhat oppose
   d. Very much oppose
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)
22. **Omnibus, January 2013:** The Chairman of the Knesset Finance Committee is a representative of the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism party, just like in most recent Governments. Do you support or oppose this?
   a. Support
   b. Oppose
   c. No opinion (not read aloud)

23. **New Question:** In recent years it has been reported that some senior people in politics, the economy and law-enforcement consult with mystics such as Rabbi Pinto, Rabbi Ifergan of Netivot and others. Do you support or oppose this phenomenon?
   a. Very much support
   b. Somewhat support
   c. Somewhat oppose
   d. Very much oppose
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

**Section on relations with Christians:**

24. **New Question:** In Jerusalem it often happens that ultra-Orthodox extremists spit [in an insulting manner] when they pass by Christian clergy. How do you think this should be addressed?
   a. No need to deal with this - it is not a crime and not a problem
   b. This must be dealt with as a minor criminal offense
   c. This must be dealt with as a high priority criminal offense
   d. No opinion (not read aloud)

25. **New Question:** Above David’s Tomb is the “Room of the Last Supper,” which is a holy site for Christians, but not for Jews. Currently Christian prayer is permitted there on a limited basis, and Jewish extremists harass the Christians at prayer. What do you think should be the Government’s position on this matter?
   a. Let Christians pray freely at the “Room of the Last Supper”
   b. Let Christians pray at this site on a limited basis, like today
   c. Forbid Christians from praying at the “Room of the Last Supper”
   d. No opinion (not read aloud)

**Background section:**

26. Gender
27. Age
28. Level of religiosity
29. Background and year of Aliyah for immigrants from the former Soviet Union
30. Level of education
31. Number of children under age 18
32. **New Question:** What stream of Judaism do you align yourself with?
   a. Ultra-Orthodox
   b. Zionist ultra-Orthodox
   c. Zionist Orthodox
   d. Conservative
   e. Reform
   f. Other
   g. Do not belong to any religious stream
33. Do you observe Shabbat?
   a. Yes, according to Halacha
   b. I observe parts of Shabbat (e.g. lighting candles or reciting Kiddush over wine)
   c. I do not observe Shabbat, but relate to it as a rest day with a special atmosphere
   d. I relate to it as a regular day off
   e. No opinion (not read aloud)

34. 2015 Knesset vote
35. Current voting inclination
36. Political world view
37. Income
38. Geographic location