

2021 Israel Religion & State Index

Report #13

Abridged Version



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Dear readers,

Hiddush - for Freedom of Religion and Equality is proud to share our annual Israel Religion & State Index with you. This is the 13th Index published by Hiddush since its inception in 2009, published annually on the eve of Rosh HaShanah. The Index is the only systematic and in-depth periodic review of Israel's adult Jewish public's attitudes on matters of religion and state. Its findings present a comprehensive picture of all the controversies in this realm, and this year – it provides a special emphasis on the public's views regarding the new government's religion-state agenda.

The Index provides a detailed analysis of positions; breakdowns by religious and political views, comparisons over time; additional relevant background elements; and an emphasis on the views of voters for the different parties in the last election and of those who are undecided as to whom to vote for in the next elections.

Special attention was dedicated to the distinctions between the two subgroups of "traditional" Jewish Israelis (the 'traditional-religious' and 'traditional-not religious'), as well as those between voters for Yamina and voters for the Religious Zionism party, in regard to their positions on all religion & state issues.

The past year brought with it a new governing coalition in Israel. The new government was formed amid fierce conflicts with the ultra-Orthodox parties over religion and state issues. The Index indicates that **not only does most of the Israeli Jewish public support the dramatic changes that the new government is initiating, but so too do most Likud voters.** This is not a change in public attitudes, but the opposite. The Index shows a stability over years in support of religious freedom and equality (with limited oscillations), and the shift is actually on the part of the new government, which is representing the will of the public more faithfully in this regard than its predecessors.

The data confirm the insight that **the battle between the two political camps is largely a struggle for different visions of Israel's image as a Jewish and democratic state.** Not that Likud voters are necessarily supporters of a halakhic state, but their opinions regarding partnership with the ultra-Orthodox parties are more divided [which is not based on a worldview on Jewish affairs but on other considerations], which brings them to support a more compulsive and limited vision of the Jewish spectrum. In this controversy over the image of the State, this division is very different from the political balance between the two main camps. **Israel is a Jewish and democratic state of a liberal, pluralistic nature, in which freedom of religion is consistently supported by about two-thirds of its adult Jewish public. However, the political camps that have formed in recent decades distort the will of the people and the vision of combining Judaism with democracy.** The two alternative visions are also prominent in the ties between Israel and Diaspora Jewry.

While the Chief Rabbinate and the ultra-Orthodox parties are fighting to preserve its long-standing monopoly, most of the public, including **the majority of voters for the coalition parties, does not want the Chief Rabbinate's monopoly on marriage and kashrut in Israel to be perpetuated, nor does it see any need for Orthodox conversion as a condition for the state to recognize the Jewish status of immigrants.**

The Index and a comparison of its data over the last ten years prove that the Israeli public is fed up with the ‘status quo’ on religious issues, which belies the worn-out rhetoric of many politicians regarding Israel’s ‘traditional, religiously inclined majority’. They mislead Diaspora Jewish leadership, when they claim that most Israeli Jews wish to maintain the State’s coercive laws and policies in matters of Shabbat, marriage, kashrut, ‘Who is a Jew’, and more. The compelling and consistent Index data refutes this self-serving distortion of the truth. The public supports religious pluralism and prefers a broad, civil coalition, which does not submit to the dictates of the ultra-Orthodox parties. It is clearly demonstrated by the many surveys we and others have conducted over the past few years and during the recent election cycles. The majority of the Israeli public identifies with and hopes for the full realization of the Declaration of Independence’s promise of freedom of religion and equality. Israeli Jews value the partnership with Diaspora Jewry, and are eager to join hands in promoting true unity, inclusiveness and rich diversity.

Below is the abridged version of the Index report, which mainly presents the issues of religion & state through the data, their numbers, and visual representations. At this stage, it does not include the detailed analysis prepared for the Hebrew edition.

We would love to hear from you and answer any questions that arise among those who read the Index and analysis. We are, of course, at your service in any matter related to the advancement of religious freedom and equality, and we encourage you to express your support for Israel's vision based on these fundamental values, anchored in its Declaration of Independence. You can do this easily by adding your signature to the Vision Statement for a Jewish and democratic state, which has already won the support of rabbis, activists and organizations from across Israel and the Diaspora, of all streams of Judaism and political views. You can sign the vision document [here](#).

Wishing you a sweet New Year, a year of peace, health and freedom of religion & equality,

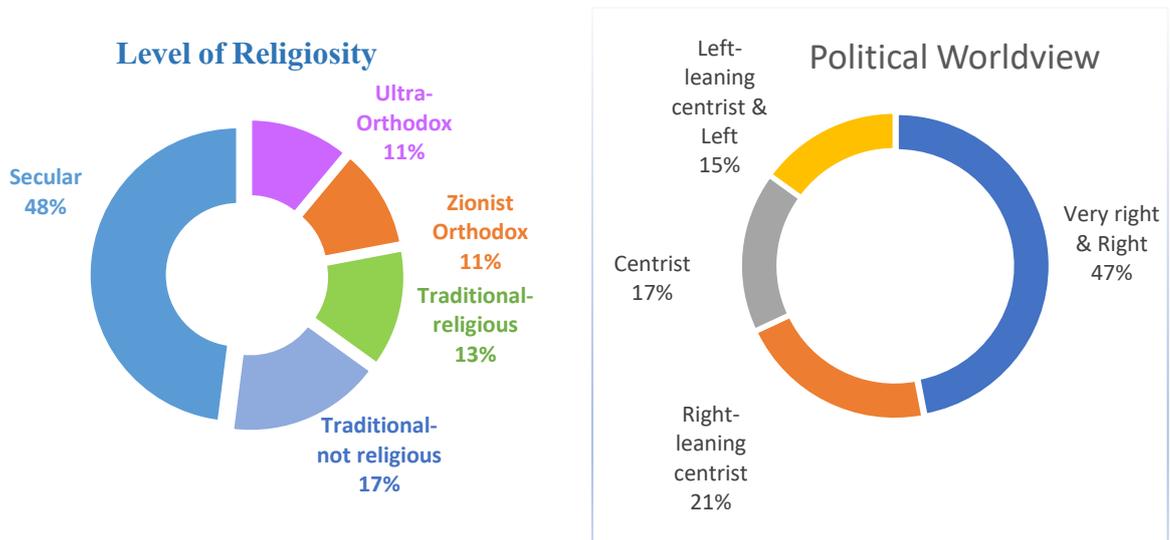


Rabbi Uri Regev

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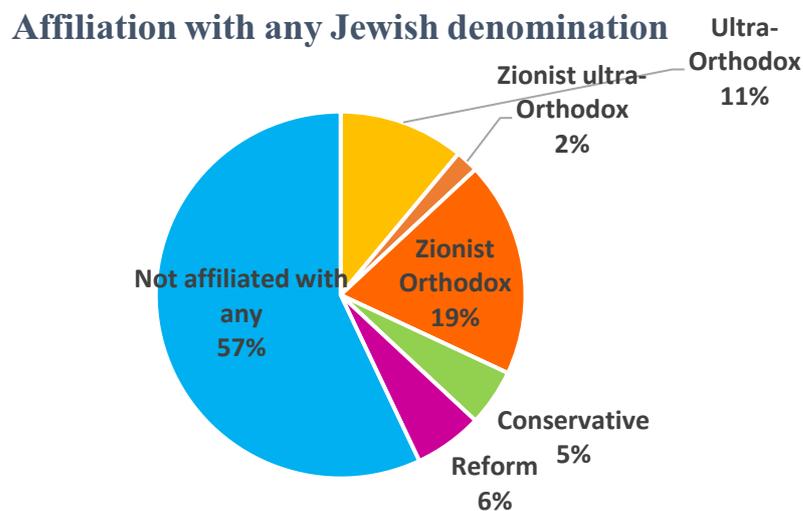
❖ What Kinds of Jews are Israelis?

65% Identify themselves as secular [48%] or “traditional-non-religious” [17%], whose positions regarding public policy on religion & state are similar to the positions of secular Israelis; 11% identify as ultra-Orthodox, 11% - Zionist Orthodox, 13% - traditional-religious.



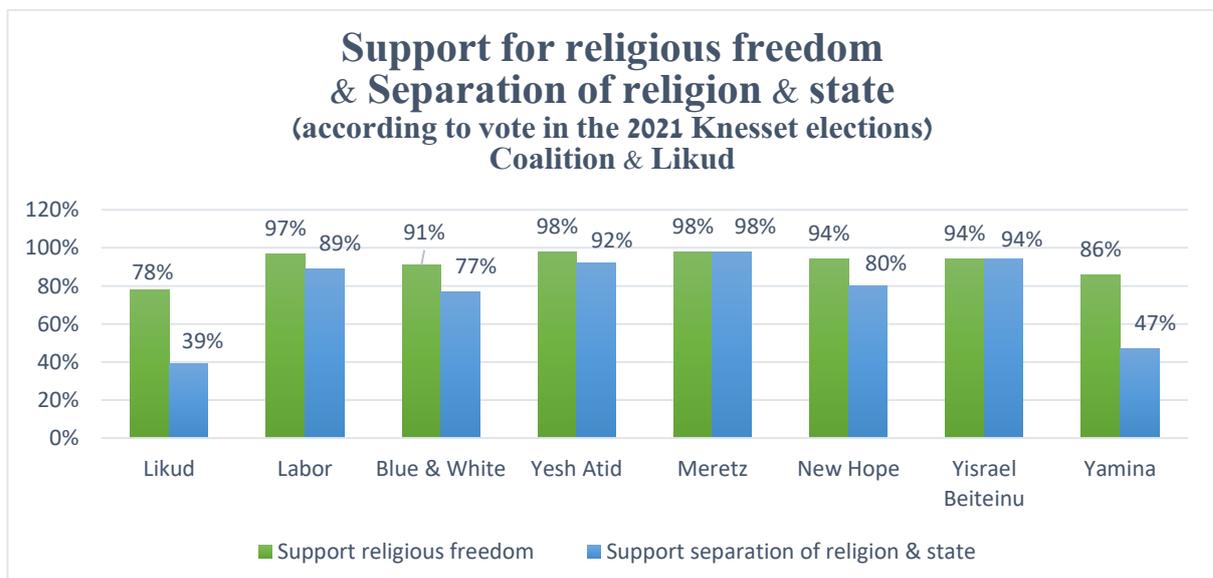
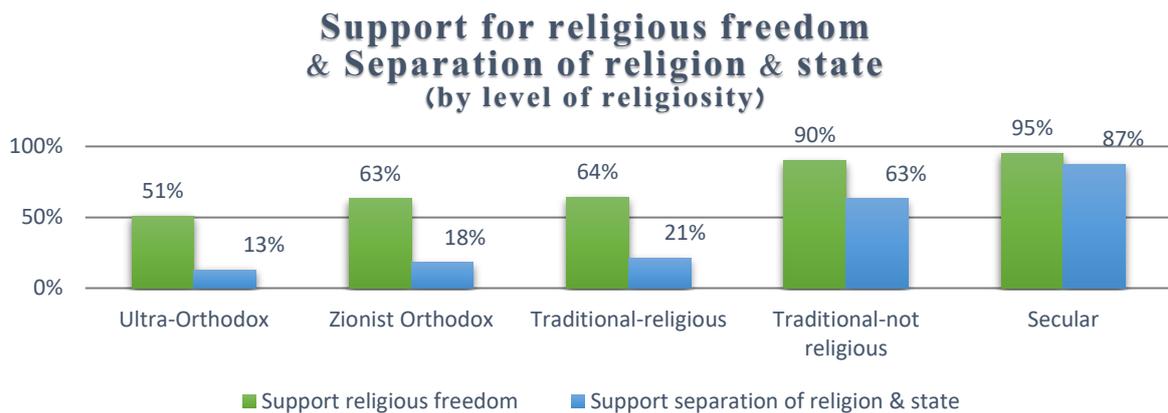
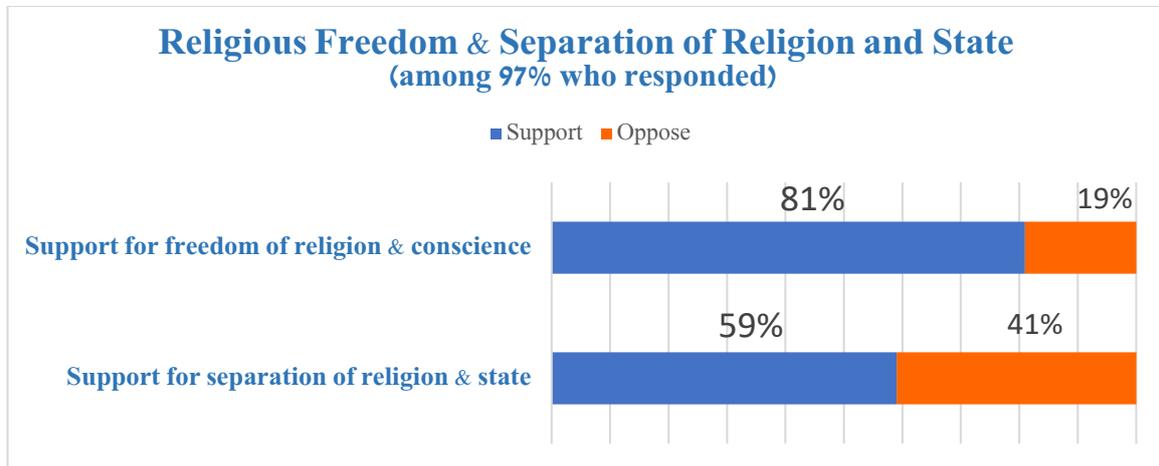
❖ Are the Religious Denominations Relevant to Israelis?

While the traditional breakdown used to measure religious identities of Israel’s Jewish public is represented by the categories listed above, in recent years, Israelis’ affiliations with the major Jewish denominations has been re-examined. They are represented and operating in Israel as well. Therefore, we also examine the extent to which the adult Jewish public affiliates itself with the major Jewish denominations. While the majority of Israelis do not belong to any of the streams [57%], **19% identify as Zionist Orthodox, 11% - ultra-Orthodox, 11% - Reform / Conservative and 2% - Zionist ultra-Orthodox.**



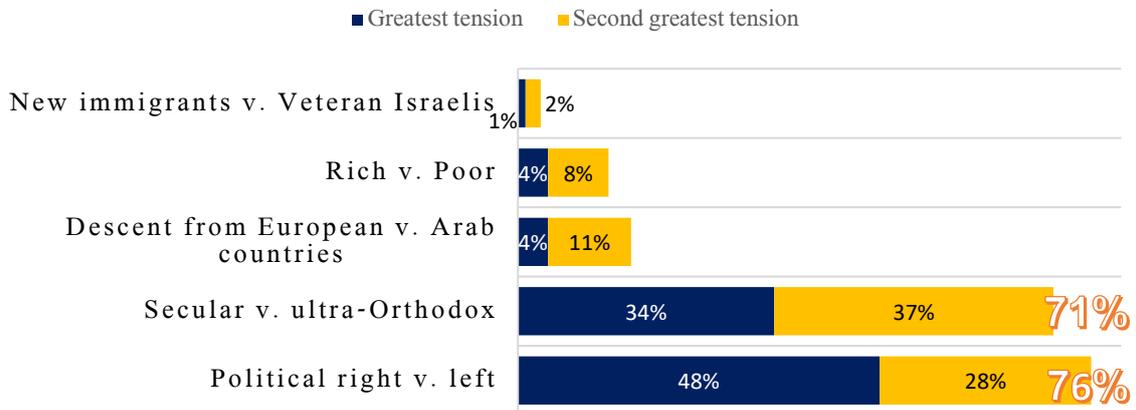
❖ What is Their Perspective on Religion-State Relations?

81% support freedom of religion and conscience in Israel [freedom of choice and behavior for secular and religious people according to their religious worldviews]; **59% support the separation of religion and state.**

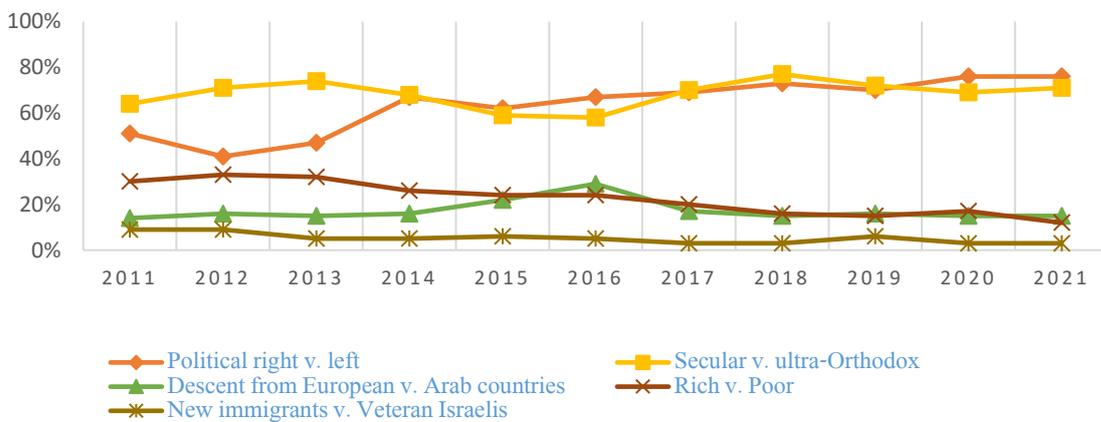


The tension between secular and ultra-Orthodox Israelis is perceived as close in severity to that between the political right and left on the scale of internal tensions in Israeli society [71% and 76% respectively], well above the rest of the tensions [rich v. poor - 12%; descent from European v. Arab countries - 15%; veteran Israelis v. immigrants - 3%]

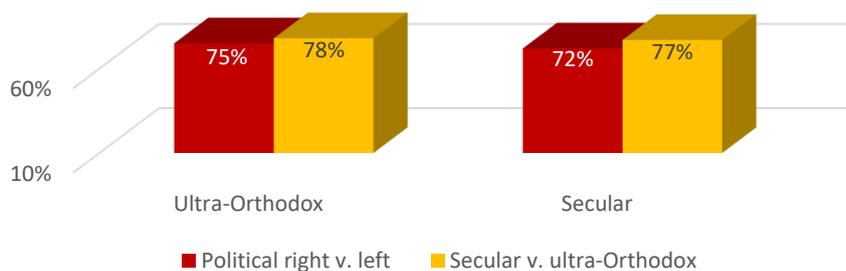
Primary conflicts & Tensions in Israeli society



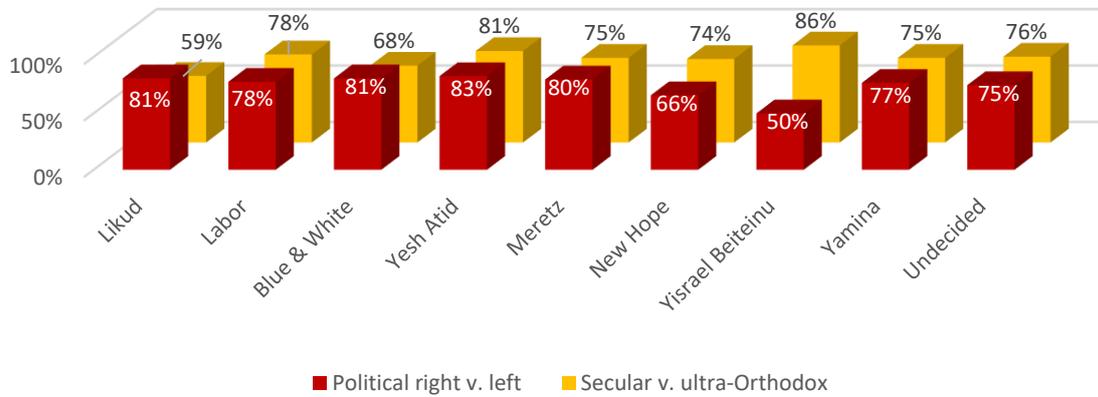
Primary conflicts & Tensions in Israeli society (comparison over time)



Primary conflicts in Israeli society (according to level of religiosity: secular & ultra-Orthodox)



Primary conflicts in Israeli society
(by vote in the 2021 elections + Likud + undecided)



❖ What’s the Connection Between Religion and Politics?

There is a clear correlation between political leanings and religious identity. A large majority of those who are ultra-Orthodox [73%] and Zionist Orthodox [78%] identify themselves as right-wing or very right-wing politically. The secular public is more diverse in its political views [29% right-wing or very right-wing].

	SECULAR	TRADITIONAL-NOT RELIGIOUS	TRADITIONAL-RELIGIOUS	ZIONIST ORTHODOX	ULTRA-ORTHODOX
Very right & Right	29%	48%	60%	78%	73%
Right-leaning centrist	21%	27%	23%	18%	17%
Centrist	22%	18%	14%	4%	10%
Left-leaning centrist & Left	28%	7%	3%	0%	0%

This correlation is also reflected in the distribution of voters for the various parties. While 38% of Likud voters in the last elections were Zionist Orthodox, traditional-religious and ultra-Orthodox, 96% of Yesh Atid voters were secular and traditional-non-religious; and so too were 85% of Blue & White and 81% of New Hope voters. Significant differences in the religious compositions of voters are also seen in the comparison between Yamina voters and ‘Religious Zionism’ voters. **75% of those who have not yet decided whom to vote for in the next elections are secular and traditional-non-religious.**

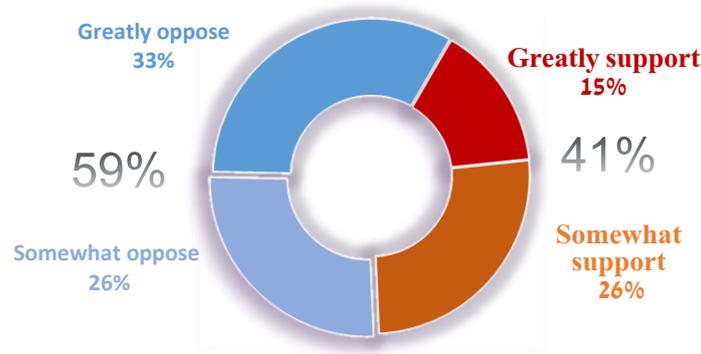
Vote in the last Knesset elections by level of religiosity

	<i>By level of religiosity</i>				<i>Country of origin</i>		
	Ultra-Orthodox	Zionist Orthodox	Traditional-close to religion	Traditional-not close to religion	Secular	Veteran Israelis	Olim from FSU
TOTAL	11%	11%	13%	17%	48%	84%	16%
Likud	1%	15%	23%	28%	34%	84%	16%
Labor	0%	3%	3%	16%	78%	95%	5%
Blue & White	0%	0%	15%	17%	68%	94%	6%
Yesh Atid	0%	0%	4%	16%	80%	81%	19%
Meretz	0%	0%	3%	5%	92%	92%	8%
New Hope	0%	11%	8%	28%	53%	75%	25%
Shas	78%	18%	4%	0%	0%	92%	8%
UTJ	86%	8%	5%	0%	0%	98%	2%
Yisrael Beteinu	0%	3%	6%	6%	86%	36%	64%
Yamina	2%	31%	23%	20%	24%	93%	7%
Religious Zionism	17%	51%	23%	5%	5%	93%	7%
Other	13%	0%	0%	0%	87%	100%	0%
Didn't vote / refuse to answer	11%	9%	12%	23%	46%	82%	18%
Undecided	3%	12%	11%	30%	45%	80%	20%

❖ **More on Religion, State & Politics**

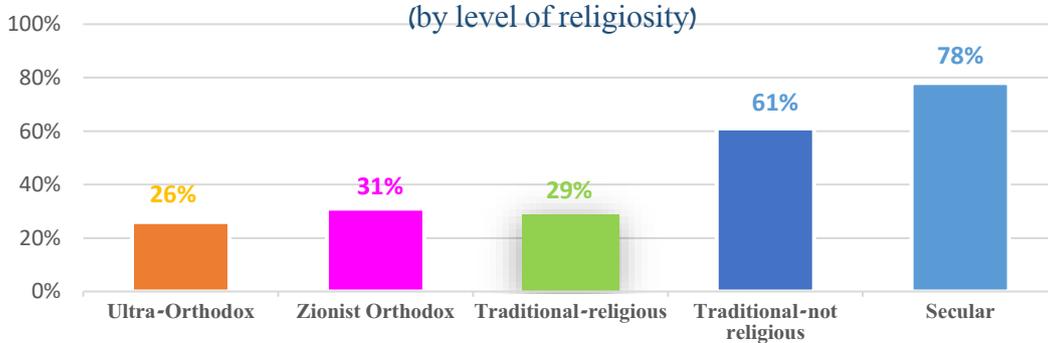
There has been consistent long-term opposition from the majority of Israel's adult Jewish public against the inclusion of the ultra-Orthodox parties in the government coalition in a way that would give them the ability to dictate government policy and legislation on matters of religion and state.

The public's positions on bringing the ultra-Orthodox parties into the Coalition (among 80% who responded)

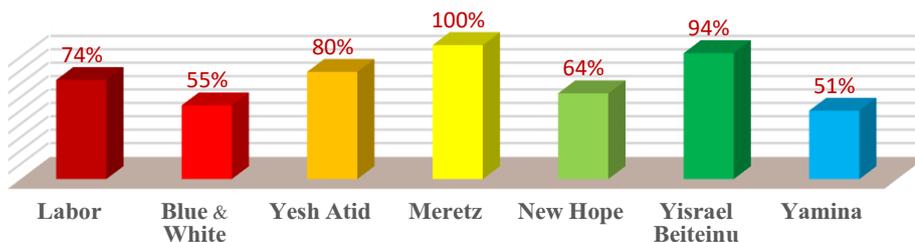


In the current Index, the question was formulated with explicit reference to the will of Yamina and Yesh Atid to fold the ultra-Orthodox parties into the coalition. 59% of respondents expressed their opposition to this. **Opposition was voiced by a majority of voters for all of the current coalition parties.** This is also the position of 72% of those who are undecided regarding their votes in the next elections.

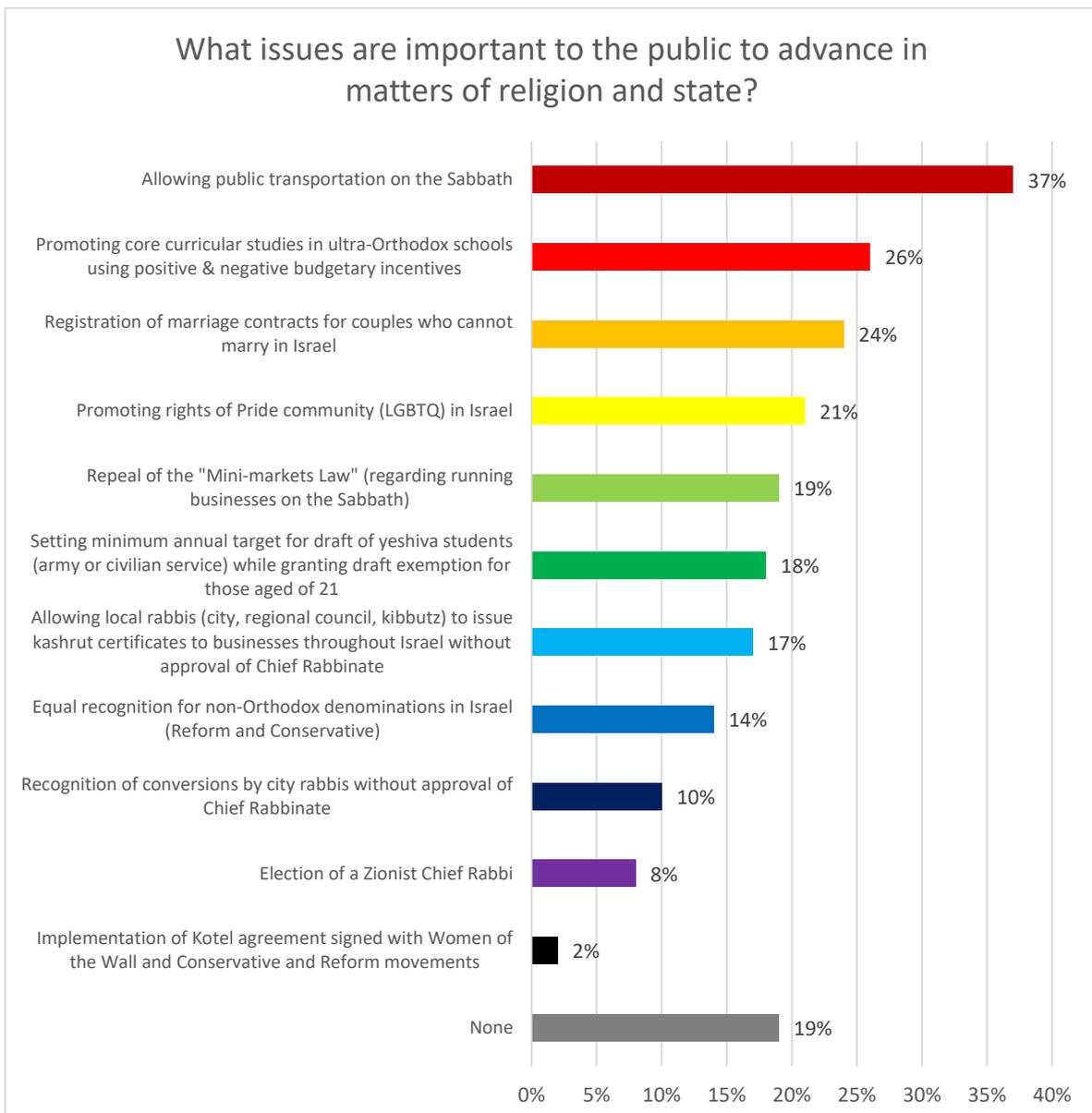
Opposed to bringing the ultra-Orthodox parties into the coalition (by level of religiosity)



Opposed to bringing the ultra-Orthodox parties into the coalition (by vote in 2021 Knesset elections)



A number of policy and legislative changes are mentioned in some of the coalition agreements signed on the eve of the formation of the new government with the parties that comprise it. We measured which are the three that are perceived most important. It should be emphasized that the list includes only the specific issues included in the coalition agreements, rather than all issues of religion & state, as we have done in the 2020 Index. **The top three issues are: allowing public transportation on the Sabbath [37%]; enforcing core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox schools through use of positive and negative budgetary incentives [26%]; and the official registration of couplehood for those couples that cannot marry in Israel [24%]**[it should be emphasized that with regard to the issue of marriage freedom, the vast majority of the public wants freedom of choice in marriage for all, not only the option of couplehood registration]. Only 19% of the adult Jewish public responded that none of the issues listed were important to them. Only 4% of the secular public, and 10% of the traditional-non-religious public.



Ranking of important topics for promotion

(by level of religiosity)

	Ultra-Orthodox	Zionist Orthodox	Traditional-religious	Traditional-not religious	Secular
Allowing public transportation on Shabbat	2%	4%	18%	35%	58%
Promoting core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox schools using positive & negative budgetary incentives	2%	26%	30%	34%	29%
Registration of marriage contracts for couples who cannot marry in Israel	0%	3%	22%	22%	37%
Promoting rights of Pride community (LGBTQ) in Israel	2%	6%	20%	20%	30%
Repeal of the " Mini-markets Law ")regarding running businesses on the Sabbath(3%	2%	9%	12%	33%
Setting minimum annual target for draft of yeshiva students (army or civilian service) while granting draft exemption for those aged of 21	6%	14%	25%	25%	17%
Allowing local rabbis (city, regional council, kibbutz) to issue kashrut certificates to businesses throughout Israel without approval of Chief Rabbinate	1%	22%	24%	26%	14%
Equal recognition for non-Orthodox denominations in Israel (Reform and Conservative)	1%	3%	5%	17%	20%

Ranking of important topics for promotion

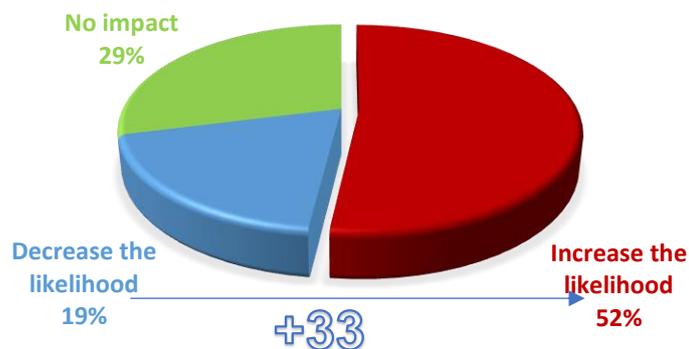
(by vote in the 2021 Knesset elections)

Coalition and Likud

	<i>Likud</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Blue & White</i>	<i>Yesh Atid</i>	<i>Meretz</i>	<i>New Hope</i>	<i>Yisrael Beiteinu</i>	<i>Yamina</i>
Allowing public transport on Shabbat	24%	51%	55%	63%	73%	45%	58%	25%
Promoting core curricular studies in ultra-Orthodox schools using positive & negative budgetary incentives	27%	43%	30%	33%	35%	30%	25%	38%
Registration of marriage contracts for couples who cannot marry in Israel	22%	43%	32%	33%	28%	40%	44%	19%
Promoting rights of Pride community (LGBTQ) in Israel	19%	32%	28%	31%	53%	30%	11%	8%
Repeal of the " Mini-markets Law) "regarding running businesses on the Sabbath(12%	14%	32%	38%	23%	23%	53%	17%
Setting minimum annual target for draft of yeshiva students (army or civilian service) while granting draft exemption for those aged of 21	23%	14%	19%	19%	8%	26%	8%	30%
Allowing local rabbis (city, regional council, kibbutz) to issue kashrut certificates to businesses throughout Israel without approval of Chief Rabbinate	17%	24%	19%	15%	8%	23%	17%	35%
recognition for non- Equal Orthodox denominations in Israel (Reform and (Conservative	10%	24%	17%	28%	35%	19%	8%	8%

79% of secular voters responded that a party's commitment [assuming its platform was consistent with their political views on security and economic issues] to promoting freedom of religion and equality of civic burden would increase the likelihood that they would vote for it, compared to only 3% who responded that it would decrease the likelihood of that [this is a gap of 76% in favor of those who responded that it would increase the likelihood of their voting for it]. Similarly, among the 'traditional non-religious' public, the gap is significant. [a gap of 37% in favor of "will strengthen the chance": 50% versus 13%].

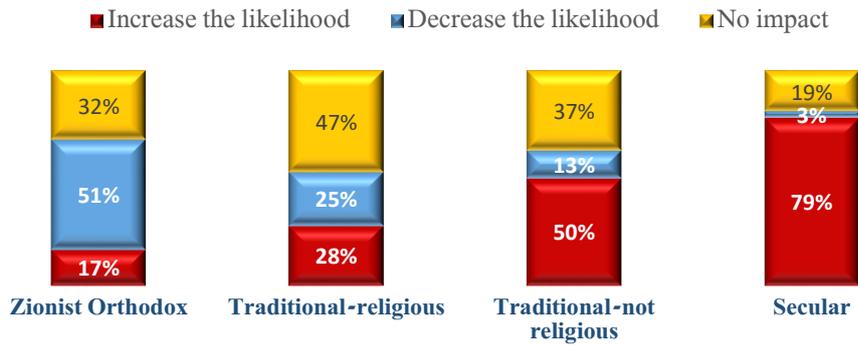
Given the voter profile of parties such as Yesh Atid, Yisrael Beiteinu, Blue & White, Labor and New Hope - their policies and decisions on religion & state issues may have a significant impact on the level of support they will receive from their potential voters in the next elections.



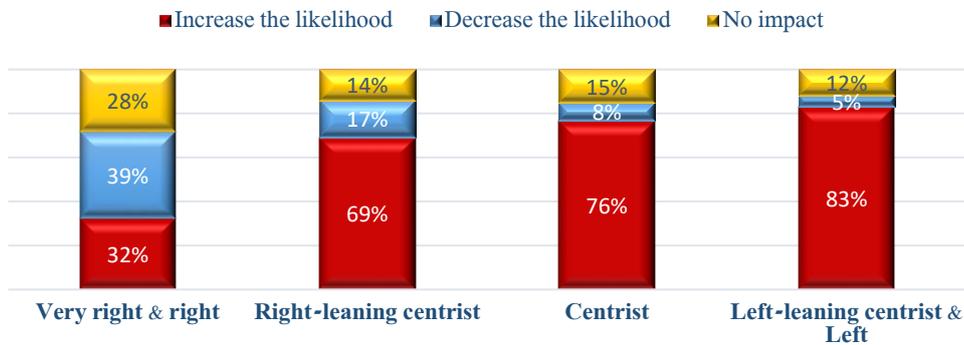
**A party's commitment to support religious freedom & equality
- will it affect the vote?**

	<i>July 2021</i> <i>Index(91%)</i>	<i>July 2020</i> <i>Index(89%)</i>	<i>August 2019</i> <i>Index(89%)</i>	<i>July 2018</i> <i>Index(85%)</i>	<i>July 2017</i> <i>Index(85%)</i>
<i>Increase the likelihood</i>	52%	57%	55%	57%	56%
<i>Decrease the likelihood</i>	19%	23%	23%	19%	20%
<i>No impact</i>	29%	20%	22%	24%	24%
<i>The difference in favor of "increase"</i>	33%+	34%+	32%+	38%+	36%+

Break-down by level of religiosity



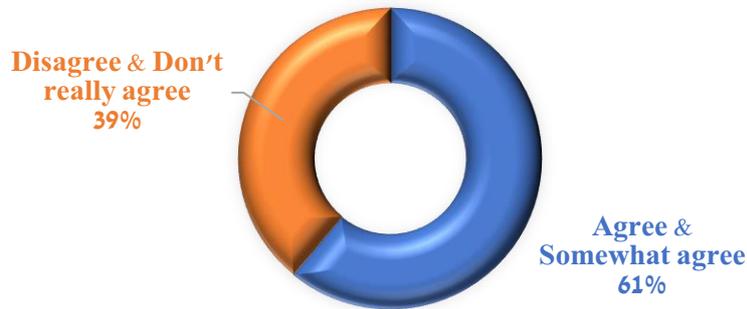
Break-down by political worldview



❖ Religious pluralism in Israel too?

61% of the public supports granting equal status in Israel for the 3 major Jewish denominations - Orthodox, Conservative and Reform.ⁱ Among the secular public, the support rate is 88%. Among the traditionalists - 62% support it. This is also supported by the majority of voters for all coalition parties [except for Yamina voters, who are divided on the issue. 48% of them support equal status for the denominations]. 57% of Likud voters in the March 21 elections also expressed support.

The public's positions regarding equal status in Israel for the 3 largest denominations
(among those who expressed an opinion - 92%)



Supports equal recognition for the three major Jewish denominations
(by level of religiosity and immigrants from FSU)



Support for equal recognition for the 3 major denominations
(by vote in 2021 Knesset elections)
Coalition, Likud, Religious Zionism party



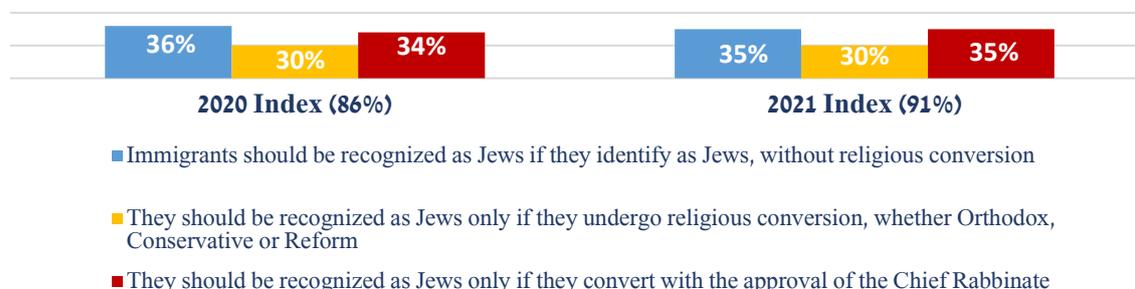
We asked about **Diaspora Minister Nachman Shai's announcement, upon taking office, regarding his commitment to a "broad Jewish tent" that should be open and accept equally all Jewish denominations.** 69% expressed support for his announcement. Among them were 91% of the secular public and 82% of the traditional non-religious public. This is the position of a large majority of voters for all coalition parties, 64% of Likud voters in the

March 21 elections, and 80% of those who are undecided as to whom to vote for in the next elections.

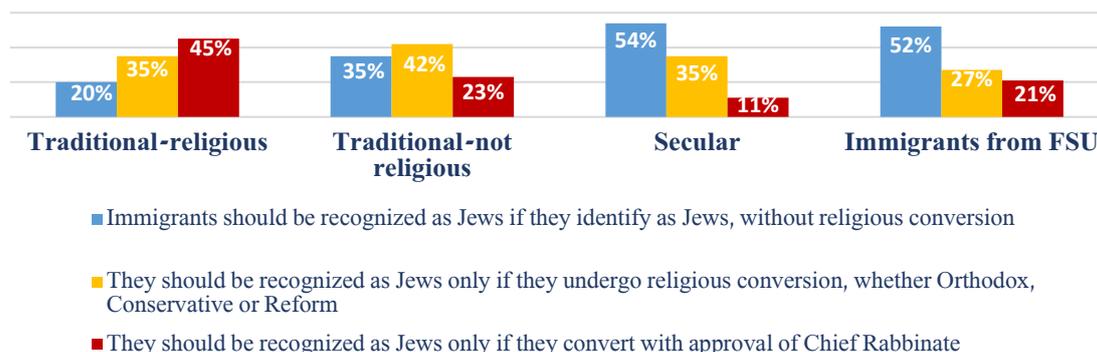
❖ Are the Immigrants Jewish?

A large majority does not see the need for Orthodox conversion as a condition for the state recognition of immigrants' Jewish civil status. Only 35% hold that recognition should be conditional upon Orthodox conversion, versus 35% that support state recognition of the Jewish civil status for all descendants of a Jewish parent, whether it is the father or the mother, who identify as Jews and are absorbed into the Jewish community. Another 30% are satisfied with any form of religious conversion common among world Jewry, whether it is Orthodox, Conservative or Reform. Only 11% of secular and 23% of traditional-non-religious Israelis see a need for Orthodox conversion. **Most voters in all coalition parties do not see the need for Orthodox conversion, as do most Likud voters [only 30% think Orthodox conversion should be the condition]** and most of those who are undecided regarding their votes in the next election [79%].

Public's positions on 'Who is a Jew' and immigrants from the FSU
(among 91% that responded)
comparison over time

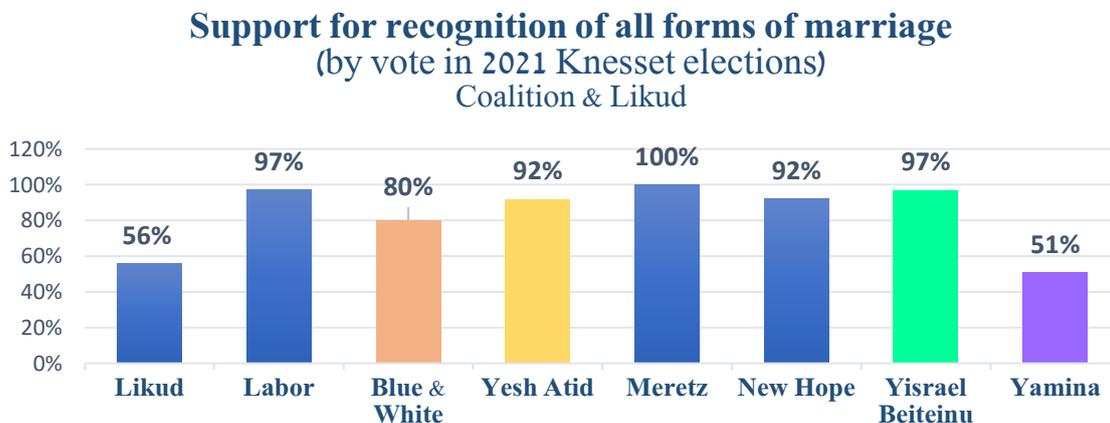
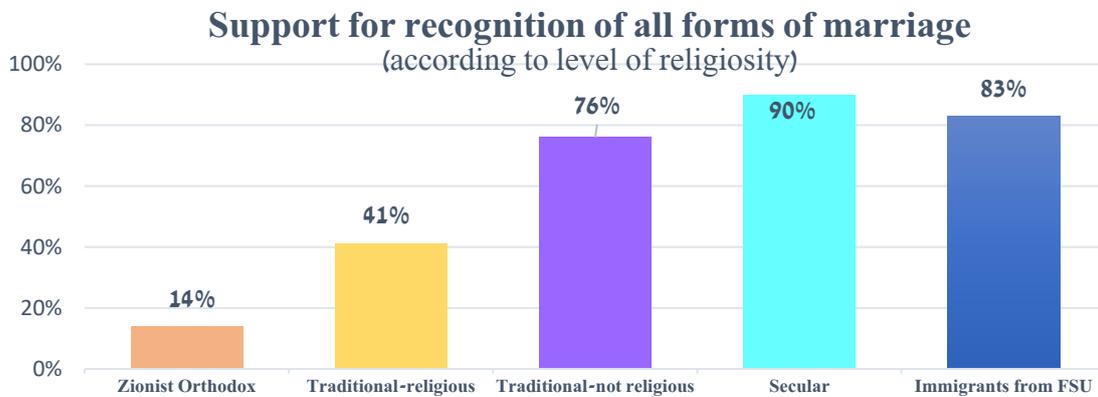
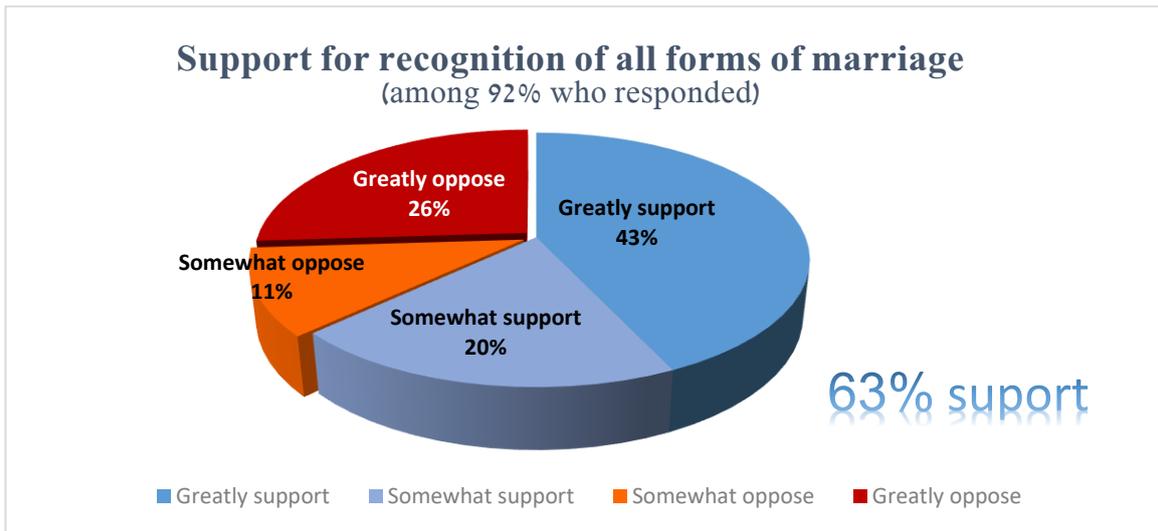


Public's positions on 'Who is a Jew'
(by level of religiosity & immigrants from FSU)



❖ **Let Marriage Freedom Ring!**

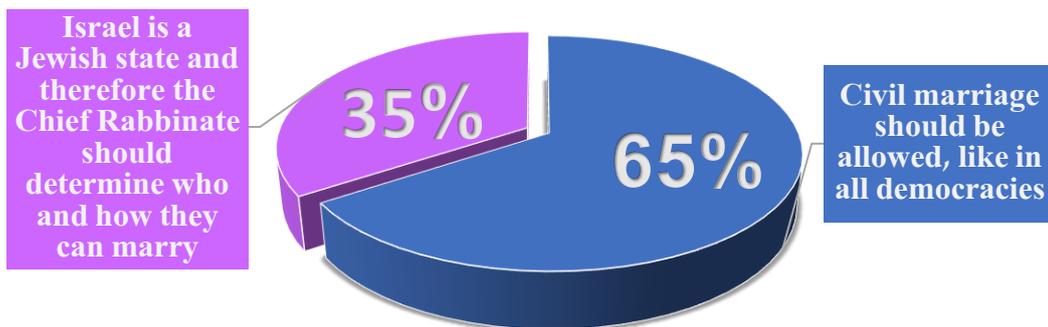
63% support equal recognition by the state of all types of marriage [civil and religious, including Reform and Conservative]. This rate has been stable [within a statistical sampling deviation] since 2010; and it represents the position of about 2/3 of the public. This is supported by the majority of voters for **all** coalition parties, and even most Likud voters [56%]. Among those that are undecided as to their votes in the next elections, the support rate is 77%.



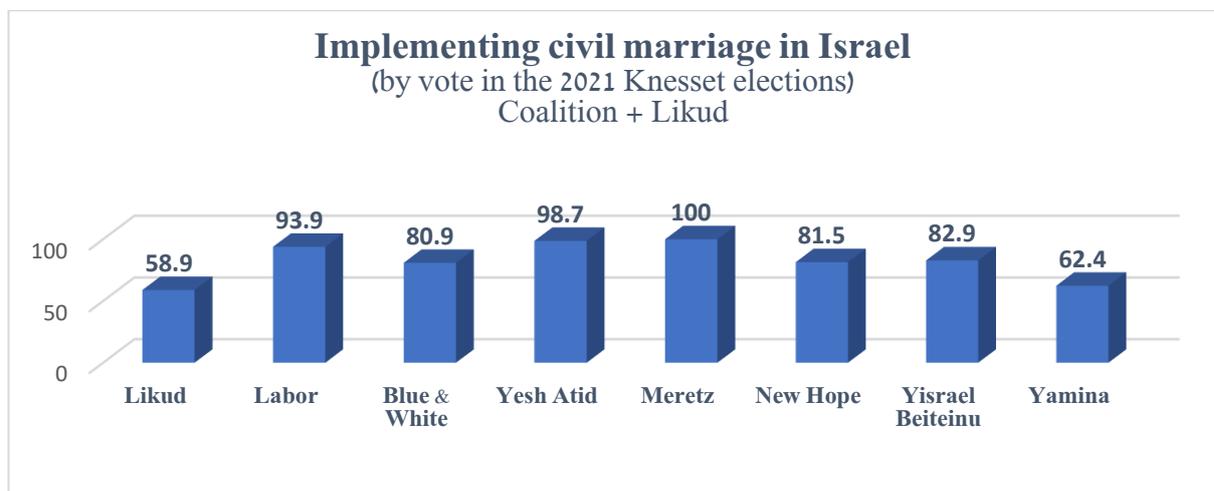
Artem Dolgopyat’s gold medal Olympic victory for Israel ignited a heated public debate on the issue of marriage freedom in Israel. This occurred after it became known that the gold medalist could not get married in his country because his mother is not Jewish according to Halacha. Therefore, after completing the Index, we commissioned an additional question regarding the enactment of a civil marriage alternative. Among those who expressed an opinion, 65.2% expressed support for allowing civil marriage, as in any other democracy in the world. **Among these supporters were a large majority of voters for all parties in the current coalition.** Only 34.8% of the adult Jewish public supported leaving the authority in the hands of the Chief Rabbinate.

[From a poll conducted for us on 5.8.21]: **“The heads of state praised Artium Dolgofiat for the honor he brought to the State of Israel by winning the Olympics, but they ignore the fact that he and hundreds of thousands of immigrants like him cannot marry in Israel because only his father is Jewish and there is no civil marriage in Israel. What do you think?”**

Implement civil marriage in Israel (among 93% that responded)

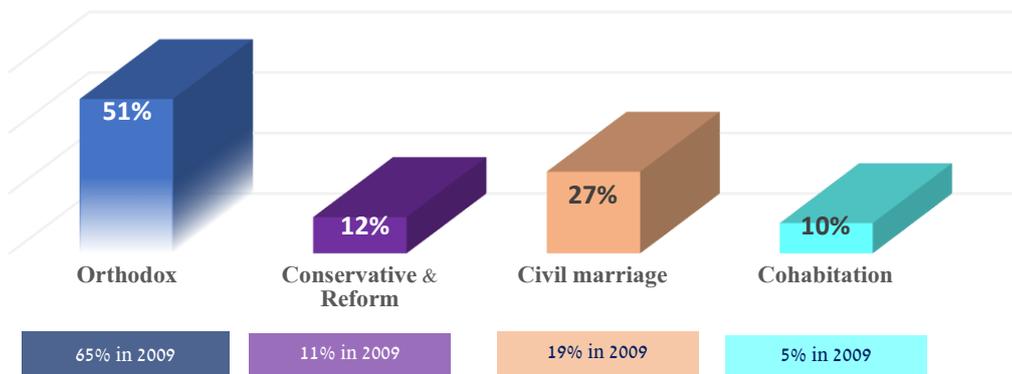


Implementing civil marriage in Israel (by vote in the 2021 Knesset elections) Coalition + Likud

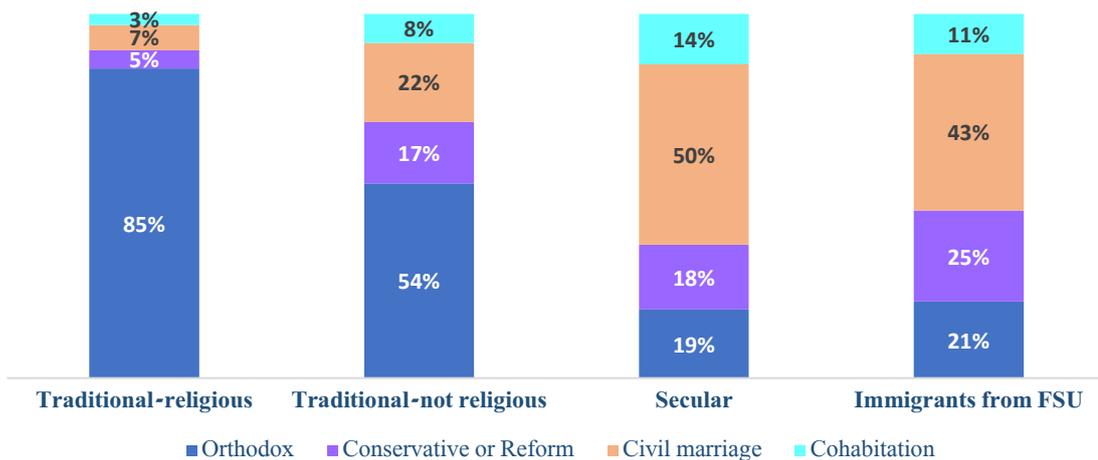


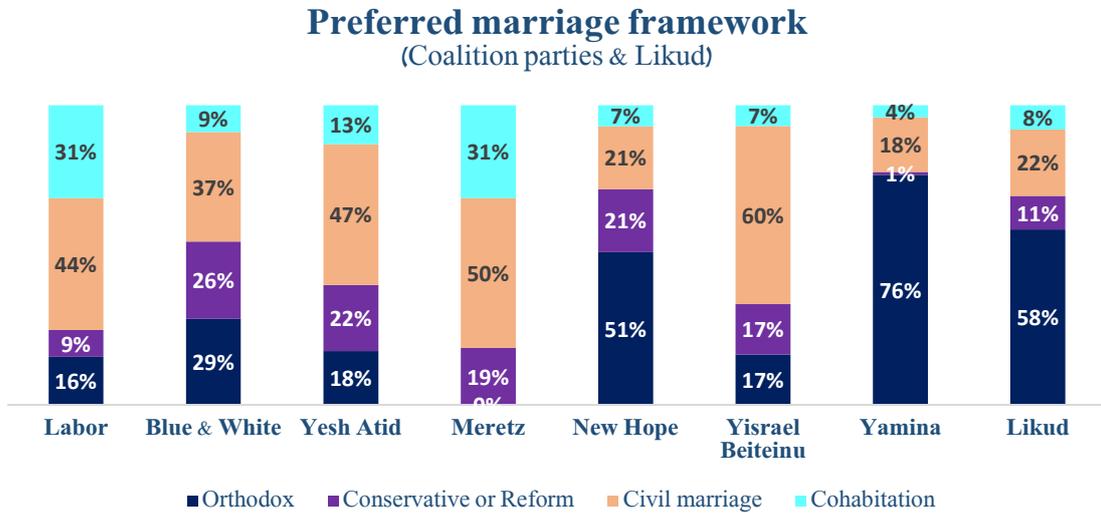
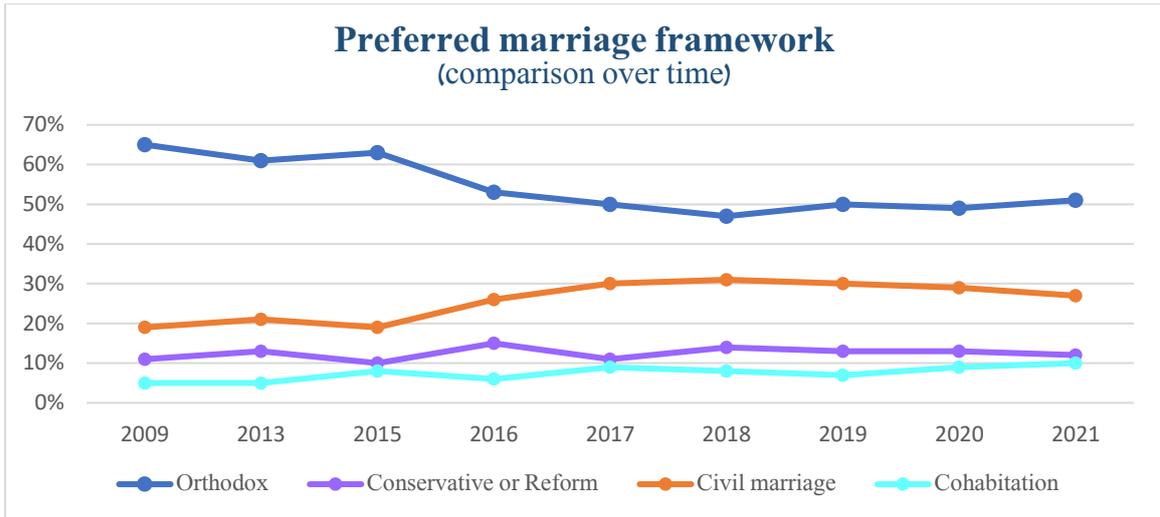
Only about half of the adult Jewish public [51% of those who expressed an opinion] would opt for Orthodox marriages if the State of Israel allowed them to choose [including some who would opt for Orthodox marriages outside the Chief Rabbinate, which means that the percentage of those who prefer to marry under the auspices of the Chief Rabbinate is even lower]. The preference for Orthodox marriage has dramatically dropped from 65% in 2009. **Only 16% of Israel's secular public would get married via the Chief Rabbinate if they were allowed legal alternatives in Israel.**

Preferred marriage framework (among those who expressed an opinion)



Preferred marriage framework (by level of religiosity & immigrants from FSU)

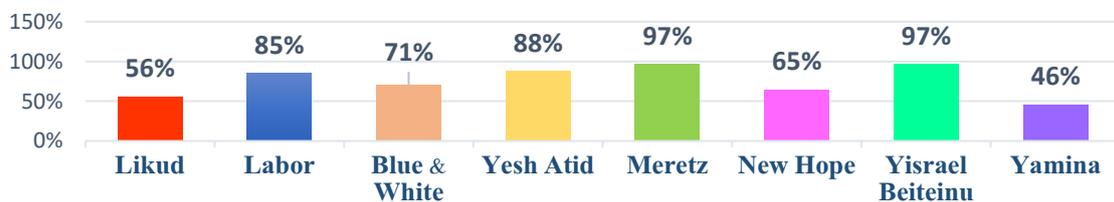




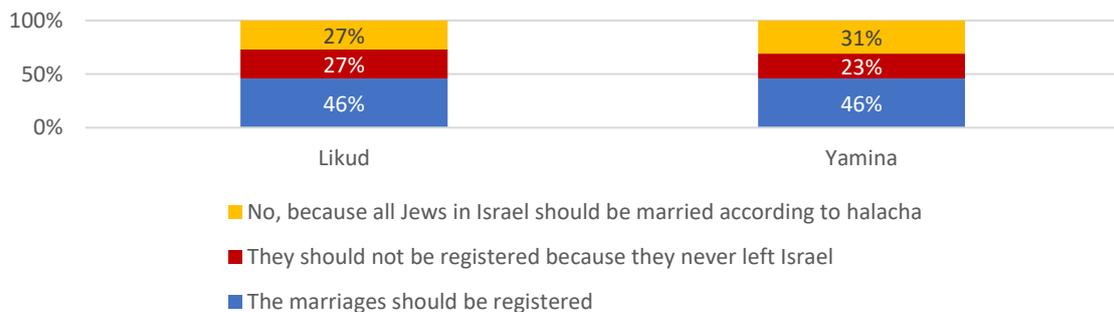
Utah Marriages: Earlier this year, the former Interior Minister halted the registration of couples who had married by videoconference [zoom] in Utah County, a pioneer in enabling couples from all over the world to marry in this way. The Population Authority stopped registering such marriages even though it registered the first couples upon verifying that such marriages were legal and valid under Utah law and according to the US federal authorities. A number of administrative petitions were filed against this refusal. 55% of the adult Jewish public is of the opinion that this form of marriage should be registered in the Population Registry just like all other civil marriages performed abroad. 16% support the position recently disclosed by the State in response to the petitions, which is that these couples should not be registered because they did not leave the country to get married, and 29% expressed the opinion that civil marriages of Jews abroad should not be registered at all because Israeli Jews should only marry according to Halacha.



Support for registration of marriages conducted by videoconference (by vote in 2021 Knesset elections) Coalition & Likud

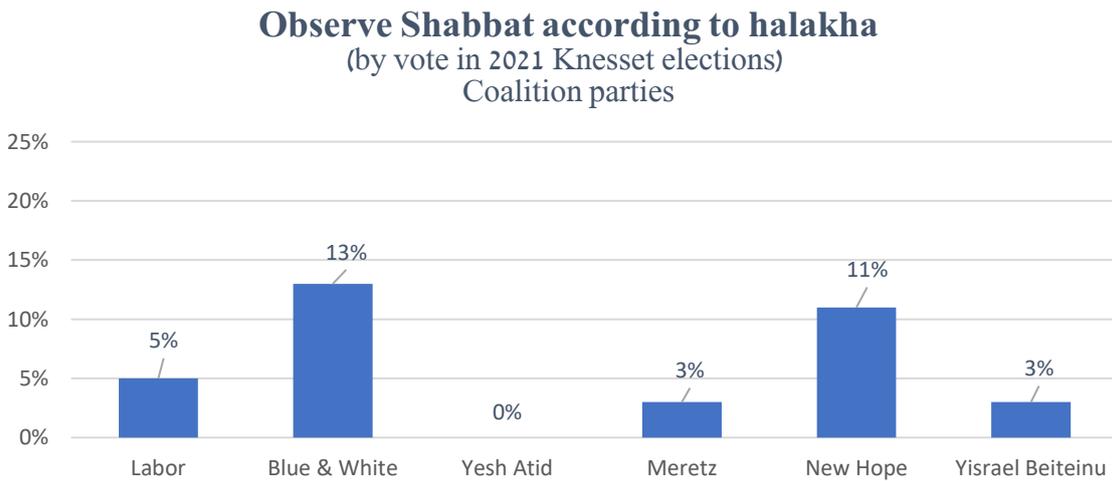
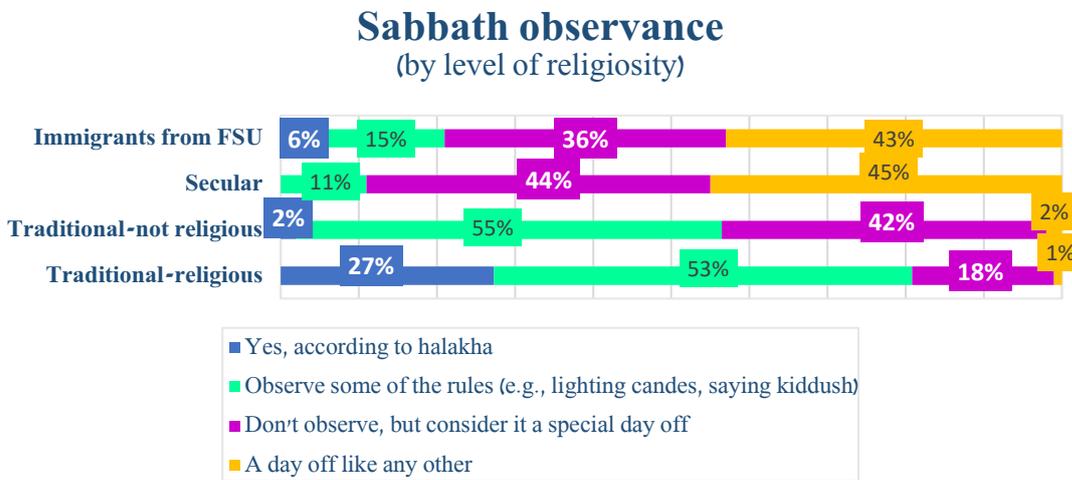
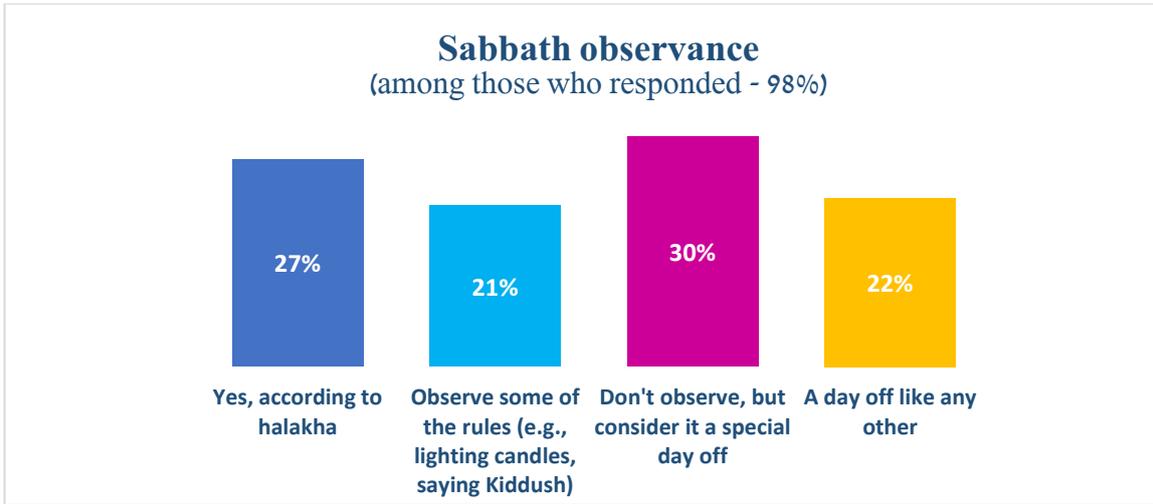


Support for registration of marriages conducted by videoconference (by vote in 2021 Knesset elections) - Likud & Yamina



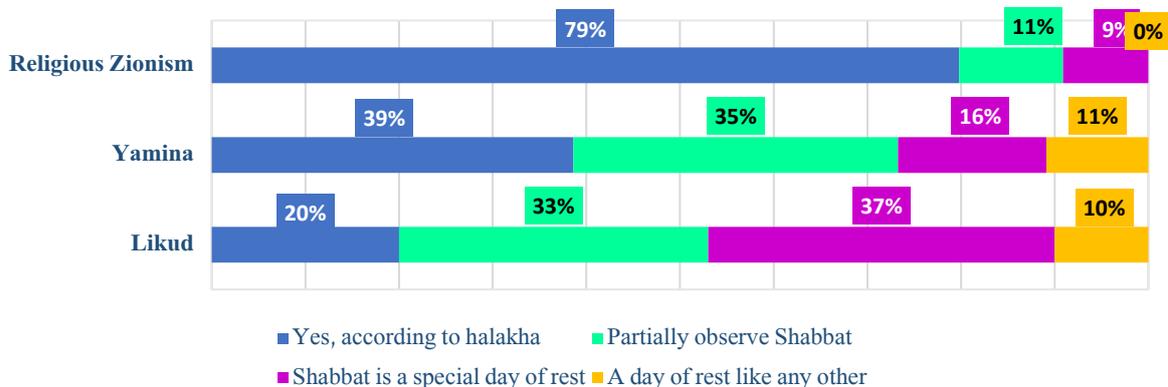
❖ Shabbat: Public & Private

Only 27% of the public observes Shabbat according to Halacha. 21% observe it partially [for example, lighting candles or making Kiddush]; 30% consider Shabbat to be a day of rest with a special atmosphere; and 22% consider it a normal day off. Among the secular public 89% answered that they do not observe Shabbat, either fully or partially.



Sabbath observance

(by vote in 2021 Knesset elections)
Likud, Yamina, & Religious Zionism party

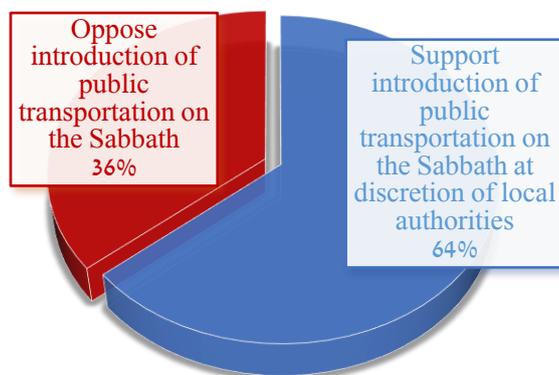


❖ Public Transportation on Shabbat

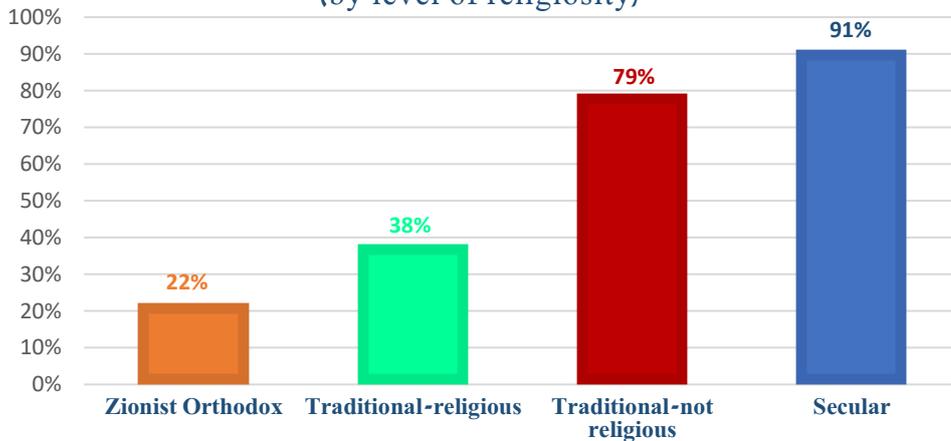
As for the debate over **allowing public transportation on the Sabbath**, this time, we asked the question in the context of the fact that while some of the coalition agreements mentioned the promotion of public transportation on the Sabbath, it was not included in the “Basic Agreement” signed between Yesh Atid and Yamina, which stipulates maintaining the status quo on issues of religion & state, except for issues explicitly included in the “Basic Agreement” or that have the consent of all member parties of the coalition to legislate change. In this context, 64% of the public supports this. 91% of secular Israelis and 79% of traditional-non-religious Israelis support the promotion of public transportation on Shabbat. **This is supported by a large majority of voters for all coalition parties [including Yesh Atid [96%] and Yamina [69%]. 54% of Likud voters also support this.**

Public’s positions on implementing public transportation on the Sabbath

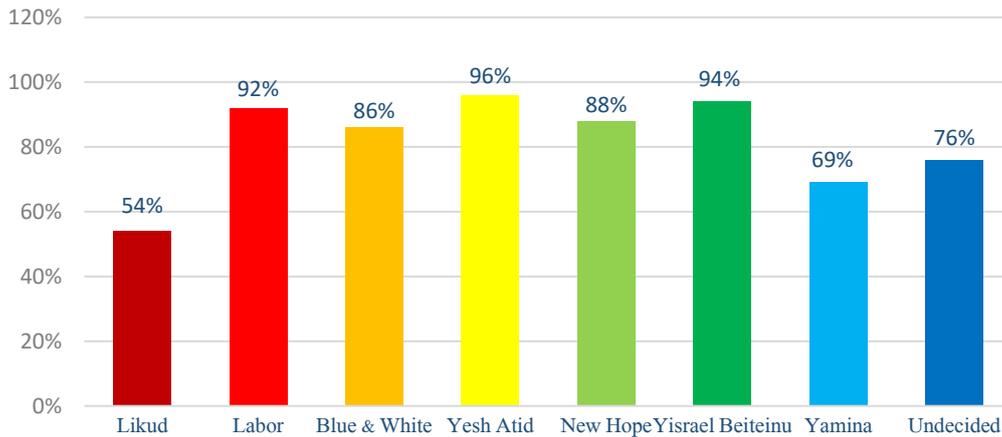
(among 94% who responded)



Support allowing public transportation on Shabbat at discretion of local authorities (by level of religiosity)

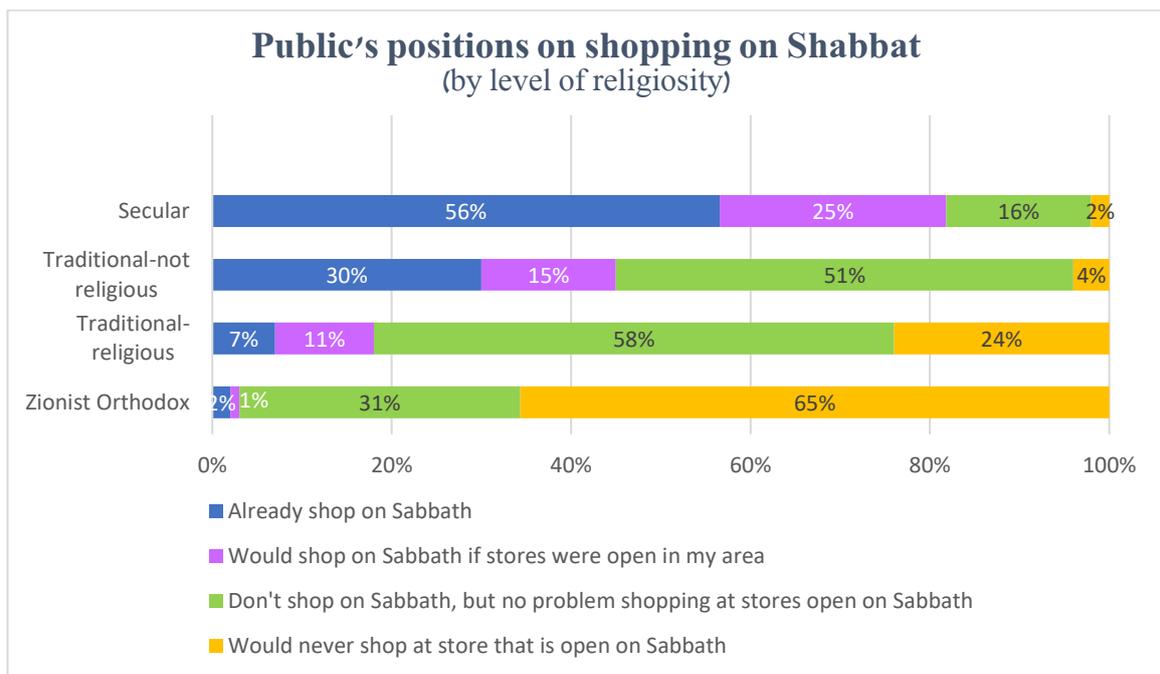
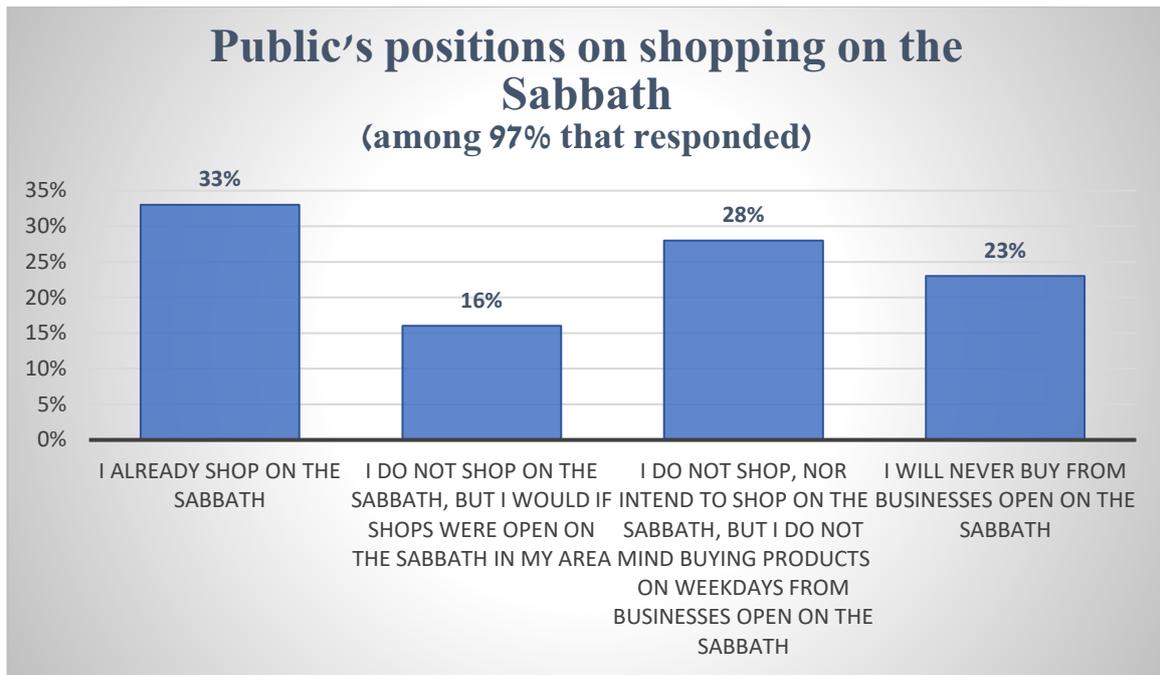


Support implementing public transportation on the Sabbath, at discretion of local authorities (by vote in 2021 Knesset elections Coalition + Likud + Undecideds)



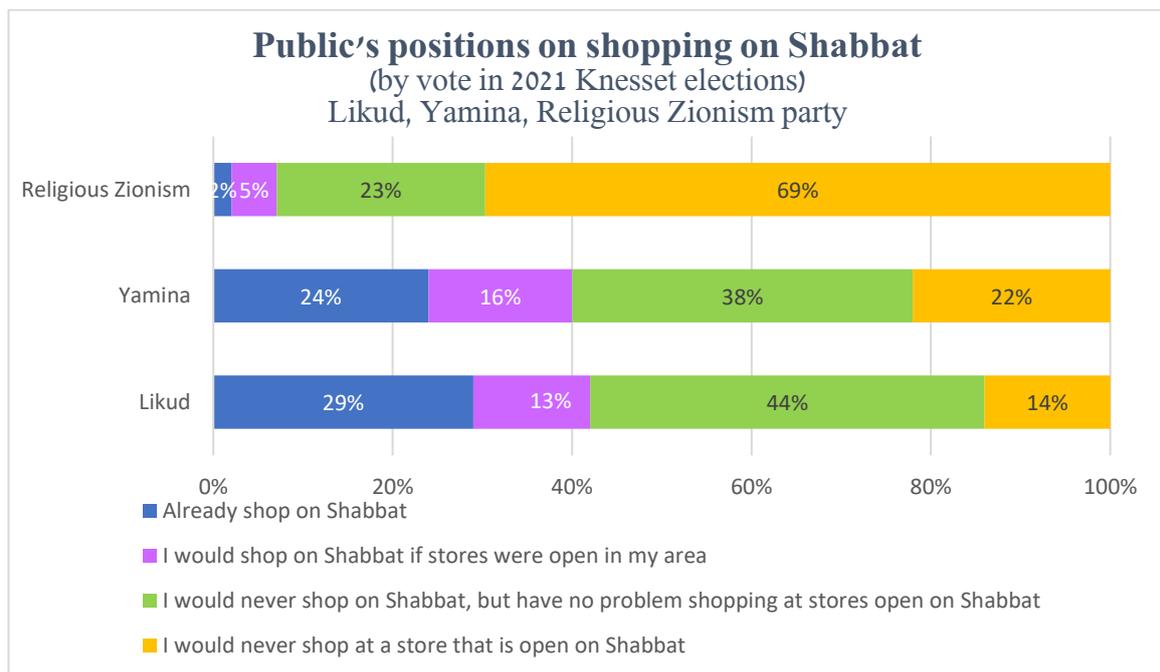
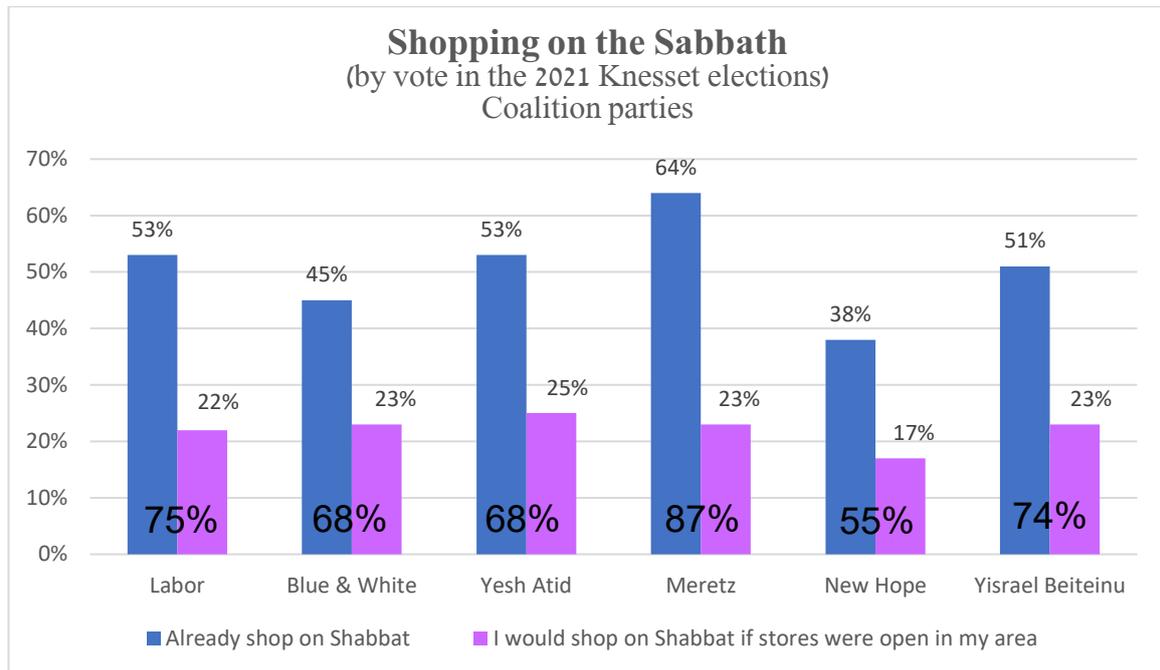
❖ Opening Stores on Shabbat

There is a significant gap between the importance the public attaches to allowing public transportation on the Sabbath, as mentioned in some of the coalition agreements [37%], and the importance it attaches to opening minimarkets and businesses on the Sabbath, which is also mentioned in some of the agreements [19%]. This gap is consistent and was seen in previous surveys as well. It indicates that in the eyes of the public there is a difference in the order of importance between the two.



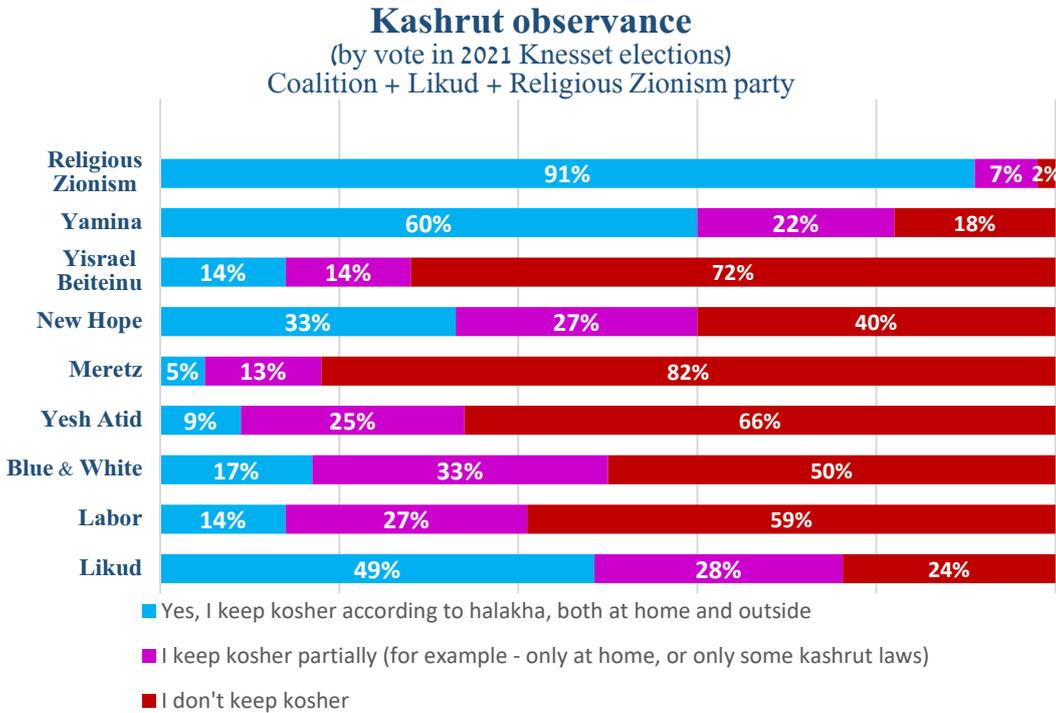
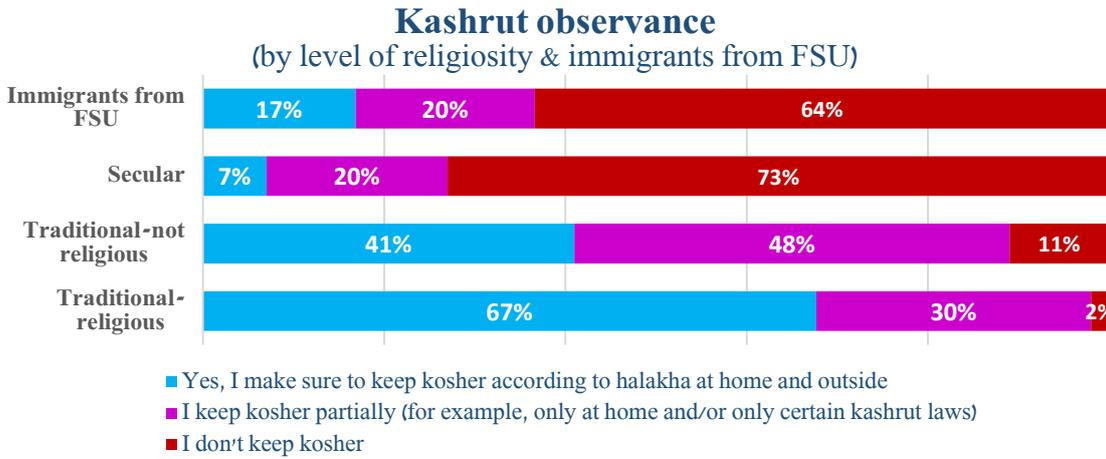
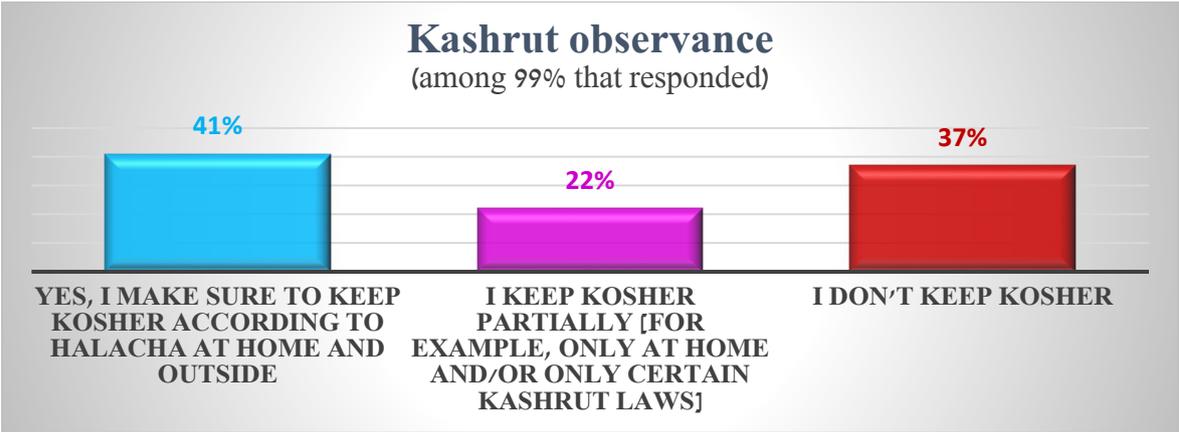
This is not a total disqualification of everything related to Shabbat as the weekly day of rest day. Rather it indicates a much more matter of fact and discerning approach when it comes to the importance and urgency that people attribute to policy change and priorities, as they perceive them. However, this gap must be seen in the context of the personal conduct of many who are already shopping on Shabbat and those who would do so if there were shops open near them, even if this is not the issue that they consider most important among the battles for change. **The data that came up in the current Index reveals both the high support for opening businesses on the Sabbath and the risk business owners take when opening on the Sabbath, given the fact that the majority of the religious public [but only a minority**

of the traditional public] will refrain from purchasing products from them even on weekdays.



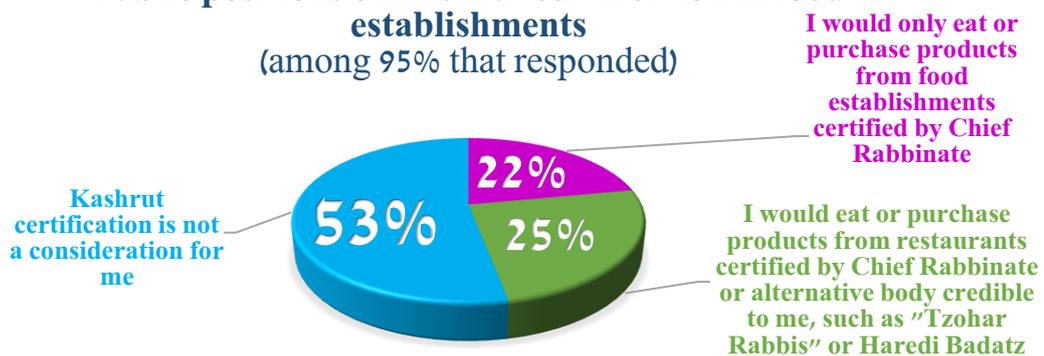
❖ Kashrut Without the Chief Rabbinate

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 away from home, only 7% of the secular public adheres to kashrut this way. On average, 41% of Israel's adult Jewish public maintains kashrut according to Halacha, 22% partially observe kashrut, and 37% do not keep kosher.

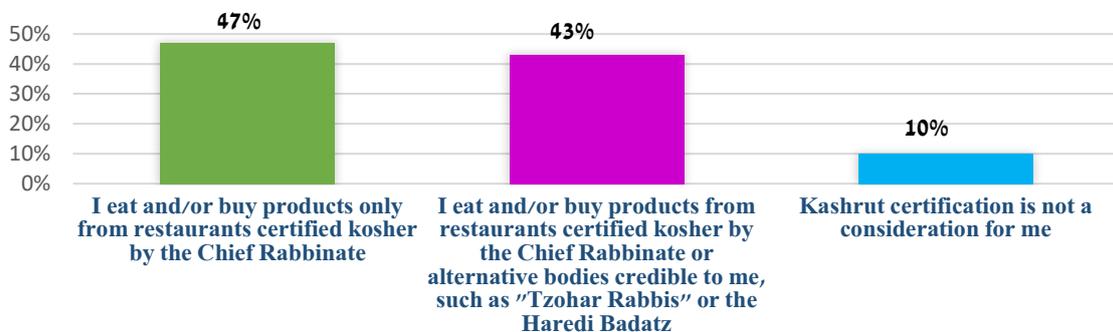


As for the growing conflict over the Chief Rabbinate's continued monopoly on kashrut certification, the Index data show again that **the majority of the public does not support maintaining this monopoly. Only 22% responded that they would eat only in restaurants with kashrut certificates from the Chief Rabbinate;** 25% would be satisfied with alternative kashrut certification [whether from Tzohar rabbis, for example, or from ultra-Orthodox bodies]; and for 53% a kashrut certificate does not constitute a consideration at all. Even among the 41% who responded that they adhere to kashrut according to Halacha, less than half [47%] feel themselves obligated to consume only food supervised by the Chief Rabbinate. **Most voters for all coalition parties do not limit themselves to consuming food certified kosher by the Chief Rabbinate.** [Even among Yamina voters, only 18%, which is undoubtedly relevant to understanding of Minister Kahana's steps to promote the kashrut reform]. Only 23% of Likud voters and 21% of those who are undecided about whom to vote for in the next elections indicated that they only consume food certified as kosher by the Chief Rabbinate.

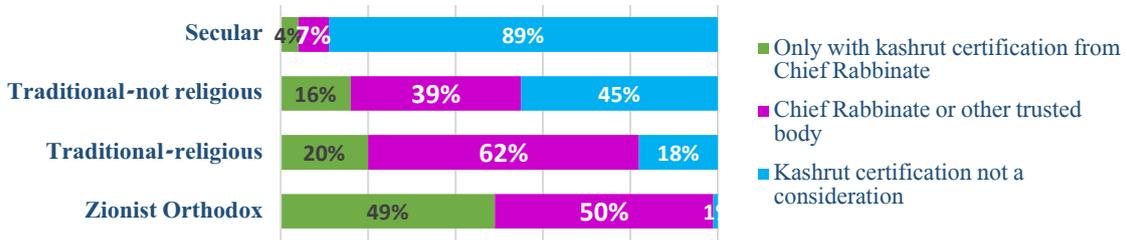
Public positions on kashrut certification in food establishments
(among 95% that responded)



Public positions on kashrut certification in food establishments
(among those who keep kosher)



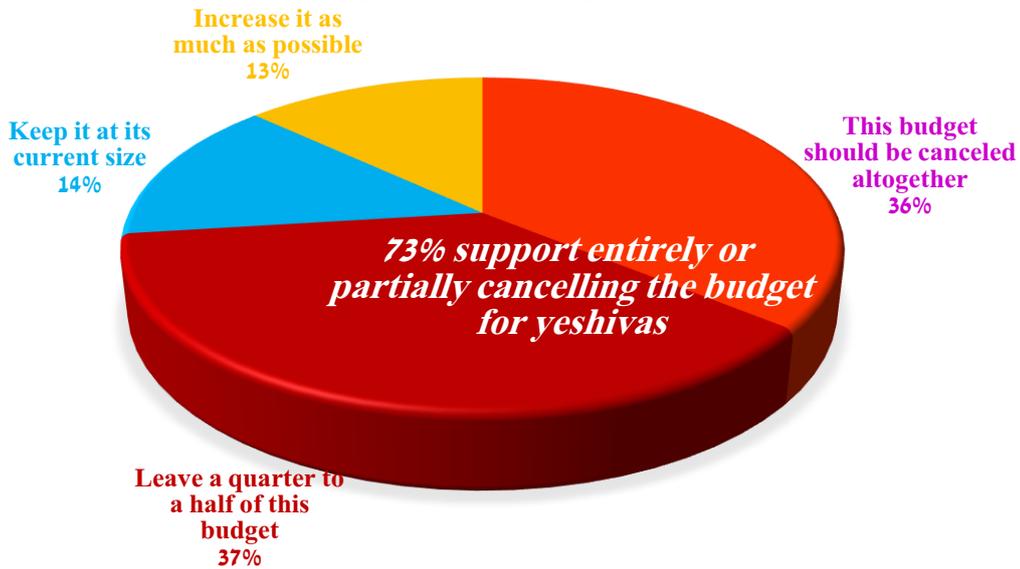
Public's positions on kashrut certification in food establishments (by level of religiosity)



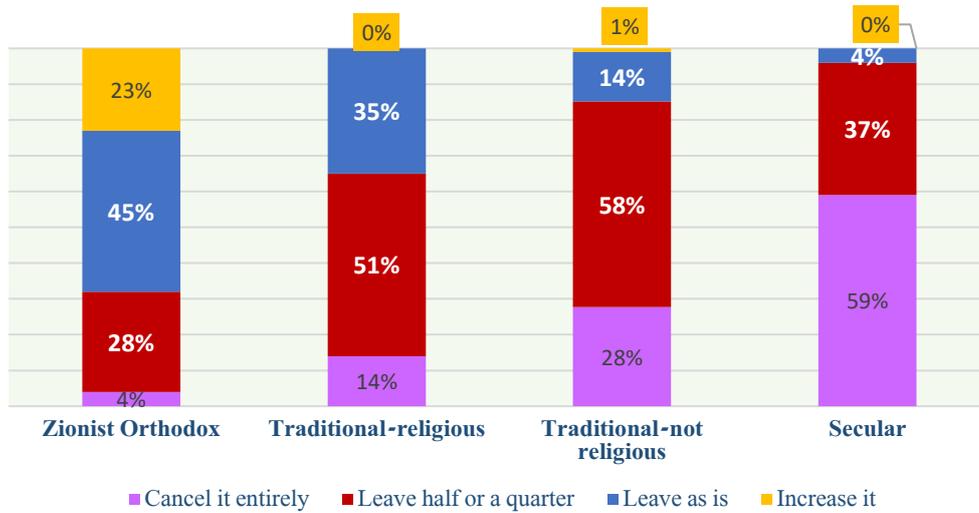
Cutting the Budgets

Although the ultra-Orthodox parties are not part of the current government coalition, the heads of Yesh Atid and Yamina have declared that there is no intention to harm them and that the budget line for yeshivas [about a billion and a quarter NIS] will not be cut, for they hope that the ultra-Orthodox parties will join the coalition later. **The vast majority [73%] of the adult Jewish public, on the other hand, is of the opinion that this funding should be canceled or considerably reduced.** This is supported by a huge majority of voters for **all** coalition parties, including Yamina [82%], as well as Likud voters in the March 21 elections [73%], and 89% of those who are undecided as to their votes in the next elections.

The public's positions on the budget for yeshivas (among the 90% that responded)

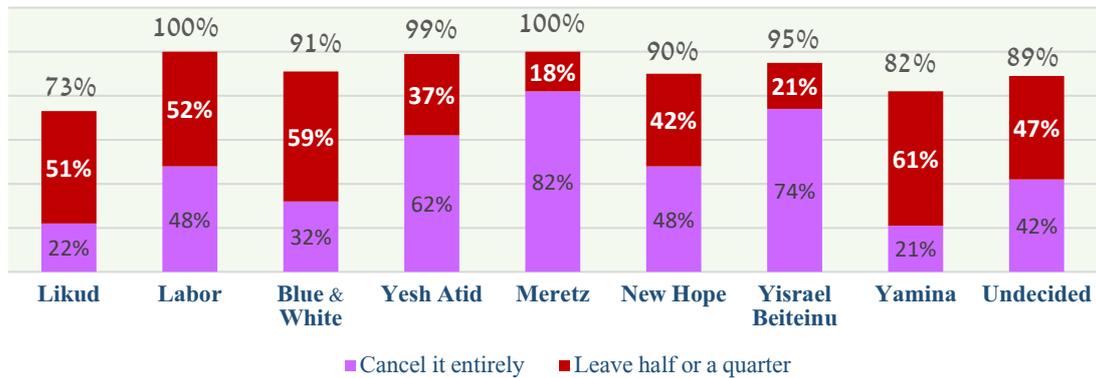


Public's positions on the budget for yeshivas (by level of religiosity)



Public's positions regarding cutting the budget for yeshivas (by vote in the 2021 Knesset elections)

Coalition & Likud

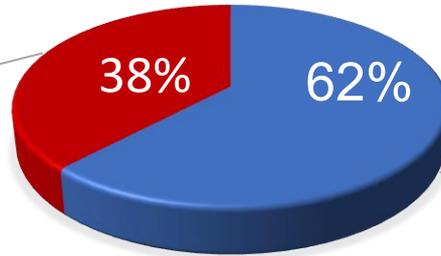


The majority of the public also supports the initiative of Finance Minister Lieberman to condition the government's daycare subsidy upon the actualization of the parents' earning capacity [62%]. 70% of the non-Haredi public supports this, including most voters for **all** coalition parties and even 52% of Likud voters.

The public's position regarding the Finance Minister's decision to condition the daycare subsidy on the actualization of earning capacity

(Among 90% that responded)

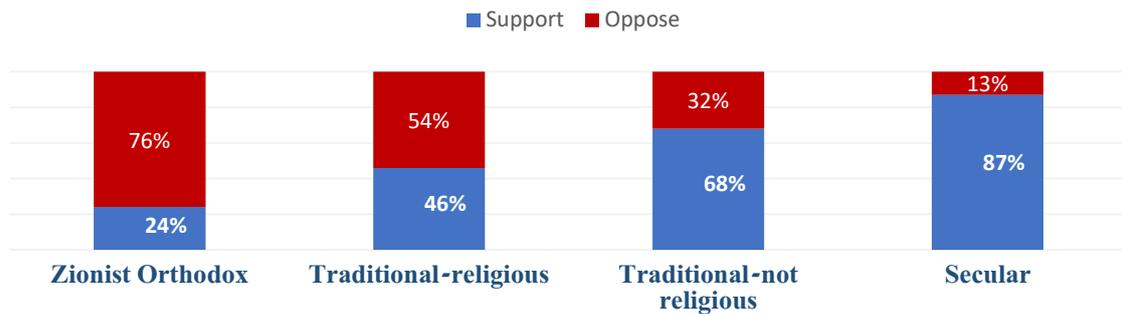
I oppose the position of the Minister of Finance because the State should provide the subsidy even if only the wife works and the...



I support in principle the position of the Minister of Finance. The subsidy is intended to help parents integrate into work and therefore should be conditional on the actualization of earning capacity.

The public's position regarding the Finance Minister's decision to condition the daycare subsidy on the actualization of earning capacity

(by level of religiosity)

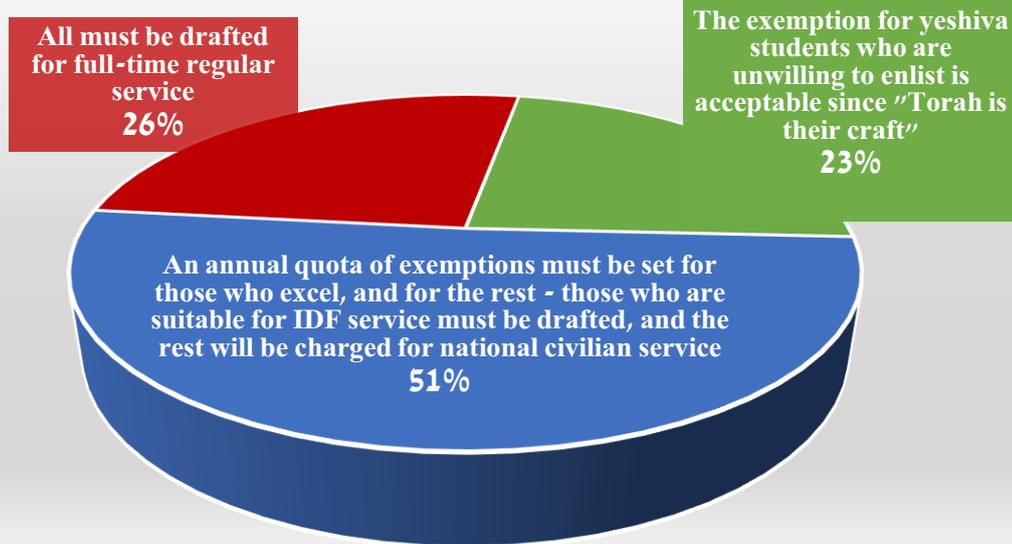


❖ Enough Draft Dodging!

Only 23% of the public accepts the position of the ultra-Orthodox parties, according to which yeshiva students should be exempted from military or civilian service because “Torah is their vocation”. The position of the majority of Israelis is that yeshiva students should be drafted for military service [or national-civilian if not suitable for the IDF], except for a quota of exemptions for the most outstanding [51%]; or all should be drafted [26%]. While 98% of ultra-Orthodox party voters support the exemption, only 14% of the non-Haredi public supports it. A tiny minority [in some parties - 0%] of voters for all coalition parties supports the continuation of the exemption [including Yamina voters, of which only 17% support it]. The same is true among Likud voters [22%] and among those who are undecided as to their votes in the next elections [11%].

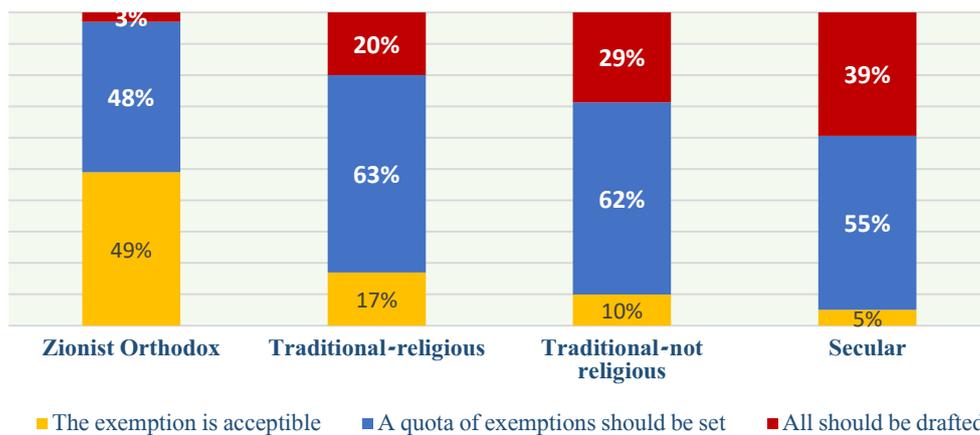
Public positions on drafting yeshiva students

(among 94% who responded)



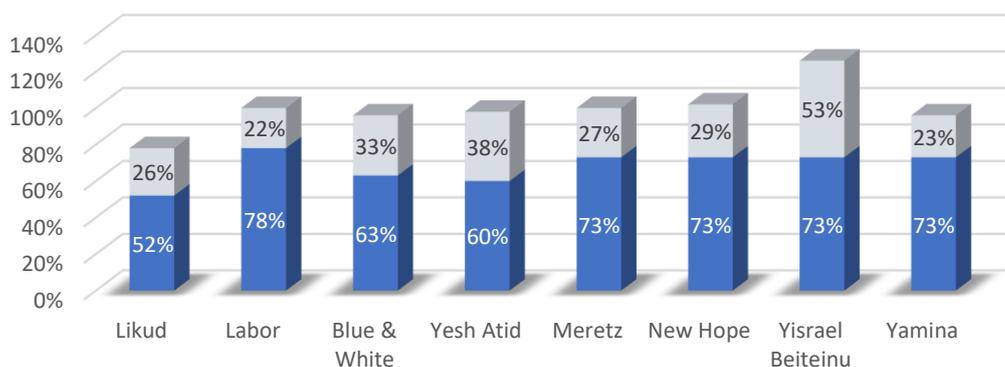
Public's positions on drafting yeshiva students

(by level of religiosity)

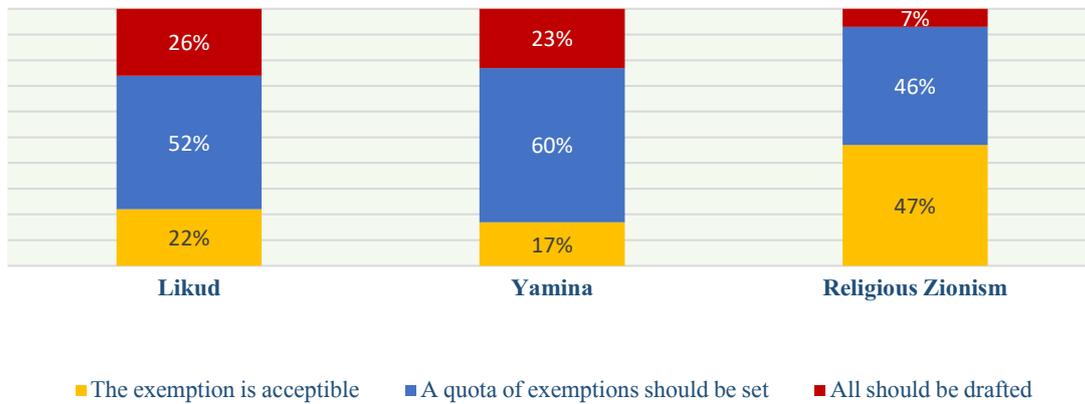


Support for drafting yeshiva students

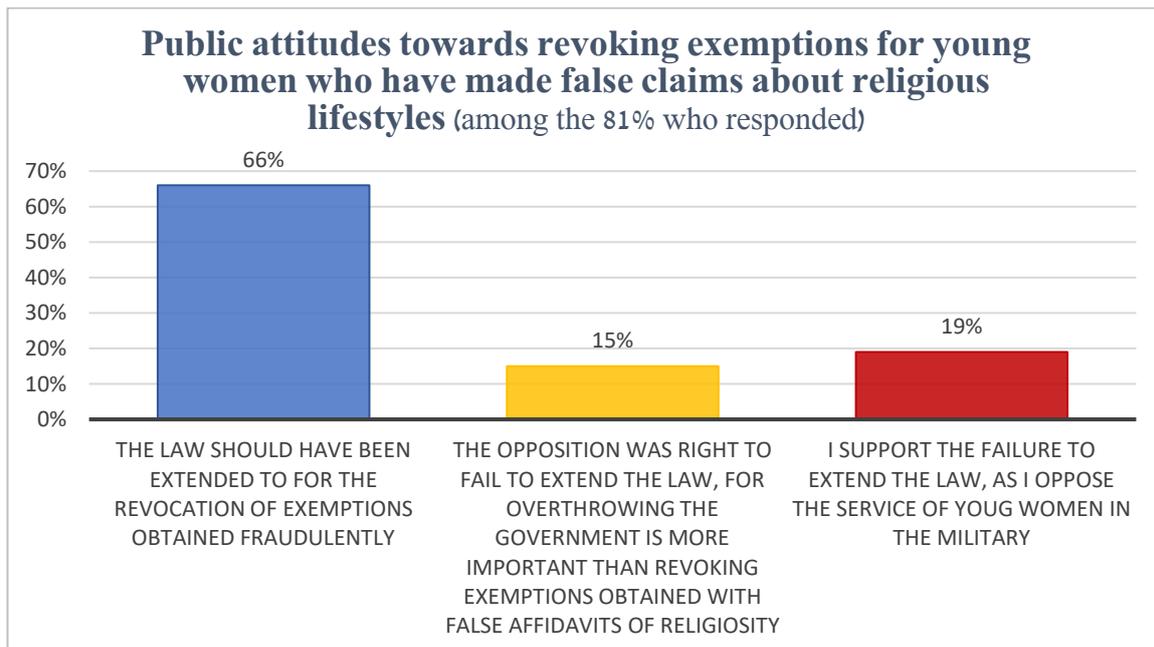
(by vote in the 2021 Knesset elections)
Coalition & Likud

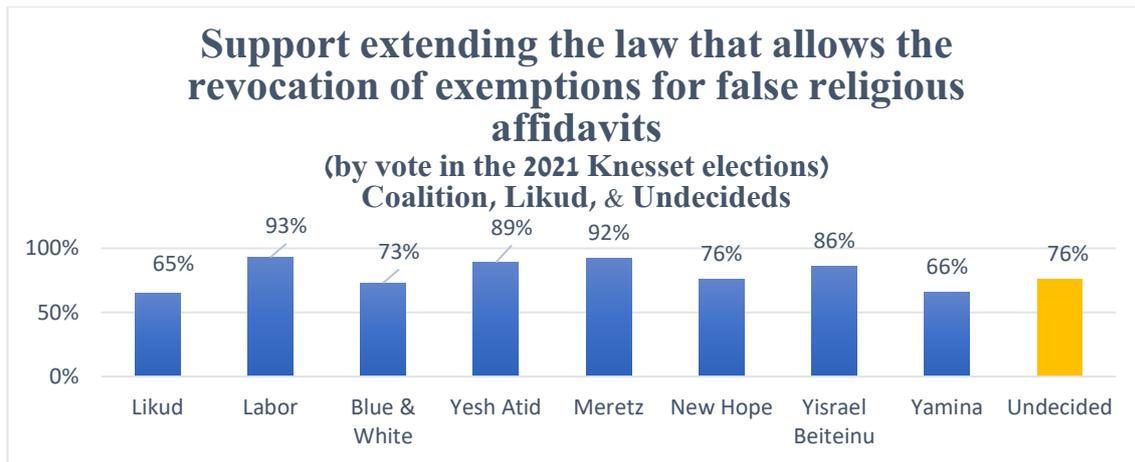


Public's positions on drafting yeshiva students (by vote in the 2021 Knesset elections)



After long and repeated legal battles waged by Hiddush, the IDF was forced to appoint and start operating a committee mandated under the Security Service Law **that had the authority to administratively revoke exemptions for young women from military service that were obtained on the basis of a false affidavits claiming a religious way of life. It is estimated by the IDF that thousands are fraudulently receiving this exemption annually.** However, due to the protracted litigation required, the temporary provision in the law for the operation of this committee expired very soon after it began operating. A bill to extend the temporary clause in the Law failed to pass due to opposition from the Likud and Ra'am. **66% of the adult Jewish public is of the opinion that the law should have been extended, including a large majority of voters for all coalition parties, 65% of Likud voters, and 76% of those who are undecided about whom to vote for in the next elections.**



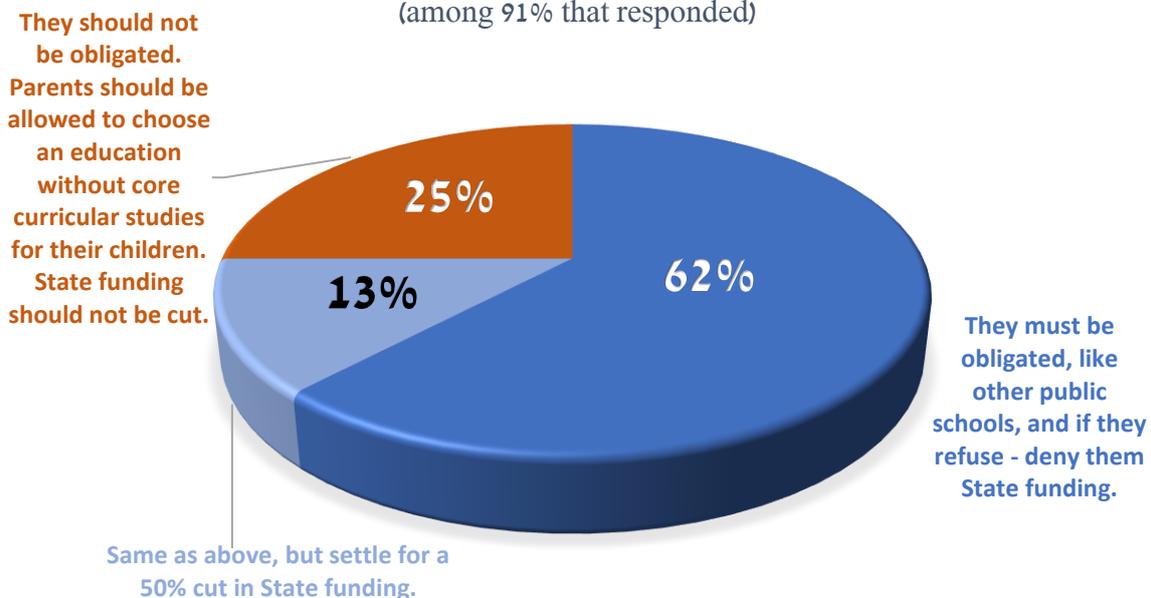


❖ Core curricular studies for all

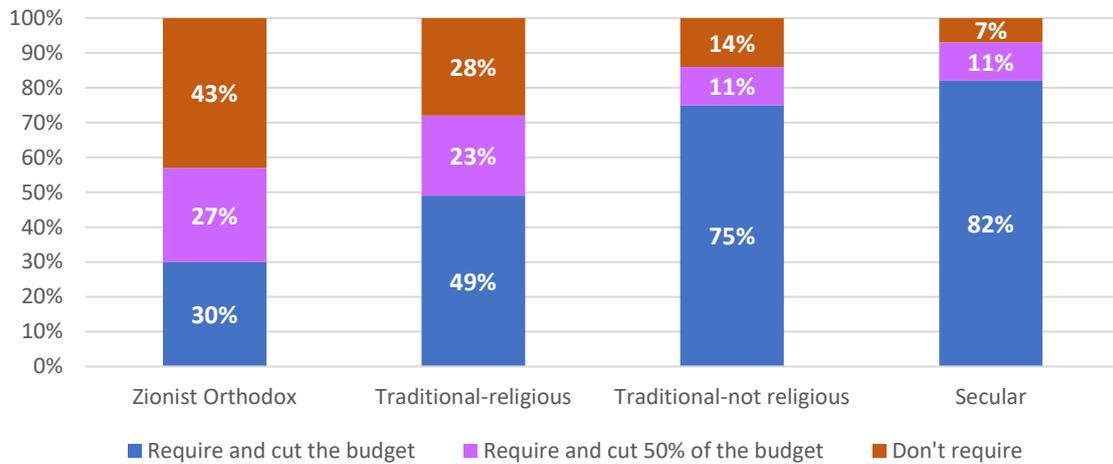
75% hold that all ultra-Orthodox boys' schools operating with state funding should be required to teach core curricular studies like all public schools, and the funding they receive from state coffers should be canceled or cut if they do not do so. Among the non-Haredi public, the support rate is 84%. A large majority of voters for **all** coalition parties support this, as do 78% of Likud voters in the March 21 elections and 88% of those who are undecided as to whom to vote for in the next elections.

Public attitudes regarding State funding for schools that don't teach core curricular subjects

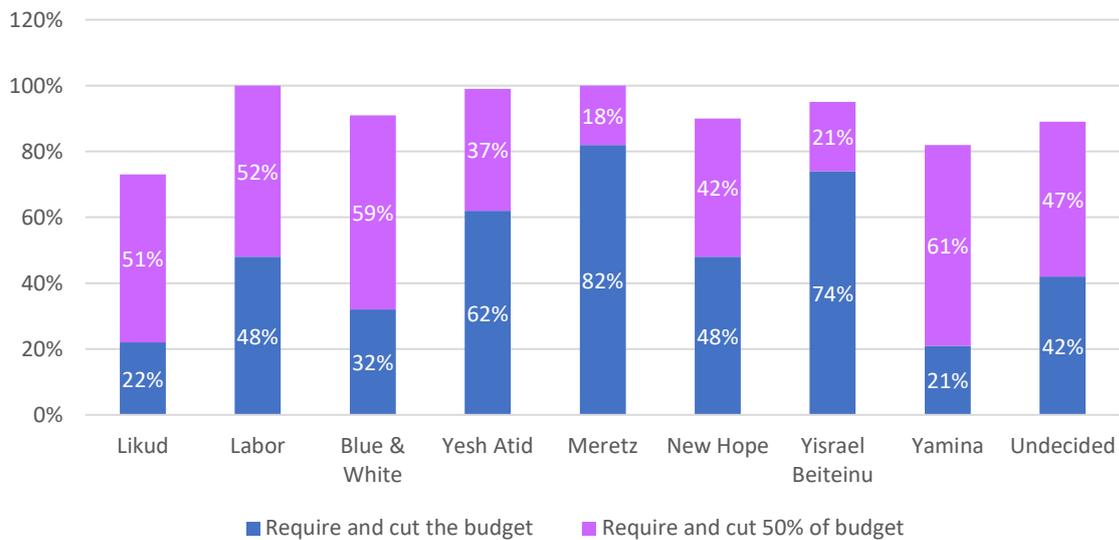
(among 91% that responded)



Public attitudes regarding State funding for schools that don't teach core curricular subjects (by level of religiosity)

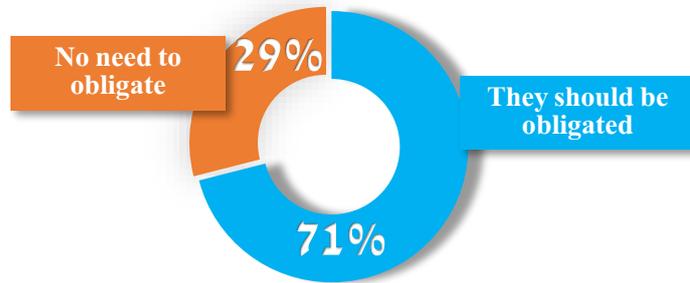


Support for full/partial cancellation of budget for schools that do not teach core curriculum (by vote in the 2021 Knesset elections) Coalition & Likud & undecided

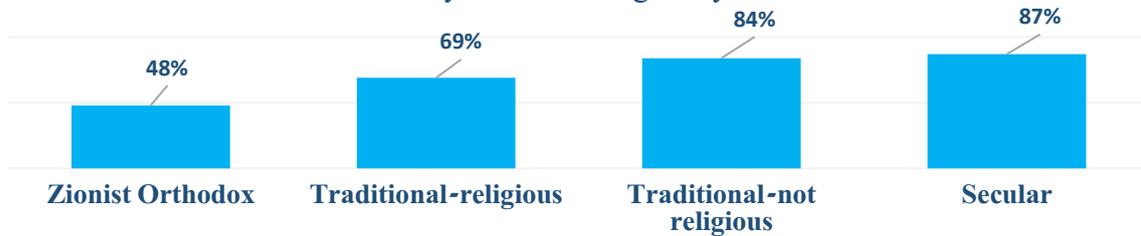


Similar findings are seen also with regard to whether or not all ultra-Orthodox schools should be required to participate in the national Meitzav exams and other similar exams designed to enable an objective comparison between schools and an examination of their achievements in basic education.

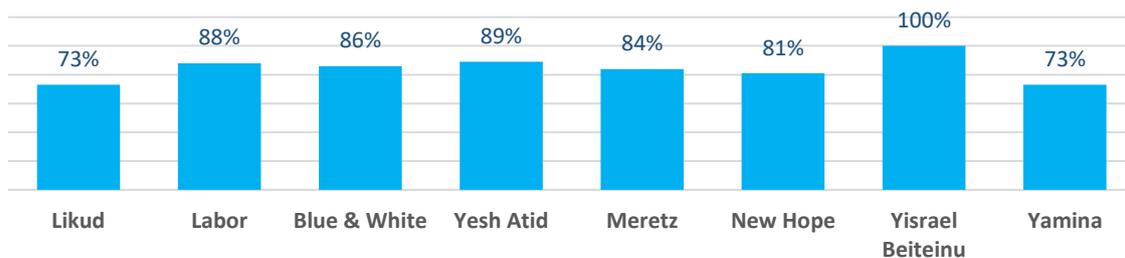
Public attitudes regarding obligating ultra-Orthodox schools to participate in national Meitzav tests
(among 92% that responded)



Support requiring ultra-Orthodox schools to participate in national Meitzav exams
(by level of religiosity)



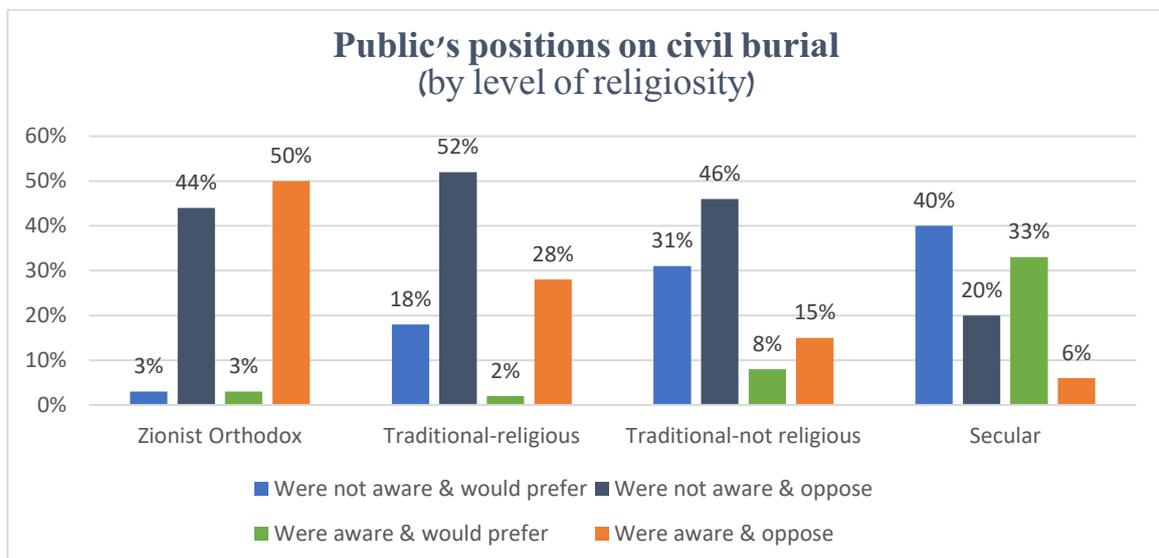
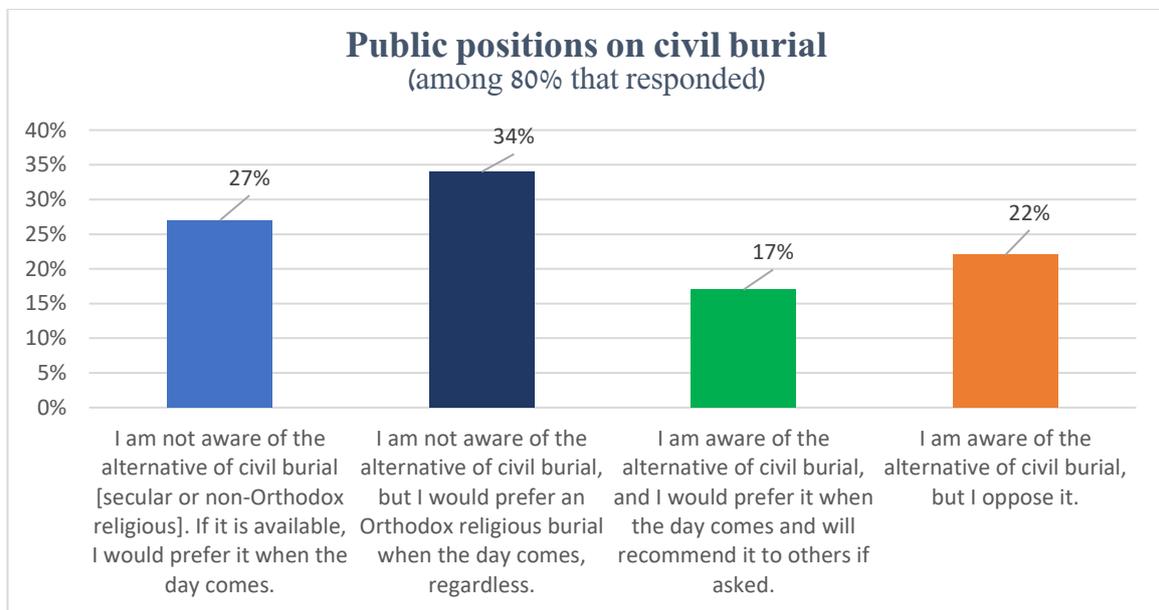
Support requiring ultra-Orthodox schools to participate in national Meitzav exams
(by vote in 2021 Knesset elections)
Coalition & Likud



This question is of great importance in light of the fact that the ultra-Orthodox education system of Agudat Israel / Degel HaTorah [Independent Education] refuses to cooperate with the national Meitzav exams, and the Shas Education System [Bnei Yosef – Ma’ayan Torah Education] only allows the exams to be held in a very partial manner. This prevents follow-up and audit; it is intended to hide the fact that these education systems do not fulfill their obligations to teach core curricular studies to boys, which is a condition for receiving full funding from the state treasury.

❖ Civil burial!

Although 25 years have passed since the Knesset enacted the Right to Alternative Civil Burial Law, which was designed to provide the public with a choice of secular or pluralistic religious burial near their areas of residence, to this day the law has not been fully implemented. For most of the Jewish population in Israel, cemeteries and civil burial services remain unavailable. Undoubtedly this has to do with the fact that the responsibility for implementing the law was entrusted to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which was ruled in those years by the religious parties. The findings of the Index indicate that **61% of the adult Jewish public are not at all aware of this legal right. Still, whether they knew about it or heard it for the first time from the Index questionnaire - 44% expressed a preference for an alternative civil burial if it were available when their time came. Among the secular public, 73% expressed this preference!**



❖ The Survey

The survey for the Israel Religion and State Index was conducted by the Smith Institute in July 2021 with an expanded sample of 800 people representing the adult Jewish population in Israel, aged 18 and over. Sampling error $\pm 3.5\%$

In this report we frequently use the term "public". The meaning of this term, given the composition of the representative sample, is - the adult Jewish public. This choice is explained in that shaping Israeli government policy on religion and state is based upon the political agreements made among the parties representing the Jewish public. Further, change in this arena will be based first and foremost on changing the political patterns in the Jewish sector. However, for the first time, it became clear in the current coalition how fragile a government coalition it is. Its dependence on the support of an Arab party with a conservative Muslim worldview may stop the coalition from implementing initiatives it has announced, such as equality for the LGBT community, or in dealing with the widespread phenomenon of false affidavits testifying to a religious way of life, which are used by young women for the purpose of obtaining exemptions from military service. From time to time, reviews of the positions of the Arab public are also published on some of these issues [for example, in the publications of the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Guttman Institute's surveys within the framework of the Israel Democracy Institute], and even Hiddush has examined this extensively in the past on marriage and personal status issues. All these studies point to a much more conservative worldview among the Arab population, compared to the Jewish population.

ⁱ It should be noted that this and similar questions listed only these 3 streams, and did not specify Reconstructionist and Renewal, because at present only these 3 are active sufficiently in Israel to be familiar to the public.