

2020 Religion & State Index

12th Report



November 2020 – Cheshvan 5781
[Abridged report published in Sept. 2020 – Elul 5781]

Pollsters:
Rafi Smith & Olga Paniel



Written by:
Rabbi Uri Regev, Esq.

Design & Graphs:
Keren Wisgan & David Bogomolny

Translation:
David Bogomolny

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Key Findings	6
Level of Religiosity & Political Outlook	10
Freedom of Religion & Separation of Religion and State	12
The Central Conflicts in Israeli Society	15
Jewish Pluralism	
To which stream in Judaism do you belong, if at all?	17
Equality for the Jewish religious streams	18
Engagement of Diaspora Jewry	20
Conversion – “Who is a Jew?”	24
Religion, State, and Politics	
Who are the voters?	28
Participation of Haredi parties in the Coalition	29
Appointment of Haredi politicians as Knesset committee chairs	30
A party's commitment to religious freedom and equality of civic burden - will it affect the vote?	32
What does the public consider most important to promote in matters of religion and state?	34
Should Blue & White prevent legislation on matters of religion that conflict with its election promises?	38
The public trusts the Supreme Court, not the politicians and the Rabbinate	40
The Override Clause	41
Let Marriage Freedom Ring!	44
Shabbat: Public and Private	48
Public Transportation on Shabbat	49
COVID-19 and Religion & State	53
Enough with the Draft Dodging	55
Kashrut – Personal and Public	57
Would you eat at a food establishment uncertified by Chief Rabbinate?	59
Core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox schools	61
About the Index Survey	64

Cheshvan 5781 - November 2020

Dear Readers,

We are proud to present you with Hiddush's twelfth annual Israel Religion & State Index. The pride and satisfaction are twofold. Firstly, in that we are once again producing a unique survey unparalleled in its scope, continuity, and depth of exploration in all major Israeli religion-state issues. Secondly, in that the Index once again confirms our assertion that the overwhelming majority of the public supports the advancement of religious freedom and equality, in the spirit of the Israeli Declaration of Independence's promise and of the most basic democratic principles.

This Index is published during a turbulent time in Israel's history, in which the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and its severe impact upon the economy and society are interlaced with the strife-laden and unstable political system. Still, even at such a complex time, issues of religion & state remain prime on the public and political agenda. Many of these are erupting precisely on account of the pandemic and the political reality.

Such is the societal tension caused by the conduct of Israel's ultra-Orthodox sector in facing the pandemic, exacerbated by it being able to dictate to the whole country rules and exceptions by exerting political pressure and threats; such is the case with the nearing deadline set by the Supreme Court regarding the revocation of the unconstitutional Draft Law, resulting with great pressure from the ultra-Orthodox to adopt a new law to ensure that no yeshiva student shall be obligated to perform military or civilian service. Such legislation would undoubtedly be challenged again in court, including by Hiddush, for its unconstitutionality is self-evident; such is the case with the battle over the national budget and its many clauses dealing with funding for yeshivas and other expenditures demanded by the religious parties; Such is the case with the attempt to amend the Law of Return in order to restrict Aliyah of descendants of Jews who are not halakhically Jewish; Such is the case with the continuing Shabbat wars; etc., etc.

The Index provides valuable insights regarding pluralism and the Israel-Diaspora relationship. Not only does it reaffirm that the clear majority of Israel's adult Jewish population supports granting equal status for all Jewish denominations, but it also demonstrates that areas under the Chief Rabbinate's monopoly are resented by most Israeli Jews, and that there is majority support for active engagement of Diaspora Jewry in advocating for religious freedom and equality in Israel.

A consistent majority welcomes Diaspora Jewish leadership's active engagement on such issues as allowing freedom of choice in marriage by instituting civil marriage & divorce and ending the Chief Rabbinate's control over kashrut. This consistent finding is particularly important at a time when Israeli political leaders, whether from the Likud or the ultra-Orthodox parties, repeatedly assault the Diaspora's Jewish pluralism, reject its legitimacy, and fight against pluralism, such as in regards to the Western Wall plaza, conversion, and marriage. Often Diaspora Jewish leadership avoids playing an active role in advocating, together with Israeli partners, for pluralism and religious freedom in Israel. Such leaders would benefit from studying the Index and learning that while Israelis may not welcome Diaspora involvement in matters of security and the territories,

they are eager to have Diaspora partners in enhancing Israel's Jewish and democratic character.

The report before you is rich with insights. In part, it follows the conclusions of Indices that preceded it, but it also brings to light new aspects of religion-state relations. It provides a compass for better understanding the connection between the issues of religion and state on the one hand, and the voting choices Israelis make. Alongside security, territorial and economic considerations, which are the overriding considerations for most voters in deciding who to vote for, the Index indicates that the battle over religion and the state also weighs heavily. It may decide the outcome when voters decide between parties whose security and economic agendas are similar to their views.

The Index presents a roadmap for understanding which issues potential voters attach the most importance to, identifies the target audiences of parties in terms of their religious identities and positions on these controversial issues, and explains the increase in votes for Yisrael Beiteinu when it shifted its focus to issues of religious freedom and equality of civic burden. It underscores the challenge facing both Blue & White and Yesh Atid in keeping their votes as they develop their positions on issues of religion and state in the current Knesset and when they come to prepare for upcoming elections, and more.

In particular, this report underscores the gap between the policies, which the governing parties pursue on matters of religion and state under pressure from the ultra-Orthodox parties, and the wills of their own constituents and that of Israel's entire adult Jewish public. This gap brings most of the components of the government coalition to the point of posing a growing threat to the rule of law and to the authority of the High Court and its independence.

They claim they do it in the name of democracy and the "will of the People". These politicians are undermining the legitimacy of the Court, accusing it of being detached from the People "that seeks tradition and religion", boasting that they and only they faithfully represent the will of the public. The Index demonstrates how cynical and artificial these claims are and illustrates the truth: that the public's trust in the Supreme Court is far greater than its trust in the Government, the Knesset and the Chief Rabbinate. This is despite the and blatant attacks against the Court, which carries the high price of undermining the foundations of Israeli democracy altogether and leads to increasing public distrust in all government institutions.

The Index presents the reader with good news; there is broad national consensus on religion and state issues. However, this consensus is radically different from the practice of generations of Israeli governments on the right, left and center. This broad national consensus, of about two-thirds of the adult Jewish public, and even more on some controversial issues, is characterized by the desire to see the full realization of the Declaration of Independence's assurances of "freedom of religion and conscience" and of "equality for all without religious distinction". The vast majority of the Jewish public supports Israel's identity as a Jewish and democratic state, and a large majority rejects

attempts to transform it into a “Torah State” and enforce religious laws upon the general public.

This year’s report is characterized by a slightly different design from its predecessors, as the visual presentation of the findings has been increased, and accompanying text has been reduced, highlighting the insights that emerge from the data. We are attaching an abridged version to the full report, whose main purpose is to present the issues of religion and state through the data and its visual representation, without the accompanying analysis.

We would love to hear from you and answer questions that arise for readers of the data and analysis herein. We are, of course, at your service in any matter related to the promotion of freedom of religion and equality, and we encourage you to express your support for a Jewish and democratic Israel, grounded in the assurances of its Declaration of Independence. You can do so easily by adding your name to the “Vision Statement for Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State”, which has already gained the support of leaders, clergy, activists and organizations, in Israel and throughout the Diaspora, of all streams of Judaism and political inclinations. You can sign the Vision Statement [here](#).

With Best Wishes,



RABBI URI REGEV, ESQ.
PRESIDENT AND CEO



STANLEY P. GOLD
CHAIR

Hiddush – Freedom of Religion for Israel

Website: www.hiddush.org / E-mail: info@hiddush.org

This publication was made possible through a generous grant from the Stanley, Marion, Paul and Edward Bergman Foundation

Key Findings

[All data in the Index refer to the positions of the adult Jewish public in Israel]

❖ What kind of Jews are Israeli Jews?

1. 65% identify themselves as secular [47%] or "traditional-not-religious" [18%] (whose positions regarding public policy on religion and state are close to the positions of secular Israelis), 10% - ultra-Orthodox (referred to in Israel as Haredi), 11% - Zionist Orthodox (referred to in Israel as National Religious or Zionist Religious) or Zionist ultra-Orthodox (referred to in Israel as Hardali), 14% - traditional-religious.

❖ How do Israeli Jews view the relationship between religion and state?

2. 83% support freedom of religion and conscience in Israel [freedom of choice and behavior for secular and religious people according to their outlooks]; 63% support the separation of religion and state.
3. The tension between secular and ultra-Orthodox Israelis is perceived as close in its severity to that between political right and left on the scale of internal tensions in Israeli society [69% and 76% respectively], well above other major tensions [rich and poor - 17%; Eastern (referred to in Israel as Mizrahi or Sephardi) and European (referred to in Israel as Ashkenazi) descent - 15%; veteran Israelis and immigrants - 3%].

❖ Religious pluralism for Israel too!

4. 65% of the Israeli public supports equal status for the 3 major Jewish denominations - Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform. Among secular Israelis, the support rate is 88%. Traditional Israelis - 62% support it. 60% of those who voted for Likud in March 2020 and 91% of those who voted for Blue & White support it as well.
5. 63% support the engagement of Diaspora Jewish organizations in strengthening freedom of religion and pluralism in Israel [i.e. freedom of choice in marriage, ending the Chief Rabbinate's monopoly on matters of conversion, and more]. 85% of the secular public supports this, as does 65% of the traditional public, 56% of those who intend to vote for the Likud, 80% - for Blue & White, and 70% of those who are undecided.

❖ Are the new immigrants Jewish?

6. A large majority of Israelis does not see the need for religious conversion approved by the Chief Rabbinate as a condition for the State to recognize the Judaism of new immigrants. Only 34% consider conversion via the Chief Rabbinate is necessary, whereas 36% support the State's recognition of the Jewish identities of descendants who identify as Jewish born to at least one Jewish parent, whether it's the father or the mother, and another 30% would be satisfied with alternative religious conversions performed outside the auspices of the Chief Rabbinate, whether they are Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform. Only 9% of secular Israelis and 36% of those who are traditional see the need for conversion approved by the Chief Rabbinate. Only 41% of Likud voters and 11% of Blue & White voters in March 2020, as well as 28% of those who are currently undecided consider conversion via the Chief Rabbinate necessary.

❖ Religion, State, Politics

7. There has been strong and consistent opposition over the years to the participation of the ultra-Orthodox parties in the Government Coalition in a way that gives them the ability to dictate government policy and legislation on matters of religion and state. In the current Index, 64% are opposed. This is also the position of 74% of those who are undecided regarding their vote in the next election.
8. 79% oppose the appointments of MK Rabbi Gafni to head the Knesset Finance Committee and MK Rabbi Asher to head the Knesset Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee. All political camps oppose this, including the right [63%]. Among those who are undecided about their votes in the next election - 89% oppose.
9. There is a clear correlation between political leanings and religious identity. A large majority of those who self-identify as ultra-Orthodox [84%], Zionist ultra-Orthodox [77%], and Zionist Orthodox [71%] identify as politically right-wing or very right-wing.
10. What issues are most important to the public to promote in the field of religion and state? The top three: freedom of religion and equality of civic burden in general, allowing public transportation on Shabbat, and civil marriage and divorce. Only 17% of the public responded that none of the issues listed were important to it. Only 1% of the secular public considered none of the listed issues important to it [and 6% of the traditional-non-religious public].
11. 62% expressed support for Blue & White to use the power it was granted in its coalition agreement with Likud to prevent the passage of legislation that contradicts its principles and promises on matters of religion and state. Among those who intend to vote for Blue & White in the next election - 90% support this.
12. 93% of Blue & White voters in the last election were secular or traditional-not-religious. After the party joined the Coalition with the ultra-Orthodox parties, the percentage of secular Israelis who intend to vote for it dropped to 66%, and the percentage of secular Israelis who intend to vote for Yesh Atid rose to 79%. A similar shift has taken place in the percentage of traditional-not-religious people who intend to vote for both parties.
13. 80% of secular voters responded that should a party [compatible with their political views on security and economic issues] commit itself to promoting freedom of religion and equality of civic burden, this would increase the likelihood that they would vote for it, compared to only 6% who responded that this would decrease the likelihood of that [namely, there exists a gap of 74% in favor of increasing the likelihood of secular Israelis voting for such a party]. Similarly, in relation to the traditional-not-religious public, the gap is significantly larger compared to the average among the general public [a gap of 52% in favor of "will increase the likelihood": 63% versus 11%].

❖ Let Marriage Freedom ring!

14. 65% support State recognition of all forms of marriage [civil and religious, including Reform and Conservative]. Between 2009 and 2014 there was a gradual increase in the support rate, from 53% in 2009 To 66% in 2014. Since then it has stabilized at a rate of about 2/3 of the

public. Most Likud voters [55%] and about half of Yemina voters [47%] support freedom of choice in marriage. Among undecided voters, the support rate is 72%.

15. Just under half of the adult Jewish public [49% of those who expressed a view] would choose Orthodox marriage if the State of Israel allowed them to choose [this includes those who would choose an Orthodox marriage outside the auspices of the Chief Rabbinate, meaning that the number who would prefer to marry under the auspices of the Chief Rabbinate is even lower]. The preference for Orthodox marriage gradually dropped from 65% in 2009 to 49%. Only 19% of the secular public would marry via the Rabbinate if given a choice.

❖ **Shabbat: Private and Public**

16. Only 25% of the Israeli public observes Shabbat according to Halacha. 20% partially observe [e.g. lighting Shabbat candles or Kiddush], 34% consider Shabbat to be a day of rest with a special atmosphere, and 21% consider it a regular day off. Among the secular public 89% responded that it does not observe the Sabbath, either fully or partially.
17. As for the debate over allowing public transportation on Shabbat, which is currently not allowed throughout most of Israel, 71% of the public supports it [including 35% of the Zionist Orthodox public]. 96% of secular Israelis support public transportation on Shabbat, as does 66% of the traditional public. Excepting the ultra-Orthodox parties, voters for all parties expressed strong support for the introduction of public transportation on Shabbat, including 65% of Likud and Yemina voters, as well as 95% of Blue & White voters.
18. There is a significant gap between the importance attached by the public to allowing public transportation on Shabbat [31%] to the importance it attaches to permitting mini-markets and businesses on Shabbat [16%]. This gap is consistent and also appeared in previous surveys. It shows that in the eyes of the public there is a difference between the two. This difference indicates that it is not a rejection of Shabbat altogether, but rather a nuanced and discerning approach.

❖ **Trust in the Supreme Court, not in politicians and the Chief Rabbinate**

19. Contrary to the rhetoric of politicians attacking the Supreme Court and undermining its legitimacy, of the four institutions relevant for comparison [the Government, Knesset, Supreme Court, and Chief Rabbinate] the highest level of public trust is in the Supreme Court. It is more than four times higher than the trust in the Government, 9 times higher than the trust in the Knesset, and 3.5 times higher than the trust in the Chief Rabbinate. Among secular Israelis, 55% have the highest confidence in the Supreme Court, but only 3% have the highest confidence in the Knesset and 6% in the Government. The ultra-Orthodox also do not have much faith in the Knesset and the Government [3% and 4% respectively], even though they are represented in it, and they have 0% confidence in the Supreme Court and 56% have the highest confidence in the Chief Rabbinate.
20. Among those who expressed an opinion, 65% oppose the enactment of an override clause intended to infringe upon the authority and status of the Supreme Court. Likud voters were divided [38% supported and 34% opposed]. Among Blue & White voters, 79% oppose the legislation, and only 7% support it.

❖ **Corona and the ultra-Orthodox**

21. 74% of the public rejects the ultra-Orthodox sector's approach, according to which the corona virus was sent by God. This claim is rejected even by a small majority of the Zionist Orthodox public [51%]. 70% reject the claim that criticism of the ultra-Orthodox sector in the context of the Corona crisis is based upon racism and hatred of the ultra-Orthodox.

❖ **Enough with the draft dodging**

22. Only 22% of the public accepts the position of the ultra-Orthodox parties that yeshiva students should be exempted from military or civic service because "Torah is their craft." The position of the majority is that yeshiva students should be enlisted, except for a quota of exemptions for the exceptional scholars [49%], or they should all be enlisted [29%]. In all political camps there is opposition to the ultra-Orthodox position. Even among the right-wing camp, only 35% support it [22% of Likud voters in March 2020, and 20% of Yemina voters]. Among undecided voters, the percentage of support for the ultra-Orthodox position is only 10%.

❖ **Kashrut without the Chief Rabbinate**

23. While 100% of the ultra-Orthodox public and 98% of the Zionist Orthodox public is strict about keeping kosher according to Halacha, both at home and outside of the home, only 4% of the secular public adheres to the laws of kashrut in this manner. Over all, 38% of the public keeps strictly kosher, 27% partially keeps kosher, and 35% does not keep kosher.
24. Only 21% responded that they would eat only in food establishments holding a kashrut certificate from the Chief Rabbinate, 21% would be satisfied with alternative kashrut certification, and 58% are not concerned with a kashrut certificate at all. Even among the 38% of the public who responded that they are strict about keeping kosher according to Halacha, only half [51%] responded that they would only consume food under the supervision of the Chief Rabbinate.

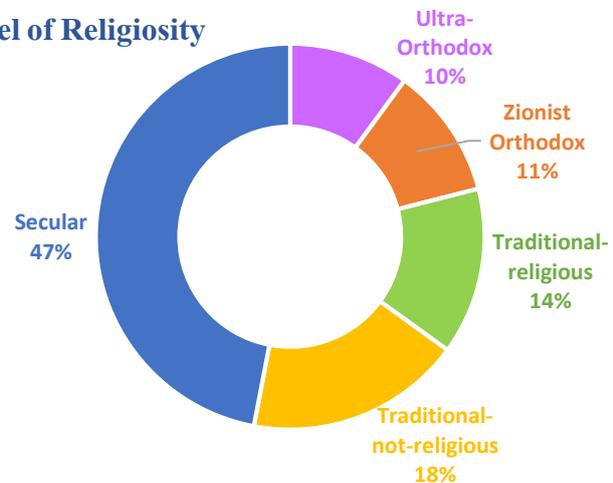
❖ **Core curriculum for everyone**

25. 77% are of the opinion that all ultra-Orthodox boys schools operating with state funding should be required to teach core curricular subjects on a full scale, like all public schools. [Among the non-ultra-Orthodox public, the support rate is 85%]. This is supported by a majority of voters of all political camps. [For example, 78% of Likud voters in March 2020 and 94% of Blue & White voters]. Similar findings also arise with regard to the matter of whether all ultra-Orthodox schools should be required to participate in the universal 'Growth and Effectiveness' exams, which are designed to enable an objective comparison and examination of schools' achievements in basic education.

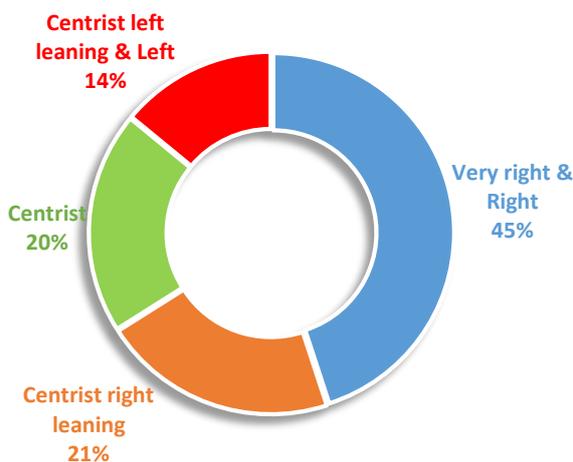
Level of Religiosity and Political Outlook

A comparison of two fundamental breakdowns of Israel’s adult Jewish public, namely those of level of religiosity and political outlook, is essential for understanding issues of religion and state in Israel’s political reality, particularly that of today’s. Below you can read about the unequivocal positions of the majority of the Israeli public, which favors religious freedom and equality. We are often asked about the contradiction between this fact and the government’s policies, which severely undermine these core values. This contradiction does not call into question the credibility of the findings of the many surveys, which indicate broad public support for freedom of religion and equality. Rather, it is explained by the gap between the public’s positions on other political issues and its positions on matters of religion and state. It illustrates one of the weaknesses of the Israeli political system, insofar as it is expected to reflect the will of the public. As we will see below, this also holds true when it comes to the will of the ruling parties’ voters. The public’s vote, given the election system used in Israel today, is driven primarily by its views on matters of personal and national security, the territories, and the settlements.

Level of Religiosity



Political Outlook



The political distribution of the public has been consistent in recent years, as is evidenced in Hiddush’s polls over the years and many others conducted by different entities. Approximately 65% of the public places itself right of center, whereas only ~15% places itself left of center. This explains the election results and the composition of the coalition. This was not the distribution of political views in the first decades of the state, and it will not necessarily remain the distribution in the future, but in the present and for some years now - this is Israel’s reality.

There is no overlap between political self-identity and religious self-identity, nor between the positions on other political issues and the positions on matters of religion and state. **Approximately two-thirds [65%] position themselves to the right of center politically, and the rate is the same [65%] among those who identify themselves as secular [47%] or “traditional-not-religious” [18%].** The definitions of the categories of religious identity are based upon those used for many years by Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics, since it separated “traditional” Israelis into two subgroups: “traditional-religious” and “traditional-not-so-religious.” As we have shown in the analysis of the traditional public’s attitudes in past Index reports, and as we will demonstrate again this year, this distinction is of great importance and has profound implications.

It turns out that there is a considerable difference between the positions of the two subgroups on public policy questions regarding matters of religion and state. While the first group, which is smaller [~14%], holds positions that are closer to those of the Zionist Orthodox public, the second group, which is larger [~18%], more closely resembles the secular public. This explains the findings that will be detailed later in this report, according to which about two-thirds of the public supports all aspects of religious freedom and equality of the civic burden [regarding some, the rate of support is even greater], while the government coalitions ignore this and bow their heads to the dictates of the ultra-Orthodox parties, which only a small minority of the public supports.

Spokesmen for the ruling parties, both civil and ultra-Orthodox, have more than once made statements to the effect that the government's policy of legislation and religious coercion [e.g. Shabbat issues] is supported by the majority of the public, claiming that "the majority of the public is religious and traditional" or that "the majority of the public supports the tradition." Such statements are merely an expression of political motives and a desire to justify the policies pursued by government coalitions. They do not describe reality. As the data in the current Index and its predecessors clearly indicate - these statements are wrong at best and knowingly false at worst. Not only is the traditional public divided on these questions, and not only do most of them support freedom of religion and equality, but even among the Zionist Orthodox public there is a significant percentage that reject the religious "status quo" and support various aspects of religious freedom.

Below is a break-down of the correlation between religious and political identity, according to the distribution of those who are included in the different religious categories, based on the political view with which they identify. This break-down speaks for itself and clarifies the correlation between increasing levels of religious identity and self-place on the political right.

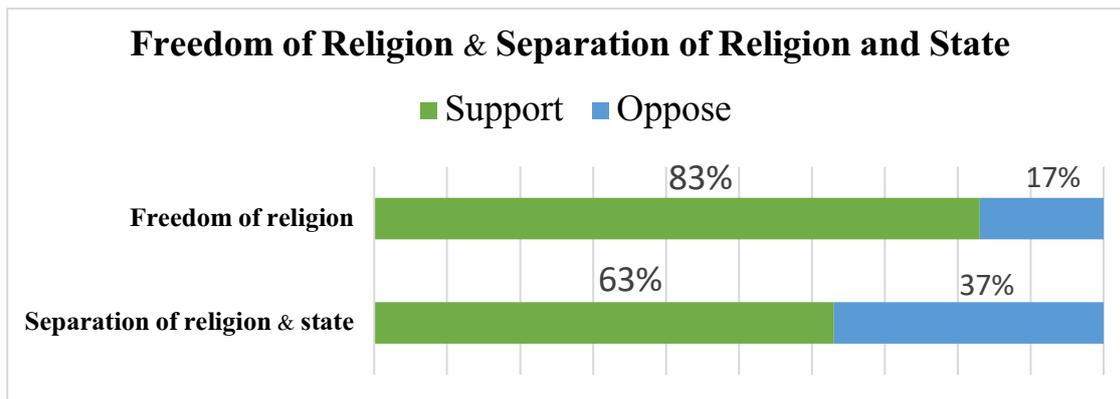
Later in the report we shall further detail the findings, insofar as they affect voting patterns in Israel, both in relation to choices that were made in previous elections, as well as in relation to the forthcoming elections – if only the leaders of the civil parties would be attentive to their significance.

	<i>Political Outlook</i>					
	<i>(by level of religiosity)</i>					
	<i>TOTAL</i>	Ultra-Orthodox	Zionist Orthodox	Traditional-Religious	Traditional-not-religious	Secular
Very right & Right	45%	84%	73%	60%	52%	23%
Centrist right leaning	21%	12%	21%	18%	24%	23%
Centrist	20%	4%	5%	18%	17%	30%
Centrist left leaning & Left	14%	0%	1%	4%	7%	24%

Freedom of Religion & Separation of Religion and State

The graphs below clearly show the public's positions regarding the two alternatives presented in the annual Index since Hiddush's establishment in 2009:

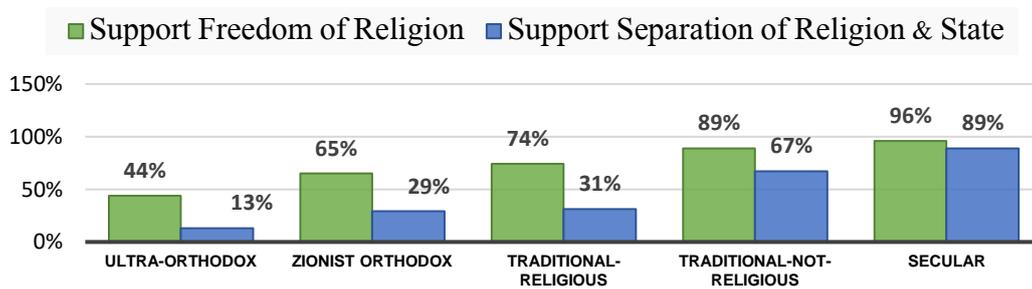
1. **Do you agree or disagree that in the State of Israel there should be freedom of religion and conscience, that is freedom of choice and behavior for secular and religious people, according to their outlooks?**
2. **Do you support or oppose the separation of religion and state?**



The insights that emerge from the findings are also clear:

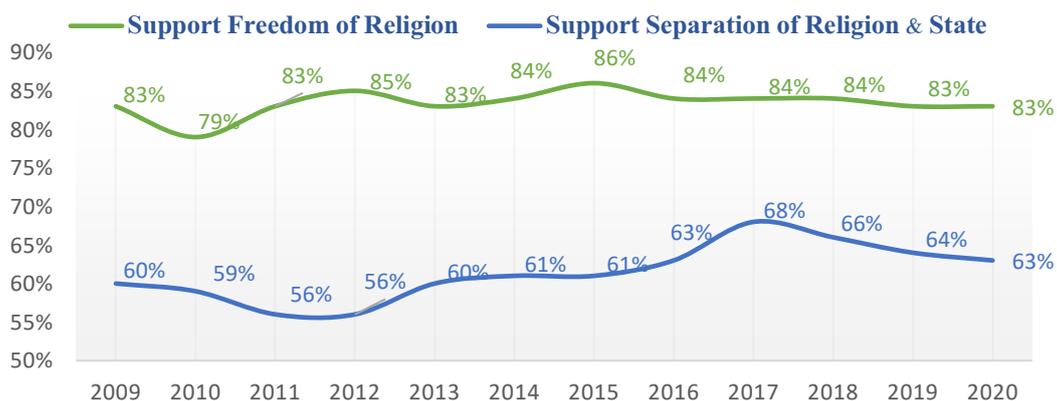
1. **Supporting the realization of the Declaration of Independence's promise of freedom of religion and equality without distinction of religion, is significantly larger than that expressed for the separation of religion and state [83% compared to 63%].** This difference is explained by two factors, among others: A. There is significant support for freedom of religion and equality among the ultra-Orthodox and Zionist Orthodox public, who rightly understand the question to refer to their own rights and status; B. Many understand the alternative of separating religion from state as separating Judaism from the state, and while they support religious freedom and equality, they also support the identity of the State of Israel as a Jewish state. Therefore, they see no contradiction between Israel's Jewish identity and freedom of religion and equality, but they understand the alternative of separation as contradictory to this identity. This consideration can be illustrated, for example, in the restrictions on bible studies in public schools in the United States, and the prohibition on state financial support for religious services that arises from the principle of separation. While the majority of the Jewish public in Israel does not oppose bible studies in public education [although it wants bible studies and Jewish education to be taught in a pluralistic way, as we showed in the 2017 Religion and State Index], and it does not oppose support for religious services, provided that they are distributed equally and not exceed a reasonable portion of the State budget.

Support for Religious Freedom & Separation of Religion and State (by level of religiosity)



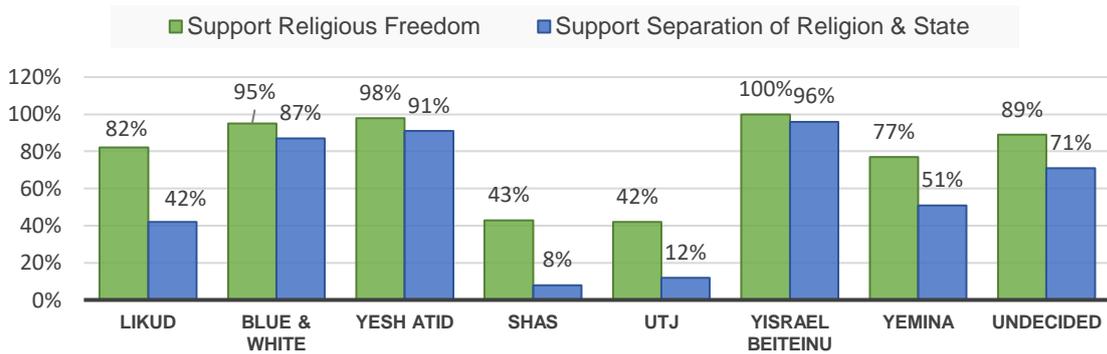
- Support rates have been stable and have not changed much in recent years [especially considering the range of the statistical error], and they reliably and consistently represent the positions of the public.
- As for support for the separation of religion and state, in the early years of conducting the Index, the rate of support was below 60%, but it has been rising gradually since 2013, and in recent years it has reached a level of support of about 65%. This increase is undoubtedly a result of the growing public opposition to the excessive influence of the ultra-Orthodox parties, the increases in funding from the state coffers to further targets and goals dictated by the religious parties, and the growing opposition to various expressions of religious coercion and gender exclusion.

Support for Freedom of Religion & Separation of Religion and State (over time)



- While there is greater support for religious freedom and equality among those who identify with the political center and the left, even among those on the right there is a majority that supports these principles [for example, 82% of those who intend to vote for the Likud]. That is, support for religious freedom and equality does not separate the left from the right. Furthermore - it is important to emphasize that among those who, at the time of the survey, responded that they have not yet decided whom to vote for, 89% support freedom of religion and equality!

Support for Freedom of Religion & Separation of Religion and State (by current voting intention)

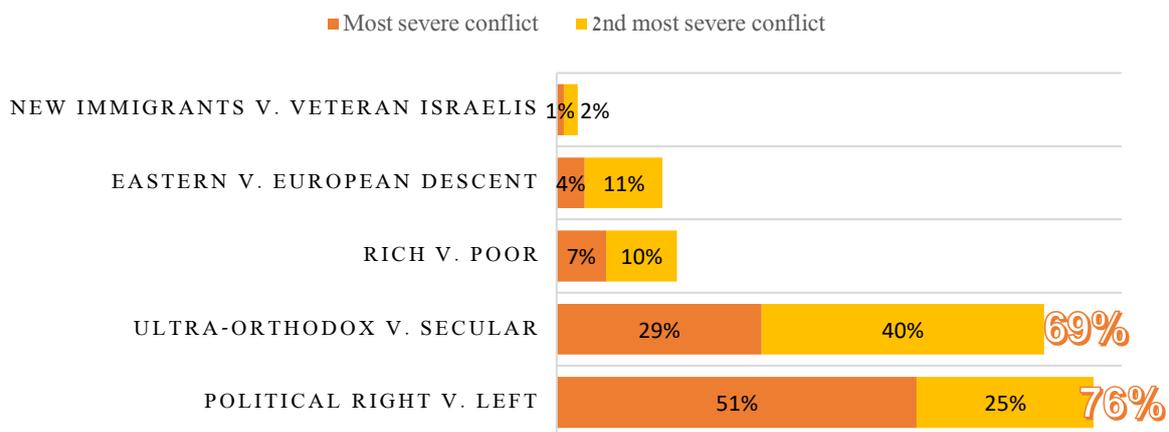


- It is interesting to note that 51% of those who intend to vote for Yamina support separation of religion and state. As we, indicated elsewhere, this reflects both the growing percentage of traditional and secular Israeli Jews who currently intend to vote for this party in the next elections and the liberal religious component [on matters of religion and state], which is part of its base of support.

The Central Conflicts in Israeli Society

The question: **In Israeli Jewish society, there are many internal tensions and conflicts. Which of the following tensions seems most severe to you? And which is the second-most severe?**

PRINCIPLE CONFLICTS AND TENSIONS IN ISRAELI SOCIETY

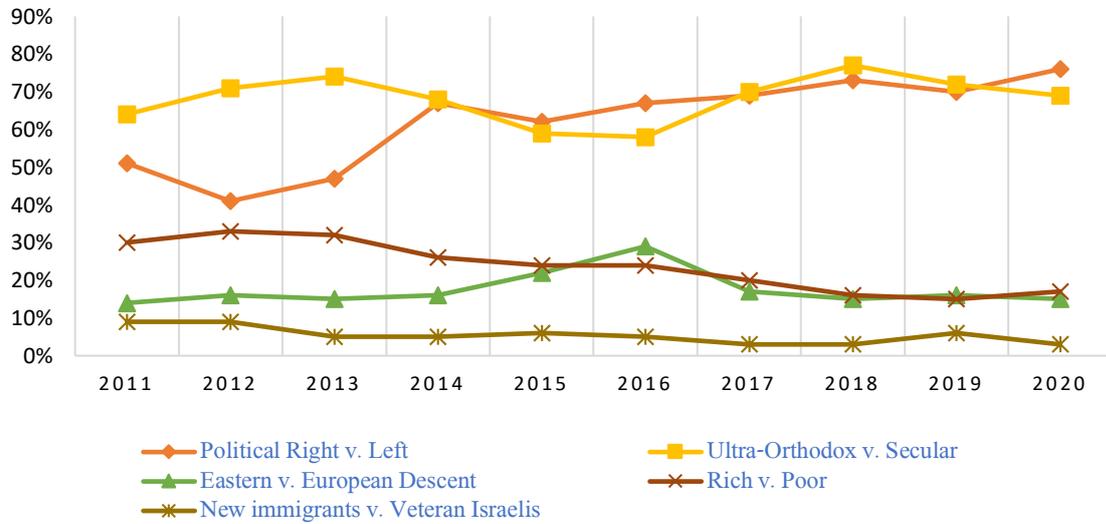


Examining the findings regarding the most difficult tensions in Israeli society [internal tensions in Israeli Jewish society. We did not include Jewish / Arab relations, nor security / peace / territories issues, although to a large extent they are expressed in reference to the tension between the political right and left] indicates the following:

1. There is a clear and noticeable difference between the tensions between Israel's political right and left and between secular and ultra-Orthodox Jews on the one hand, and the other conflicts included in the survey. This indicates that the rest of Israel's internal tensions, which agitated the country in the distant past, although not gone, are marginal in their severity in the eyes of the majority of the public. This has been consistent, with limited fluctuations, for years.
2. The tension between Israel's ultra-Orthodox and secular populations, which largely represents the struggles of religion and state in Israel, is very high. In the years 2011-2014, this tension was considered to be more severe in the eyes of the public than the tension between political right and left, and since
3. then it has been of comparable severity [putting together those who consider it to be the most severe and the second most severe]. Anyone who is watching what is happening in the political arena and the way in which many party leaders are speaking and acting understands how this tension came to soar from a level of about 40% -50% in its severity [cumulatively] in 2011-2012, to a level of about 70% -76% in recent years.
4. There are politicians, social activists and media professionals who devote most of their energy to fueling ethnic tensions, linking them to both political and economic tensions. An examination of the public's responses to the question posed annually in Hiddush's Index shows good news as well: the tensions between Jews of Eastern and of European descent are not perceived as severe tensions in Israeli society. Consistently [except for a certain increase in the years 2015-2016], only about 15% of the public identifies it as the most severe or second most severe tension that Israeli society faces.

- Similarly, the tension between rich and poor is marginal in the degree of severity attributed to it by the public, and this has also consistently declined from about 30% ten years ago to 15% -17% in recent years.

PRINCIPLE CONFLICTS AND TENSIONS IN ISRAELI SOCIETY (OVER TIME)



- It is worth noting that the distribution of the respondents who believe that the tension between ultra-Orthodox and secular Israelis as the most severe or second most severe in Israeli society, indicates that 75% of undecided Israelis hold this view! This means that the tension over issues of religion and state rates very highly in the minds of those who have not yet decided whom to cast their votes for, as will be demonstrated in further Index questions. This matter will no doubt heavily impact their considerations when deciding how to vote.

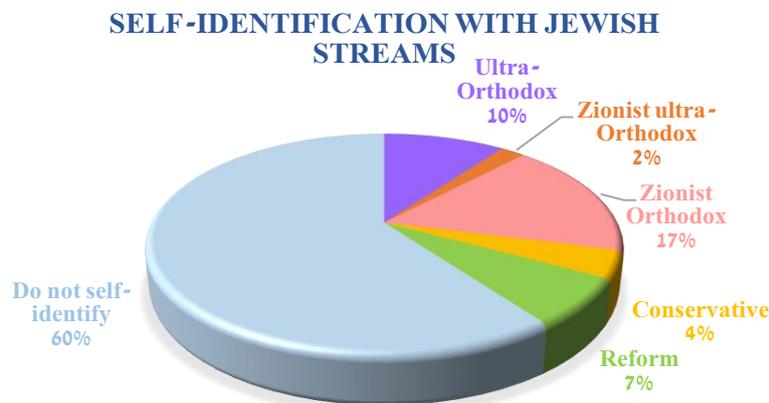
Jewish Pluralism

❖ To which stream in Judaism do you belong, if at all?

At the beginning of this report, we detailed and analyzed the findings regarding the political and religious identities of the adult Jewish public in Israel. The division that was accepted for many years regarding Jewish identity was into three categories: religious, traditional, and secular. This developed into five categories used by the Central Bureau of Statistics and many other research institutions: Haredi, Zionist Orthodox, traditional-religious, traditional-not-religious, and secular. However, in parallel with this division, and especially with the expansion of the activities of the non-Orthodox streams in Israel, the question as to whether the Jewish public in Israel defines itself according to terms common in the Diaspora is often explored, and whether the division into streams of Judaism is relevant to this. So does the Central Bureau of Statistics in its social survey, and this is found in quite a few other studies.

In the Index surveys, we also examine this issue, and ask: **With which stream in Judaism do you align yourself?**

The following is the distribution of the answers of the representative sample of the adult Jewish public in Israel:



Examining the answers over time reveals stability with slight changes [within statistical error from year to year]. **A slight decrease can be seen in the rate of those who align with Zionist Orthodoxy [from 21% in 2015 to 17% now]** and a slight increase in those who align with ultra-Orthodox Judaism [from 8% in 2015 to 10% now]. These changes have been diagnosed in many studies as a trend, related to both the very high birth rate in the ultra-Orthodox sector and the phenomenon of Zionist Orthodox Jews (and to a lesser degree ultra-Orthodox Jews) leaving their sector. As for the non-Orthodox streams, the distinction between them from the point of view of the general public is not always known, and therefore the figure should also be considered together, that is - **11% aligning themselves with a non-Orthodox religious stream. This figure has been consistent since 2015**, with slight changes that are not statistically significant. It is impressive on the one hand and poses no simple challenges to the non-Orthodox movements on the other.

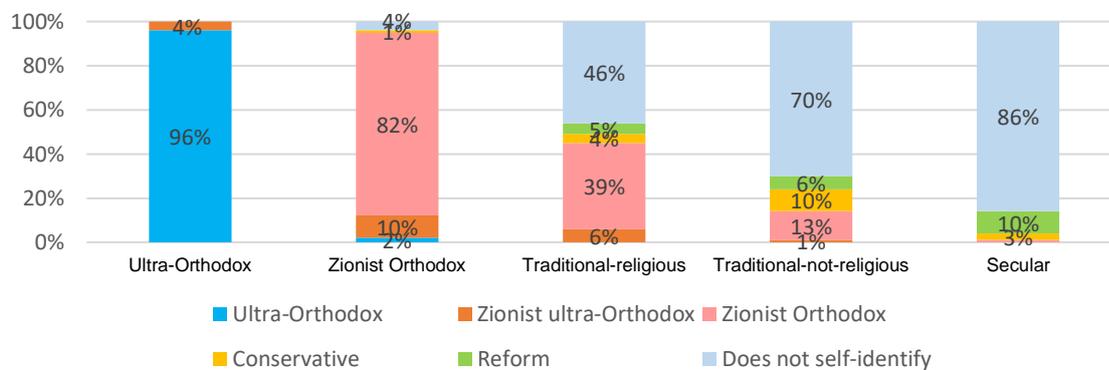
Self-identification with Religious Streams
(by political outlook)

	TOTAL	Ultra-Orthodox	Zionist ultra-Orthodox	Zionist Orthodox	Conservative	Reform	Don't self-identify
Very right & Right	45%	84%	77%	71%	48%	39%	29%
Centrist right leaning	21%	10%	23%	17%	34%	14%	24%
Centrist	20%	4%	0%	11%	15%	29%	27%
Centrist left leaning & Left	14%	2%	0%	1%	3%	18%	20%

The data breakdown gives us an idea of the other characteristics of those belonging to the various streams, and with it, insights as to their target audiences and their views. Given the relatively small number of those included in each group in the sample these findings should of course be treated with caution, but it should be noted that they are consistent with conclusions drawn in other studies and explorations.

There is a clear correlation between political leanings and religious identity. A large majority of those who belong to the ultra-Orthodox stream [84%], Zionist ultra-Orthodox [77%], and Zionist Orthodox [71%] identify themselves as right-wing or very right-wing. On the other hand, those who do not belong to any religious stream are spread across the entire political spectrum. A difference can be found between the political identities of those who belong to the Reform stream and the Conservative stream [53% right and right leaning centrists among Reform Jews, compared to 82% of Conservative Jews; and on the other hand, 47% of Reform Jews identify as left of center - compared to 18% of Conservative Jews]. As expected, the percentage of immigrants from the former USSR who do not align themselves with any stream is larger than average [71%], and it is also worth noting the preference of immigrants for the Reform stream [13%], compared to the Conservative stream [4%]. However, one should be cautious about drawing conclusions based on these data due to the small number of sample participants in each of these subgroups.

Self-identification with Jewish streams
(by level of religiosity)



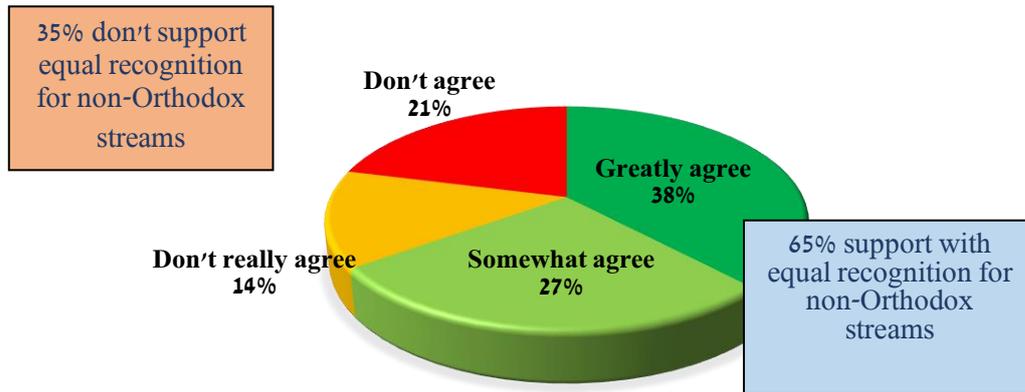
❖ Equality for the Jewish religious streams

One of the main battles in the field of religion and state relations, which also entails a growing conflict with Diaspora Jewry, deals with the status of the non-Orthodox streams in Israel. These streams, particularly the Reform and Conservative movements, include the vast majority of American Jewry that identifies with the religious streams. Their growth in Israel in recent decades has been accompanied by a backlash of the religious parties and the Chief Rabbinate, which translates into policies and legislation that block recognition of their status equal to that of Orthodoxy. Prominent examples that have occupied quite a bit of the political system are the issues of “Who is a Jew?” and conversion, as well as the issue of egalitarian prayer services at the Western Wall. The controversy over equality for the streams covers many other diverse areas, quite a few of which find their way to the Supreme Court.

This issue has been examined in the Index surveys since their inception. Their findings are clear and consistent: two-thirds of the adult Jewish public are in favor of granting equal status to the non-Orthodox streams, and this figure has been stable since 2009.

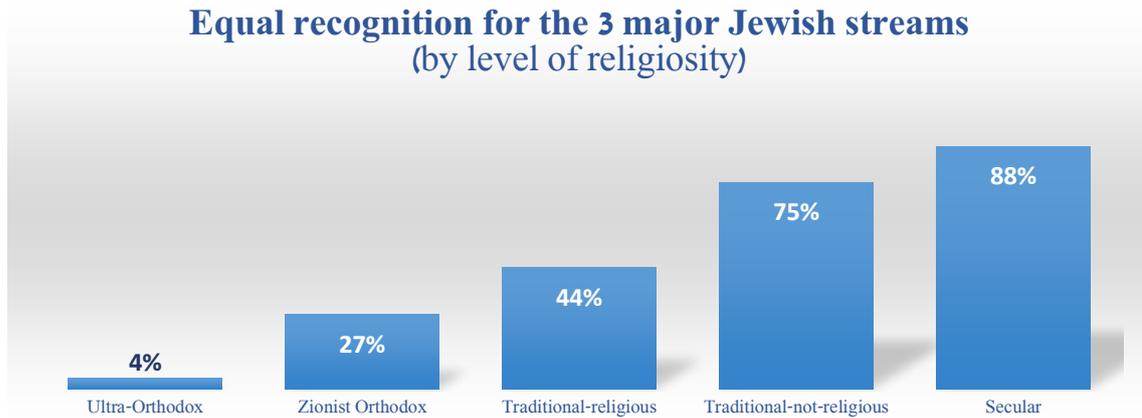
We asked: Do you agree or disagree that equal status in Israel should be granted to the 3 major streams in Judaism - Orthodox, Conservative and Reform?

EQUAL RECOGNITION FOR THE 3 MAJOR JEWISH STREAMS (AMONG 91% WHO GAVE AN OPINION)



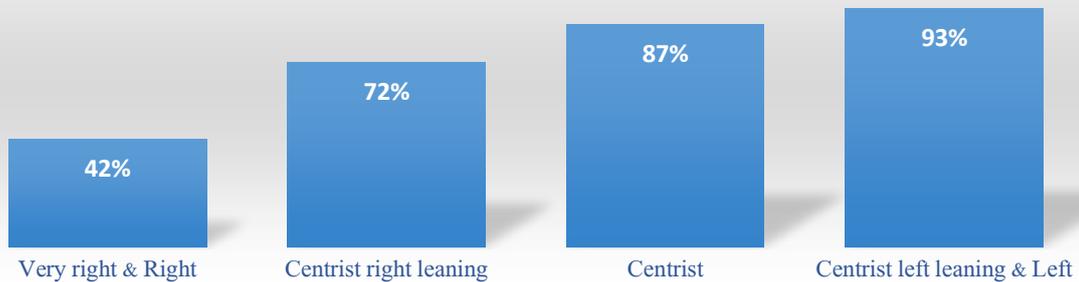
The data breakdown also reveals the high support of the secular public [88%] and the gap in the positions of the two traditional subgroups: while among the traditional-not-religious public there is support for equality of the streams at 75%, among the traditional-religious public the support rate is only 44%. It should be emphasized that **even among the Zionist Orthodox public there is support of 27%, and this fact is consistent and complements insights we pointed out throughout the Index report, namely - the existence of a liberal Orthodox religious group, which adopts and supports many aspects of religious freedom and pluralism.**

Equal recognition for the 3 major Jewish streams (by level of religiosity)



Only in the right-wing political camp is there an opposition of a slight majority to equal status [58%], while among all other political camps, from right leaning centrists to the left, the large majority supports this [72% - 93%]. A large majority of currently undecided voters [76%] and the majority of Likud voters in the last election [60%] support this.

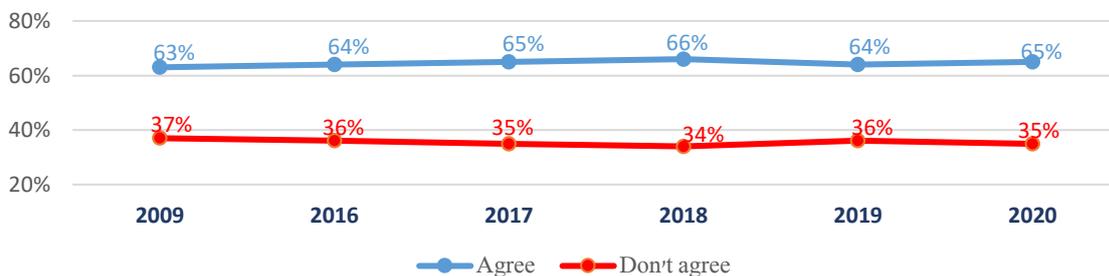
Equal recognition for the 3 major streams (by political outlook)



Equal recognition for the 3 major streams (by vote in March 2020 elections)



Equal recognition for the 3 major streams (over time)



❖ Engagement of Diaspora Jewry

The partnership with Diaspora Jewry has long been characterized as a strategic asset for the State of Israel. This makes headlines from time to time, and it is discussed in various forums in Israel and in the Diaspora. The growing tension between the State of Israel and the Diaspora is a fact, contributed to by many factors. There is no doubt that one of the reasons for this is the gap between the pluralistic nature of Diaspora Jewry, particularly American Jewry, and Israeli policy on religion and state, which often disaffects Diaspora Jewry. This includes both a discriminatory policy [in marriage, conversion, education, funding, etc.] and the insulting rhetoric of some government spokesmen, the ultra-Orthodox parties and the religious establishment. This policy also makes it difficult for the younger generation in the Diaspora to identify with and support Israel.

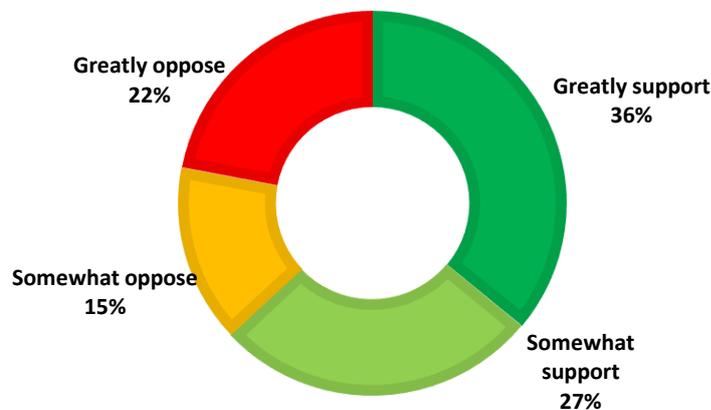
Among the Jewish leadership in the United States, there is hesitation in actively engaging in the struggle over religion and state in Israel, partially due to a feeling that the Jewish public in Israel does not approve of such involvement, as well as a reluctance to clash with Israeli political leadership. Quite a few studies in recent years have sought to examine the Israeli public's attitude toward the engagement of Diaspora

Jewry, but most of them focused on questions of security and borders, or examining in principle and in general whether the Israeli government should take into account the positions of Diaspora Jewry.

Hiddush's Index focuses on issues of religion and state, and we examine even this issue from the perspective of religion and state battles. In slightly different formulations we have presented the question several times in recent years, and we have found that the clear position of the majority of the public in Israel regarding the engagement of Diaspora Jewry in matters of religion and state, is quite different from the conclusions drawn in other studies regarding the engagement of Diaspora Jewry in matters of peace and security or in general.

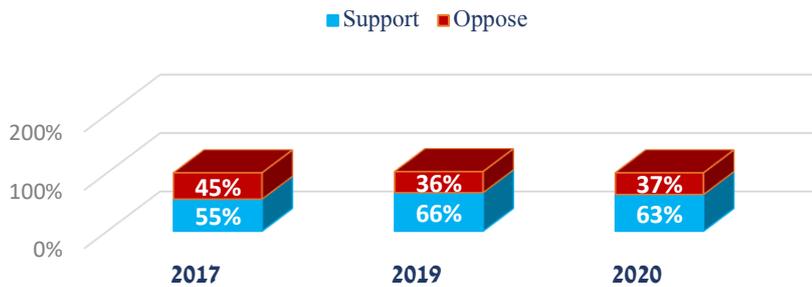
We asked: **Tensions between the Israeli government and Diaspora Jewry are growing, due to the government's position on issues such as "Who is a Jew?", prayer at the Western Wall, marriage and the status of the non-Orthodox streams in Israel. Various Diaspora Jewish organizations work to strengthen freedom of religion and pluralism in Israel, for example, freedom of choice in marriage, abolition of the Chief Rabbinate's monopoly on conversion issues, etc. What is your position on such activity?**

Engagement of Diaspora Jewry in Israel's religion-state arena
(among 84% who gave an opinion)



A comparison of the answers in recent years shows the consistent support of two-thirds of the adult Jewish public for the active engagement of Diaspora Jewish organizations in promoting freedom of religion and pluralism in Israel. Increasing tensions between Israel and American Jewry, and the growing anger over government policy in religion and state disputes [which reflect a growing gap between the public and the government policy dictated in many cases by the ultra-Orthodox parties] have led the public to increase its support for the entry of Diaspora Jewry into this arena. This expresses the public's desire to change reality and the recognition that it is too disempowered to change it on its own. Obviously, therefore, more than it is about a position of principle that relates to all areas of the Israeli government's business, the emphasis here is on dealing with a challenge that adversely affects the life and ability of the public to realize its values and in which there is agreement between the majority of the public in Israel and the majority of Diaspora Jewry. This is different than other issues where there is a significant gap between the two communities, especially regarding security issues and territories.

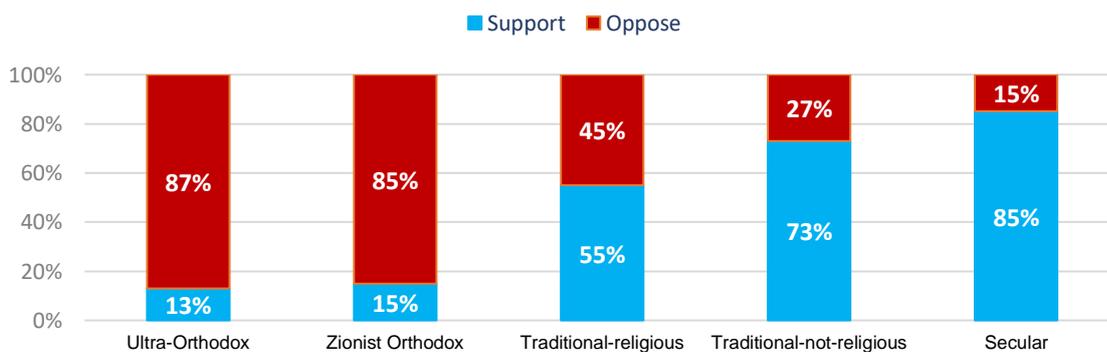
Engagement of Diaspora Jewry in Israel's religion-state arena (over time)

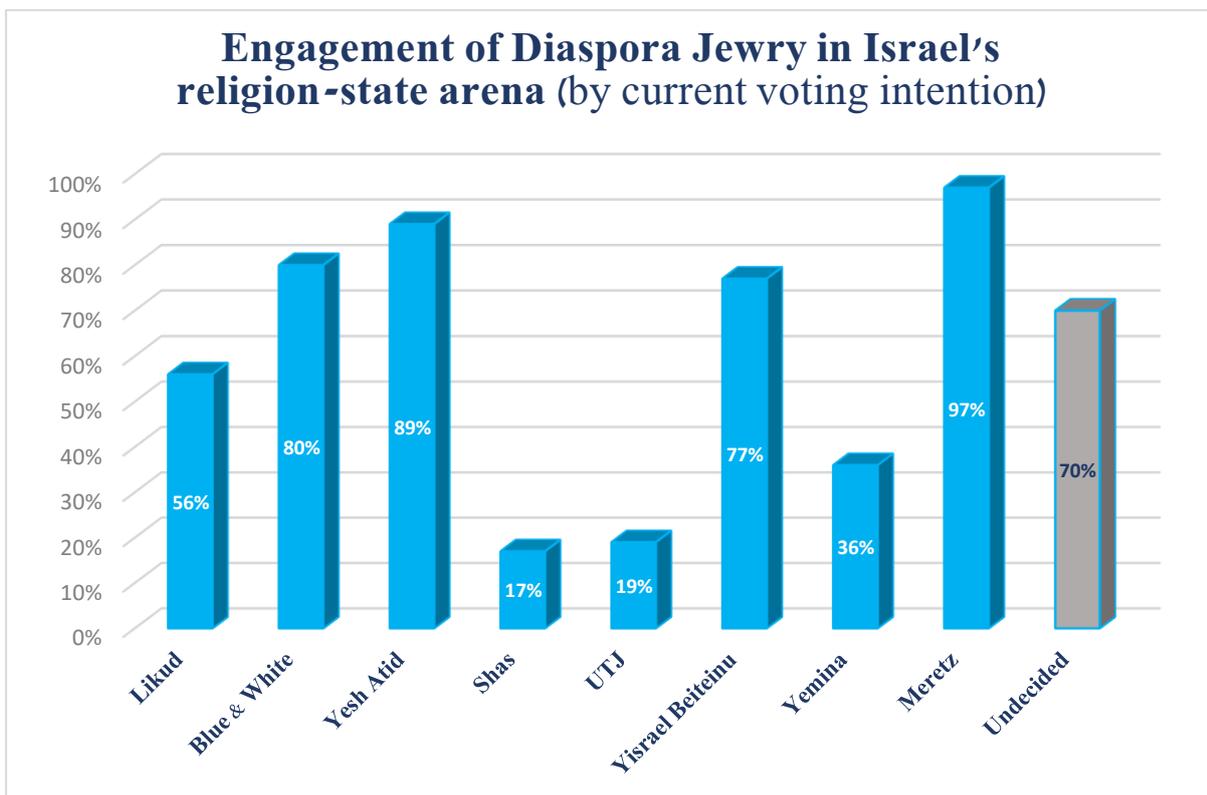
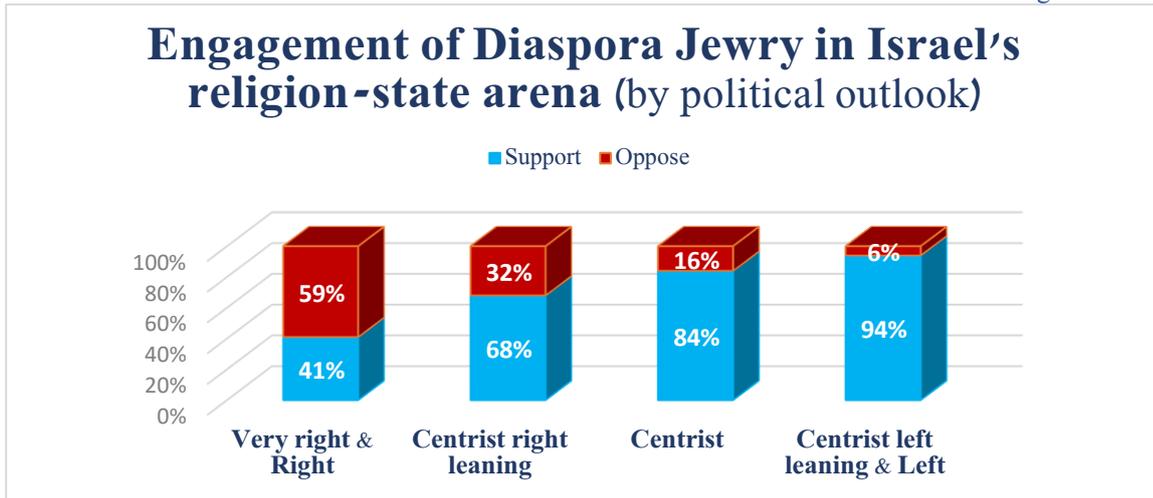


As expected, there is a high correlation between the public's attitudes on this issue and the religious identities and political outlooks of the respondents in the representative sample. These differences of opinion are explained by the degree of aspiration to perpetuate the existing arrangements on matters of religion and state [because they are in line with the respondent's religious views and sometimes even because they serve his / her political agenda] or change them fundamentally. No less than they express the respondents' positions regarding Israel-Diaspora relations, they express their positions regarding the perpetuation or change of reality in the field of religion and state. This is reflected in the graph of the range of attitudes according to religious identity, and to some extent also in the range of positions according to the political outlook. As for the latter, we mostly refer to respondents identifying themselves as right or very right. In the other political camps, from right-leaning centrists to the left, a growing majority supports the entry of Diaspora Jewry into the struggle for freedom of religion and equality.

The response from those who intend to vote for the Likud is interesting, in spite of the party's alliance with the ultra-Orthodox parties. The level of opposition to the moves made by the government at the demand of the ultra-Orthodox parties is so high that 56% of them express support for the entry of Diaspora Jewry into the arena in Israel to strengthen the struggle against surrender to the dictates of the ultra-Orthodox parties. This is also how 80% of Blue & White voters responded. This figure is interesting in the context of the decisions that will be faced by this party in the coming months and which the Index survey dealt with elsewhere. It is also worth emphasizing that this is the position of 70% of currently undecided voters.

Engagement of Diaspora Jewry in Israel's religion-state arena (by level of religiosity)





Conversion – “Who is a Jew?”

There is no issue like that of “Who is a Jew?” in the history of Israel’s battles over religion and state, especially those that relate directly to Diaspora Jewry. This issue has arisen in various contexts, and in recent decades - especially on the matter of the recognition of non-Orthodox conversions, which has also contributed to the ultra-Orthodox political and rabbinical establishment’s attacks on the Supreme Court. A few years ago, the matter of conversions performed in the IDF was added to the conversion storm, and after it died down, lenient Orthodox initiatives emerged, especially the “Giyur k’Halacha” organization, with which rabbinical figures such as Riskin, Amsalem and Stav are identified. The Chief Rabbinate fights against recognition of these conversions with no less determination than that which characterizes its struggle against non-Orthodox conversions. The rabbinical establishment’s highly aggressive fight against these conversions is explained by its recognition that what is involved is actually a wide front, which challenges the monopolistic standing of the Chief Rabbinate, including also the issues of kashrut and marriage.

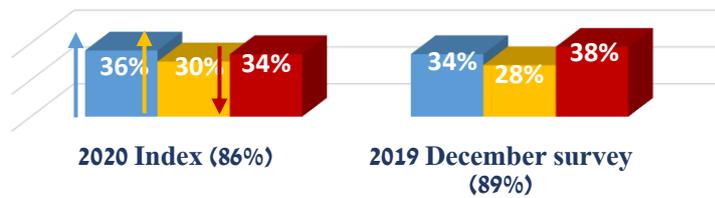
In the past year, the media and the political system have also occupied another angle on the question of “Who is a Jew?”, following [the blatant attack of Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef against immigrants from the former USSR](#). Rabbi Yosef’s harsh words at a rabbinical conference were leaked, and among other things he said: “Hundreds of thousands or tens of thousands of Gentiles came to the Land [of Israel] because of the law of ‘Who is a Jew’ (his reference to the ‘grandchild clause’ of the Law of Return) ... They are not Jews at all but Gentiles ... They are brought here to Israel to counterbalance the ultra-Orthodox ... Complete Gentiles, really complete gentiles ...” Later in his remarks, he even questioned the Jewish identities of those immigrants who had converted before the courts that operate under the auspices of the Chief Rabbinate, and he proclaimed that they should not automatically be accepted as Jews.

Following Rabbi Yosef’s remarks, on the one hand, harsh criticism was voiced throughout the political system and by immigrant organizations, but on the other hand, his position was supported by the ultra-Orthodox rabbinical and political leadership. Recently, the Knesset also began a debate on the initiative of MK Bezalel Smotrich to repeal the “grandchild clause” of the Law of Return [that is, to restrict the right of Aliyah to the children of Jews, and not allow Aliyah for their grandchildren].

Having previously dealt quite a bit in the annual Indices with the matter of conversion, this time we decided to include the two questions, and examine once again the public’s attitudes towards the Jewish identities of new immigrants. The Law of Return and the Population Registry Law define a Jew as “a person who was born to a Jewish mother or has been converted and is not a member of another religion.” Over the years, however, a number of proposals have been made to recognize as a Jew even someone whose father is a Jew, and the emphasis has been placed, for example, on the person’s will to identify as a Jew or his integration into Jewish society. This approach was raised many years ago by the late thinker Prof. Gershom Shalom, and later by the late Vice President of the Supreme Court and State Comptroller Miriam Ben Porat, and others.

We asked: Many immigrants made Aliyah under the Law of Return. Some of them immigrated as family members of Jews, but according to today’s legal definition they are not recognized as Jews even for civilian purposes such as registration in the Population Registry. Do you think that Israel should recognize as Jews on the civil level [as opposed to rabbinical standards] even those who were born to a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother, or should they be required to convert?

Question of 'Who is a Jew?' RE new immigrants
(comparison with December 2019 survey)



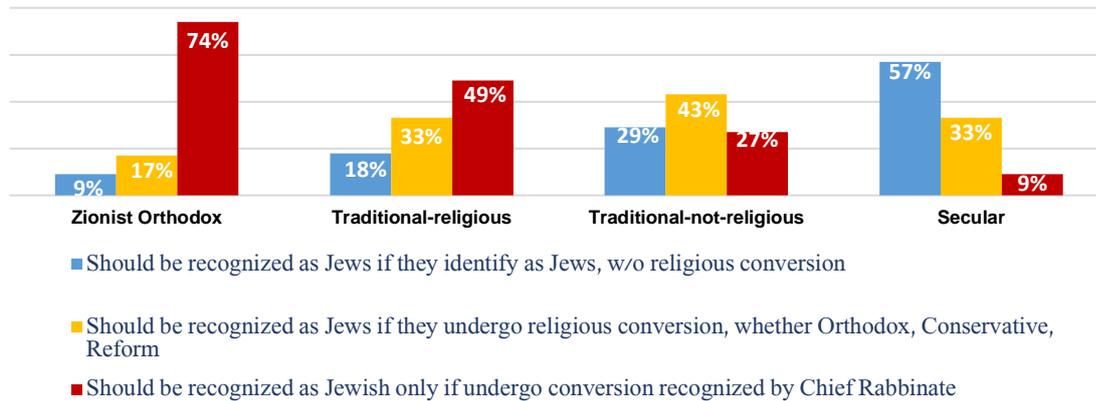
- Should be recognized as Jews if they identify as Jews, w/o religious conversion
- Should be recognized as Jews if they undergo religious conversion, whether Orthodox, Conservative, Reform
- Should be recognized as Jewish only if undergo conversion recognized by Chief Rabbinate

A comparison of the Index findings with a previous survey Hiddush conducted in December 2019 indicates consistency in public attitudes, with a slight decrease within the statistical range of error, in the scope of requiring conversions approved by Chief Rabbinate as a condition for state recognition of the Jewish status of descendants [from 38% to 34%]. Corresponding to this, there is a slight increase in the scope of those who are satisfied with one Jewish parent [whether it be the mother or the father] and identifying as a Jew for the purpose of recognition of Jewish status [from 34% to 36%]. Similarly, **there has been a slight increase of those who are willing to accept an alternative religious conversion [whether Orthodox outside the auspices of the Chief Rabbinate, Reform, or Conservative] for the purposes of accepting them as Jewish [from 28% to 30%]. The conclusion that emerges from these consistent findings is that only about a third of the adult Jewish public sees conversions of immigrants with non-Jewish mothers, which are approved by the Chief Rabbinate as a necessary condition for state recognition as Jews. Two-thirds of the public deem the Chief Rabbinate as having the authority to determine Jewish status for the state.**

A breakdown of the findings allows for additional insights:

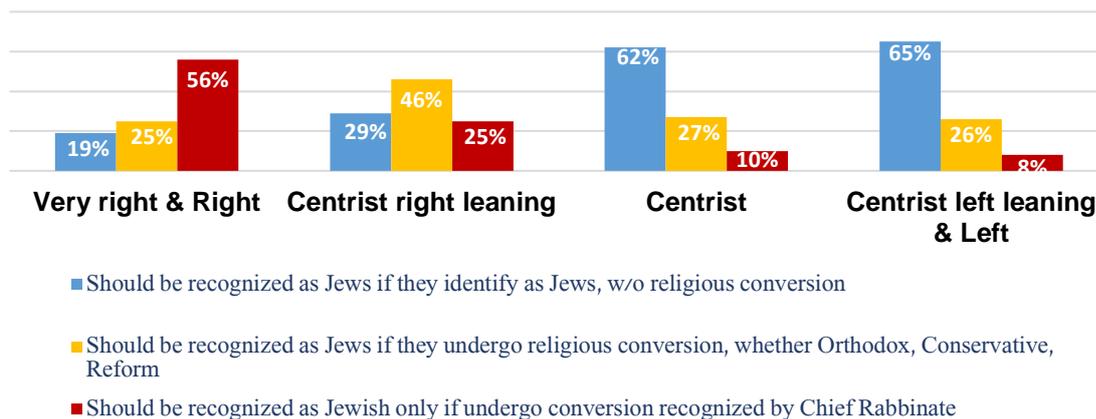
1. **Only 74% of the Zionist Orthodox public sees conversions via the Chief Rabbinate as necessary for the recognition of descendants' Jewish status. 17% are comfortable with alternative conversions and 9% are willing to give up on religious conversion altogether. This again reinforces a phenomenon we have discussed several times in previous Religion & State Indices, according to which there are growing circles among the Zionist Orthodox public whose approach to issues of religion and state is pluralistic and embraces the principle of religious freedom.**
2. **Only 9% of the secular public sees conversion via the Chief Rabbinate as a condition for the acceptance of such descendants as Jews. Most of them [57%] are willing to accept one Jewish parent and self-identification with Judaism. 33% see the need for religious conversion, but would be satisfied with an alternative to that of the Chief Rabbinate.**
3. On this issue too we see the difference between the two subgroups of the traditional public. While 49% of the traditional-religious public sees conversion via the Chief Rabbinate as a condition, only 27% of the traditional-not-religious public shares this standard.
4. **It is interesting that women are more willing than men to recognize as Jews those who identify as Jews and are the offspring of one Jewish parent. [41% and 31% respectively].**

Question of 'Who is a Jew?' Re new immigrants (by level of religiosity)



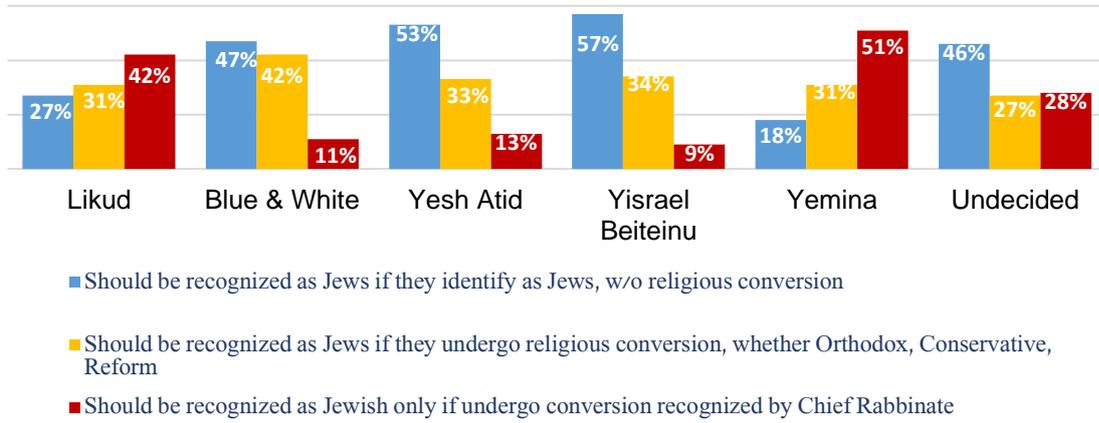
- Only among those identified as politically right and very right is there a demand for conversion via the Chief Rabbinate. In all other political camps only a small minority requires this as a condition for the recognition of descendants' Jewish status [25% of the right leaning centrists, 10% of centrists, and 8% of left leaning centrists and those on the left. In the center and center leaning to the left there is a solid majority for accepting the descendants as Jews on the basis of one Jewish parent [62% - 65%]

Question of 'Who is a Jew?' Re new immigrants (by political outlook)



- Only a minority of those intending to vote for Likud condition recognition of the descendants' Jewish status upon conversion via the Chief Rabbinate [42%]. Among those who intend to vote Yamina, only about half require it [51%]. Among Blue & White voters in March 2020 and those intending to vote Blue & White - only 11% see it as necessary. Among currently undecided voters, only 28% consider conversions via the Chief Rabbinate important.

Question of 'Who is a Jew?' Re new immigrants (by current voting intentions)



Religion, State, and Politics

The Index allows us a fuller understanding of the characteristics of voters for the various parties, in terms of their religious identities and expectations in matters of religion and state, both in relation to the last elections (March 2020) and in relation to their current voting intentions. The findings are consistent with many previous Hiddush surveys, especially those conducted during the three election campaigns over the past year and a half. You may read about these on Hiddush's website. As noted above, in matters of public policy in the field of religion & state relations, those who define themselves as "traditional-not-religious" hold positions closer to the secular public. In the graphs and tables below, you can see the exact breakdown, but in the concise observations we will treat both "traditional" groups as one. We are doing so to illustrate the positions and expectations of actual and potential voters. This will enable readers [and the leaders of the relevant parties] to compare these to the policies their parties pursue. The importance of this comparison is self-evident, both for assessing the degree of the parties' loyalty to their voters and to the general public, as well as in relation to the way in which they can increase their successes at the ballot box in the future.

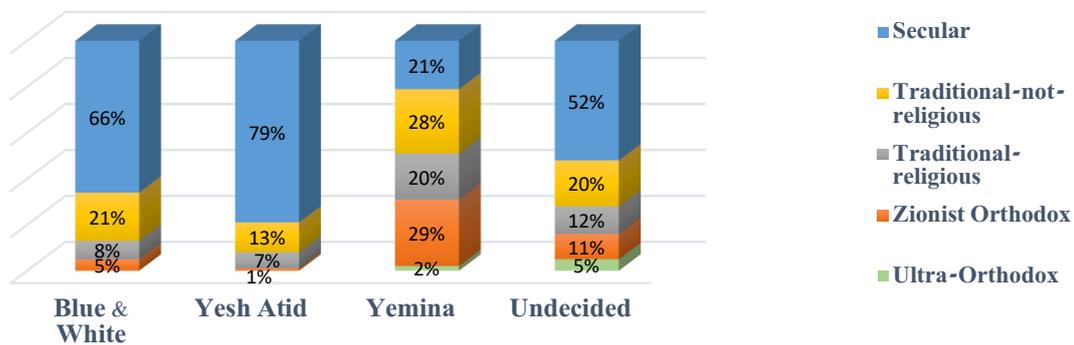
Here are the main observations and conclusions:

❖ Who are the voters?

1. **The Blue and White Party** has emerged as a new player in the political arena. The platform and promises of its leaders sent a message of breaking the status quo on religious issues and a series of far-reaching changes in key areas such as the right to marriage, Shabbat, LGBTQ rights, gender equality, and more. **93% of its voters in the last election [March 2020] were secular or traditional-not-religious. 51% of all secular voters voted for this party [23% for Likud and 12% respectively for Labor-Gesher-Meretz and Yisrael Beiteinu].** As we know, parts of the party headed by Gantz joined the government coalition in partnership with the ultra-Orthodox parties, and the party split. This led to an erosion in the percentage of secular Israelis who expressed an intention to vote for the party in the next election from 74% to 66%, as well as an increase in the percentage of secular Israelis who intend to vote for Yesh Atid [to 79%]. Among those who shared their opinions - 27% of secular Israelis intend to vote for Yesh Atid, and only 8% for Blue & White [13% and 7% respectively from the traditional-not-religious]. 16% - Likud, 10% for Yisrael Beiteinu and for Meretz, and **20% of secular and traditional-not-religious voters remain undecided.**
2. **The religious identities of Likud voters are much more diverse, but even among them, secular and traditional-not-religious voters constitute the majority [57%].**
3. There is a significant difference between Shas and United Torah Judaism in terms of the identities of their voters. While in the last election 36% of Shas voters were not ultra-Orthodox, only 7% of United Torah Judaism voters were not ultra-Orthodox. 0% of secular and traditional-not-religious voters intend to vote for one of these two parties in the next election.
4. Among the other changes that are taking place regarding the positions and prospects of the **Yamina party**, the composition of its voters is also undergoing significant change. **While in the last election 46% of its voters identified as Zionist Orthodox, examining the public's voting intentions today indicates a much broader vote for the party, showing a much more diverse composition of voters, in terms of religious identity. The expected percentage of religious voters dropped to 29%, while the percentage of secular voters rose from 10% in March 2020 to 21% today.**

Breakdown of votes by level of religiosity					
(March 2020 elections)					
	Ultra-Orthodox	Zionist Orthodox	Traditional-religious	Traditional-not-religious	secular
TOTAL	10%	11%	14%	18%	47%
Likud	2%	15%	26%	25%	32%
Blue & White	0%	1%	6%	19%	74%
Shas	64%	17%	15%	0%	4%
UTJ	93%	4%	3%	0%	0%
Yisrael Beiteinu	0%	0%	3%	13%	84%
Yemina	0%	46%	17%	27%	10%
Labor Gesher	0%	2%	5%	12%	81%

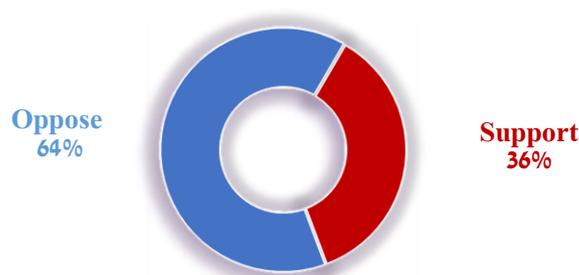
Current Voting Intentions (by level of religiosity)



❖ **Attitude towards the participation of the ultra-Orthodox parties in the Coalition**

The question was presented to the representative sample as follows: **Do you support or oppose that the government coalition will include the ultra-Orthodox parties and their demands will determine the government’s policies and legislation on religious issues?**

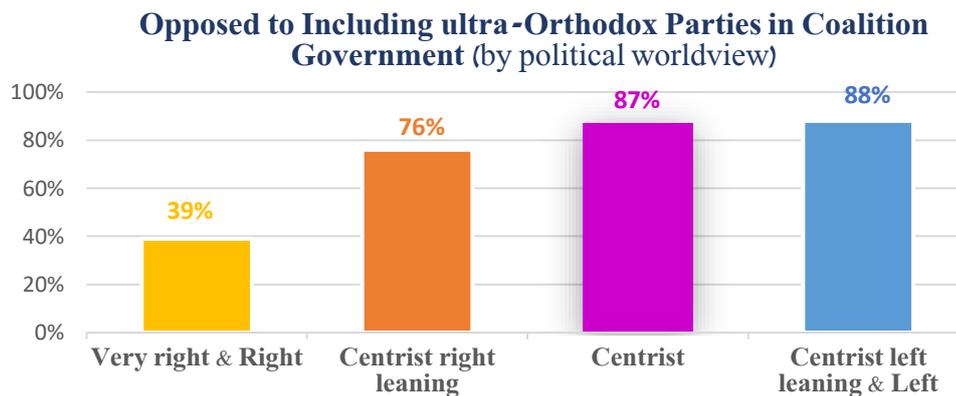
Public’s Positions on ultra-Orthodox Parties in Coalition Government



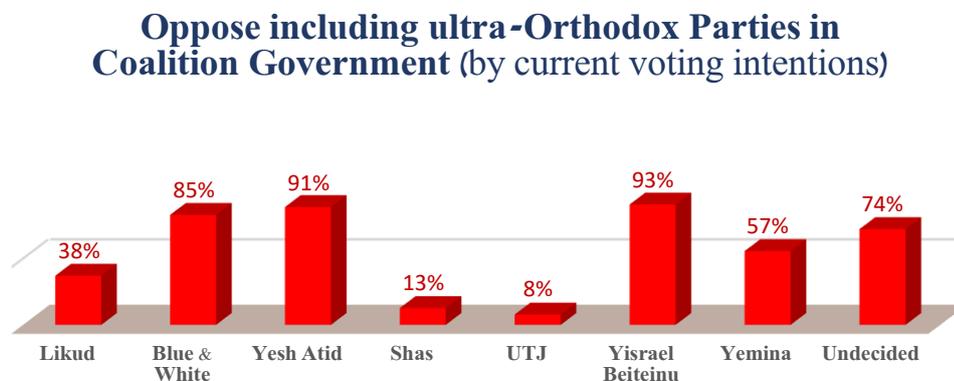
1. **Among the sample representing the adult Jewish public, 64% of those who expressed an opinion opposed it, and only 36% - supported it.** This question has been included by Hiddush in the annual Index since 2013, as well as in a series of more limited surveys during

the last 3 rounds of elections. The wording of the question has differed slightly, to examine whether this is a position of principle or whether different wording affects the answer. The public response is consistent [within statistical error], and unequivocal: there is strong opposition to the participation of the ultra-Orthodox parties in the government coalition in a way that allows them to dictate government policy and legislation on matters of religion and state. [That is, overall opposition to the participation of the ultra-Orthodox parties, or alternatively opposition to their participation in a manner that grants them the power to determine matters of religion and state.]

2. Opposition is shared by secular Israelis [87%], traditional-not-religious [71%], and traditional-religious [54%]. It is also shared by the political center-right [76%], the center [87%], and the center-left and left [88%]. It is held by 89% of Blue & White voters in the March 2020 elections, 51% of Yamina voters, and 46% of Likud voters.



3. Looking to the future, most of those who intend to vote for the following parties oppose the participation of the ultra-Orthodox parties in the coalition: Yesh Atid [91%], Blue & White [85%], Yisrael Beiteinu [93%], Yamina [57%]. It is important to emphasize that **among undecided voters - 74% oppose!** Among those who intend to vote for Likud the percentage of those opposed dropped to 38%.



❖ **Appointment of ultra-Orthodox politicians as Knesset committee chairs**

As in the past, the ultra-Orthodox parties demanded that the Knesset Finance Committee be handed over to them [MK Moshe Gafni], and this year - also the Knesset Constitution, Law and Justice Committee [MK

Yaakov Asher]. Both are from the Degel HaTorah party, which refuses to accept ministerial positions due to their religious opposition to being part of the Government’s “collective responsibility” for the running of the “Jewish and democratic” state of Israel. This is how Agudat Yisrael also conducted itself in the past, demanding that their senior representatives be appointed as Deputy Ministers with the powers of

Ministers, for the same religious reason. However, when the Supreme Court ruled in 2015 that this was illegal and Rabbi Litzman would not be able to continue in his position as a Deputy Minister holding the authority of a Minister, the Council of Torah Scholars of Agudat Yisrael changed its decision and allowed him to be appointed minister. [Subsequently, he resigned his position as Minister of Housing in protest of government policies regarding COVID-19 restrictions on religious functions, intending to later resume his position as Deputy Minister of Housing, holding full ministerial authority under a “token” Minister. This became entangled in complex political machinations and resulted with him resuming the position of Minister of Housing – Nov. 2020 update.]

In addition to the matter of the ultra-Orthodox parties’ participation in the coalition and the weight given to their positions on issues of religion and state, included in the Index surveys, we also inquired about a practice that became seemingly self-evident: Appointing representatives of ultra-Orthodox parties to chair powerful key committees in the Knesset. In the past, we have included a question regarding the appointment of MK Rabbi Gafni as Chairman of the Finance Committee in Hiddush’s polls. [For example, in 2013 and 2015], and the opposition of the majority of the public was unequivocal and consistent.

This time, we asked: **If you were able to influence the appointments, would you appoint representatives of the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism Party for the positions of chairmen of the Knesset Finance Committee [MK Gafni] and the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee [MK Asher]?** [The question was not presented to the ultra-Orthodox participants in the sample.]

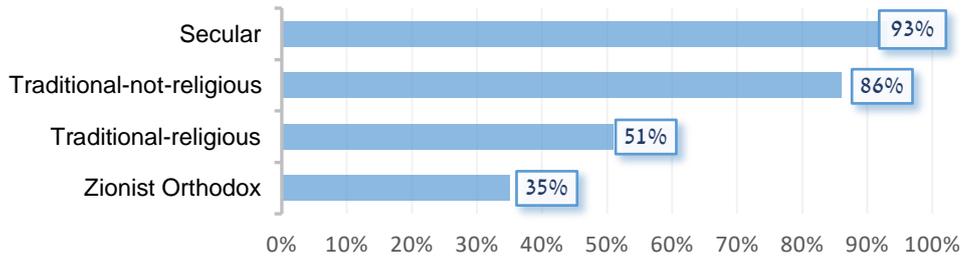
Among those who gave their opinions, [excluding the ultra-Orthodox participants in the sample], 79% expressed opposition and only 21% supported these appointments.



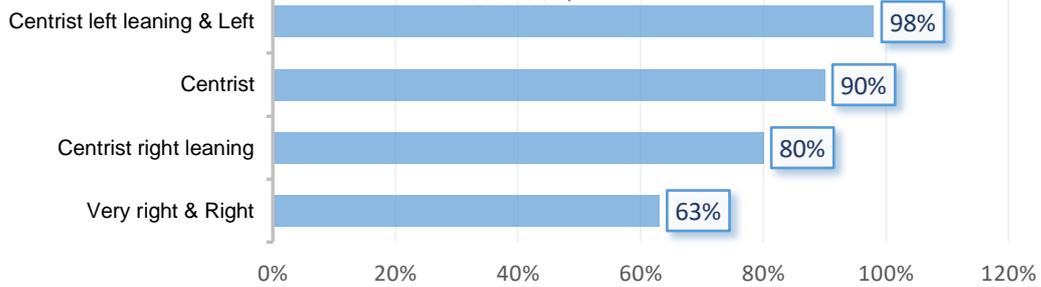
Opposition among women [83%] is greater than that of men [76%]. Presumably, this is related to the exclusion of women identified with the ultra-Orthodox parties.

Among the secular Israeli public, opposition is particularly high [93%], as it is among the traditional-not-religious public [86%]. On average, among all traditional Israelis, the rate of opposition is 71%. It should be emphasized that the opposition crosses political camps, and it is also shared by those who identify with the right [63%] and with right leaning centrists [80%]. Thus, for example, 60% of Likud voters in the March 2020 elections also expressed opposition. It is also worth emphasizing the opposition of 89% of those who are undecided regarding their vote in the next election.

OPPOSITION TO APPOINTING REPRESENTATIVES OF ULTRA-ORTHODOX PARTIES AS CHAIRMEN OF KEY KNESSET COMMITTEES (BY LEVEL OF RELIGIOSITY)

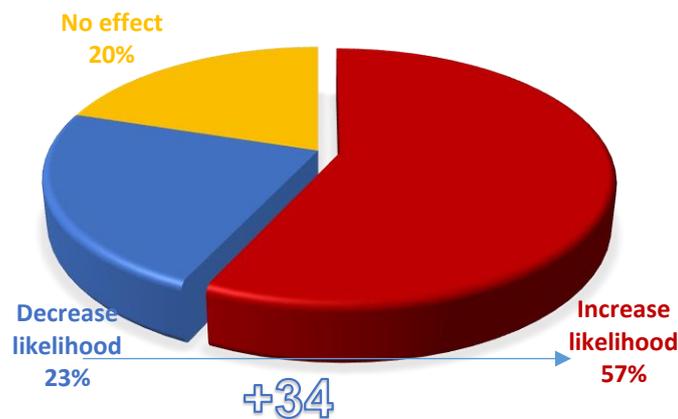


OPPOSITION TO APPOINTING REPRESENTATIVES OF ULTRA-ORTHODOX PARTIES AS CHAIRMEN OF KEY KNESSET COMMITTEES (BY POLITICAL OUTLOOK)



❖ **A party's commitment to religious freedom and equality of civic burden - will it affect the vote?**

The question presented in the Index was: **In the next election, if a party that matches your political views on issues of security and economics, announces that it is committed to the principles of freedom of religion and equality of civic burden, such as public transportation on the Sabbath, enlistment of yeshiva students, allowing civil marriage and divorce, preventing the exclusion of women, etc., and it will work to advance them in the Knesset - how would this affect the likelihood of you voting for it?**



A similar question has been asked in other Indices of recent years, as well as in surveys leading up to the last rounds of elections, and the findings strengthened the credibility of the assumption and indicated consistency among Israel's adult Jewish public;

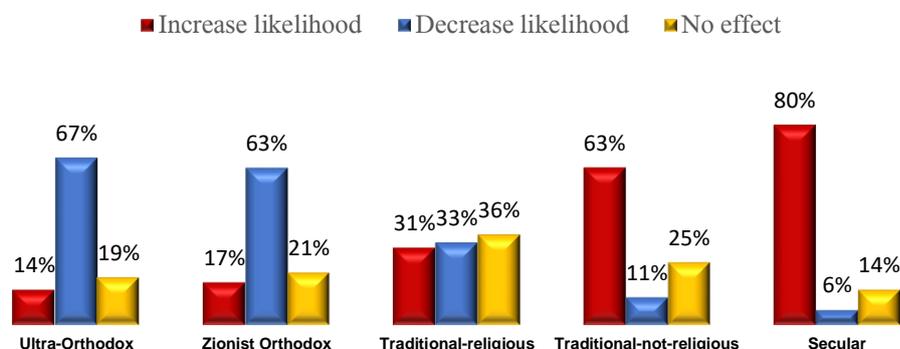
1. Among the whole representative sample [those who shared their opinions], there was a 34% difference between those who responded that a party's commitment to these issues would increase the likelihood of them voting for it [57%], compared to those who responded that this would decrease the likelihood of them voting for it [23%]. As stated, a similar and consistent result was found in previous surveys commissioned by Hiddush, as shown in the table below.

	July 2020 Index(%89)	August 2019 Index(%89)	July 2018 Index(%85)	July 2017 Index(%85)
Increase likelihood	57%	55%	57%	56%
Decrease likelihood	23%	23%	19%	20%
No effect	20%	22%	24%	24%
The difference, in favor of "Increase"	+34%	+32%	+38%	+36%

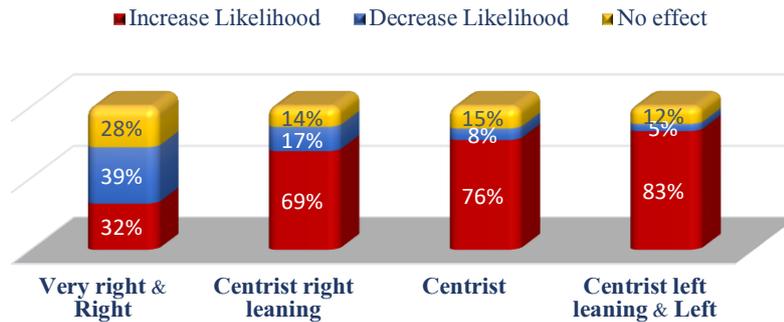
2. However this finding does not reveal the full political picture, and its relevance to the election campaigns. Remember, it was difficult for the Likud and Blue & White to point out significant differences between them on security and economic issues. As we have shown, 93% of Blue & White voters in the March 2020 election were secular or traditional-not-religious. However, only 51% of secular voters voted for it [23% of the secular public voted for Likud], and 32% of

traditional-not-religious voters [49% of those voted for Likud]. That is - the likelihood that the party will attract Zionist Orthodox or traditional-religious voters is very slim. On the other hand - the party did not realize the full potential of the secular voters it could attract. Given this data, **most important is the finding that 80% of secular voters responded that a party's [which is consistent with their political views on security and economic issues] commitment to advancing freedom of religion and equality of civic burden would increase the likelihood that they would vote for it, compared to only 6% who responded that this would decrease the likelihood of that [namely - a difference of 74% in favor of the respondents who said that this would increase the likelihood of their voting for it among this large segment of the public!]** Similarly, in relation to the traditional-not-religious public the difference is significantly larger compared to the average among the general public [a difference of 52% in favor of "would increase the likelihood". 63% vs. 11%]. It is also worth noting the 45% difference in favor of "would increase the likelihood" among the undecided [63% vs. 18%].

Breakdown by Level of Religiosity



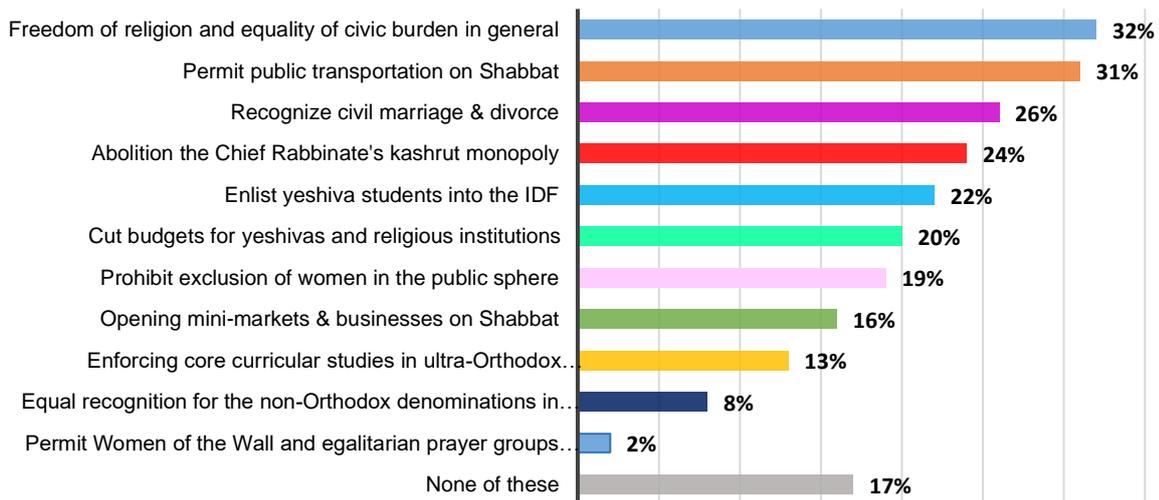
Breakdown by Political Outlook



❖ What does the public consider most important to promote in matters of religion and state?

We asked: **Which of the following issues is it important to you that the party you voted for in the last election advance in the field of religion and state relations?**

We have outlined the main issues currently in dispute in the realm of religion and state, including those that are of particular importance to Diaspora Jewry [equality for the non-Orthodox denominations and egalitarian worship at the Western Wall]. We began with the principle [“freedom of religion and equality in general”], and then we listed specific controversial issues. Respondents were asked to select up to 3 topics.



1. The findings provide a clear picture of the public's priorities and the importance of the issue. **Only 17% of the public responded that none of these issues are important to them** [this is also the percentage among Likud voters in the March 2020 elections, compared to 2% of Blue & White voters, 0% of Yisrael Beiteinu voters, and 3% of Labor-Gesher-Meretz voters. A similar percentage was found in the breakdown of future voting intentions. **Only 1% of the secular public responded that none of the issues were important to them [and 6% of the traditional-not-religious public].**

On this subject it is also worth noting the distribution according to political camps: only 2% of the center left and left, 4% of the center, 13% of the center right, but 30% of the right. This is, of course, also related to the high correlation between higher levels of religiosity and the political right.

	Ranking of important issues							
	(by vote in March 2020 elections)		(by current voting intentions)					
	Likud	Blue & White	Likud	Blue & White	Yesh Atid	Yisrael Beiteinu	Yemina	Undecided
Freedom of religion & equality of civic burden in general	27%	49%	28%	41%	55%	45%	24%	33%
Enforcing core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox education	12%	12%	14%	9%	15%	13%	29%	11%
Allow public transportation on Shabbat	27%	45%	24%	35%	44%	46%	21%	38%
Allow limited opening of minimarkets and business on Shabbat	17%	19%	14%	23%	17%	22%	12%	18%
Recognize civil marriage and divorce	21%	37%	24%	30%	33%	33%	17%	28%
Enlist yeshiva students into military or civilian service	25%	25%	23%	36%	24%	32%	26%	24%
Cut budgets for yeshivas and religious institutions	12%	29%	10%	24%	36%	37%	18%	23%
Prohibit exclusion of women in the public sphere	18%	21%	21%	23%	19%	13%	20%	18%
Abolition Chief Rabbinate's kashrut monopoly	30%	25%	23%	24%	27%	18%	35%	28%
Equal recognition for non-Orthodox streams	8%	12%	7%	10%	11%	10%	2%	11%
Allow Women of the Wall and egalitarian groups to pray and read Torah at Kotel	4%	2%	6%	3%	2%	0%	1%	2%
None of these	17%	2%	18%	4%	0%	0%	20%	14%

2. **The three leading issues, in terms of the degree of importance the public attaches to their advancement by the party for which they voted are: the general principle of religious freedom and equality in civic burden [32%], allowing public transportation on the Sabbath [31%], and recognition of civil marriage and divorce [26%].** The issues at the bottom of the list are the issues that are closest to the hearts of Diaspora Jews [equal recognition of the non-Orthodox denominations - 8%, and egalitarian worship at the Western Wall - 2%]. It should be emphasized that this does not represent opposition to these issues, for the Index and previous surveys conducted by Hiddush show clear support of the majority of the adult Jewish public for both equality to the religious streams and for allowing Women of the Wall to pray and read Torah at the Western Wall plaza, for example. However, the current question examines the priorities of the public, not the mere existence of support from the majority.
3. There are, of course, differences between the different sectors in terms of level of religiosity in the importance they attach to the issues: On the one hand, the secular public prioritizes the three leading issues noted above, at an even higher percentage than the general public [the general principle of freedom of religion and equality of burden - 44%, public transportation on the Sabbath - 49%, recognition of civil marriage and divorce - 39%]. On the other hand, for the traditional-not-religious public, the three leading issues are the abolition of the Chief Rabbinate's kashrut monopoly [40%], the general principle [36%], and the enlistment of yeshiva students into the army or civilian service [31%]. These are also the three leading issues in the eyes of the traditional-religious public, although at lower rates.

4.

	TOTAL	Level of religiosity					Political outlook			
		Ultra-Orthodox	Zionist Orthodox	Traditional-religious	Traditional-not-religious	Secular	Very right & Right	Centrist right leaning	Centrist	Centrist left leaning & Left
Religious freedom & equality of civiv burden in general	32%	1%	13%	26%	36%	44%	22%	38%	45%	45%
Enforcing core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox education	13%	4%	16%	23%	14%	11%	14%	14%	14%	12%
Permitting public transportation on Shabbat	31%	2%	9%	12%	27%	49%	21%	37%	37%	50%
Permitting limited opening of minimarkets and business on Shabbat	16%	2%	4%	7%	18%	23%	15%	19%	22%	10%
Recognition of civil marriage & divorce	26%	1%	5%	17%	26%	39%	19%	27%	32%	42%
Enlisting yeshiva students into military or civilian service	22%	5%	17%	28%	31%	23%	23%	23%	26%	18%
Cutting budgets for yeshivas and religious institutions	20%	4%	1%	15%	22%	28%	13%	15%	34%	25%
Prohibition exclusion of women in the public sphere	19%	3%	12%	23%	24%	20%	13%	22%	19%	30%
Abolition the Chief Rabbinate's kashrut monopoly	24%	1%	14%	25%	40%	24%	21%	27%	26%	23%
Equal recognition for the non-Orthodox streams	8%	0%	2%	7%	9%	11%	4%	10%	12%	16%
Allow Women of the Wall & egalitarian prayer groups to pray and read Torah in the Kotel plaza	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	3%	3%
None of these	17%	77%	48%	20%	6%	1%	30%	13%	4%	2%
No opinion	6%	10%	8%	10%	3%	4%	6%	4%	2%	2%

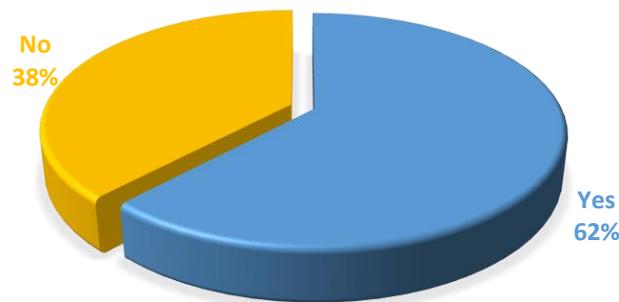
5. It is interesting to note **the gap between the importance that the public attaches to public transportation on the Sabbath [31%] and to supermarket and business activity being allowed on the Sabbath [16%]. This gap is consistent and has also arisen from previous surveys and teaches that in the eyes of the public there is indeed a difference between the two. This is not an overall rejection of Shabbat as a day of rest, but rather a much more merit-based and discerning approach.**
6. Also noteworthy is the relatively low priority attached to enforcing core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox education [13%]. In view of the unequivocal positions of the public on many issues in which the ultra-Orthodox sector receives preferential or unique treatment, including the issue of enforcing core curricular studies, per se. The likely reason is not acceptance of the ultra-Orthodox demand for full educational autonomy. Rather it is the lack of awareness of the far-reaching economic implications of this issue on the future of the state and society, as the publications of all the leading economists in Israel show.
7. As expected, immigrants from the former USSR attach greater importance to the recognition of civil marriage and divorce [42%] than the veteran Israeli public [23%]. The same is true with regard to allowing public transportation on Shabbat and cutting the budgets of yeshivas and religious institutions. This difference is partly explained by the direct interest that immigrants have in these changes, but also in the fact that among the veteran Israeli public there is significant representation of the Zionist Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox sectors.
8. The finding that 23% of women attach great importance to the prohibition of the exclusion of women in the public sphere, compared to only 14% among men, is not surprising [although it is regrettable].

❖ **Should Blue & White prevent legislation on matters of religion that conflict with its election promises?**

Since the formation of the coalition, political tensions have been rising. The decision not to dissolve the Knesset following the dispute between the Likud and Blue & White over the budget is seen, at the time of writing, as only temporarily. Most commentators predict that the coalition will not complete its term. Some of the growing tension is related to statements by some Likud leaders that they do not accept that the diminished Blue & White can stand in the way of the Likud when it comes to shaping government policy. Nevertheless that was exactly the basis for the coalition agreement, the agreement on equity between the blocs despite the numerical difference between them, and the reason for this is known - without agreement on this principle, the Prime Minister would have been unable to form a coalition. This agreement is of paramount importance in matters of religion and state, for while the coalition agreement between the Likud and Blue & White includes the latter's consent to the enactment of an IDF enlistment law that follows the format required by the ultra-Orthodox parties, there is no such agreement on other issues of religion and state. The Blue & White party's consent is required, according to the principles of the coalition agreement, as a condition for raising legislative initiatives and/or for the support of the coalition parties in voting on these issues, as well as on many other issues. On the other hand, in the Likud's coalition agreement with the ultra-Orthodox parties, the Likud undertook to maintain the status quo on religious issues and to a number of additional demands presented by the ultra-Orthodox parties. The Likud promised that, if necessary, a contradictory Supreme Court ruling would be repealed by enacting an override clause or similar legislation. These conditions in the coalition agreement were demanded by the ultra-Orthodox parties, knowing that the Supreme Court is facing a number of disputes that are soon to be decided, such as the enlistment of yeshiva students, 'Who is a Jew?', and egalitarian prayer at the Western Wall. In the Index, we sought to examine the Israeli public's attitudes toward the question of whether Blue & White should exercise the right granted to it in the coalition agreement to prevent legislation that contradicts its positions and promises on matters of religion and state.

We asked: **The Blue & White party promised far-reaching changes in religion & state relations in its platform, the party's coalition agreement with the Likud does not obligate it to maintain the status quo, beyond the issue of yeshiva student enlistment, and the party has the right to prevent new legislation that is not acceptable to it. Do you support or oppose Blue & White using its right to prevent legislation on matters of religion & state in accordance with the demands of the ultra-Orthodox parties such as Shabbat and the preservation of the Chief Rabbinate's monopoly on kashruth and conversion issues?**

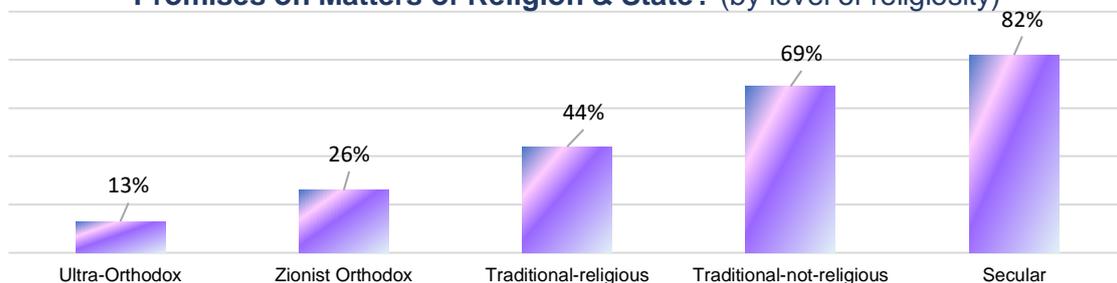
Should Blue & White Prevent New Legislation that Contradicts its Promises on Matters of Religion & State?
(among 76% who gave their opinion)

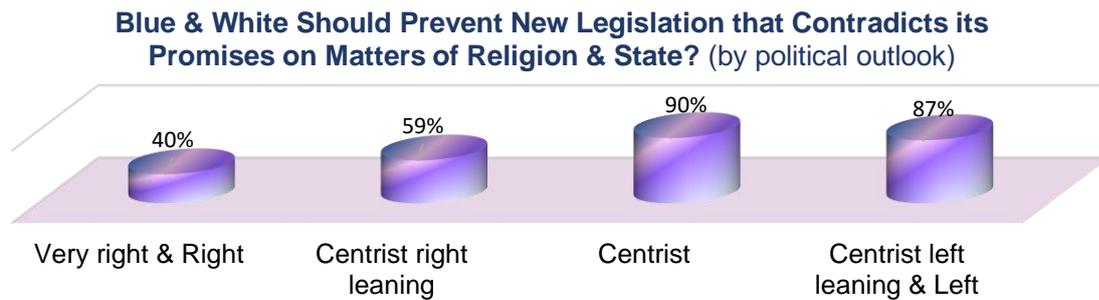


Among those who expressed their opinions - **62%** expressed support for Blue & White to use the power conferred on it by the coalition agreement and prevent the passage of legislation that contradicts its principles and promises. This support is shared by most of those who are right-leaning centrists, centrists, left-leaning centrists, and left-wing politically. **90%** of those who intend to vote for Blue & White support this, as do 88% of those who intend to vote Yesh Atid. This is the opinion of 64% of currently undecided voters and of 82% of the secular Israeli public.

The percentage of survey participants who did not express an opinion was relatively high - 26%, perhaps due to the complexity of the issue and the limited public awareness of its details.

Blue & White Should Prevent New Legislation that Contradicts its Promises on Matters of Religion & State? (by level of religiosity)



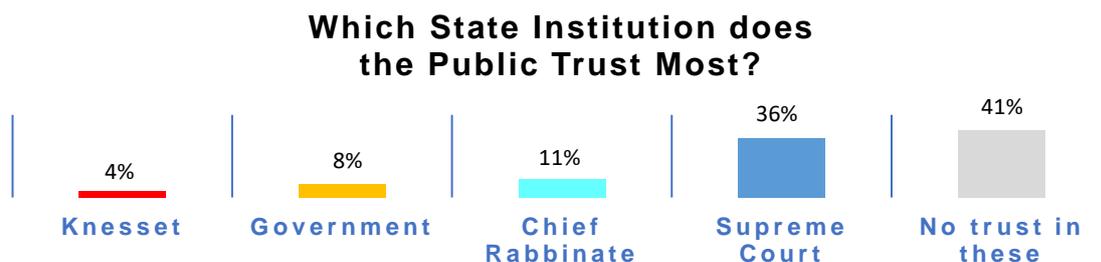


❖ **The public trusts the Supreme Court, not the politicians and the Rabbinate**

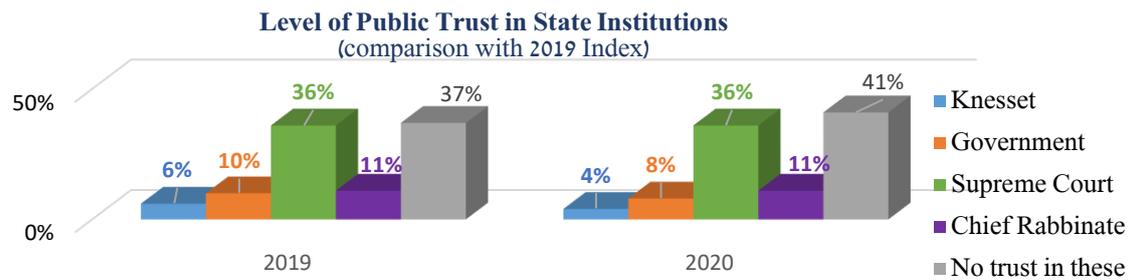
Much of the ongoing struggle against the Supreme Court stems from issues of religion and state; some of its rulings against the demands of the ultra-Orthodox parties; and some that it is anticipated to rule upon in the not-too-distant future. These attacks and threats against the Court come not only from the heads of the ultra-Orthodox parties but also from prominent figures in the Likud and Yamina. More than once, the harsh criticism leveled against the Court has been expressed by attacking its legitimacy and that of its rulings. This is accompanied by an insistence that the Supreme Court is cut off from the public and has

lost its trust, in contrast to Israel’s political leadership, which describes itself as faithfully representing the will and attitudes of the public. For several years, we have been examining this question, and the results speak for themselves. Several institutes monitor levels of public trust, and in their questions they include a comparison between many state and public institutions. Their findings are similar to those of the 2020 Index, but since Hiddush focuses on religion & state, we have limited the comparison to the four primary institutions, which are relevant to the debate on public trust in the context of the battle over religion & state: the Government, Knesset, Chief Rabbinate and Supreme Court.

We asked: **In which of the following public institutions do you have the highest level of trust?**



The results show that **contrary to the rhetoric of the politicians attacking the Supreme Court, undermining its legitimacy and threatening legislation to curtail its powers and reverse its decisions, out of the four aforementioned relevant institutions, the greatest level of public trust is in the Supreme Court. It is more than 4 times higher than the trust in the government, 9 times the trust in the Knesset, And 3.5 times the trust in the Chief Rabbinate.** The disturbing figure that emerges from the surveys is that this struggle and the face of Israeli politics contribute to the reality that 41% of the public does not trust any of these institutions. This undoubtedly reflects a dangerous erosion in Israeli democracy, and a comparison of the data with those that came out of the 2019 Index shows that the level of distrust rose from 37% to 41% this year, and that this increase coincides with a decrease in this rate of confidence in the Knesset and the Government. [It is worth noting, however, that these are minor changes that may result from the range of statistical error]. The relatively high level of trust in the Supreme Court remains intact.



Among secular Israelis, 55% have the highest confidence in the Supreme Court, but only 3% have the highest degree of trust in the Knesset and 6% in the Government. The ultra-Orthodox also do not have much faith in the Knesset and the Government [3% and 4% respectively], even though they are represented in it, and have 0% confidence in the Supreme Court and 56% trust in the Chief Rabbinate.

Which State Institution does the Public Trust Most?
(by level of religiosity)

	Knesset	Government	Supreme Court	Chief Rabbinate	None of these
Ultra-Orthodox	3%	4%	0%	56%	37%
Zionist Orthodox	15%	8%	6%	25%	46%
Traditional-religious	6%	12%	20%	14%	49%
Traditional-not-religious	3%	11%	36%	2%	47%
Secular	3%	6%	55%	1%	36%

Which State Institution does the Public Trust Most?
(by political outlook)

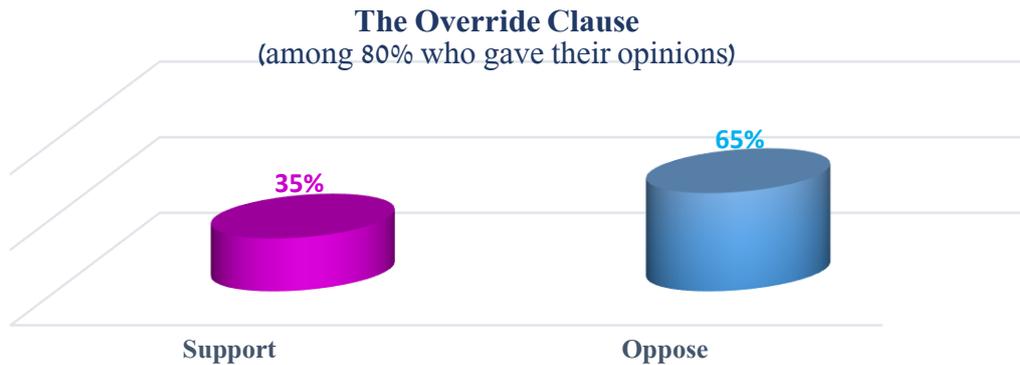
	Knesset	Government	Supreme Court	Chief Rabbinate	None of these
Very right & Right	6%	13%	12%	20%	49%
Centrist right leaning	5%	6%	40%	7%	43%
Centrist	3%	3%	61%	1%	32%
Centrist left leaning & Left	3%	2%	80%	1%	15%

❖ **The override clause**

At the heart of the fight against the Supreme Court is the recurring threat of passing an “override clause.” One of the reasons for raising this demand is the insistence of the ultra-Orthodox parties.

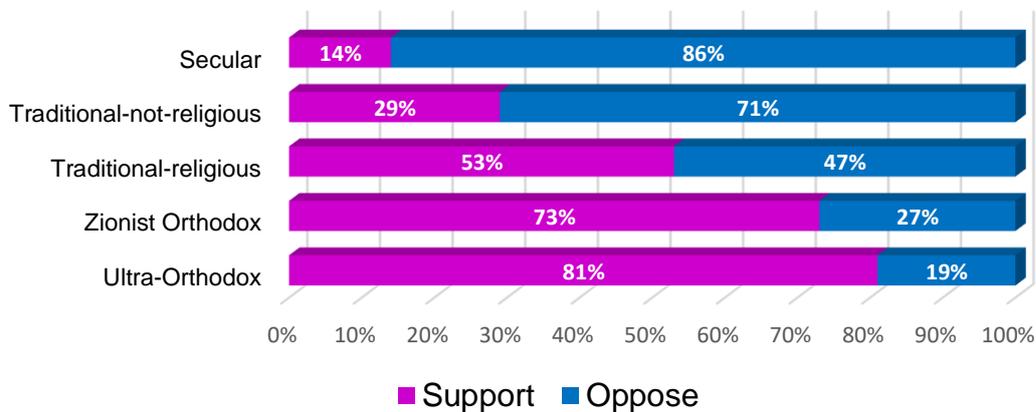
We asked: **According to the demands of the ultra-Orthodox parties, the Likud undertook to enact an override clause or specific legislation that would repeal a Supreme Court ruling on religion & state, which would change existing policies on religion, such as enlisting yeshiva students, Shabbat, ‘Who is a Jew?’, etc. Do you support or oppose legislation that would repeal a Supreme Court ruling on these issues?**

Among those who expressed their opinions [80%], 65% expressed opposition to such legislation.



Both secular [14%] and ultra-Orthodox Israelis [13%] had the lowest rates of not responding to the question. However, the positions of the two groups were, of course, opposite, for 73% of secular Israelis opposed such legislation [86% of those who provided responses]; while 70% of the ultra-Orthodox public supported it [81% of those who provided responses]. Among traditional Israeli Jews, 29% abstained.

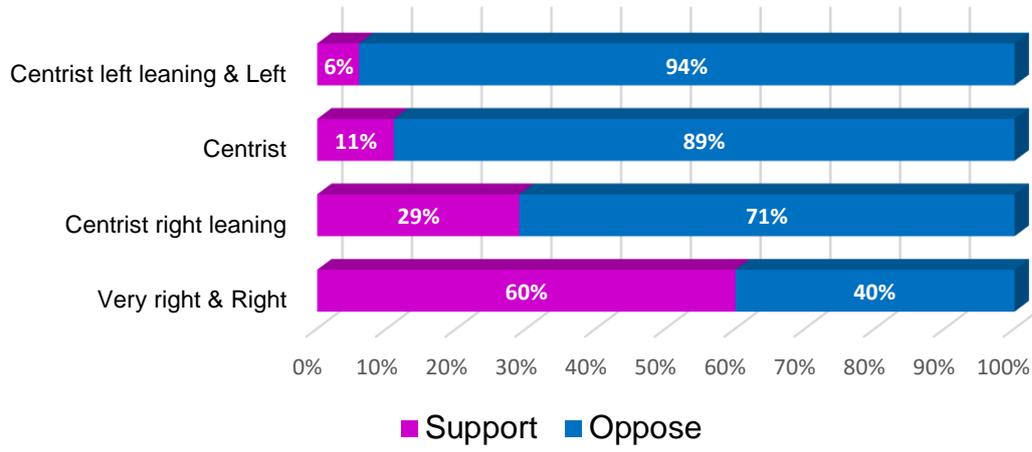
The Override Clause (by level of religiosity)



Of all the political camps, the percentage of those on the right who did not express an opinion was the highest [24%; and 28% of Likud voters]. While Likud voters' responses were divided [38% supported and 34% opposed], among Blue & White voters only 14% refrained from responding, and the position among the rest was clear: 79% oppose such legislation and only 7% support it.

Among those who expressed their opinions there was majority support only among right-wing voters [60%], while among the voters of all the other political camps the majority was opposed [94% of centrist left leaning and left-wing voters, 89% of centrist voters, and 71% of centrist right-leaning voters]. Among undecided voters who expressed their opinions - 74% oppose this.

The Override Clause (by political outlook)



Let Marriage Freedom Ring!

The issue of the right to family and freedom of marriage is one of the most important issues in the field of religion & state relations, both because of its classification as one of the most basic civil rights and because of its far-reaching implications for the entire population, including the non-Jewish population. This is a serious violation of the principle of freedom of religion & equality, resulting in hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens to be completely denied the right to marriage in their country, as well as millions more who are denied the opportunity to choose marriage ceremonies in accordance with their outlooks and beliefs. Israel is the only Western democracy in the world that denies its citizens the right to marriage, and the policy established in Israel on this issue has serious implications even for Israel-Diaspora relations. [Further explication on the issue of marriage freedom, as well as a comparison to the rest of the world, can be found on Hiddush’s unique website: <http://marriage.hiddush.org.il>]

We have examined the public’s positions on this issue since Hiddush’s founding, allowing us to see if and how public opinion and preferences have shifted over the course of the last decade.

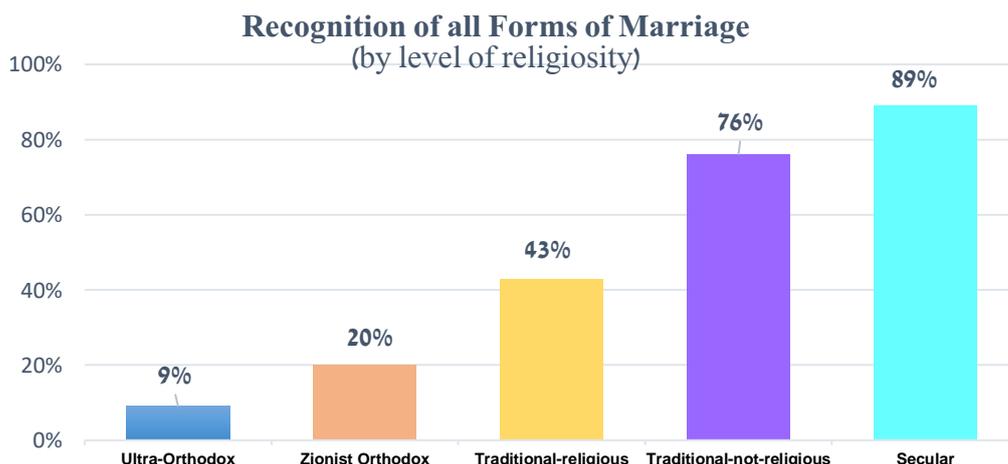
We first asked: **Currently, marriages and divorces of Jews in Israel are carried out only according to Orthodox law. Do you support or oppose Israel recognizing all types of marriage, including Conservative, Reform, and civil marriage?**

As with many other issues in the field of religion-state relations, the public is divided into two camps in a ratio of 2:1; **two-thirds support freedom of choice in marriage, and only one-third supports the preservation of the Orthodox monopoly.**

RECOGNITION OF ALL FORMS OF MARRIAGE
(AMONG 92% THAT GAVE AN OPINION)



A comparison of the answers to this question over the last decade reveals that in recent years, public opinion has stabilized and this ratio reflects its consistent position [subject to changes from year to year in the range of statistical error]. **Between 2009 and 2014, we observed a gradual increase in support, from 53% in 2009 to 66% in 2014. Since then, it has stood at that level.** It seems, therefore, that in the absence of significant events [such as changes in the political arena, in the status of the Rabbinate and the system of rabbinical courts, or an extensive and ongoing campaign to promote freedom of marriage] this division will continue and

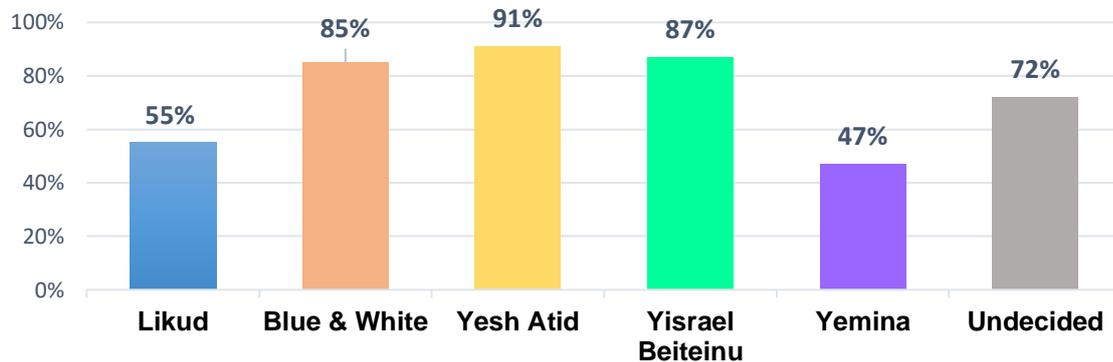


represent the proportion of supporters and opponents of the Orthodox Chief Rabbinate's monopoly over Jewish marriage in Israel.

As expected, the rate of support varies according to the religious identities of the respondents, from 89% among the secular public, up to 9% among the ultra-Orthodox public. 20% of the Zionist Orthodox public also supports freedom of choice and equality, and this indicates a phenomenon we have noted in the past: an increase in support for religious freedom & equality in the Zionist Orthodox sector. Here, too, we see the distinction between the two subgroups of the traditional public: while only 43% of the traditional-religious public supports freedom of choice in marriage, among the traditional-not-religious public, the support rate is 76%.

Freedom of choice in marriage is supported not only by Blue & White, Yesh Atid and Yisrael Beiteinu voters, but also by the majority of Likud voters [55%] and about half of Yamina voters [47%]. It should be emphasized that among currently undecided voters, the support rate is 72%.

Recognition of all Forms of Marriage (by current voting intentions)

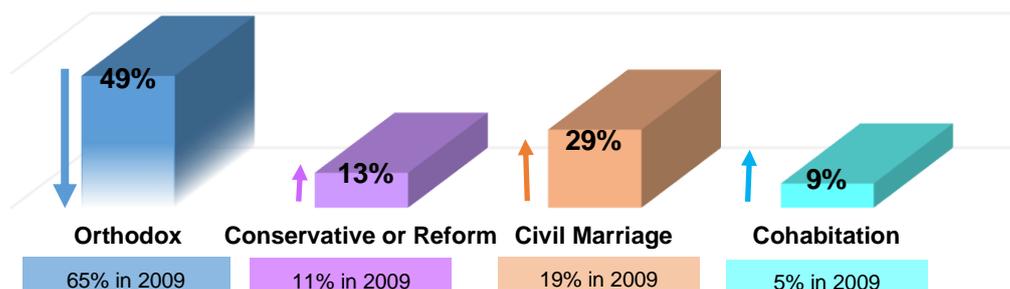


As in the past, we also posed a question of personal preference, as opposed to the one regarding principled support of the right of couples to choose how they want to marry.

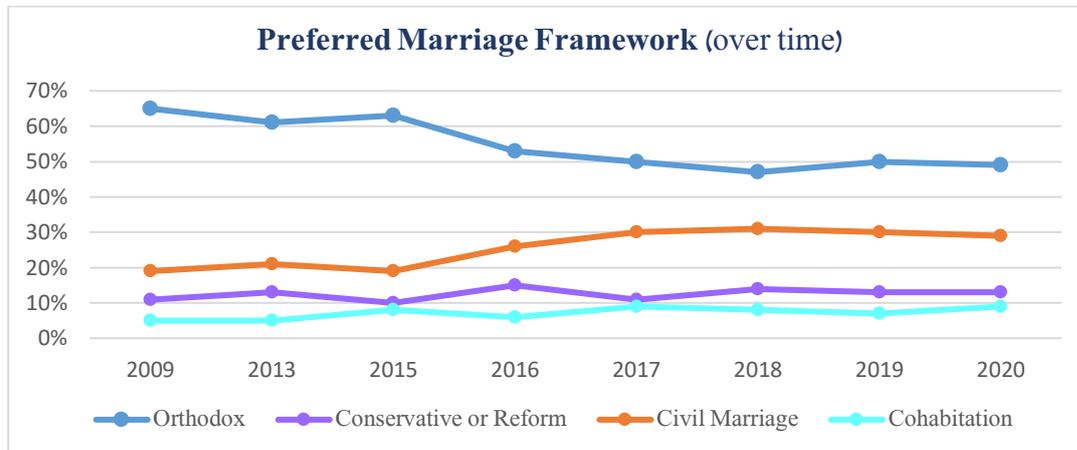
We asked: **Assuming that all of these options exist and are recognized equally by law, if you or one of your children wants to get married - what framework would you choose for marriage?**

Just under half of Israel's adult Jewish public [49% of those who expressed an opinion] would choose an Orthodox marriage if the State of Israel allowed them to choose. [It should be noted that there are even those who would choose an Orthodox marriage outside the Chief Rabbinate's auspices, as Hiddush showed in a previous survey. That is to say - the proportion who prefer to marry under the auspices of the Chief Rabbinate is even lower.]

Preferred Marriage Framework (among 84% who gave a response)



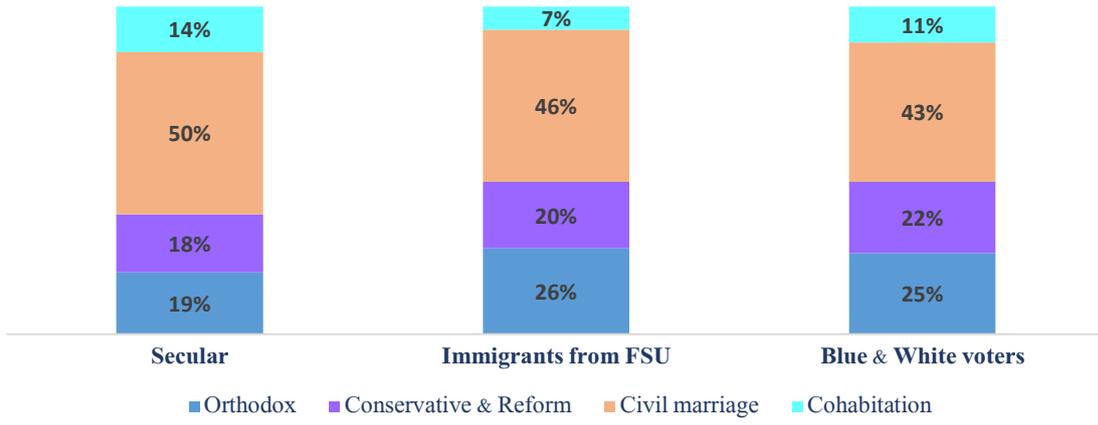
A comparison of the responses to this question since 2009 indicates significant changes with respect to some of the alternatives. The preference for marriage via the Orthodox Rabbinate dropped from 65% to 49%. The preference for civil marriage has risen from 19% to about 30%. The preference for cohabitation without a formal marriage has risen slightly from 5% to about 9%. As for non-Orthodox religious marriages, the rate of preference for this alternative remains more or less unchanged [taking into account the range of statistical error], which suggests existing potential, but, at this point, there seems to be a need for further significant moves on the part of the non-Orthodox denominations to break through the ceiling and achieve a wider market share.



Break-down of the findings allows for additional insights:

1. There is a difference between the preferences of women and men in regards to the alternative of non-Orthodox marriage, probably due to the attitude of the non-Orthodox denominations for gender equality, expressed in their marriage ceremonies. While 10% of men prefer this alternative, the preference among women stands at 16%.
2. Significant potential for non-Orthodox religious marriages exists among the traditional-not-religious public, of which 22% prefer this alternative [compared to 18% among the secular public and 11% of the traditional-religious public], as well as among immigrants from the former USSR [26%].
3. While 14% of the secular public prefers the alternative of cohabitation without marriage, only 7% of immigrants from the former USSR prefer this. Among the immigrants, 26% prefer marriage via the Orthodox rabbinate, compared to only 19% of the secular public. In these two sectors the main preference is for civil marriage [50% of secular Israelis and 46% of immigrants].

Preferred Marriage Framework
(Breakdown by Secular public, Immigrants from FSU, & Blue and White voters)

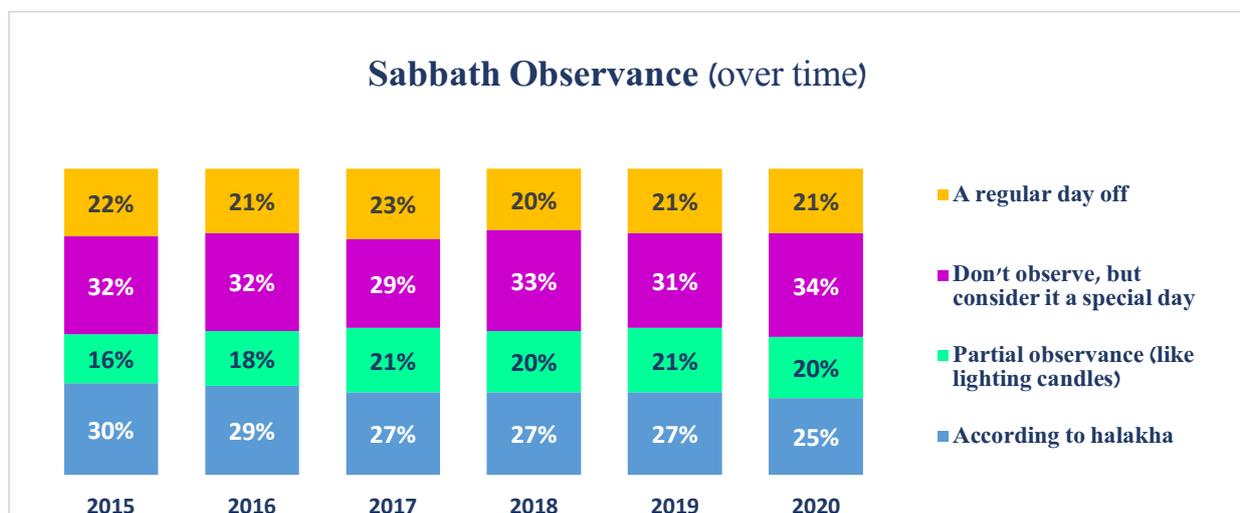


Shabbat: Public and Private

Another issue at the top of the ladder of religion and state battles is Shabbat. The Sabbath has been a source of a number of public and political controversial issues, foremost of which are the matters of public transportation and the opening of businesses on the Sabbath. In the past, the Index explored public opinion on businesses opening and the Minimarket Law; and this year we returned to the issue of public transportation. In the political chapter we observed that in the eyes of the public there is a difference between the two, and the public attaches significantly greater importance to allowing public transportation on Saturdays than to allowing businesses to open.

We first inquired as to the extent of the public's Sabbath observance. We asked: **Do you observe Shabbat?**, offering a few options for response as you can see below.

This background question has been included in the Hiddush Index survey every year, and a comparison of the responses since 2015, for example, indicates consistency over time [subject to the statistical margin of error]. **You can see a slight decrease, which is not necessarily statistically significant, in the percentage of those who observe Shabbat according to Halacha from 30% in 2015 to 25% this year, and a slight increase in the percentage of those who keep some of the commandments of Shabbat [from 16% - to 20%], as well as among those who are not Sabbath observant but see it as a day of rest with a special atmosphere [from 32% to 34%].**

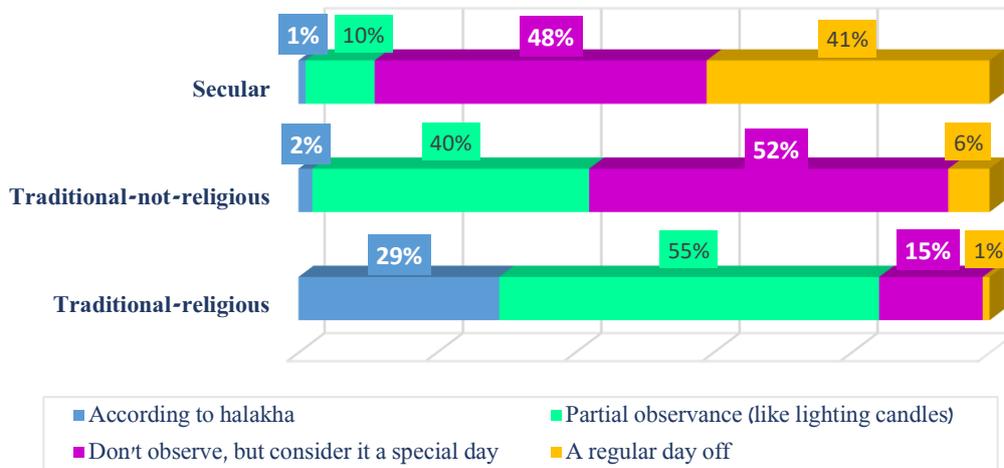


Analysis of the findings points to a number of insights:

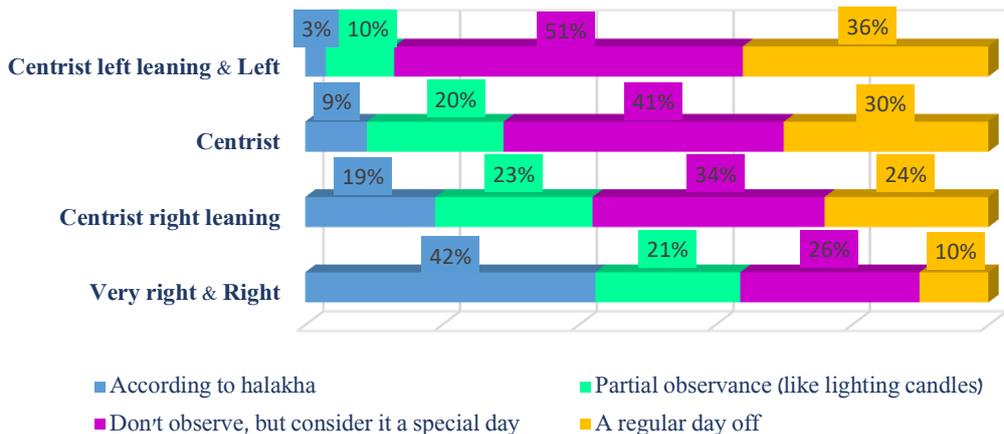
1. About 90% of the secular public sees the Sabbath as a normal day off or a day of rest with a special atmosphere, but does not see itself as Shabbat observant, not even partially.
2. The issue of Sabbath observance illuminates another layer of the difference between the two traditional subgroups. For example, while 29% of the traditional-religious public answered that it observes Shabbat according to Halacha, only 2% of the traditional-not-religious public answered so. On the other hand, while 52% of the traditional-not-religious public responded that it sees the Sabbath as a day of rest with a special atmosphere, only 15% of the traditional religious public responded so.
3. The issue of Sabbath observance also correlates [partially] with political outlook.

4. Among Likud voters in March 2020, only 26% answered that they keep Shabbat according to Halacha. On the other hand, among Blue & White voters 79% answered that they do not fully observe Shabbat, not even partially. Among currently undecided voters, only 19% keep Shabbat fully, while 65% do not keep Shabbat fully, not even partially.

Sabbath observance (by level of religiosity)



Sabbath observance (by political outlook)



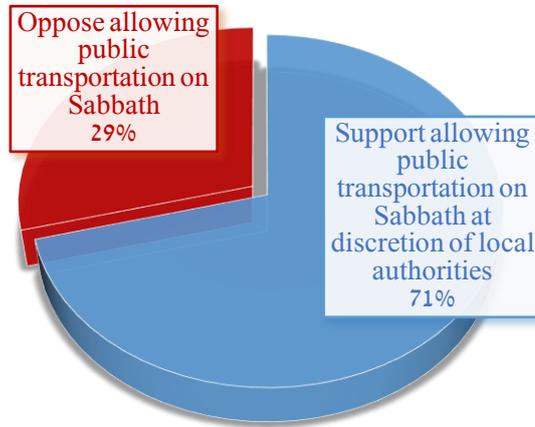
❖ Public Transportation on Shabbat

From there we moved on to examining the public’s positions in relation to public transportation on Shabbat, and the distribution of those positions in relation to the degree of Sabbath observance among respondents.

The wording of the question this time directly addressed the current debate following the formation of the government and the submission of a bill by the opposition to allow public transport on Saturdays. We asked: **Recently, the Knesset voted against a bill to allow public transportation on Saturdays. The Deputy Minister of Transportation from United Torah Judaism replied on behalf of the government that, “The state will not operate public transportation on Shabbat... the majority of the country wants to keep Shabbat,”** while according to all polls, the majority of the public supports public

transportation on Shabbat. Do you: A) Support allowing public transportation on Shabbat at discretion of local authorities, or B) Oppose allowing public transportation on Shabbat?

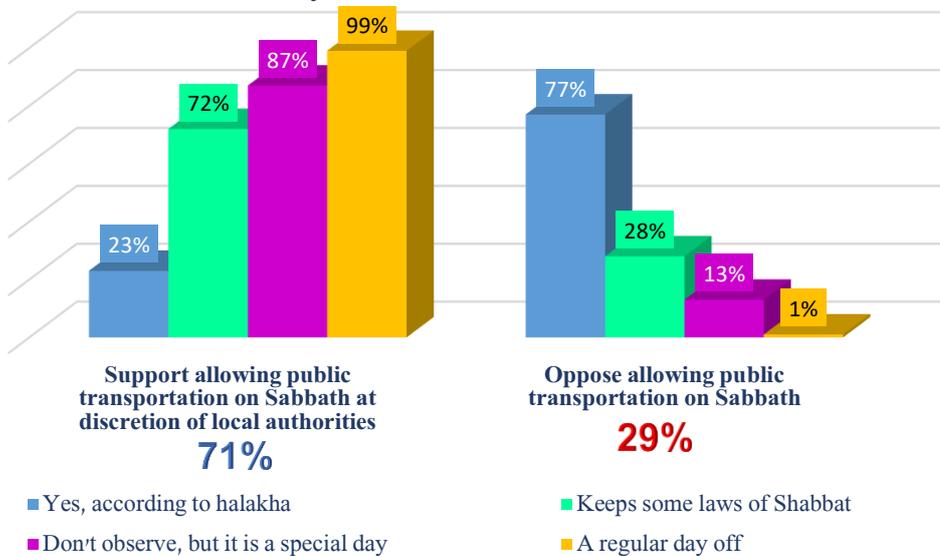
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ON SHABBAT
(AMONG 93% WHO GAVE AN OPINION)



This support of 71% for allowing public transportation on Saturdays genuinely reflects the position of the public. Subject to the margin of statistical deviation, similar findings have been indicated in recent years' annual Indices.

Cross-referencing this finding with the response to the question of Sabbath observance shows that while 77% of those who observe Shabbat according to halakha [of those who expressed an opinion] oppose allowing public transportation on the Sabbath at the discretion of local authorities [23% support this], among all who chose a different response regarding their personal Sabbath observance, there is a clear majority that supports public transportation on Saturdays, as is clear from the following graph:

Public transportation on Shabbat
(by Sabbath observance)

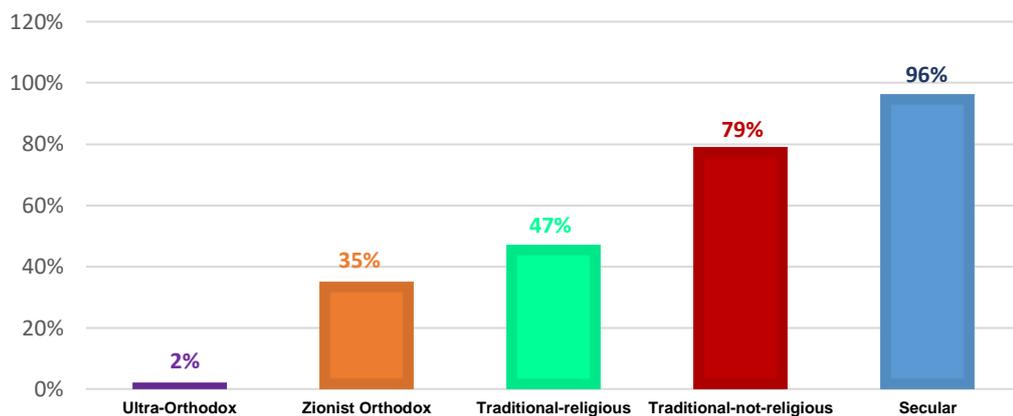


Further breakdowns of the findings provide additional important insights as to the positions of the public, as well as to the gap between the policies of the various political camps and political parties and the wills of their voters. In this regard, we will mention what we have written above regarding the pretentious

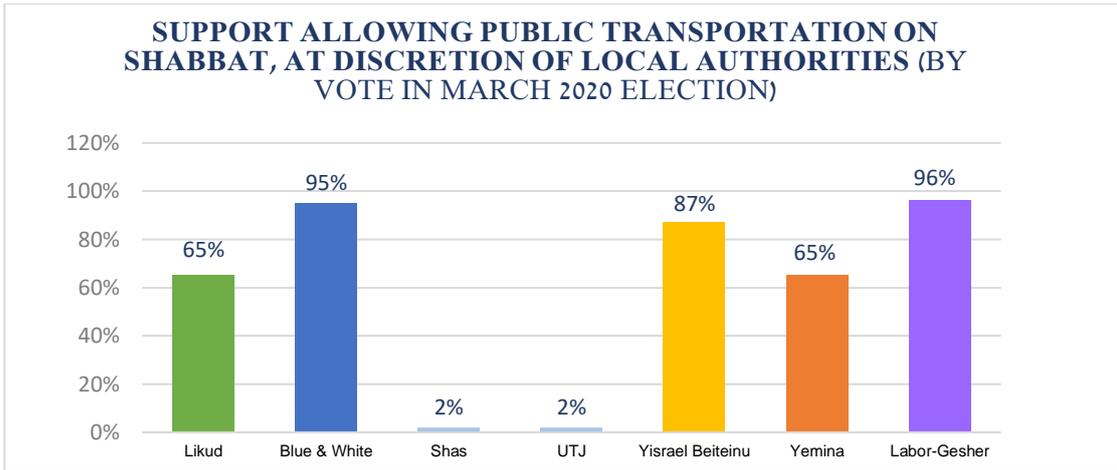
statements of key political spokespeople, claiming to be supposedly loyal representatives of the general public and their voters;

1. While 98% of the ultra-Orthodox public opposes the possibility of public transportation on Shabbat, **35% of the Zionist Orthodox public supports it.**
2. On this issue, too, we see the difference between the attitudes of the traditional-religious public [53% oppose and 47% support] and the traditional-not-religious public [79% support and only 21% oppose].
3. **Among the secular public there are almost no opponents at all [4%], and practically all of it [96%] supports this.**

SUPPORT ALLOWING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ON SHABBAT, AT DISCRETION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES (BY LEVEL OF RELIGIOSITY)



4. The voters for all political camps voiced majority support to allow public transportation on Saturdays, although naturally it increases as we move left on the political spectrum.
5. **It is especially instructive to examine the answers by breakdown according to votes in the March 2020 elections. With the exception of the ultra-Orthodox parties, voters of all parties expressed strong support for the introduction of public transportation on Saturdays, including 65% of Likud and Yamina voters, and 95% of Blue & White voters. Among currently undecided voters, 79% support it.**

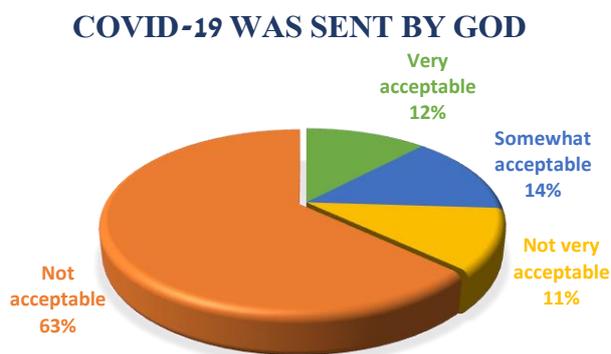


COVID-19 and Religion & State

Each annual Index includes questions on current issues on the public agenda. In the current survey, it wasn't possible to overlook the connection between the COVID-19 crisis and issues of religion and state. Therefore we included two related questions in this year's Index:

❖ The reason for the outbreak of the pandemic

Many among the ultra-Orthodox leadership claim that COVID-19 is not a natural phenomenon, but rather it was sent into the world by God. Some say it is because of Internet use, disrespect towards Torah scholars, ordeals before the coming of the Messiah, Shabbat desecration, and more. Is the view that God sent the corona virus because of his desire to punish the world or the people of Israel or to convey a message acceptable or unacceptable to you?



Only 26% of the adult Jewish public is willing to adopt the ultra-Orthodox faith narrative as to the reason for the COVID-19 outbreak. 74% reject it. Interestingly, not only the secular public rejects this explanation [93%]; also the majority of the traditional public [62%; 79%], and even a slight majority of the Zionist Orthodox public [51%].

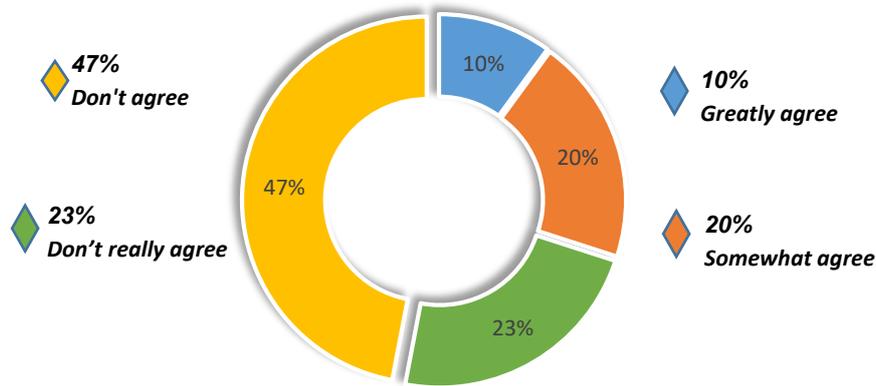
COVID-19 WAS SENT BY GOD (BY LEVEL OF RELIGIOSITY)



❖ “Racism” towards the ultra-Orthodox sector during the COVID-19 crisis?

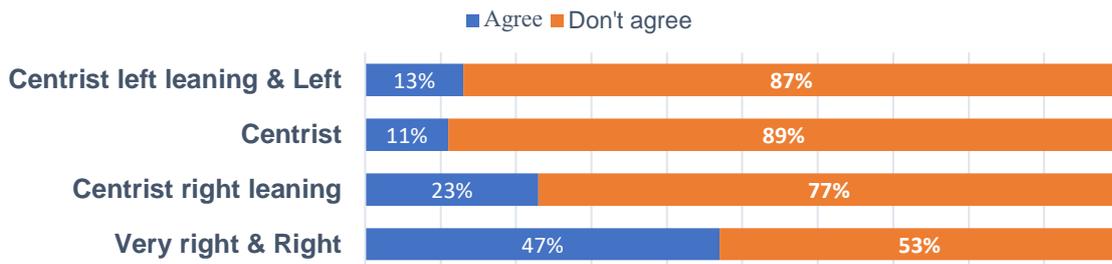
As with many other issues, the ultra-Orthodox leadership's response to the criticism leveled at this sector during the COVID-19 pandemic is to describe such criticism as stemming from anti-Semitism, racism and hatred of the ultra-Orthodox. This response, which was accompanied by a demand to amend the law to define such criticism as constituting the criminal offense of racism does not enjoy public support. Only 30% agree with the ultra-Orthodox leadership, whereas 70% reject this.

We asked: Many among the ultra-Orthodox leadership explain the criticism of the ultra-Orthodox sector's conduct during the COVID-19 crisis as an expression of unjustified ultra-Orthodox racism and hatred. Do you agree that this is the reason?

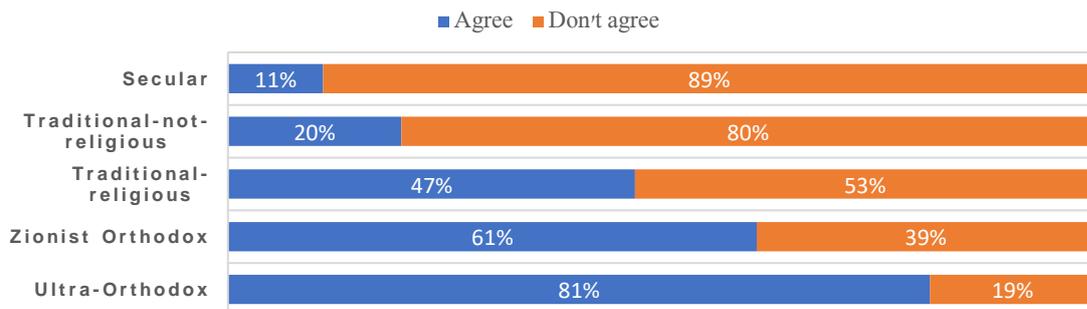


The break-down of the responses indicates that **the rejection of this ultra-Orthodox claim of racism ranges across the entire political spectrum**. As expected, it is particularly high among the center and the left, compared to those who are to the right of center. However, on this topic [unlike the ultra-Orthodox theological narrative for explaining the pandemic] 61% of the Zionist Orthodox public agrees with the ultra-Orthodox claim regarding the motives for such criticism, and a larger gap is seen between the two traditional subgroups in their respective majorities, which expressed disagreement with the ultra-Orthodox claim.

Racism against ultra-Orthodox Sector in context of COVID-19 crisis (by political outlook)



Racism against ultra-Orthodox sector in context of covid-19 crisis (by level of religiosity)

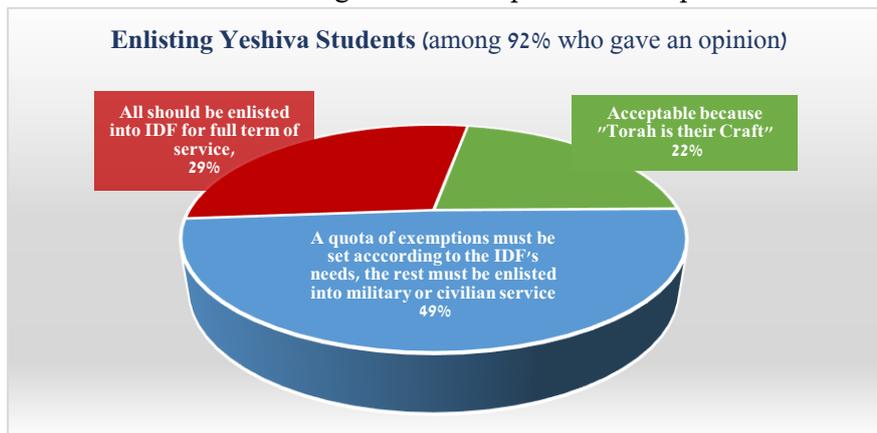


Enough With the Draft Dodging

One of the most controversial issues, which evokes strong emotions and reactions, is the matter of drafting yeshiva students. Over the years, Hiddush has repeatedly examined the public’s positions on this matter, and this year we presented the question worded in the context of developments that have taken place in recent months, after Minister Michael Biton (Blue & White) who was entrusted by the Ministry of Defense with the formulation of the new bill, expressed the direction of the outline he would present.

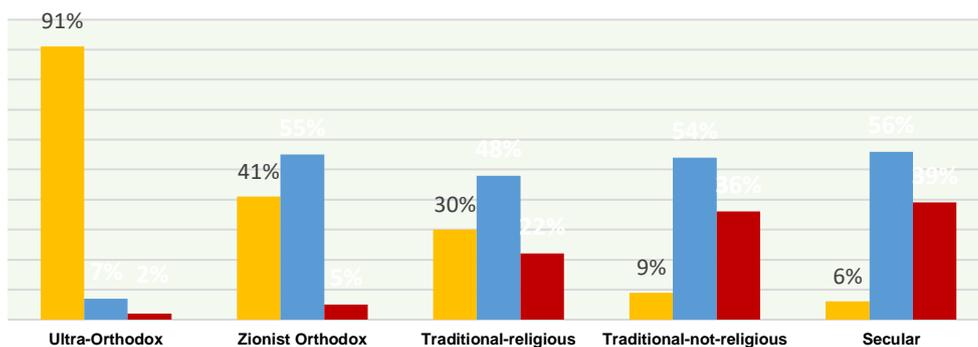
We asked: **The renewed battle to enlist yeshiva students, which constitute about 15% of the annual conscription cycle, is moving towards an expected Supreme Court ruling. Minister Michael Biton (Blue & White), who has been entrusted with the preparation of a new draft law, announced that the law shall not contain any coercive or binding quotas for yeshiva students, and only students who want to serve - will serve. Which of the following statements reflects your opinion?**

This was the distribution of attitudes among those who expressed their opinions:



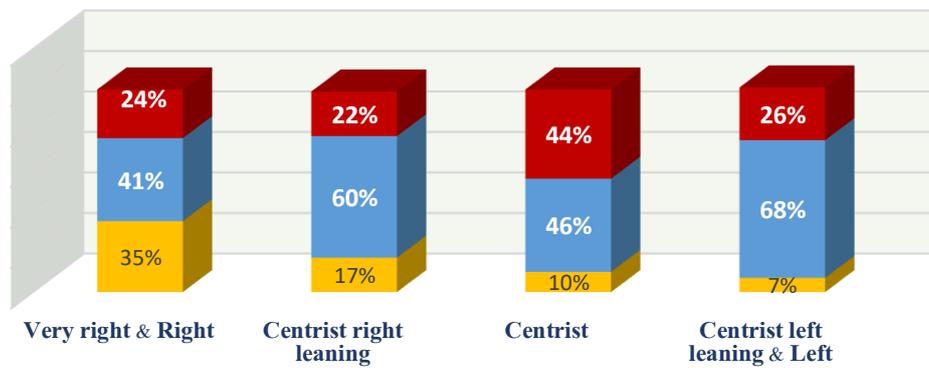
Analysis of positions in the annual Indices over time [since 2010] indicates great consistency in attitudes [considering the range of the statistical error]. **Only about 20% of the public accept the ultra-Orthodox leadership’s position that yeshiva students should be exempted from compulsory service because their “Torah is their craft”.** The rest maintain that they should be charged for some service, but opinions are divided as to the nature and extent of their service. Over the years, one can see changes in the percentage that supports the conscription of all yeshiva students for full-time regular service [about 40% in 2010 and 2011, and about 29% since 2018]. About 50% support a middle ground solution.

Enlisting Yeshiva Students (by level of religiosity)



Even among the Zionist Orthodox public only a minority supports the ultra-Orthodox position - 41%), and this is one of the areas where there is a significant difference between the attitudes of the traditional-religious public [30% support the ultra-Orthodox position] and the traditional-not-religious public [only 9% support the ultra-Orthodox position]. In all political camps there is opposition to the ultra-Orthodox position, and even among the right-wing camp, only 35% support it. [22% of Likud voters in March 2020, 20% of Yamina voters. Among the currently undecided, the percentage of support for the ultra-Orthodox position is only 10%.]

Enlisting Yeshiva Students (by political outlook)



- All should be enlisted into IDF for full term of service
- A quota of exemptions must be set according to the IDF's needs, the rest must be enlisted into military or civilian service
- Acceptable because "Torah is their Craft"

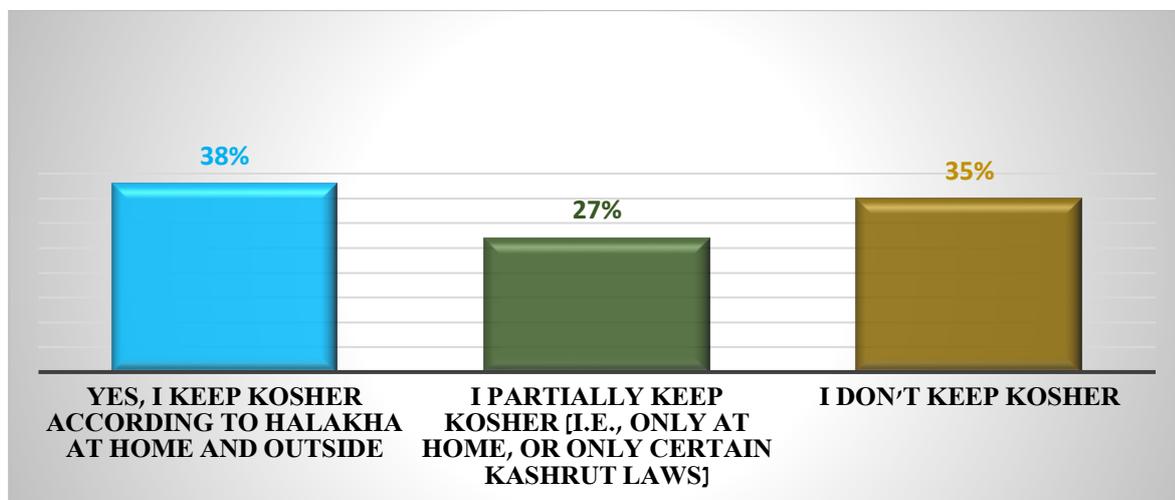
Kashrut – Personal and Public

The battle over kashrut has gained a lot of attention in the media, in politics, in business, and in the courts in recent years, and even the State Comptroller has dealt with it. To a large extent he focused on the question of the Chief Rabbinate's monopoly, granted to it by law, over issuing kashrut certificates to food business of various kinds. Competitors to the Chief Rabbinate arose from the camp of those who observe Torah law, not only as in the past, stemming from ultra-Orthodox groups that demand further stringencies, but also among the Modern Orthodox. The latter were motivated by a desire to make it as easy as possible for the Israeli public to abide by religious Jewish law, to correct deficiencies in the supervision and kosher status of food, and to deal with the corruption that so many people have injected into this market, which is rich with money and jobs. Such initiatives have also emerged in the past, but in recent years they have expanded and institutionalized, first in the organization "Hashgacha Pratit" [Private Supervision] whose initiative was later folded into the Tzohar rabbinical organization. The Chief Rabbinate and its partners in the political system invest a great deal of effort in battling with the competitors and challengers from the side of the Modern Orthodox. Not surprisingly, they do not dare to fight competitors on the right. This is partly because the multiple ultra-Orthodox kashrut authorities are grounded in political centers of power in the ultra-Orthodox world, which in quite a few cases have close affinities for key figures in the Chief Rabbinate, and because usually their kashrut certificates are only in addition to those issued by the Chief Rabbinate and do not seek to replace it. The struggle is waged in the courts and in the Knesset, but also in public opinion and in the business world. Rabbinical officials claim that the public, which keeps kashrut will not be tempted by substitutes on the "left", and they will not consume products or eat at restaurants and hotels that are not certified as kosher by the Chief Rabbinate.

We sought to examine these claims and to gain a deeper understanding of the scope of kashrut observance among the adult Jewish public in Israel.

We first asked: **Do you keep kosher?** offering 3 options for reply as you can see below.

As expected, the percentage of those who keep kosher according to Halacha is significantly larger than the percentage of the public that defines itself as ultra-Orthodox or religious. Almost no one refrained from answering this question, and thus the findings reflect the answers of 99% of the participants in the representative sample.

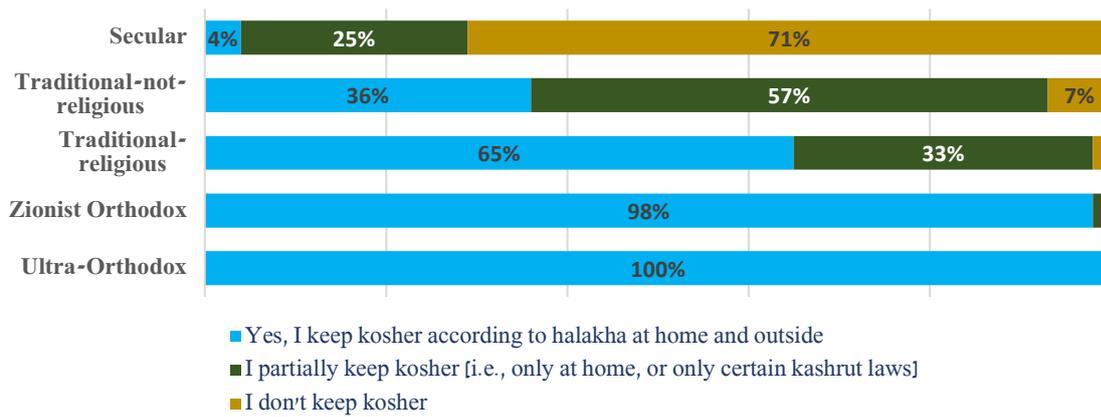


A breakdown of the findings reveals a complex picture, especially in light of the familiar rhetoric of the religious establishment's spokesmen regarding the Jewish public's adherence to tradition. **While 100% of the ultra-Orthodox public and 98% of the religious public is strict about keeping kosher according to Halacha, both in and out of the home, only 4% of the secular Israeli public adheres to the laws of kashrut this way.** This question also provides another opportunity to examine the difference between the

two subgroups of the traditional public: While 65% of the traditional-religious public keeps kosher to this degree, only 36% of the traditional-not-religious public does so.

At the same time, complementing those who fully keep kosher, it is important to examine the breakdown of those who responded that they partially keep kosher, “for example, only at home and / or some laws of kashrut”: 25% of the secular public indicated that this is how it behaves. Here too we see the difference between the two traditional subgroups, for while 57% of the traditional-not-religious group describes their degree of kashrut this way, only 33% of the traditional-religious public is satisfied with this degree of commitment to kashrut.

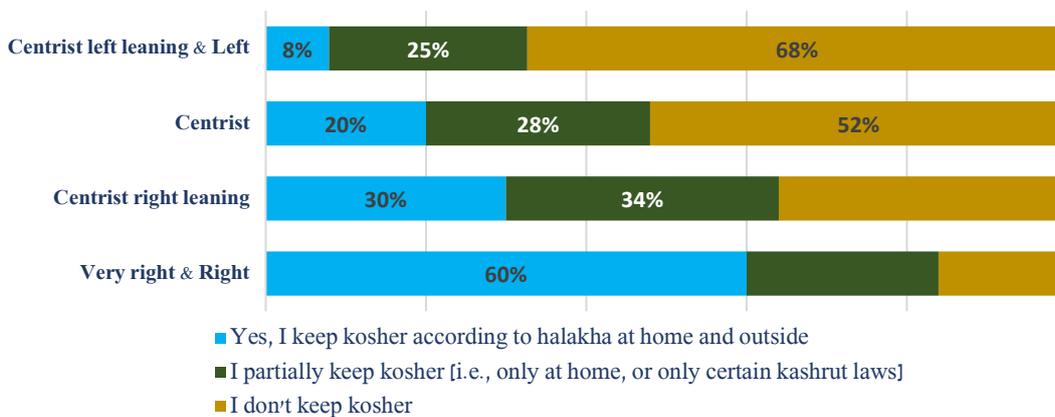
Kashrut Observance (by level of religiosity)



Having emphasized that on many issues related to public policy, the attitudes of the traditional-not-religious public are close to those of the secular public, we see that in the matter of keeping kosher on a personal level, the difference between them is revealed, and the choice of the first group in being labeled “traditional” rather than “secular” is made clear. This underscores why this group identifies as “traditional”, rather than “secular”: While 71% of the secular public responded that it does not keep kosher, only 7% of the traditional-not-religious responded in this way.

This is also an opportunity to see the [partial] correlation between the observance of mitzvot, such as kashrut, and political inclinations.

Kashrut Observance (by political outlook)

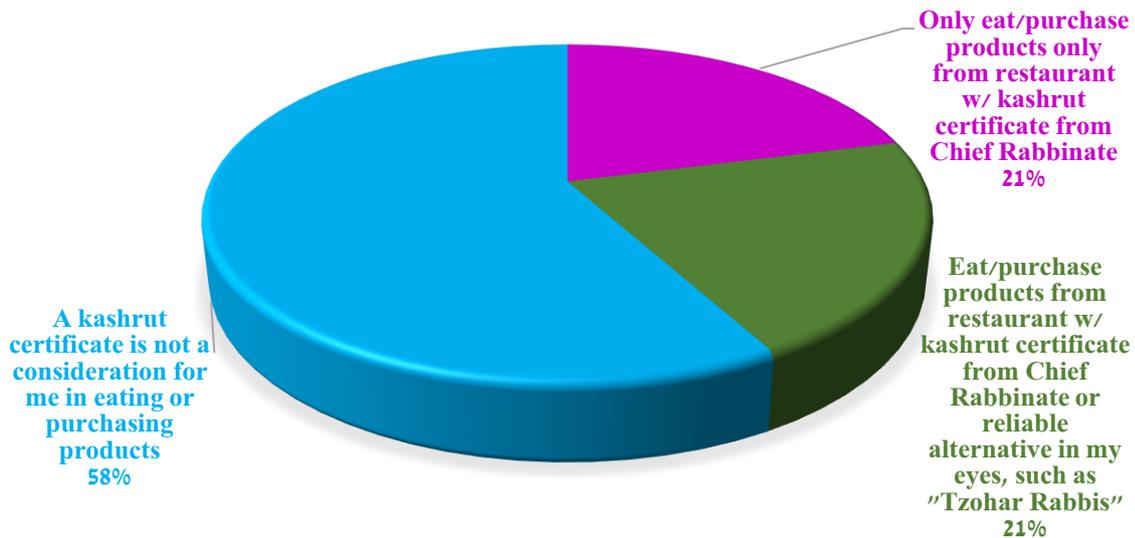


❖ **Would you eat at a food establishment not certified as Kosher by the Chief Rabbinate?**

After gauging the level of personal kashrut observance, we then presented the question of the implications of the identity of the kashrut certificate provider.

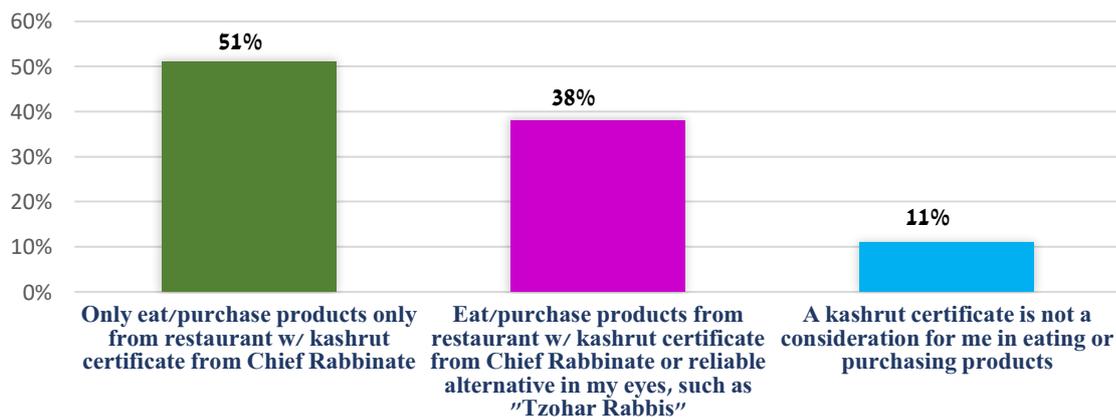
We asked: **Recently, more and more food establishments are giving up the Chief Rabbinate’s kashrut certification and moving to alternative certification bodies such as “Tzohar Rabbis” or giving up on kashrut certification altogether. Which sentence reflects your opinion on the subject:** This is how the answers were distributed among those who expressed an opinion:

POSITION REGARDING KASHRUT CERTIFICATION AT FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS (AMONG 95% WHO GAVE AN OPINION)



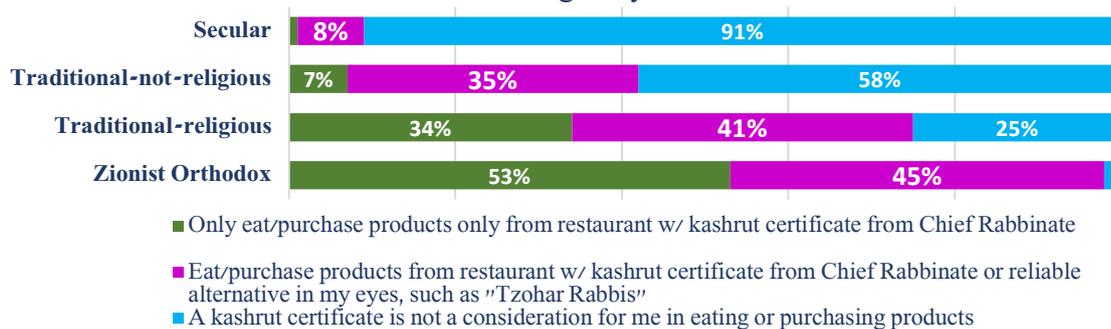
It turns out, then, that **only 21% of the adult Jewish public will limit itself to only consuming food products and eating at food establishments that hold a kashrut certificate from the Chief Rabbinate!** Equally significant is the breakdown of the data when combining the answers to the two questions presented to the sample. **It turns out that even among the 38% of the public that responded that it keeps kosher halakhically, both at home and outside the home, only half [51%] think this requires them to consume only food under the supervision of the Chief Rabbinate.**

POSITION REGARDING KASHRUT CERTIFICATION AT FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS (AMONG THOSE WHO CLAIM TO KEEP KOSHER)



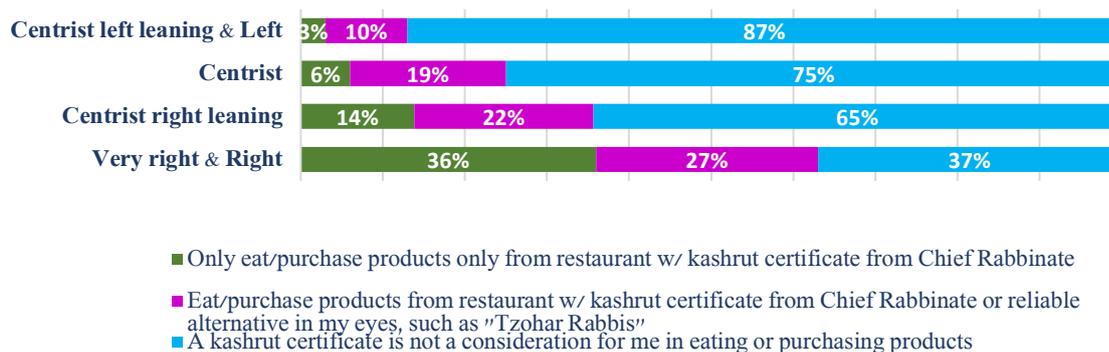
This last figure can be understood and given a broader meaning **when we examine the breakdown of the answers according to the religious identities of the respondents. While 88% of the ultra-Orthodox responded that they would not consume food that is not kosher according to the Chief Rabbinate, only about half of the Zionist Orthodox public responded this way [53%], and the rest in this sector are satisfied with alternative kashrut certification [45%].** Here, too, we see the difference between the two traditional subgroups, for while 34% of the traditional-religious insist upon kashrut certification from the Chief Rabbinate, only 7% of the traditional-not-religious responded this way. A comparable percentage of both groups is satisfied with alternative kashrut certification [41% and 35% respectively], and they are again divided on completely giving up kashrut certification [25% and 58% respectively]. Only 1% of the secular public wants a kashrut certificate from the Chief Rabbinate, whereas 91% responded that a kashrut certificate is not a consideration for them.

Kashrut observance at food establishments (by level of religiosity)



As expected, on this issue, too, we see a reflection of the [partial] correlation between political identity and level of religious observance. Breaking down the findings by voting patterns suggests that **among Likud voters in March 2020, only for 28% consider kashrut certification from the Chief Rabbinate to be important, 25% are satisfied with alternative certification, and for 47% a kashrut certificate is not important at all. We also learn about the characteristics of Yamina voters, for we can see that only 17% of them care about kashrut certification from the Chief Rabbinate, 57% would be satisfied with alternative certification, and for 25%, a kashrut certificate is not important at all. Only 3% of Blue & White voters consider kashrut certification from the Rabbinate important, and for 81% kashrut certification does not constitute a consideration in food consumption.** Finally, it is worth noting that the Rabbinate's kashrut certification is important to only 12% of currently undecided voters, while 22% are satisfied with alternative certification, and 67% are not concerned with kashrut certification at all.

Kashrut observance at food establishments (by political outlook)

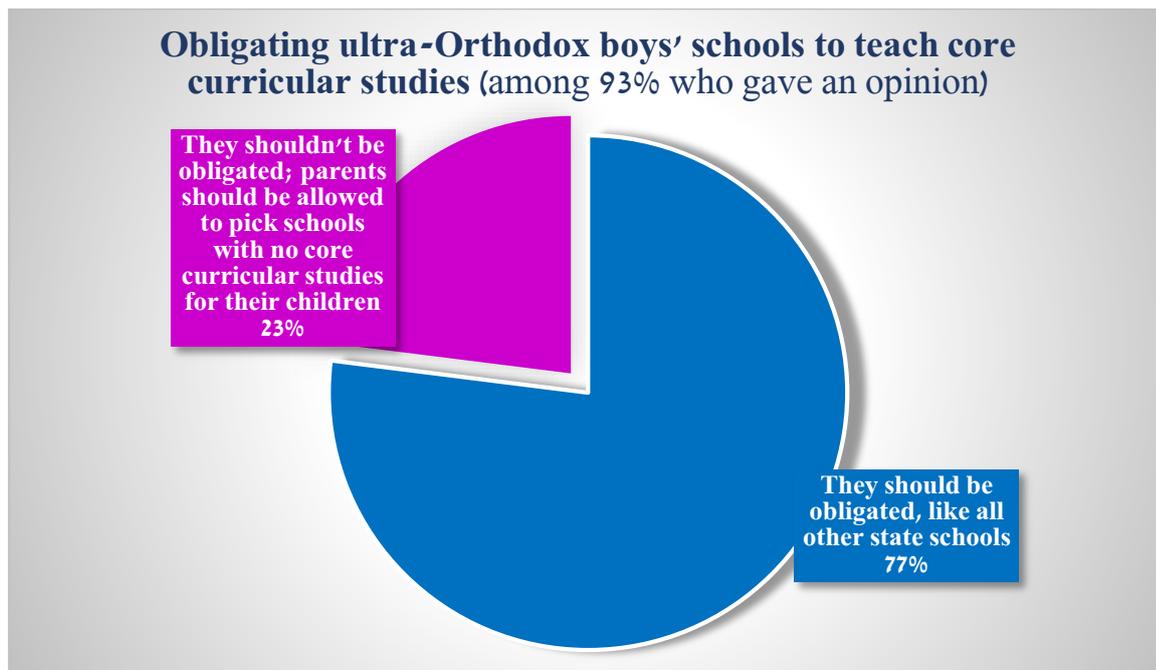


Core Curricular Studies in ultra-Orthodox Schools

Another issue that is at the top of the demands of the ultra-Orthodox leadership is the refusal to accept government intervention in the curriculum taught in ultra-Orthodox schools. The agreement reached with the state, according to which the schools within the education networks affiliated with the ultra-Orthodox parties [Independent Education System and B'nei Yosef - MaAyan HaHinuch HaTorani] will be funded 100% ["Like all the children of Israel"], is conditioned on a commitment to teach 100% of the state's core curriculum. However, in practice, this was not done in boys' schools, as the findings of the Meitzav exams (standardized testing in language, math, science and English) clearly prove [in which the ultra-Orthodox schools participate only in part - and only some, and to a limited extent, and refuse - especially the 'Independent Education System' schools - to fully integrate into them]. Further evidence of this is found, for example, in detail in the State Comptroller's report, published in May 2020. In exempted schools (which are not affiliated with the two major Haredi networks and receive only 55% funding), the situation with regard to core curricular studies is even worse. In the extreme streams of Haredi society there are tens of thousands of additional students - boys and girls - that study in unlicensed schools, which are not supervised by the Ministry of Education and do not teach the core curriculum at all.

We asked: **All senior economists underscore the damage done to the country's economy as a result of the refusal of ultra-Orthodox boys' schools to teach general subjects called "core curricular subjects" that include math, English, and science. Do you think that the ultra-Orthodox schools that operate with state funding should be obligated to teach core curricular studies?**

The distribution of attitudes among those who expressed an opinion is clear and is reflected in the following graph:

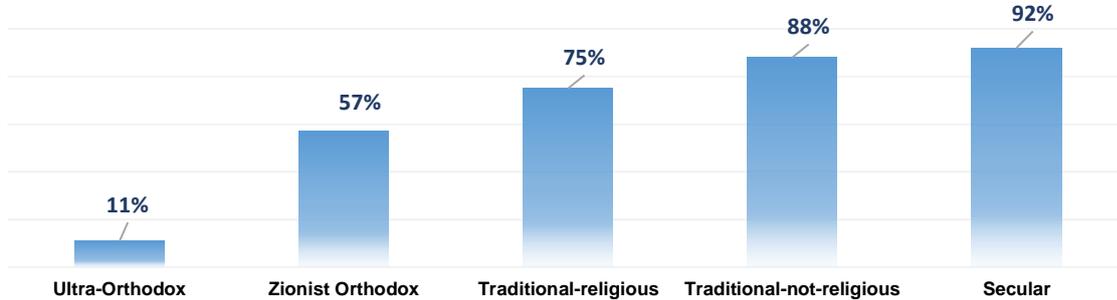


This position has been consistent over the years, and the changes from year to year have been in the realm of statistical error.

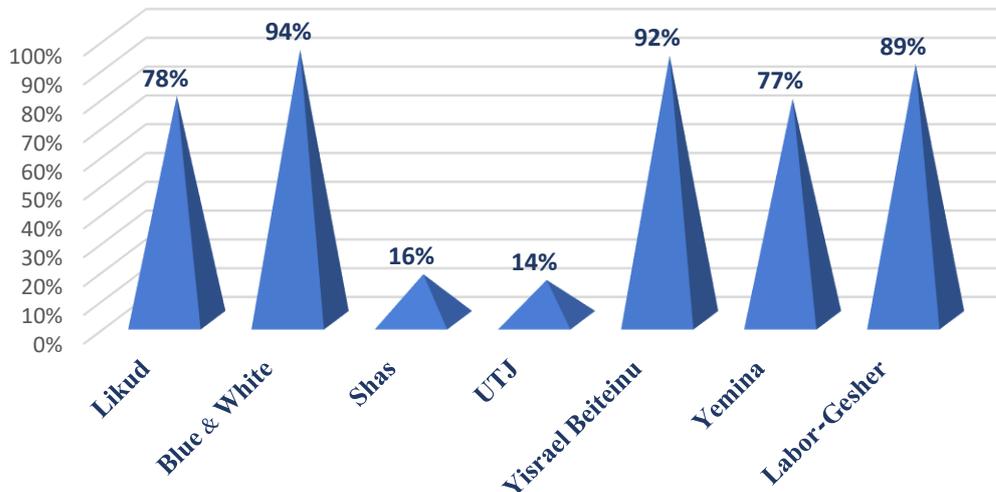
The demand to enforce core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox schools that operate with state funding is common to all religious camps except the ultra-Orthodox [on average - 85% of the non-Haredi public support this], and to all political camps. Support for this includes, for example, 78%

of Likud voters in March 2020 and 94% of Blue & White voters. Among currently undecided voters, 83% support it.

SUPPORT OBLIGATING ULTRA-ORTHODOX SCHOOLS TO TEACH CORE CURRICULAR STUDIES LIKE ALL OTHER STATE SCHOOLS (BY LEVEL OF RELIGIOSITY)



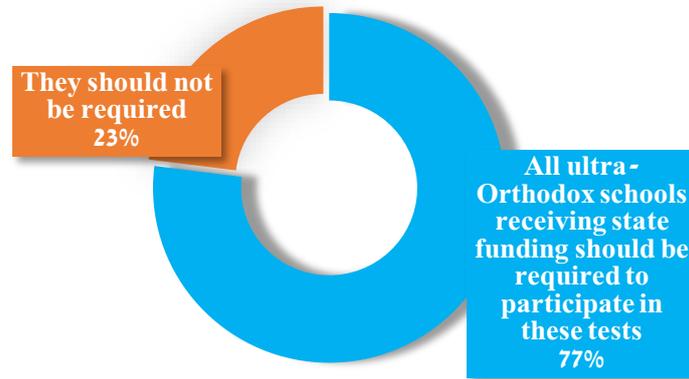
SUPPORT OBLIGATING ULTRA-ORTHODOX SCHOOLS TO TEACH CORE CURRICULAR STUDIES LIKE ALL OTHER STATE SCHOOLS (BY VOTE IN MARCH 2020 ELECTIONS)



The issue of core curricular studies is directly related to the refusal to participate fully in the Meitzav exams, which are the only clear and objective means to compare the quality of core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox education, in comparison with other sectors in Israel. It is also necessary to compare the achievements of the boys with the achievements of the girls, which also lead one to harsh conclusions regarding the way in which ultra-Orthodox schools choose to implement the required core curriculum.

We therefore asked an additional question this year regarding the Meitzav exams: **The ultra-Orthodox schools refuse to participate fully in the Meitzav exams and other exams designed to examine and compare student achievement in reading, math, English, and sciences. The test results in which they participated indicate that the achievements of the ultra-Orthodox boys are in the lower two deciles [ultra-Orthodox girls' achievements are comparable to the national average]. Do you think that all the ultra-Orthodox schools that receive funding from the state should be required to participate in these tests as a condition for public funding, in order to objectively examine the extent to which they meet the core curricular requirement?**

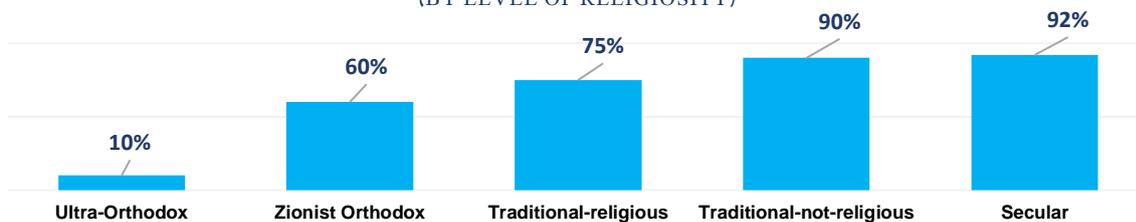
Ultra-Orthodox schools should be required to participate in the Growth and Effectiveness exams
(among 90% who responded)



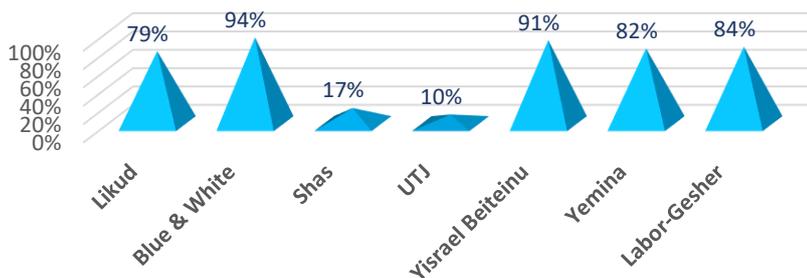
The responses to this question were identical to the responses to the question of requiring core curricular studies. Among those who expressed an opinion, 77% supported requiring the schools to participate in these exams, and only 23% thought they should not be required. The responses to both questions were almost entirely the same: 95% of those who indicated that ultra-Orthodox boys' schools should be required to teach core curricular subjects also responded that they should be required to participate in the Meitzav exams.

As in the previous question, this position is common to all religious camps except the ultra-Orthodox, and 85% support the obligation to participate in the Meitzav exams. It is also common to all political camps, including, for example, 79% of Likud voters and 94% of Blue & White voters in March 2020. It is supported by 86% of currently undecided voters.

ULTRA-ORTHODOX SCHOOLS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GROWTH AND EFFECTIVENESS EXAMS (BY LEVEL OF RELIGIOSITY)



ULTRA-ORTHODOX SCHOOLS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GROWTH AND EFFECTIVENESS EXAMS (BY VOTE IN MARCH 2020 ELECTIONS)



About the Index Survey

The Index survey was conducted by the Smith Polling Institute by telephone between the 13th and 16th of July 2020, among an expanded sample of 800 people, a representative sample of Israel's adult Jewish population (aged 18 and over). Sampling error - $\pm 3.5\%$.

In this Report we sometimes use the general term "public" in reference to Israel's adult Jewish public, represented by the composition of the survey's representative sample. This is due, among other things, to the reality that the government's policy on religion & state continues to be shaped on the basis of political agreements made among the parties representing the Jewish public.

Further, the terms "Haredi" and "ultra-Orthodox" are used interchangeably in this report, as are the terms "Shabbat" and "Sabbath".

Change in this arena will be based first and foremost on changing political patterns in the Jewish sector. From time to time, reviews of the positions of the Arab public are also published on some of these issues [e.g. in publications by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics and the Guttman Institute's surveys within the framework of the Israel Democracy Institute], and Hiddush has also examined this extensively in the past, specifically on questions of marriage and personal status.

The 2020 Israel Religion and State Index is published every year in Hebrew on the eve of Rosh Hashanah. This year we published [Sept. 2020], along with the full Hebrew report also an abridged version in English. We have now completed the translation and adapted the full report for the English language readers.