12.11.24

Findings from the Swords of Iron Survey: November 2024

Mora Deitch, Idit Shafran Gittleman, Rebecca Meller, Anat Shapira, and Abir Gitlin

Since the outbreak of the war in Gaza, the Institute for National Security Studies has periodically conducted opinion surveys[1] to gauge the Israeli public's views on national security issues, as well as trends in public resilience and trust.

Download the entire survey
Download Trends among the Jewish public
Download Trends among the Arab public

Key findings from the November 2024 survey:

Trust in Institutions and Individual Leaders

- The proportion of respondents expressing a high degree of trust in the IDF remains steady compared to the previous month (74% of a representative sample of all Israelis; 85% of Jewish respondents; and 32% of Arab respondents). In addition, the level of trust in the IDF chief of staff has held steady (50% of a representative sample of all Israelis; 57% of Jewish respondents; and 22% of Arab respondents). The same is true for trust in reports by the IDF spokesperson (64% of a representative sample of all Israelis; 75% of Jewish respondents; and 32% of Arab respondents). The IDF, its chief of staff, and its spokesperson maintain the highest levels of trust among all institutions and individual leaders.
- There has been an increase in the public's trust in the Israel Police compared to the last survey in August. The percentage of Israelis who expressed a very high or relatively high level of trust in the police rose from 29% to 36%. Among Jewish respondents, it climbed from 32% to 41% while among the Arab population, trust slightly decreased. standing at 16% in November compared to 18% in August. It should be noted that only a quarter of the Israeli population expressed a high level of trust in the national security minister and the police chief (24% and 25% respectively). Moreover, 61.5% of the Israeli public believes that the political considerations of National Security

[1] The Swords of Iron Survey for November was conducted on November 7–11, 2024 and was led by the Data Analytics Center at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). The fieldwork was carried out by iPanel, during which 800 men and women were interviewed online in Hebrew and 200 in Arabic, constituting a representative sample of the adult Israeli population aged 18 and over. The maximum margin of error for the entire sample is ±3.5% with a 95% confidence level.

03-6400400 info@inss.org.il www.inss.org.il חיים לבנון 40 תל אביב, 6997556

Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir greatly or very greatly influence the decision-making process within the Israel Police. Significant gaps also exist between Jewish and Arab respondents regarding whether they would call the police emergency line if they felt threatened (93% compared to 65.5 % respectively).

- The level of trust in the Israeli government remained unchanged from the previous month, but it still continues to be the lowest among the institutions included in the survey (21% of a representative sample of all Israelis; 25% of Jewish respondents; and 9% of Arab respondents). The public's level of trust in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also remained stable (28% of a representative sample of all Israelis; 34% of Jewish respondents; and 7% of Arab respondents). There was also a significant difference between the public's level of trust in the outgoing defense minister, Yoav Gallant, and his replacement, Israel Katz (47% and 20% respectively). In fact, more than 40% of the Israeli public believes that replacing the defense minister will undermine the war's achievements and reduce chances of securing the release of the hostages.

The Sword of Iron War: Perceptions of Accomplishments

- A majority of the Israeli public (63%) report high or very high levels of satisfaction with the operational accomplishments in Lebanon (compared to 59% in the October survey). However, 80% of the Israeli public believes that the current security situation does not allow for most residents to return to their homes in the north. The Israeli public is divided on the optimal course of action in Lebanon, with 42% agreeing that Israel should complete its ground operation in a targeted manner and work toward an agreement that meets Israel's security requirements, compared to 37% who believe that Israel should expand its ground operation until Hezbollah is fully disarmed.
- A majority of the Israeli public (67%) is confident that the IDF will win the war in the Gaza Strip. Although this figure has remained steady compared to the previous month, there has been a decline in confidence among the Jewish public since the war began. Significant gaps exist between the Jewish public's perception of victory (76%) and that of the Arab population (35.5%). Furthermore, 54% of the Israeli public believes the goals of the war in Gaza will be fully or largely achieved (62% of the Jewish public and 22.5% of the Arab public).

The Recruitment Law and Motivation to Serve in the Army

- According to the findings, 63% of the Israeli public and 67.5% of the Jewish public believe that, if the government enacts a law exempting the majority of the ultra-Orthodox population from serving in the IDF, motivation to serve in combat units will decrease. These figures represent an increase from 56% and 58%, respectively, in the September survey.
- In a preliminary question posed only to the Jewish respondents, among those with children approaching the age of mandatory service in the IDF, 29% would prefer their child to serve in a combat role, 30% would encourage them to enlist but not serve on the front lines, 13% would not encourage them to serve in the military at all, 19% responded that they would not interfere in any way, and 9% of respondents replied that they were unsure. These figures have remained steady compared to surveys conducted from June to August 2024.
- Another preliminary question examined respondents' motivation to serve in the reserves. 50.5% of the Jewish public stated that they would encourage a family member who has previously served

03-6400400 info@inss.org.il www.inss.org.il חיים לבנון 40 תל אביב, 6997556

on the front line during this war to respond positively if called up again. 24.5% would discourage it, and 25% were unsure.

- Despite the impending draft exemption law, a large majority of the Jewish public (83%) still agrees that the IDF is the "people's army," although this reflects a slight decline from 88% when the question was posed in 2020.

The Future of Israeli Democracy

- A majority of the Israeli public believes that Israeli democracy is in danger (61% of a representative sample of all Israelis; 56% of Jewish respondents; and 82.5% of Arab respondents). This represents a sharp increase compared to the survey conducted in 2018.

The Resilience of Israeli Society

- 37.5% of the Israeli public believes that the sense of solidarity in Israeli society has either declined or declined greatly. In contrast, 29.5% feels that social solidarity has increased or increased greatly, while 17% believes that there has been no change. These figures reflect a sharp decline in social solidarity among both Jewish and Arab populations, compared both to the previous month and to data collected at the start of the war in Gaza.
- A majority of the Israeli public (64%) reports feeling greatly or somewhat worried about the state of Israeli society after the war.
- Despite this, a majority of the Israeli public (59%) remains optimistic about Israeli society's ability to recover from the crisis and grow, while about one third of the public (33%) is more pessimistic.
- About one quarter of the public reports a high or very high sense of security; 40.5% reports a medium sense of security, while 31.5% of the public feels a low or very low sense of security. There are significant differences between the Jewish and Arab public, with the latter expressing a lower sense of security.
- One quarter of the Israeli public has considered leaving the country, compared to 65% who have not.

The International Arena

- 64% of the Israeli public believes strongly or very strongly that US President-elect Donald Trump will work to advance Israel's strategic interests.
- In response to media reports that Russia has expressed a willingness to help implement a ceasefire on the northern border, 77% of the Israeli public does not trust Russia to safeguard Israel's security interests in any such agreement.
- 74.5% of the Israeli public does not trust China as a mediator in any future negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

03-6400400 info@inss.org.il www.inss.org.il חיים לבנון 40 תל אביב, 6997556