

# Committed, concerned and conciliatory: The attitudes of Jews in Britain towards Israel

Initial findings from the 2010 Israel Survey

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David Graham and Jonathan Boyd

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# 1 Foreword

The relationship of Diaspora Jews to Israel has long preoccupied Jewish philosophical, theological and ideological debate. Since the earliest days of the Zionist movement, scholars, rabbis, politicians and journalists have discussed how Jews in the Diaspora *should* relate to Israel: what responsibilities they should have, what contributions they should make, what behaviours they should exhibit. Opinions have differed, often depending upon the historical, geographical or religious context in which they were developed, but the vibrancy and relevance of the debate continue to this day.

The related sociological question – how Jews in the Diaspora actually *do* relate to Israel – has been regularly investigated in the American Jewish community, but far less often in a British Jewish context. Indeed, the only significant data on the attitudes of British Jews to Israel were gathered by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) in 1995 and published in 1997.<sup>1</sup> That study painted a portrait of a community that was closely attached to Israel (81% felt either a strong or moderate attachment), that had, in large measure, visited Israel at least once (78%), and that comprised many individuals (69%) who had close family or friends living there. A clear relationship was also demonstrated between religious outlook and attachment to Israel: Jews who self-identified as “Traditional” or “Orthodox” were considerably more likely to be strongly attached to Israel than those who self-identified as “Progressive,” “Just Jewish,” or “Secular.” This distinction also played itself out on political issues: the “Traditional” and “Orthodox” were less likely to support the “land for peace” principle than the “Progressive,” “Just Jewish,” and “Secular.” Nevertheless, at that time, 69% of the sample as a whole agreed that Israel should give up some territory in exchange for credible guarantees of peace.

1 B. Kosmin, A. Lerman and J. Goldberg, *The attachment of British Jews to Israel* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 1997). The general findings from the 1995 study were published in: S. H. Miller, M. Schmool and A. Lerman, *Social and political attitudes of British Jews: Some Key findings of the JPR Survey* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 1996).

Possibly the most interesting part of that study was a table included in the conclusion, which attempted to capture the nature of the relationship between British Jews and Israel in the past, and to predict, in the view of the authors, how that relationship might change in the future:

Table 1: Predicted changes in the relationship between British Jews and Israel, as recorded in 1997<sup>2</sup>

The Past	The Future?
Appeals to all denominations	Greater appeal to Traditional and Orthodox Jews
Attachment based on ideology and emotion	Attachment based on experience
The primary focus of communal fundraising	Declining support for Israel charities
Zionism most widely held ideology	Zionism ideologically irrelevant
A medium for the expression of Jewish ethnic identity	Jewish ethnic identity more broadly based
A focus for Jewish communal consensus and strong unifying factor	A source of communal division
Central in Jewish life	Diminishing centrality

In essence, the authors predicted that “...if current trends prevail, attachment to Zionism and the Jewish state could become the concern of only a minority with a mostly Traditional or Orthodox religious outlook.”<sup>3</sup> Of course, when that report was published, few could have predicted the turbulence in global and Israeli affairs over the subsequent thirteen years. Numerous events may have contributed to a shift in the outlook of Jews in Britain since those data were collected. Globally, we have witnessed the presidency of George W. Bush, 9/11, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and a worldwide recession. In Britain, we have lived through the period of the New Labour government under Tony Blair and then Gordon Brown, the inquiries into the existence of weapons of mass destruction, the protests against the war in Iraq, and, of course, the

2 Ibid., p.20.

3 Ibid.

7/7 bombings. And in Israel itself, we have seen the assassination of former Israeli Prime Minister and Nobel Laureate Yitzchak Rabin,<sup>4</sup> the collapse of the Oslo Accords and the second *intifada*, Israel's unilateral disengagement from Gaza, the war with Hezb'allah in Lebanon in 2006, rocket attacks on Israeli civilians in Sderot and the surrounding area, and Operation Cast Lead in 2008-09.

However, until now, there has been no way to assess whether, or indeed precisely *how*, the attitudes of Jews in Britain have changed. In some respects, the 1997 JPR report served as a wake-up call to the community. Undoubtedly, immense effort and significant sums of money have been invested since then in providing young people with opportunities to visit Israel on organized educational programmes. Indeed, the Israel Experience, Birthright and MASA have become cornerstones of UJIA's UK programme. It is conceivable that such initiatives will have strengthened attachment levels and reversed the tide; certainly, that was part of their aim.

In terms of political opinions, there are several hypotheses, but again, no reliable evidence. On the one hand, one can construct a case in favour of a likely shift in a hawkish direction. First, data gathered on an ongoing basis by the Community Security Trust, as well as those collected by the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism (2006), clearly demonstrate an increase in levels of antisemitism in Britain.<sup>5</sup> One natural communal response to antisemitism is to turn inwards, circle the wagons and assume a defensive posture. It is entirely conceivable that this reaction might, in turn, lead to Jews adopting a more hawkish position on Israeli politics. The likelihood of this is strengthened by the data that show that one of the sources of contemporary antisemitism is Islamic extremism, and that surges in antisemitism are closely linked to the periodic outbreaks of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict.<sup>6</sup> If Jews in Britain feel threatened and draw clear parallels between the source of the threat in Britain and the source of the threat in Israel, some, at least, will be attracted towards right-of-centre Israeli government policies. Second, and clearly related, the increasingly frequent attempts by various British organizations and institutions to boycott Israel may have similarly encouraged Jews in Britain to jump to Israel's defence more readily than in the past. The notion that Israel is singled out for unfair treatment is a common theme in Jewish communal discourse, and one would expect to see evidence of that view in these new data. Furthermore, overarching apprehensions about the general growth of Islamic extremism in Britain may similarly encourage Jews in Britain to back Israel in its ongoing efforts to fight delegitimization, hostility and attack.

Intriguingly however, in the recent past, there have been some interesting indicators of a shift in Diaspora opinion – or perhaps of a growing sense of self-confidence – in the opposite direction. The establishment of JStreet in the United States in April 2008 was partly based on a belief that the views of the majority of American Jews no longer align with those of the American Jewish leadership, which was perceived, rightly or wrongly by the JStreet founders, as decidedly right-of-centre. Similarly, JCall, an initiative that has garnered considerable support from several thousand Jews across Europe, including prominent French intellectuals Bernard-Henri Lévy and Alain Finkielkraut, issued a “Call for Reason” earlier this year. JCall, while clearly recognising the existential threats faced by Israel, nevertheless argues that the systematic support of Israeli government policy by Jews does not serve Israel's best interests. This, in turn, inspired a similarly prominent group of American Jews to publish a comparable statement under the title “For the Sake of Zion”, which holds that Diaspora

4 The JPR data referred to above were collected several weeks prior to this event.

5 See: *Antisemitic Incidents Report 2009* (London: Community Security Trust, 2009); and *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* (London: All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism, 2006). The CST reported 924 antisemitic incidents in 2009, the highest annual total since it began recording them in 1984.

6 See: “Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism,” op. cit., pp.26-30. The CST has also noted in the aforementioned report that the main reason for the record high figures in 2009 was “the unprecedented number of antisemitic incidents recorded in January and February 2009, during and after the conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.” It added: “The number of incidents recorded did not return to relatively normal levels until April, some three months after the conflict ended.” (p.4).

Jews have a right “to call attention to decisions the government of Israel takes which, in our view, endanger the State we hold so dear.” Thus, there appears to be a growing sense in some quarters that Jews in the Diaspora should serve more as critical friends, than die-hard supporters, of Israel. Evidence that this position is penetrating British shores is rather thin, but given what is happening elsewhere, it would not be surprising if British Jews attempted to establish similar initiatives here. All of this ought to be located in the context of the broader debate about whether it is justifiable for Jews to criticize Israel publicly at all, and certainly, this report is published at a time when this question is featuring prominently in Jewish community discourse.<sup>7</sup>

There are, of course, extremes at both ends of the spectrum of opinion: hard-line criticism and unquestioning support. However, there are also several positions that sit somewhere in between: support in certain instances combined with criticism in others; support on certain fundamentals combined with dissatisfaction with specific policies; or perhaps, a general sense of confusion about what to think. Embarking upon this project, we were conscious that, without some empirical data, there was no reliable way to assess where Jews in Britain stand today, how they relate to Israel, in what directions they tend to lean, or how we might construct an overarching picture of the differences of opinion that exist. That was our goal: in short, to assess the attitudes and attachments of Jews in Britain to Israel.

In considering JPR’s overall research agenda, it was clear to us that this issue was worthy of investigation. Much Jewish communal discourse is taken up with discussion of Israel. Events in Israel regularly dominate national media headlines. Whether the views expressed by the community’s leadership represent the thrust of grassroots opinion in the Jewish community has been a moot question for some time. Without up-to-date data about those grassroots opinions, there has been no way of really knowing. As a result, any criticism levelled at the community’s leadership for

adopting the communal stances it has taken, could be seen as rather groundless.

However, it is important to note that, in undertaking this research, JPR’s primary interest has been simply to fulfil the role it holds in the Jewish community: to provide reliable and objective data to help inform constructive policy debate. We have not sought to support or undermine any particular communal perspective or any particular interest group. Furthermore, we do not believe, for one moment, that sociological data alone should inform policy; just because a majority holds a certain position does not mean that position is automatically correct. Thus, this survey was not designed to prove or disprove any previously-held hypothesis or position; indeed, we have worked tirelessly to ensure that the data have been gathered, analysed and reported in as neutral a way as possible.

To ensure its credibility, we sought to involve some of the leading specialists in Jewish social research. One of the authors of the report is Dr David Graham, JPR’s Director of Social and Demographic Research, who is the foremost expert in the demography of Jews in Britain. Dr Graham has worked extensively with the data on Jews from the 2001 UK Census, which has been particularly important in this project as we have needed to carefully cross-reference our sample with baseline data from the Census and other sources in order to assess accurately how representative our findings are.

In addition, the research has undergone extensive peer review. First and foremost, we are deeply indebted to Professor Stephen H. Miller OBE, Emeritus Professor of Social Research at City University in London and Chairman of JPR’s Policy Research Advisory Group, who has worked closely with us, assessing our methodology, examining our findings, interrogating the dataset itself, and, in the final analysis, ensuring that we have done all in our power to present the data in a fair and transparent fashion. We are equally grateful to Professor Steven M. Cohen, Research Professor of Jewish Social Policy at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York and Director of the Berman Jewish Policy Archive @ NYU Wagner, who has brought all of his knowledge, expertise and experience to the dataset, and worked closely with us to ensure

7 See, for example, Mick Davis, “Open debate is our best way of defending Israel in the diaspora,” *The Jewish Chronicle*, 17 June 2010. The article also appears on the website of the *Jewish Chronicle* under the title “Defending Israel in the diaspora”.



the robustness of our findings. Finally, we must also express our gratitude to Professor Stanley Waterman, Professor Emeritus of Geography at the University of Haifa, and former Director of Research at JPR, who has similarly assisted us and carefully assessed our work. All of these scholars have endorsed the accuracy and reliability of the data.

JPR was also ably assisted in the early stages of the project by the staff at Ipsos MORI, the UK's foremost market research company, notably Pamela Bremner and Tom Frere-Smith, who worked closely with us to construct the questionnaire in as unbiased and user-friendly fashion as possible. They also managed the online data collection exercise with the highest degree of professionalism and attention to detail, and we are grateful to them for that. It is, however, important to make clear that Ipsos MORI played no role whatsoever in data analysis or report-writing; JPR was solely responsible for those elements of the project.

We are also most grateful to the Pears Foundation for funding and supporting this research. Trevor Pears, together with the Foundation's Director, Charles Keidan, and Deputy Director, Amy Philip, worked with us to develop the research brief and suggest areas for investigation. Their interest throughout has been to understand more about the role that Israel plays in the complex identity of Jews in Britain. However, JPR remained strictly independent throughout the research process and all final decisions about

methodology and question design were taken by JPR alone.

Our final thanks are extended to JPR's lay leadership and professional staff. In particular, Harold Paisner, JPR's Chairman, who has been a constant source of encouragement and support throughout the project, and Judith Russell, Tamara Ormonde and Lena Stanley-Clamp, all of whom have assisted with the project at various stages of its development, and helped us to complete the report.

This is the most definitive study ever compiled on this topic among Jews in Britain. JPR, together with the Pears Foundation, hopes the data will be used both for scholarly purposes, and to encourage debate within the Jewish community in Britain about our individual and collective relationship with Israel. Certainly, Israel faces challenges today that would test any nation state. The questions around how Jews in Britain should best engage with Israel – its people, civil society and government – are important considerations for the future of the Jewish state and for Jews in Britain. The data in this report cannot answer those questions, but they should, at the very least, inform the debate, and help to establish some of the parameters within which future policies may unfold at all levels of the British Jewish community.

Jonathan Boyd  
*Executive Director*



## 2 Introduction

In Jewish communal discourse, Israel is widely regarded as being of vital importance to Jewish life. It regularly dominates Jewish media headlines, it forms the basis of a considerable amount of Jewish communal activity, and it is a major focus for Jewish philanthropy. It can be both a source of community cohesion and division; over the course of its short history, events in Israel have not only prompted moments of tremendous communal unity, but also instances of great anxiety, debate and tension. In the wider British national context, Israel frequently features as a topic for discussion, and generates a tremendous amount of interest and concern. In short, Israel matters, both to Jews and non-Jews.

This report investigates the attitudes and attachments to Israel of Jews living in Britain. It is by far the most definitive study yet conducted on this subject, and the first to be undertaken for fifteen years in Britain. Given the changes in the political landscape during that time, it would be surprising if opinions among Jews had not shifted or become more nuanced. However, until now, there has been no data to indicate precisely what Jews in Britain think and feel about Israel today.

This survey shows that the vast majority of respondents exhibit strong personal support for, and affinity with, Israel: 95% have visited the country; 90% see it as the “ancestral homeland” of the Jewish people, and 86% feel that Jews have a special responsibility for its survival. On the other hand, these strong levels of personal attachment to Israel do not prevent respondents from expressing criticism about Israel’s civil society: 74% think that Orthodox Judaism has too much influence in Israel; 67% say there is too much corruption in Israel’s political system; and 56% feel that non-Jewish minority groups suffer from discrimination in the country.

It further paints a portrait of a community that is highly-engaged with Israel, and that expresses predominantly dovish views on the key political issues: 78% favour a two-state solution to the conflict with the Palestinians; 74% oppose the expansion of existing settlements in the West Bank; and 67% favour exchanging land for peace. A majority (52% against 39%) favours negotiating with Hamas to achieve peace.

These, and the many other findings contained in this report, should contribute to ongoing debates about Israel within Britain’s Jewish community, as well as inform discussions occurring outside the community: in the wider British media, other Jewish communities around the world, and of course, within Israel itself.

### ***Do the findings represent the views of British Jews as a whole?***

Short of an official census which all members of a population are required to complete, no sample survey can provide a perfect representation of the target population. That is particularly the case when sampling the Jewish community, because members of the population cannot be identified by a list, or accessed by any form of random process. Further, in a survey such as this, which was carried out on-line, and where respondents are self-selected, there is additional potential for bias in the data.

Although it is not possible to devise a sampling methodology for Jews that will guarantee in advance that the sample will be representative, it is possible to get a good understanding of who ultimately responded to the survey. We can thereby assess retrospectively how representative the achieved sample actually turned out to be and if necessary, weight it accordingly. This is done by comparing the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample with those of the Jewish population as a whole.

The details of this comparison are set out in the methodology section at the end of this report. The analysis shows that the Israel Survey (I.S.) sample has a remarkably close fit with the British Jewish population generally in terms of age, geographical distribution, family structure, employment status, country of birth and Jewish religious practice. These close matches indicate that this sample provides a fair reflection of Jewish opinion in general.

However, on some variables, differences between the sample and the general Jewish population were observed. These differences are generally minor, but the I.S. does, to some extent, over-represent men, Reform, Liberal and Masorti synagogue members, and Jews with high levels of educational

achievement. It under-represents central Orthodox synagogue members and strictly Orthodox Jews, as well as Jews who describe their outlook as “Somewhat secular” and “Somewhat religious”.<sup>8</sup> Tests show that the over-representation of men has very little effect on the attitudinal data, and thus it has been ignored. But the higher prevalence of Progressive/Masorti synagogue members, “Secular” and highly educated Jews does have an impact, since the data show that these groups typically hold more “dovish” and critical views of Israel. Therefore, if the biases were left unweighted the results would over-represent such views.

By weighting the data it is possible to assess the magnitude of this biasing effect and correct statistically for the distortions in the make-up of the sample. The weighting process applies a simple adjustment to the over-sampled and under-sampled groups, so that their presence in

the sample reflects their presence in the Jewish population generally. In accordance with standard survey methodology, all the findings contained in this report have been weighted to take account of these three data biases—synagogue membership, secular/religious outlook, and educational achievement.

Further details of this are included within the methodology section at the end of this report.<sup>9</sup> However, in general terms, it is clear that the 2010 Israel Survey sample accurately reflects the diverse character of the Jewish population on most social, religious and demographic variables. After weighting, we have been able to correct for the influence of known departures from the population profile. As a result, we are confident that the picture presented here is unlikely to differ markedly from the general pattern of opinion held by Britain’s Jewish population in regard to Israel.

8 The outlook continuum allows respondents to identify as ‘Secular,’ ‘Somewhat secular,’ ‘Somewhat religious,’ and ‘Religious.’

9 An extended methodological analysis will be available shortly on JPR’s website ([www.jpr.org.uk](http://www.jpr.org.uk)).

### 3 Executive summary

This sample consists of 4,081 responses to the Israel Survey, which was conducted during January and February 2010.

#### Deep ties and strong commitment

- For 82% of respondents, Israel plays a ‘central’ or ‘important but not central’ **role in their Jewish identities**.
- 90% believe that Israel is the ‘**ancestral homeland**’ of the Jewish people.
- 95% have **visited Israel** at some point in the past. In contrast, previous studies reported comparable figures of 91% (2002) and 78% (1995).
- 72% categorize themselves as **Zionists**; 21% do not see themselves as Zionists, and 7% are unsure. Generally speaking, the more religious respondents say they are, the more likely they are to describe themselves as Zionist.
- 87% say that Jews in Britain are part of a global Jewish ‘**Diaspora**’; just 19% regard Jews outside Israel as living in ‘exile’.
- Only 31% agree that the State of Israel has a responsibility for ‘ensuring the safety of Jews around the world’. By contrast, 77% of respondents agree that Jews have ‘a special **responsibility to support Israel**’.<sup>10</sup>
- An overwhelming majority (87%) agrees that Jews are **responsible for ensuring ‘the survival of Israel’**— over half (54%) the non-Zionist respondents also agree.

#### Dovish stance on key policy issues

- Two-thirds (67%) favour giving up **territory for peace** with the Palestinians; 28% disagree. Religious respondents are less likely than secular respondents to agree. Nevertheless, almost half (47%) of all ‘Religious’ respondents agree that Israel should give up territory, as do 76% of the ‘Secular’. Similarly, 62% of self-described Zionists agree, compared to 70% of those who see themselves as non-Zionists.
- Almost three-quarters (74%) are opposed to the expansion of existing **settlements** in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria). Even among those who define themselves as Zionist, 70% are opposed.
- A large majority (78%) favours a **two-state solution** to the conflict with the Palestinians; 15% are opposed, and 8% are undecided.
- Just over half (52%) think that Israel should **negotiate with Hamas**, while 39% do not.

#### Clear support on security issues but with some reservations

- Half the sample (50%) agrees that ‘Israeli **control of the West Bank** (Judea/Samaria) is vital for Israel’s security’, while a sizable minority (40%) disagrees. Religious respondents are more likely to agree than secular respondents.

<sup>10</sup> This statement was designed to denote support for Israel in general, rather than the more narrow meaning of support for the current policies of its government.

- There is still stronger support (72%) for the view that the **security fence**/ separation barrier is ‘vital for Israel’s security’. Self-defined Zionist respondents are nearly three times as likely to agree as non-Zionists.
- A clear majority (55% against 36%) consider Israel to be ‘an **occupying power** in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria)’; 9% are uncertain. 48% of self-defined Zionist respondents see Israel as an occupying power.
- Most (72%) agree that the **Gaza War** was ‘a legitimate act of self-defence.’ Religious and Zionist respondents are considerably more likely to agree with this than secular and non-Zionist respondents.
- A slight majority (52% against 43%) agrees that the government of Israel has **little or no choice** in most of the military action it takes.
- Fully 87% of respondents agree that ‘Iran represents a threat to Israel’s existence.’ Just over two-thirds (68%) of non-Zionist respondents also agree.

### Some mixed feelings about the state of Israeli society

- A large majority (80%) feels that ‘**Democracy is alive and well**’ in Israel.
- By contrast, 67% agree that ‘there is **too much corruption** in Israel’s political system.’ Only 13% disagree, while 20% are uncertain.
- About three-quarters (74%) think that ‘**Orthodox Judaism** has too much influence in Israel’s society’. Close to half (45%) of ‘Religious’ respondents also agree with this assertion.
- 60% of respondents agree that *Jewish* minority groups in Israel, such as people of Russian or Ethiopian origin, ‘suffer from **discrimination**’, and only 20% disagree. Similarly, 56% agree that *non-Jewish* minority groups ‘suffer from discrimination’ in Israel, while 27% disagree.

### Some divergence of opinion on the will for peace

- A majority (59%) feels that ‘Israel holds *less responsibility for the recent failure of the peace process* than its neighbours’; a third (34%) disagrees. Religious respondents are more sympathetic towards Israel in this respect than secular respondents. Those with higher level qualifications are more critical.
- The majority of those with a view (47% compared with 38%) feels that ‘Most **Palestinians want peace** with Israel’; 15% are unsure. Secular and non-Zionist respondents are the most likely to agree with the statement.

### Israel is prominent in the daily lives of Jews in Britain

- Over three-quarters (76%) of the sample feel that Israel is **relevant to their day-to-day lives** in Britain. Even so, 67% do *not* feel any **conflict of loyalty** regarding Britain and Israel.
- Just over a quarter (26%) say that they ‘**feel uncomfortable** living in Britain because of events in Israel’. Respondents living in parts of the country with fewer Jews are the most likely to feel uncomfortable.
- A majority (60%) says that Israel is either *not* an issue or only *one of several* issues that influences their **voting behaviour**. 36% say that Israel is either ‘the central issue’ or a ‘high priority issue but not central.’

- Almost a quarter (23%) of the sample had **witnessed some form of antisemitic incident** in the previous year. Of these, over half (56%) believe that the incident was ‘probably’ or ‘definitely’ **related to the abuser/assailant’s views on Israel**.
- More than one in ten respondents (11%) said they had been **subjected to a verbal antisemitic insult or attack** in the 12 months leading up to the survey. Over half of the victims (56%) believe that the incident was ‘probably’ or ‘definitely’ related to the abuser/assailant’s views on Israel.

### **Division of opinion on the right to speak out**

- Over a third (35%) think that *Jewish people* should ‘always’ feel free to criticize Israel in the **British media**; a further 38% say that there are some circumstances when this would be justified. Only a quarter says this is ‘never’ justified.
- Just over half (53%) agree that Jews in Britain have the **right to judge Israel** even though they do not live there; a slightly smaller proportion (45%) think that Jews do not have this right as they do not live there.

### **Religiosity and educational attainment**

- In general, the more religious respondents reported being, the more hawkish their stance on political and security issues; the more secular they were, the more dovish their stance.
- Respondents with higher levels of educational attainment tended to exhibit more dovish stances on political and security issues compared with those with lower levels of educational attainment.

## 4 Exploring variations within the sample: Zionism and secular/religious outlook

In examining attitudes to Israel, we have looked both at the views of the sample taken as a whole, and at the views of various sub-groups. In particular, we have focused on variations between those who self-define as “Zionist” and those who do not, and also at variations based on the secular/religious outlook continuum.

### **Zionists and non-Zionists**

A key aim of the Israel Survey (I.S.) was to better understand how the term “Zionist” is used by Jews in Britain today. At its most fundamental level, Zionism is a nationalist ideology espousing the right of the Jewish people to self-determination in their own sovereign state in the land of Israel. However, as the complexities of the political situation have unfolded over time, the term has often been used to mean “a supporter of Israel and its government’s actions and policies”. As a result, some of those opposing Israel’s actions, or even its right to exist, have tended to use the term “Zionist” in derogatory and even derisive ways. The I.S. investigated both the ways in which the term is being used by Jews in Britain, and the differences of opinion that exist between those who consider themselves “Zionists” and those who do not.

We asked respondents, “*Although there are different opinions about what the term Zionism means, in general, do you consider yourself to be a Zionist?*” As Figure 1 indicates, 72% of respondents say that they *do* consider themselves to be Zionists, whereas 21% say that they do not.<sup>11</sup>

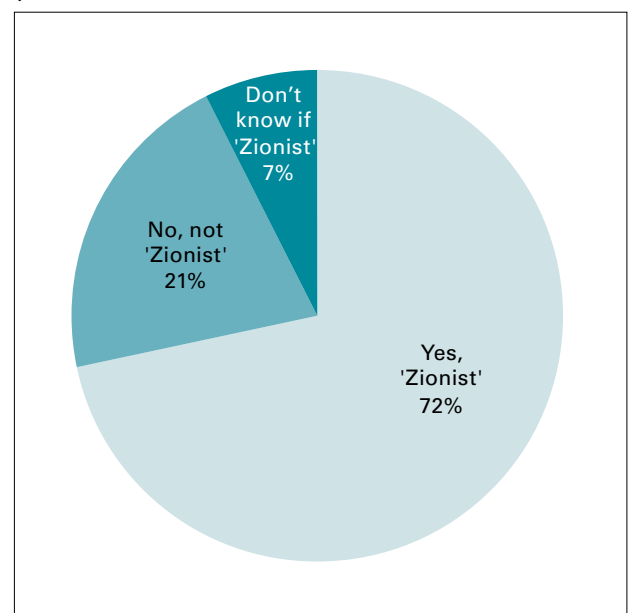
Further examination of the data revealed that whilst nearly all “Zionists” hold what might generally be considered Zionist opinions, in the sense of proclaiming the right of Jews to a national homeland, by no means all “non-Zionists” reject that right. Thus virtually all self-defined Zionists (97%) believe that “*Israel is the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people*”, and equally 97% of them see Jews as being “*responsible for ensuring the survival of Israel*”. However, so too do the majority

of non-Zionists: 66% see Israel as the Jewish “ancestral homeland,” and 54% see Jews as being responsible for Israel’s survival (see pages 15–17).

What distinguishes “non-Zionists” from “Zionists” is not so much their view on the status of Israel as a Jewish national homeland, but their tendency to be far more critical of certain policy decisions made by Israel’s government. For example, “non-Zionists” are roughly a third as likely as “Zionists” to see the Gaza War as a legitimate act of self-defence by Israel. Similarly, they are far less likely to see Israeli control of the West Bank as a vital security measure (27% versus 58%). Thus, it is apparent that many of those who define themselves as “non-Zionist” are using the term to mark their disagreement with contemporary Israeli government policy, rather than to signal a lack of support for the concept of Israel as an expression of Jewish nationhood.

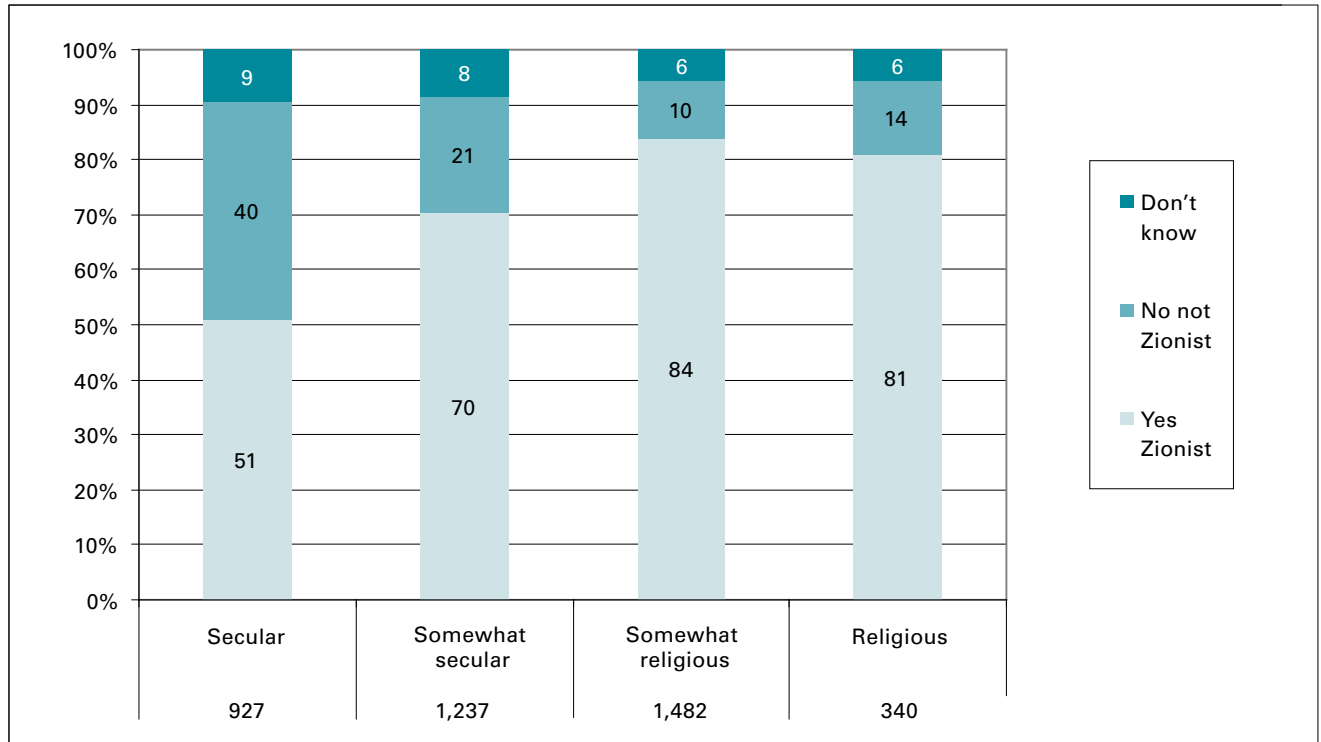
Meanwhile, those who describe themselves as “Zionist” seem to be using the term in its more fundamental sense. However, that does not imply that they hold monolithic positions on Israeli

Figure 1: “Although there are different opinions about what the term *Zionism* means, in general, do you consider yourself to be a Zionist?” N=3,986



<sup>11</sup> It should be noted that the questionnaire did not offer an ‘anti-Zionist’ response option.

Figure 2: "Do you consider yourself to be a Zionist?" by secular/religious outlook



government policy. Indeed, 62% favour giving up territory for peace, and 70% are opposed to expanding existing settlements in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria). Thus, those who define themselves as "Zionist" are not always firm supporters of Israeli government policy, and it is clear from the analysis that one cannot assume that all of those labelling themselves Zionists are, by definition, hawkish on political issues. This muddying of terminology as it has come to be used in practice by Jews in Britain is worthy of further examination.

**Secular and religious outlook**

Another key aim of this report was to explore the relationship between Jewish identity and opinions about Israel. Of the many indicators of Jewish identity that could be used to do this (such as measures of religious observance, synagogue membership or feelings of Jewish identity), we have focused on secular/religious outlook. Previous studies have shown that this measure distinguishes well between different sections of the Jewish population when it comes to Jewish

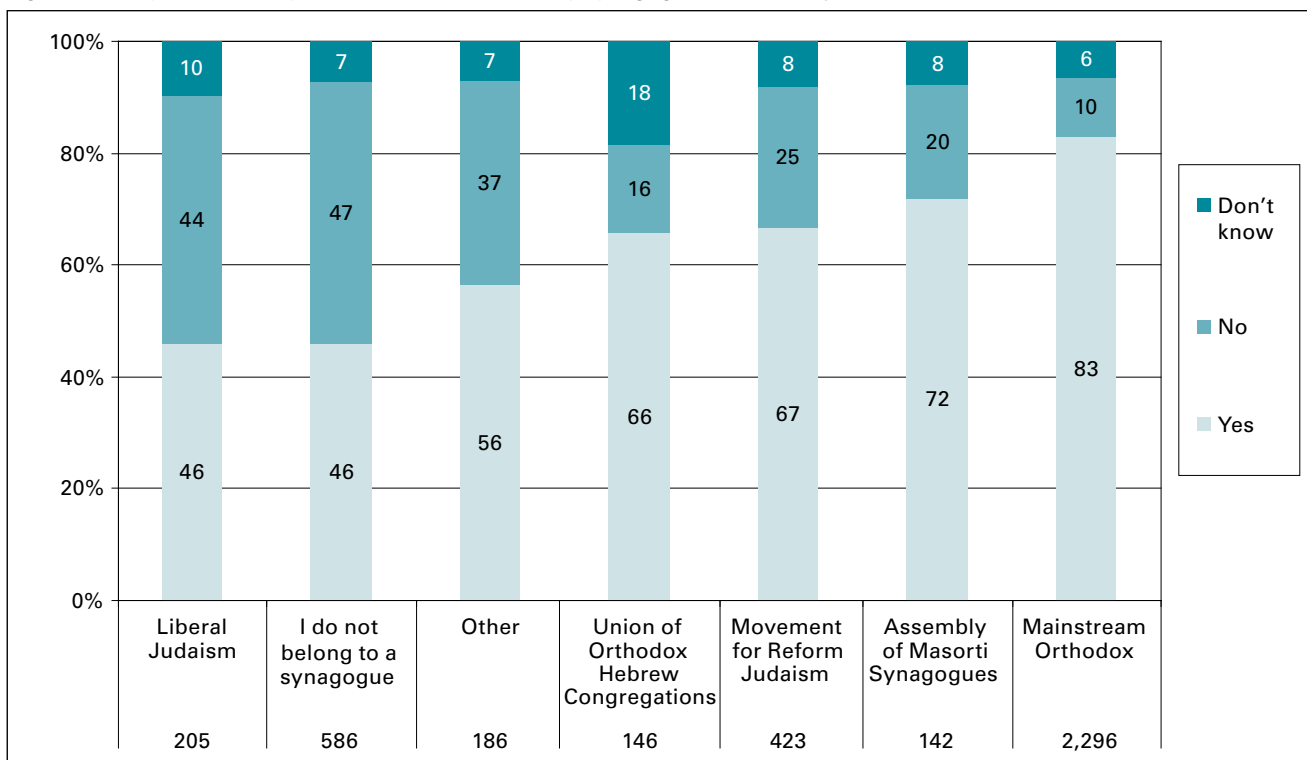
beliefs, practices and behaviours.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, in this survey, we found large differences between the general Jewish behaviours of "Secular" and "Religious" respondents. For example, whilst 16% of "Secular" respondents "Eat only kosher meat at home," 89% of the "Religious" do so. Even in areas unrelated to ritual observance, there are clear differences: for example, 17% of "Secular" respondents report that they have witnessed an antisemitic incident, whilst 33% of "Religious" respondents make the same claim.

Figure 2 shows that respondents who describe themselves as "Secular" are the least likely of the four "outlook types" to describe themselves as Zionist (51%), compared with 70% of the "Somewhat secular" respondents and over 80% of the "Somewhat religious" and "Religious" respondents. The data also correlate well with Jewish practice (for example, 83% of respondents who "Eat only kosher meat at home" describe themselves as Zionist, compared to 34% of those who do none of the six Jewish practices presented in the questionnaire).

12 D. J. Graham, *Secular or Religious? The Outlook of London's Jews* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2003); S. Waterman, *The Jews of Leeds in 2001: portrait of a community* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2003).



Figure 3: “Do you consider yourself to be a Zionist?” by synagogue membership\*



\* Due to rounding on this figure, as well as some of the other figures in this report, not all columns total 100.

As was the case with the data on self-defined Zionists, outlook has strong associations with attitudes to Israel. For example, “Secular” respondents are approximately twice as likely as “Religious” respondents to favour negotiations with Hamas, and are almost twice as likely to see Israel as an “occupying power” in the West Bank.

Note that respondents reporting a “Religious” outlook are about as likely as the “Somewhat religious” to describe themselves as Zionist, rather than *more* likely as the overall trend implies. The

reason for this is that the “Religious” category includes respondents who are attached to a wide variety of Orthodox synagogue movements. Those belonging to “Mainstream Orthodox” synagogues (including Independent Orthodox, Federation and the United Synagogue) are extremely likely to consider themselves to be Zionist (83%), whereas those belonging to strictly Orthodox synagogues (i.e. those aligned with the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations (UOHC) who would almost certainly identify as “Religious”) are rather less likely to do so (66%) (see Figure 3).

## 5 Relationships to Israel

In seeking to explore the relationship Jews in Britain have with Israel, it is important to uncover the foundations upon which the bonds are based. We explored this in several ways. First, we looked at the extent to which respondents regard themselves as living in exile from home, as compared with simply living in the Jewish “Diaspora.” The terms “Diaspora” and “exile,” whilst conceptually similar, have very different meanings in common Jewish parlance: “Diaspora” is a fairly neutral term nowadays, typically understood as meaning “outside of Israel,” whereas “exile” is a much stronger term meaning “away from home.” Second, we examined whether respondents regard Israel as “God-given” as compared with their “ancestral homeland.” The former clearly suggests a religious connection; the latter suggests more of an ethno-historic link. Third, we explored the role of Israel in respondents’ Jewish identities, and the extent to which they locate it at the heart or the periphery of their Jewishness. Last, we investigated the degree to which respondents feel a sense of responsibility towards Israel, as well as how much they feel Israel should be responsible for them and their wellbeing.

### 5.1. Exile versus Diaspora

Respondents feel strongly that they are part of a global Jewish Diaspora, but feel equally strongly that they are not living in exile from Israel. Indeed, 76% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, “*Jews who live outside Israel are living in exile.*” In complete contrast, 87% agree or strongly agree with the statement, “*Jews in Britain are part of a global Jewish Diaspora*” (see Figure 4).

### 5.2. God-given land versus ancestral homeland

Respondents relate much more strongly to the concept that Israel is the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people, than they do to the notion that Israel was given to the Jewish people by God. Asked whether they agree or disagree with the statement “*The Land of Israel was given to the Jewish people by God*”, almost half (48%) agree or strongly agree. However, asked whether they agree or disagree that “*Israel is the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people*”, the vast majority (90%) agrees or strongly agrees. The latter statement also proved to be less challenging for respondents—only 2% were unwilling to provide an opinion

Figure 4: Exile and Diaspora

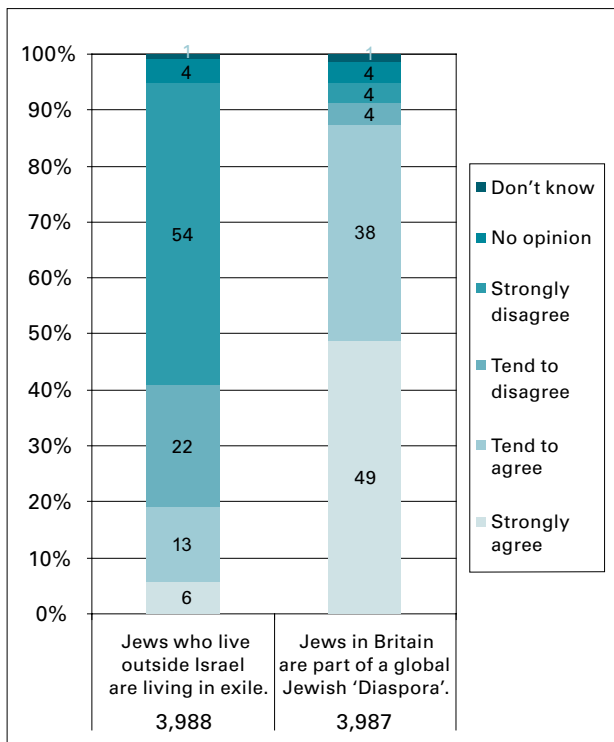
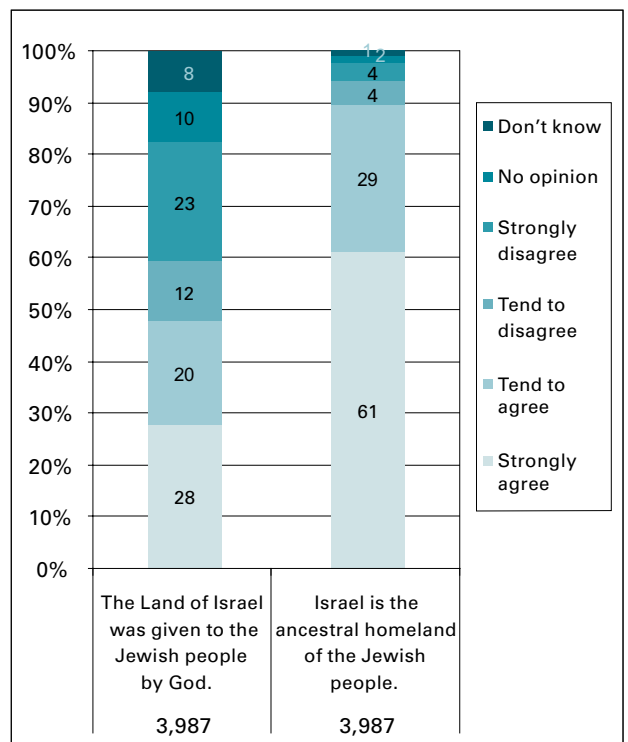


Figure 5: Israel given by God versus ancestral homeland



compared with 18% for the former statement (see Figure 5).

This strong sense of historical connection with Israel correlates with outlook, but it is not just religious respondents who agree that Israel is the ancestral Jewish homeland; three-quarters (75%) of self-described “Secular” respondents agree or strongly agree as well. Further, almost all (97%) self-described Zionist respondents agree or strongly agree with this, compared with 66% of non-Zionist respondents.

### 5.3. Israel and Jewish identity

The vast majority (82%) of respondents feel that Israel is either “important but not central” or “central” to their Jewish identity (Figure 6). Indeed, for 29% of the sample, Israel is “central”.

The more religious respondents report being, the more likely they are to say that Israel is central to their Jewish identity. 64% of the “Secular” respondents say Israel is either “important but not central” or “central”, compared with 92% of “Religious” respondents (see Figure 7). Even

among non-Zionist respondents, 44% feel that Israel is “important but not central” or “central” to their Jewish identities.

Figure 6: “Which of the following BEST describes the role of Israel in terms of your Jewish identity?” (N=3,924)

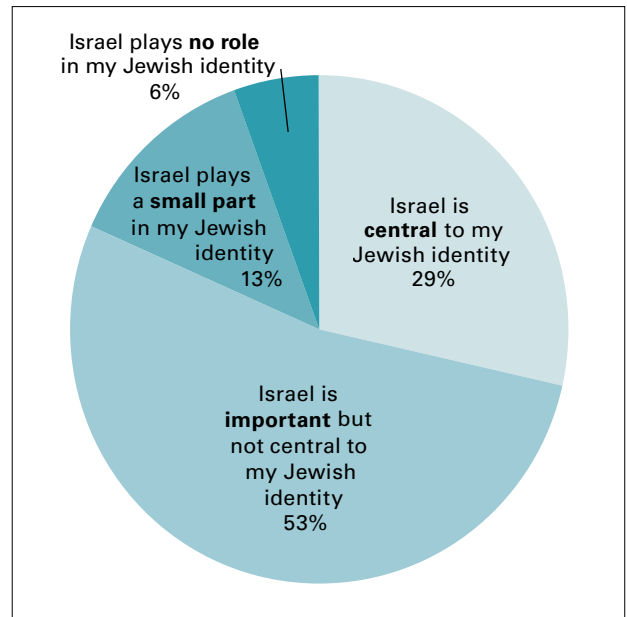
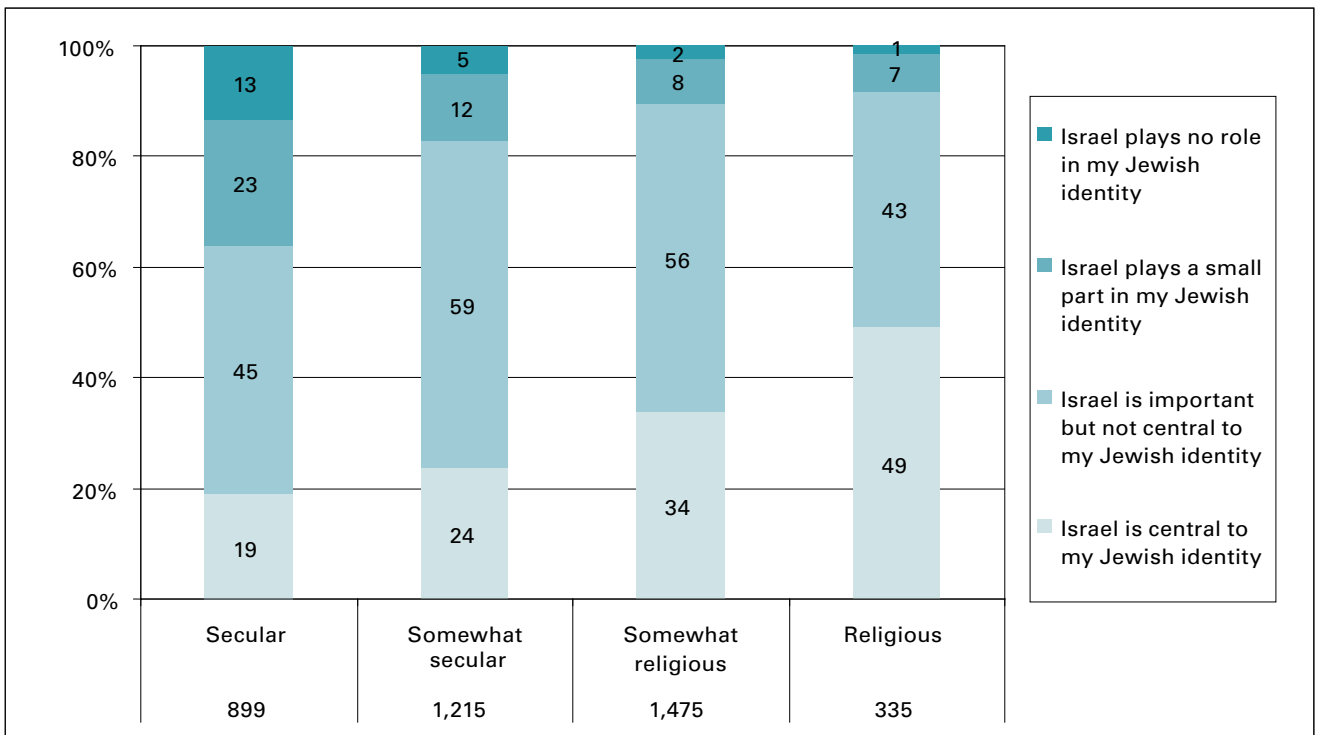


Figure 7: “Which of the following BEST describes the role of Israel in terms of your Jewish identity?” by secular/religious outlook



### 5.4. Israel, Jews and responsibility

Respondents were asked whether or not the State of Israel has responsibility for “... *ensuring the safety of Jews around the world*” (see Table 1). Less than a third (31%) feels this should be the case. Indeed, although this is, in some ways, a traditional tenet of Zionism, only 35% of those who describe themselves as Zionists agree with this notion. Nevertheless, it is important to note that a quarter is undecided about this.<sup>13</sup>

Asked the converse of this statement, i.e. whether Jews had “*a special responsibility to support Israel*”, there is far clearer agreement — 77% feel this is the case and only 12% disagree.<sup>14</sup>

Respondents were also asked whether they consider Jews to be responsible for ensuring “*the survival of Israel*”. Here, the strength of feeling is even greater — the majority of respondents (87%) agree that Jews *are* responsible for ensuring the survival of Israel. Indeed, over two-thirds (67%) strongly agree, and over half (54%) of the non-Zionist respondents also agree with this.

Table 1: The responsibility of Israel towards Jews and of Jews towards Israel\*

(A)	1	2	3	4	5	(B)
'It <b>should</b> be the responsibility of the State of Israel for ensuring the safety of Jews around the world'	11	20	24	20	26	'It <b>should not</b> be the responsibility of the State of Israel for ensuring the safety of Jews around the world'
'Jews <b>have</b> a special responsibility to support Israel'	54	23	11	4	8	'Jews <b>do not have</b> a special responsibility to support Israel'
'Jews <b>have</b> a special responsibility to ensure the survival of Israel'	67	20	6	3	4	'Jews <b>do not have</b> a special responsibility to ensure the survival of Israel'

\* Respondents were asked to read each pair of statements and decide which came closest to their own opinion. For example, if they agreed much more with statement A than with statement B, then they were directed to select box 1. If they agreed equally with both or did not agree with either, they were directed to select box 3 and so on. Figures represent percentage responses in each row.

13 i.e. they selected response box 3 (see Table 1).

14 This statement was designed to denote support for Israel in general, rather than the more narrow meaning of support for the current policies of its government.

## 6 Attachments to Israel

Two of the most obvious ways of measuring attachments to Israel are by examining how often respondents visit the country, and by assessing their appetite for *aliyah* (emigration to Israel). It is important to note that whilst many Jews do simply visit Israel on holiday, the concept of an educational “Israel experience” has become one of the cornerstones of Diaspora Jewish education in the past fifteen years. According to the underlying philosophy, organized educational tours to Israel provide an essential basis for the development of Jewish identity; by connecting with Jewish history, people, culture and language, Jews are more likely to find substance and meaning in Judaism, Zionism and Jewish peoplehood. Emigration to Israel is usually understood to be the ultimate measure of attachment as it serves as the mechanism by which the central goal of Zionism — the establishment and flourishing of a Jewish state in the land of Israel — can best be realised. Thus, we also examined the extent to which respondents regard *aliyah* as an imperative; i.e. not only whether individual respondents *intend* to live in Israel, but also to what degree they believe Jews in general *should* live in Israel.

### 6.1. Visiting Israel

The vast majority of the Israel Survey sample (95%) has visited Israel at some point in the past. This proportion sits well with that obtained by JPR in 2002 for Jews living in London and the South-east, which showed that 91% of respondents had visited Israel. The last (and only) time this question was asked in a national British survey was in JPR’s 1995 study, which found that 78% of respondents had previously visited Israel.

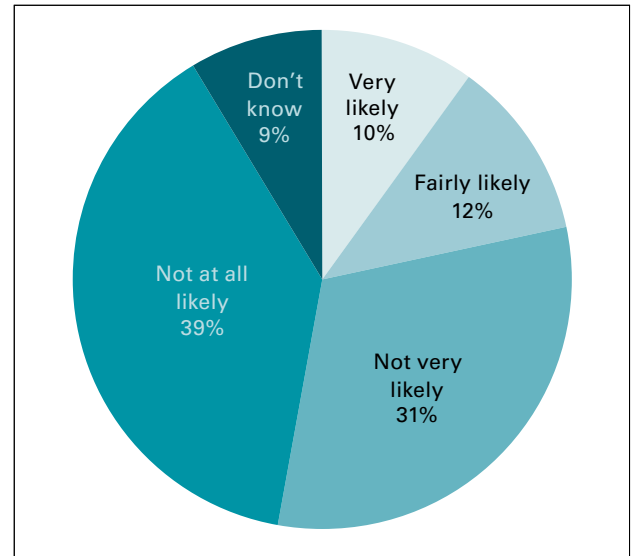
In our current survey, whilst 70% of respondents have been to Israel as a visitor only, one in five has previously lived there, and 7% currently have a home there. Further, the vast majority (76%) of self-described non-Zionists have also previously visited or lived in Israel.

### 6.2. Aliyah – Emigrating to Israel

Respondents who have **not** previously lived in Israel were asked “*How likely is it that you will live in Israel in the future?*” More than one in five (22%) considers it “Very likely” or “Fairly likely” that they will live in Israel in the future (Figure 8). The data also show that 42% of

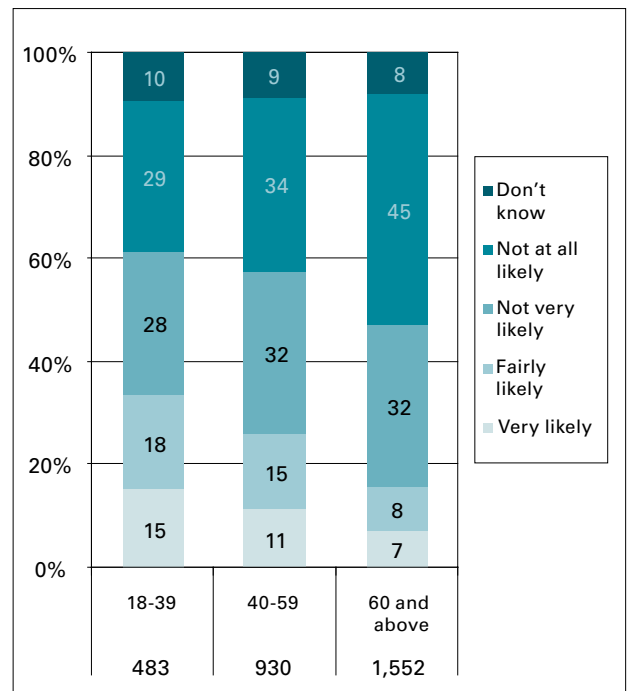
“Religious” respondents are “Very likely” or “Fairly likely” to do so, but only 14% of “Secular” respondents are.

Figure 8: “How likely is it that you will live in Israel in the future?” N=2,980\*



\* Not including respondents who currently live or have formerly lived in Israel.

Figure 9: “How likely is it that you will live in Israel in the future?” by age group\*



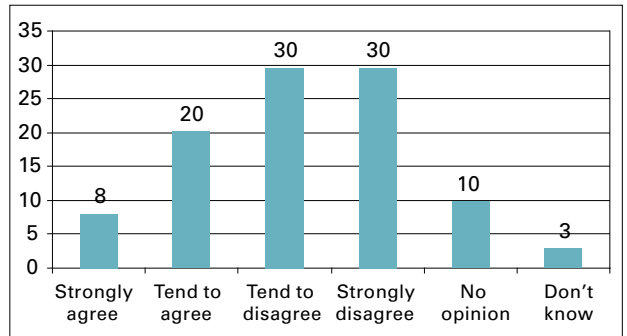
\* For all those that have **not** previously lived in, or currently have a home in, Israel.

There is a close association between age and whether or not respondents think it is likely they will “live in Israel in the future” (Figure 9). One-third (34%) of those aged under 40 say it is “Very likely” or “Fairly likely” that they will live in Israel, compared with 26% of people in their 40s and 50s, and 15% of those aged 60 and above.

**Should Jews live in Israel?**

Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree that “*Jews should live in Israel*”. Relatively few respondents (28%) agree with this statement (Figure 10). Indeed, even respondents who describe themselves as “Zionist” are more likely to *disagree* than agree (50% compared with 36% respectively).

Figure 10: “Jews should live in Israel” % N=3,986

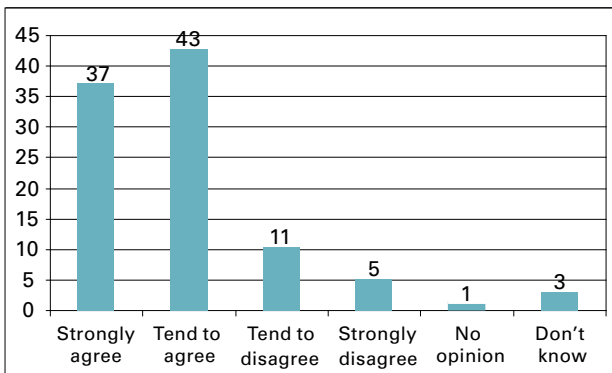


## 7 Perceptions of Israeli politics and society

One important way of examining the attitudes of Jews in Britain to Israel is to investigate where respondents stand on some of the major internal issues within contemporary Israeli society. First, we were interested to explore respondents' views on the current state of Israel's democracy. Second, we wanted to look at respondents' views on the influence of Jewish orthodox religious parties which, together, have won approximately 20% of the total vote in each of the last four elections, and thus play a highly important role within Israel's political system. Last, in the context of our

exploration of respondents' perceptions of Israeli society, we examined their views on the position of minority groups in Israel: both Jewish ones (for example, Jews of Russian or Ethiopian descent), and non-Jewish ones (which include Muslims, Christians and Druze). In each of these ways, we hoped to shed some light on how Jews in Britain see the state of Israel's political system and society.

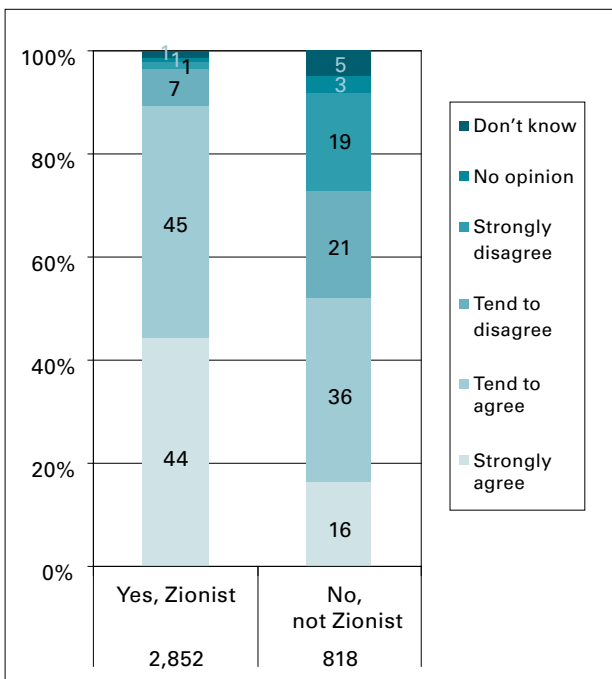
Figure 11: "Democracy in Israel is alive and well" % (N=3,967)



### 7.1. Democracy versus corruption

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement, "Democracy in Israel is alive and well." A majority (80%) agrees or strongly agrees that Israel's democracy is robust, in contrast to only 16% that does not (Figure 11). Of those in disagreement, there is a noticeable tendency for them to be "Secular". Indeed 41% of respondents who disagree (strongly or otherwise) were "Secular" as opposed to "Somewhat secular", "Somewhat religious" or "Religious".

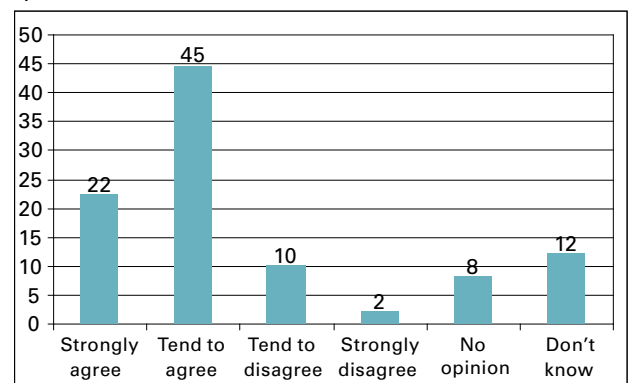
Figure 12: "Democracy in Israel is alive and well" by "Are you a Zionist?"



Similarly, respondents who describe themselves as non-Zionist are considerably more likely than Zionists to be sceptical about the state of Israel's democracy (40% compared with 8% respectively) (Figure 12).

Despite the fact that a clear majority is confident that Israel has a strong democracy (Figure 11), 67% of respondents agree with the statement, "There is too much corruption in Israel's political system" (Figure 13). The phrasing of the statement is important: it does not indicate that two-thirds believe that Israeli politics is inherently corrupt (indeed, the finding on the state of Israel's

Figure 13: "There is too much corruption in Israel's political system" % (N=3,967)





democracy partially demonstrates this), but rather that 67% believe the Israeli political system ought to be *less* corrupt than it currently is. Furthermore, a relatively high proportion (one in five) has “No opinion” or does not know whether there is too much corruption in this regard.

## 7.2. Perceptions of Israel’s society

### Influence of Orthodox Judaism

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement, “*Orthodox Judaism has too much influence in Israel’s society.*” A large majority of the sample (74%) feels that Orthodox Judaism does have too much influence in Israel’s society (N=3,968).

Unsurprisingly, religious respondents are less likely to agree with the statement than secular respondents (Figure 14). Nevertheless, just under half (45%) of even “Religious” respondents agree or strongly agree that Orthodox Judaism **does** have too much influence in Israel.

### Jewish and non-Jewish minorities in Israel

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree that, “*In Israel, Jewish minority groups, such as people of Russian or Ethiopian origin, suffer from discrimination.*” A majority (60%) of respondents agree that these Jewish groups **do** suffer discrimination in Israel—only 19% disagrees (Figure 15). However, a relatively large proportion of the sample (20%) responded “No opinion” or “Don’t know” to this statement.

We also asked about other minority groups, and whether “*In Israel, non-Jewish minority groups suffer from discrimination*”? The biggest non-Jewish minorities in Israel are Israeli Arabs, who are made up of Muslims, Christians and Druze. Again, a majority of respondents (56%) agrees, and only 27% disagree that these non-Jewish groups suffer from discrimination in Israel (Figure 15). A relatively large proportion (17%) does not know, or did not provide an opinion on the issue.

Figure 14: “Orthodox Judaism has too much influence in Israel’s society” by secular/religious outlook

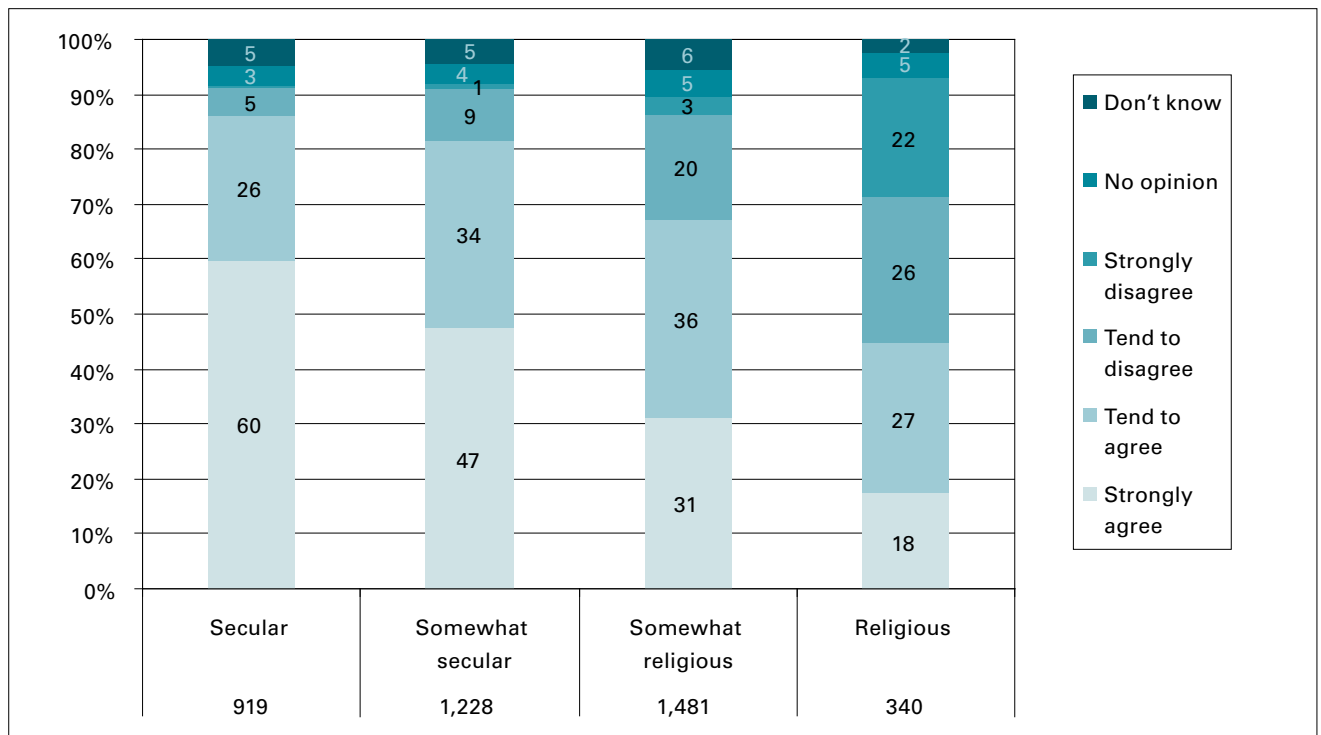


Figure 15: "Is there discrimination against Jewish and non-Jewish minority groups in Israel?" (N=3,966 for each statement)

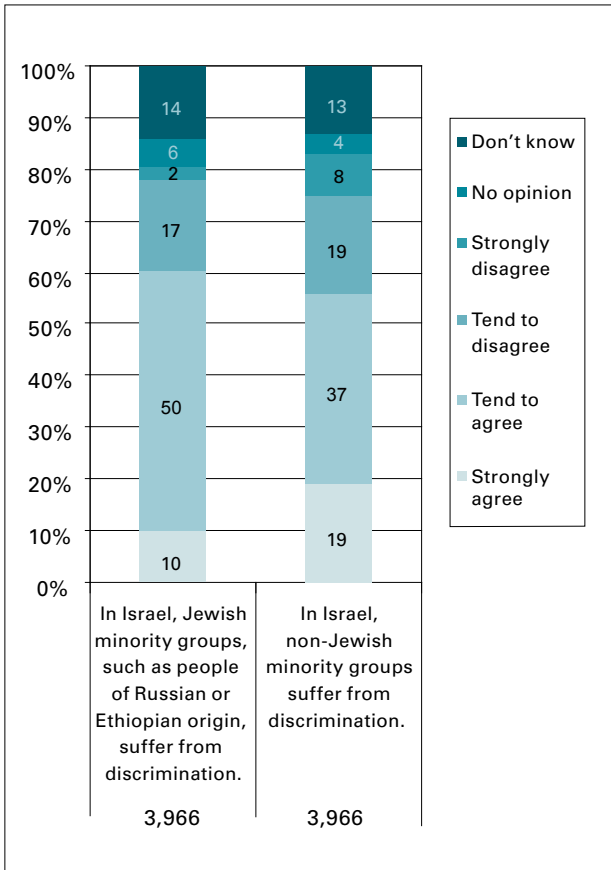


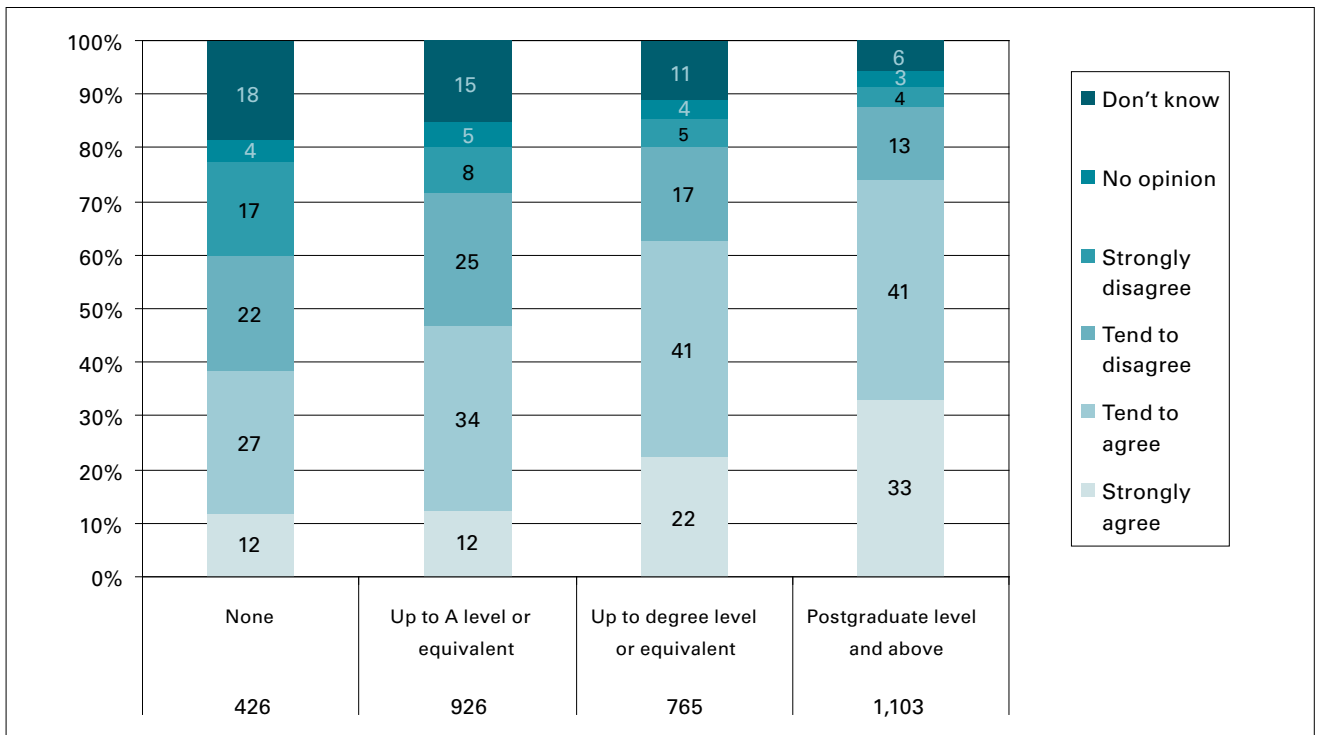
Figure 16 shows that responses to this statement about discrimination against non-Jewish minorities also correlate with educational achievement. Whereas 74% of respondents with postgraduate qualifications agree that non-Jewish minorities are discriminated against in Israel, only 39% of those with no formal qualifications take the same view. It is also noticeable that those with fewer qualifications were less likely to provide a response.

These responses show that, notwithstanding their great attachment to Israel, respondents are capable of holding critical views regarding Israeli politics and society. British Jews may be nearly monolithic in their care and concern for Israel, but they are far from uniform in their views on specific controversial issues.

**Israeli aid to non-Jews**

Respondents were asked whether they felt that "The State of Israel has a moral responsibility to send aid to non-Jews in need around the world." Almost two-thirds (64%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, whilst 27% disagreed and 9% were unable to provide an opinion either way (N=3,967). Neither secular/religious outlook, nor whether or not the respondent self-identified as a Zionist made a difference to the likelihood of agreeing or disagreeing with this statement.

Figure 16: "In Israel, non-Jewish minority groups suffer from discrimination" by highest educational qualification achieved



## 8 Israel: policy, security and the peace process

The survey included a number of questions concerning the political, religious and territorial disputes in Israel and the surrounding region. We were interested in the stance of Jews in Britain, particularly on issues related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In that context, first we explored respondents' views on Israel's security needs (for example, whether Israeli control of the West Bank and the security fence/separation barrier are seen as vital for Israel's security, and whether respondents consider the Gaza War—Operation Cast Lead—in 2008-09 to have been a legitimate act of self-defence on Israel's part). Second, we looked at their perspectives on where responsibility lies for failures in the peace process: whether Jews in Britain believe Israel is an occupying power, whether they feel settlement expansion is right or wrong, and whether they think Palestinians want to make peace. Third, we examined their views on how peace may best be achieved, including their views on territorial compromise, the two-state solution, and whether the Israeli government should or should not negotiate with Hamas. Finally, we asked about one broader contemporary issue that is generating widespread concern: whether respondents believe that Iran represents a threat to Israel's very existence. All of these issues are regularly debated both within the Jewish community in Britain and in countless other British contexts; the data below indicate where, and in what measure, opinions coalesce and differ among Jews living in Britain.

### 8.1. Security issues

#### Control of the West Bank

Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree that *"Israeli control of the West Bank (Judea/Samaria) is vital for Israel's security"* (see Figure 17). Although a majority of the sample (50%) agrees with this statement, 40% disagrees and 10% "Don't know" or have "No opinion".

The responses on secular/religious outlook correlates with opinions on this matter. For example, 68% of "Religious" respondents agree or strongly agree that the West Bank is vital for security, whereas only 39% of "Secular" respondents hold this view (Figure

18). Interestingly, 33% of self-described Zionist respondents reject the claim that the West Bank is vital for Israel's security.

#### The security fence/barrier

A majority of respondents (72%) agree or strongly agree that *"The security fence/separation barrier is vital for Israel's security,"* compared with a quarter (24%) who disagree or strongly disagree (see Figure 19).

Once again, responses closely correlate with secular/religious outlook: the vast majority (87%) of "Religious" respondents agree or strongly agree that the security fence is vital for Israel's security, in contrast to 53% of "Secular" respondents.

Respondents who define themselves as Zionists are nearly three times as likely as those who are not Zionists to agree or strongly agree that the fence/barrier is necessary for Israel's security (86% compared with 30% respectively) (see Figure 20).

Opinions also correlate with educational achievement. A large majority (80%) of respondents with "up to A-level qualifications only" agree or strongly agree that the security fence is vital for Israel; in contrast, only 59% of those with "postgraduate qualifications or above" are in agreement.

#### Is Israel an occupying power?

Just over half the sample (55%) agrees or strongly agrees that *"Israel is an occupying power in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria)"* (see Figure 21).

Figure 17: "Israeli control of the West Bank (Judea/Samaria) is vital for Israel's security" % (N=3,937)

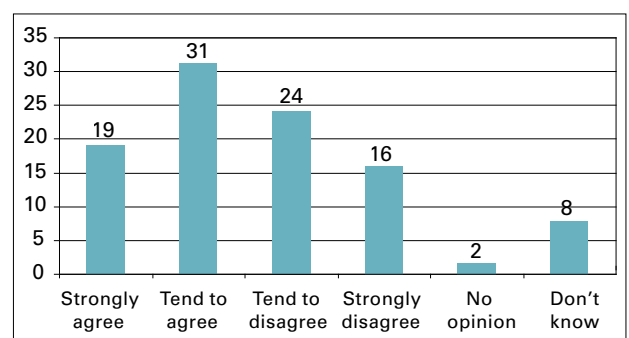


Figure 18: "Israeli control of the West Bank (Judea/Samaria) is vital for Israel's security" by secular/religious outlook

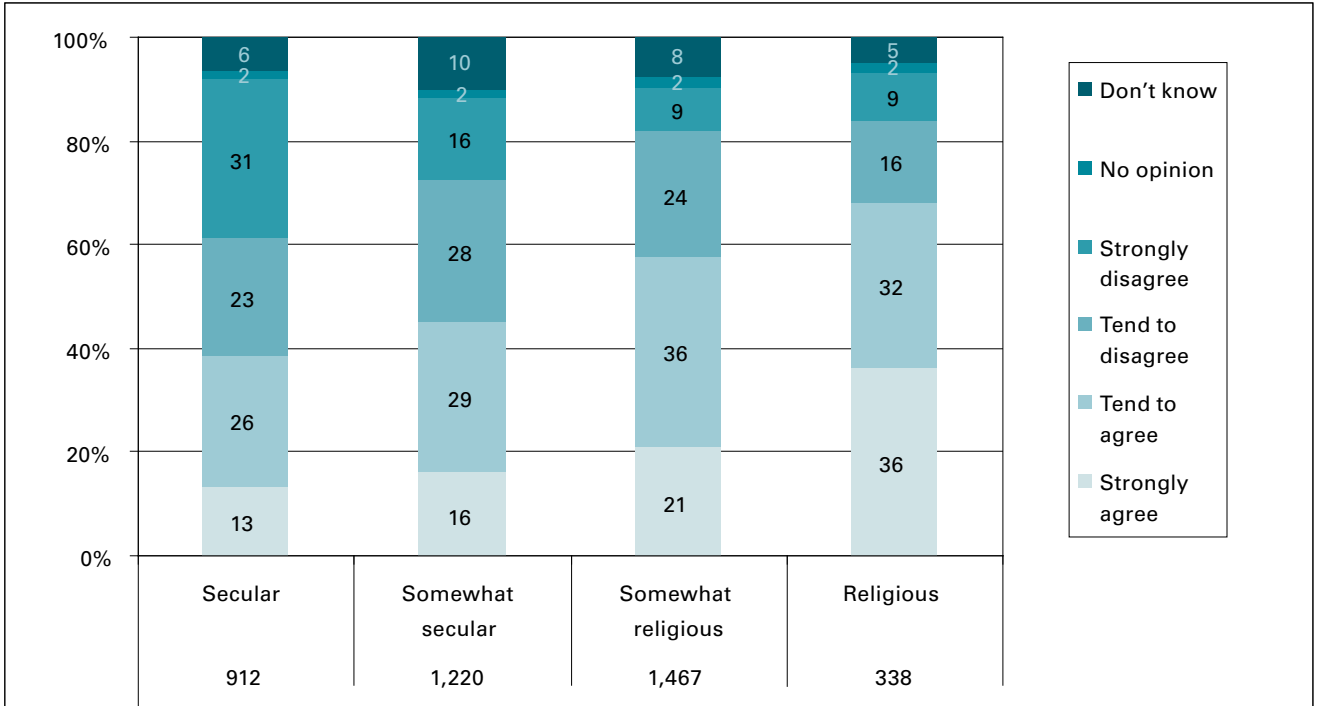


Figure 19: "The security fence/separation barrier is vital for Israel's security" % (N=4,081)

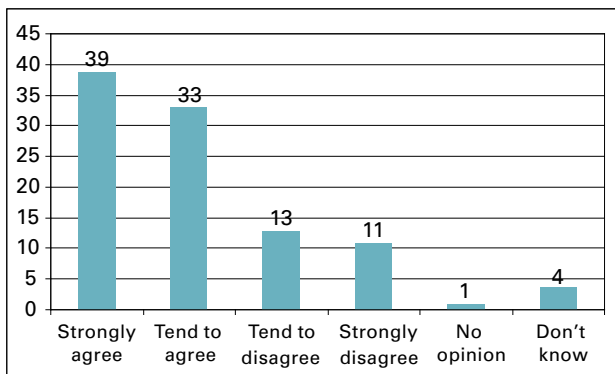


Figure 20: "The security fence/separation barrier is vital for Israel's security" by whether or not Zionist (self-described)

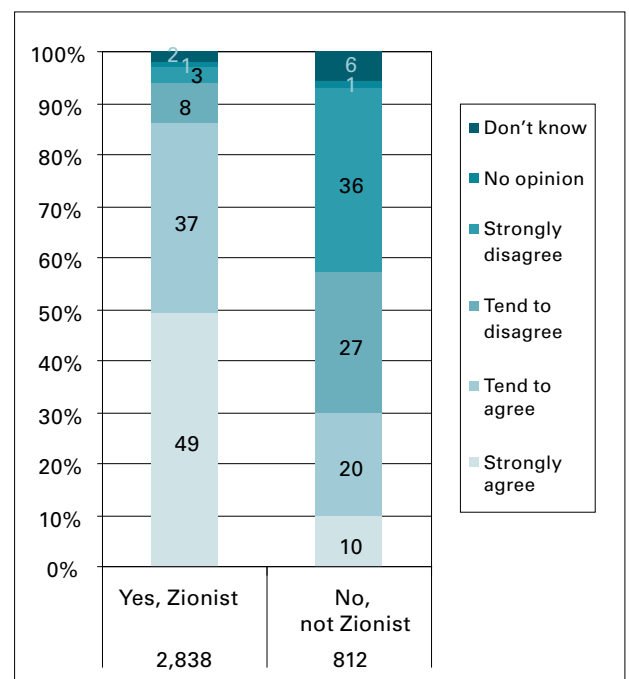


Figure 21: "Israel is an occupying power in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria)" % (N=3,937)

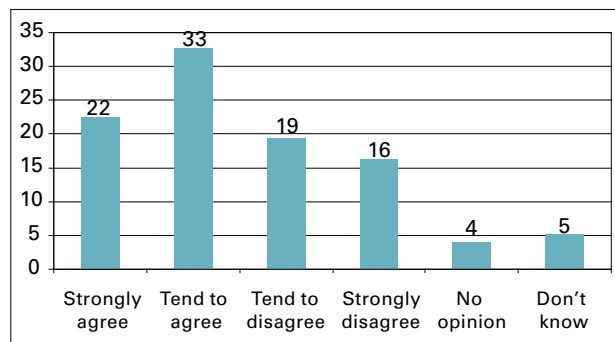


Figure 22: "Israel is an occupying power in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria)" by secular/religious outlook

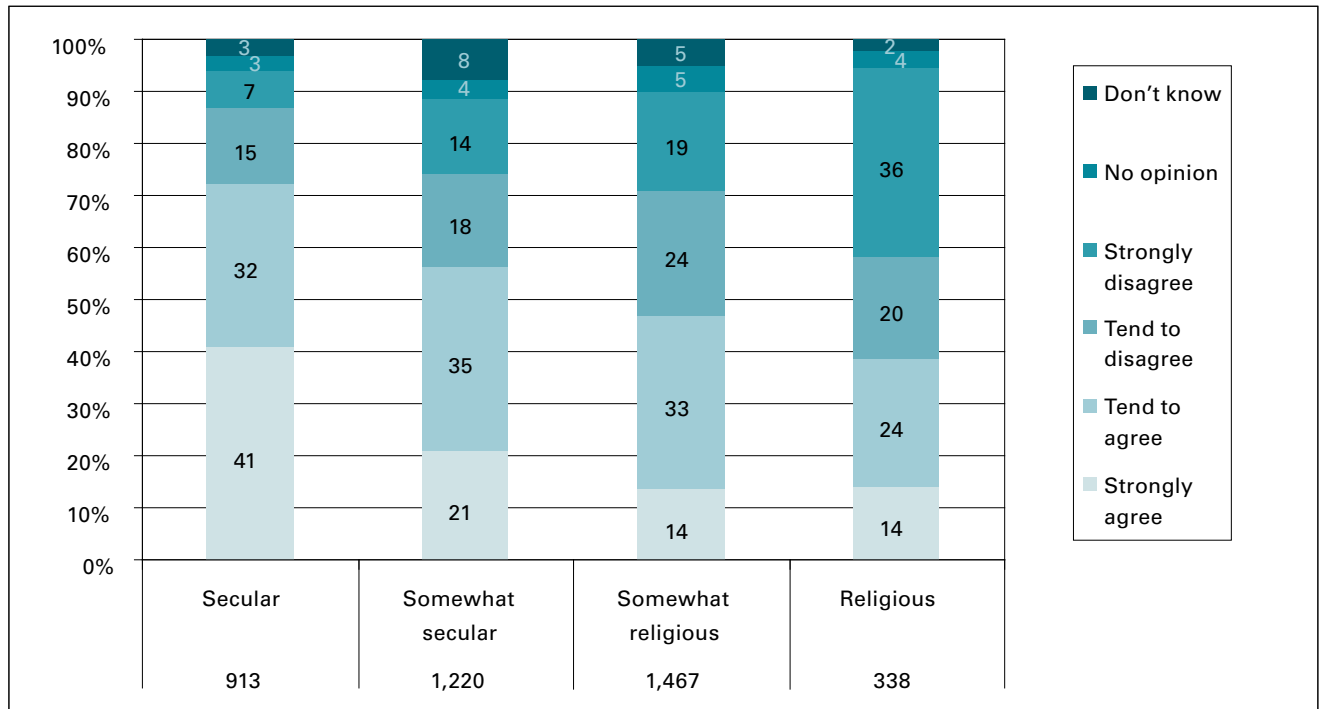
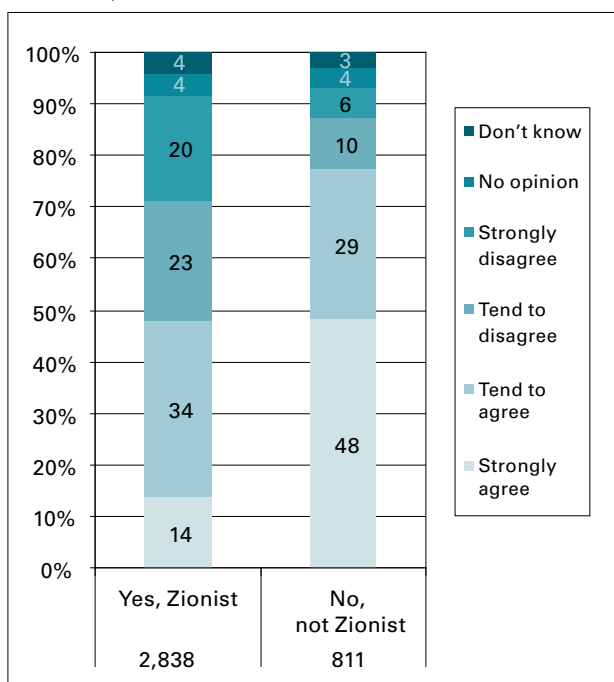
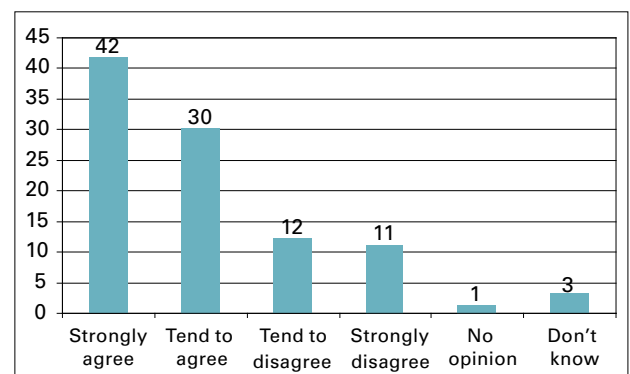


Figure 23: "Israel is an occupying power in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria)" by whether or not Zionist (self-described)



A large majority (72%) of "Secular" respondents agree or strongly agree that Israel is an occupying power, almost twice the proportion of "Religious" respondents (38%) (Figure 22). In addition, non-Zionists are far more likely than self-described

Figure 24: "The military action that Israel carried out in Gaza (December 2008 to January 2009), known as Operation Cast Lead, was a legitimate act of self defence" % (N=3,937)

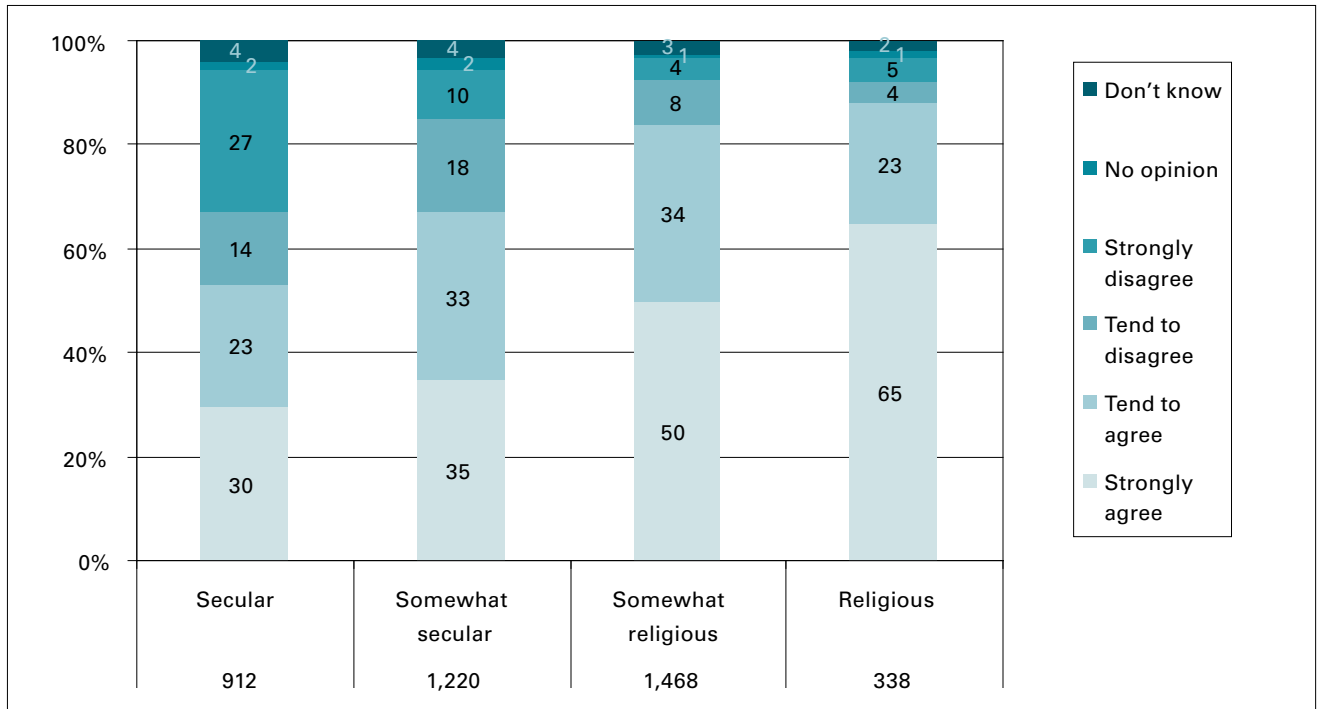


Zionists to agree or strongly agree (77% compared with 48% respectively) (see Figure 23). Note therefore, that 38% of religious respondents and 48% of self-describing Zionist respondents believe Israel is an occupying power in the West Bank.

### The Gaza War

A majority of the sample (72%) agrees or strongly agrees that "The military action that Israel carried out in Gaza (December 2008 to January 2009), known as Operation Cast Lead, was a legitimate act of self-defence (see Figure 24)."

Figure 25: “The military action that Israel carried out in Gaza ... was a legitimate act of self defence” by secular/religious outlook



“Religious” respondents are considerably more likely than “Secular” respondents to agree that the Gaza War was a “legitimate act of self-defence” (88% compared with 53% respectively) (Figure 25). Similarly, self-described Zionist respondents are two-and-a-half times as likely to agree as non-Zionist respondents (85% compared with 33% respectively). Those with lower level qualifications are more likely to agree with the statement than those who have higher level qualifications.

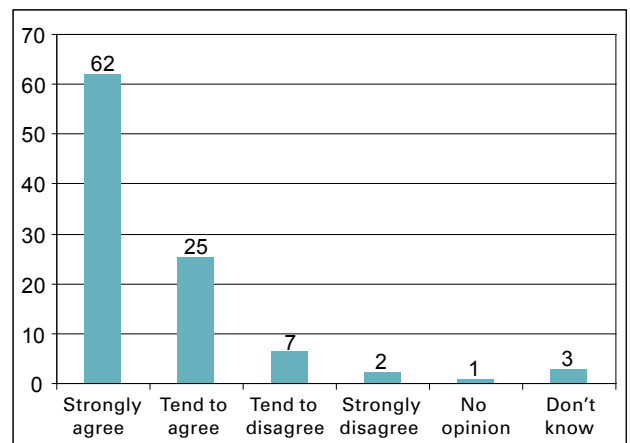
**Freedom to act?**

Respondents were asked whether or not they agree that “The government of Israel has little or no choice in most of the military action it takes.” Overall, a slight majority (52%) agrees, whilst 43% disagree with the statement. However, once again, responses were closely related to outlook. Whilst two-thirds (67%) of “Religious” agree the government has little or no choice, this was true of only 39% of the “Secular” respondents. Furthermore, 62% of self-defined Zionists respondents agree, compared with only a quarter of non-Zionists.

**Is Iran an existential threat?**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree that “Iran represents a threat

Figure 26: “Iran represents a threat to Israel’s existence” % (N=4,034)



to Israel’s existence.” The vast majority (87%) of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement; indeed, more than three out of five (62%) “strongly agree” (Figure 26).

Almost every self-described Zionist respondent agrees or strongly agrees that Iran represents an existential threat to Israel. Indeed, over two-thirds (68%) of non-Zionist respondents also agree (Figure 27).

Figure 27: "Iran represents a threat to Israel's existence" by whether or not Zionist (self-described)

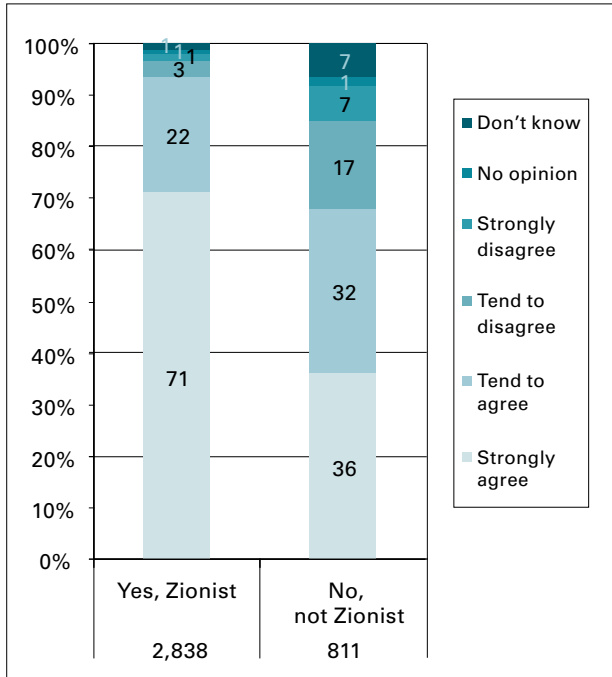
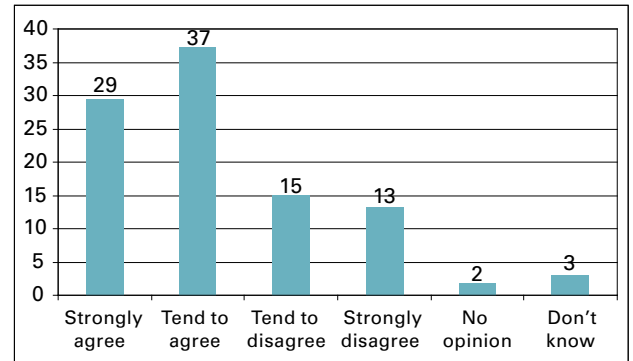


Figure 28: "Israel should give up territory in exchange for guarantees of peace with the Palestinians" % (N=3,987)



in exchange for guarantees of peace with the Palestinians." Overall the sample is strongly in favour of yielding land for peace: 67% agree or strongly agree, compared with 28% who disagree or strongly disagree (see Figure 28). Note that in JPR's 1995 survey a very similar proportion (68%) of respondents supported the idea of exchanging land for peace.

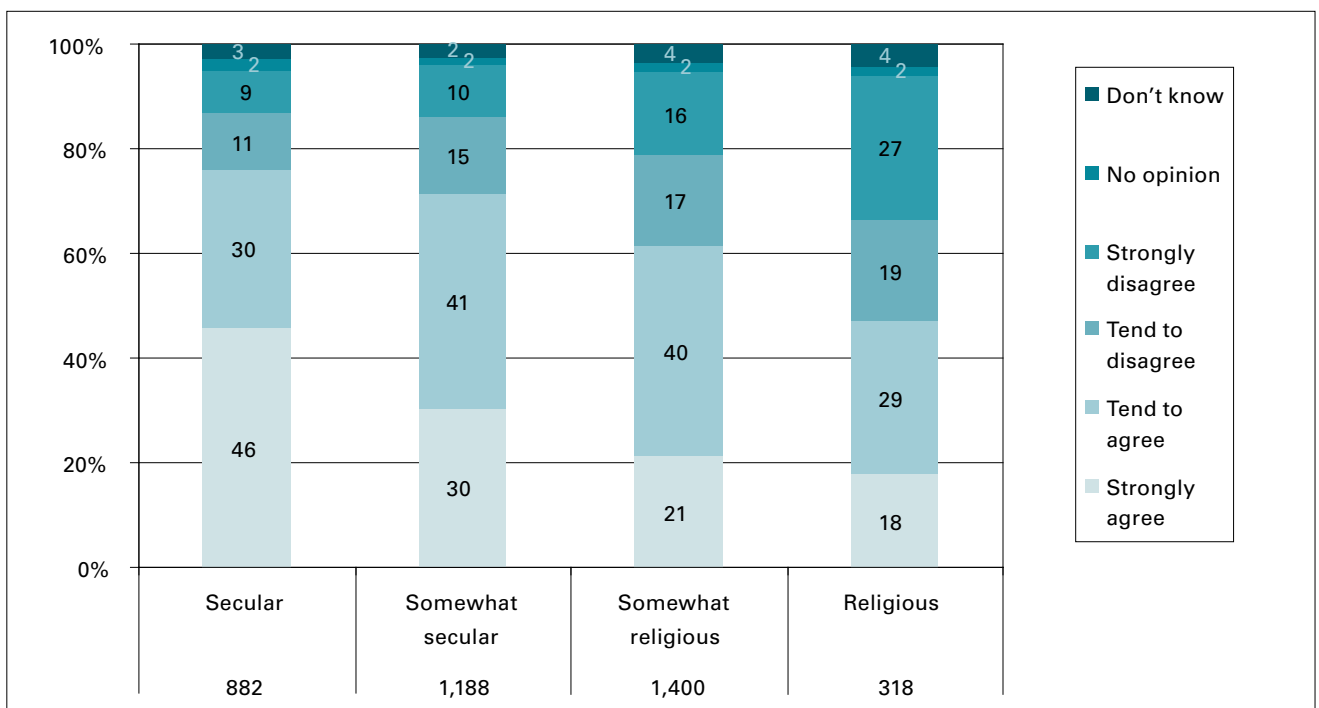
## 8.2. Policy issues

### Give up territory?

Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree that "Israel should give up territory

The data correlate well with outlook. "Religious" respondents are less likely than "Secular" respondents to be in favour of Israel ceding territory (Figure 29). That said, almost half (47%) of the "Religious" respondents agree with the statement.

Figure 29: "Israel should give up territory in exchange for guarantees of peace with the Palestinians" by secular/religious outlook





Whilst a vast majority (83%) of “non-Zionist” respondents agree or strongly agree that territory should be given up, 62% of self-described “Zionists” also agree that Israel should give up territory.

Figure 30: “It is right for the government of Israel to expand existing settlements in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria) if it wishes to do so” % (N=3,938)

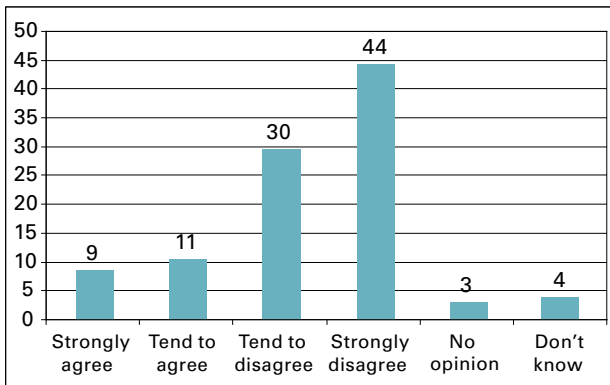


Figure 31: “A ‘two state solution’ is the only way Israel will achieve peace with its neighbours in the Middle East” % (N=3,937)

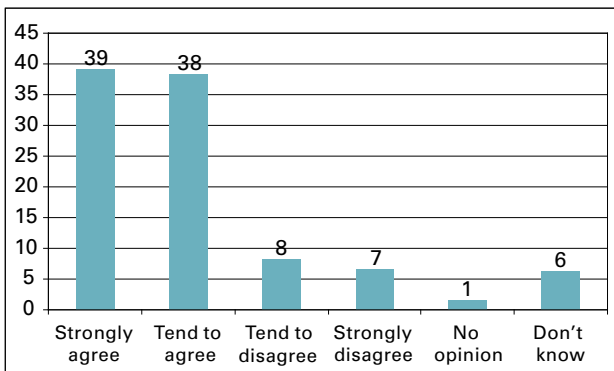
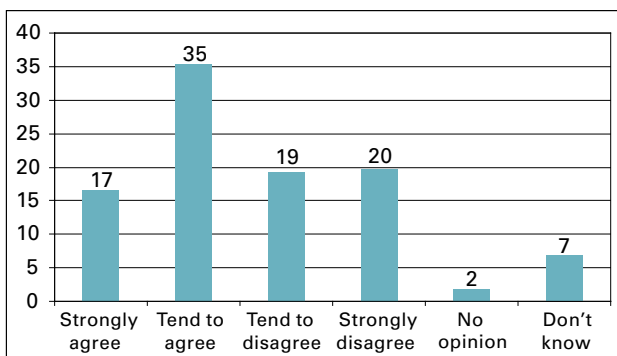


Figure 32: “The government of Israel should negotiate with Hamas in its efforts to achieve peace” % (N=3,936)



The data also correlates with educational achievement. 56% of respondents with up to A-level qualifications agree with the notion of land for peace, in contrast to 80% of respondents with postgraduate qualifications.

### Settlement expansion

We asked respondents whether they agree or disagree with the statement: “It is right for the government of Israel to expand existing settlements in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria) if it wishes to do so.” Almost three-quarters (74%) of the sample disagree or strongly disagree that settlement expansion is justified (Figure 30). Just under half (48%) of “Religious” respondents, and 70% of self-described “Zionist” respondents, oppose Israeli expansion of settlements in the West Bank.

### A two-state solution?

Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree that “A ‘two state solution’ is the only way Israel will achieve peace with its neighbours in the Middle East (see Figure 31).” The sample is very strongly in favour of a two-state solution: over three-quarters (78%) agree or strongly agree with this statement.

### Negotiate with Hamas?

Just over half (52%) of the sample agrees or strongly agrees that “The government of Israel should negotiate with Hamas in its efforts to achieve peace.” However, as Figure 32 shows, 39% disagree, and 9% have no opinion. Furthermore, of those who agree, only one-third “Strongly agrees” which suggests that even among those in favour of negotiations with Hamas, a certain degree of caution is being expressed.

“Secular” respondents are more likely than “religious” respondents to agree that Israel should negotiate with Hamas (see Figure 33). 35% of “Religious” respondents agree with the statement, whilst 67% of “Secular” respondents agree, almost twice the proportion of the religious group. Self-described “Zionist” respondents are far less likely than “non-Zionists” to agree that Israel should negotiate with Hamas (42% compared with 81% respectively) (Figure 34). Further, respondents with higher level qualifications are more likely to agree (61%) that Israel should negotiate with Hamas than those with up to A-Level qualifications (45%).

Figure 33: “The government of Israel should negotiate with Hamas in its efforts to achieve peace” by secular/religious outlook

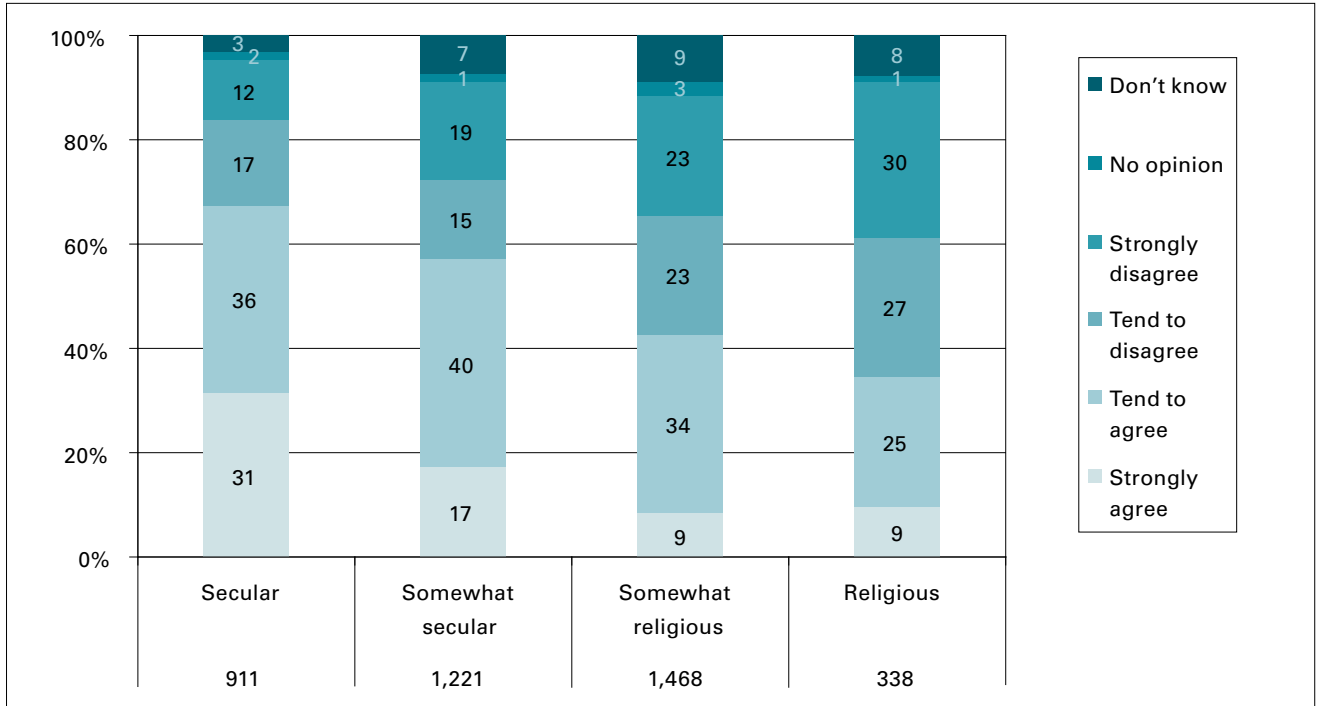


Figure 34: “The government of Israel should negotiate with Hamas in its efforts to achieve peace” by whether or not Zionist (self-described)

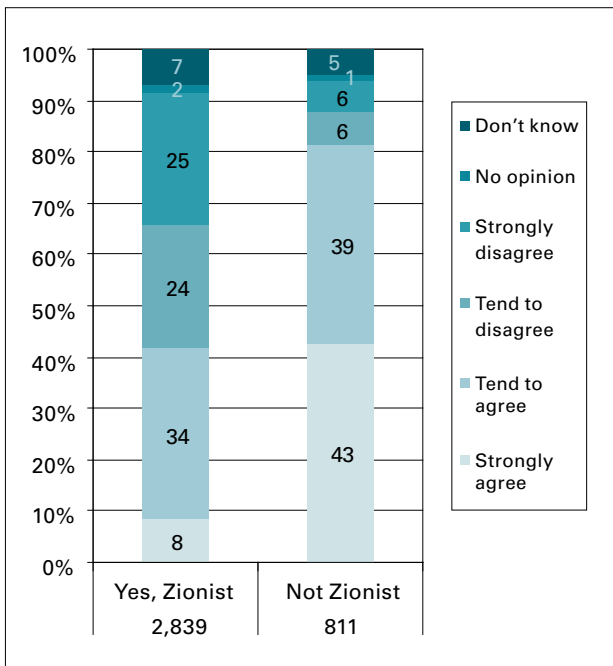
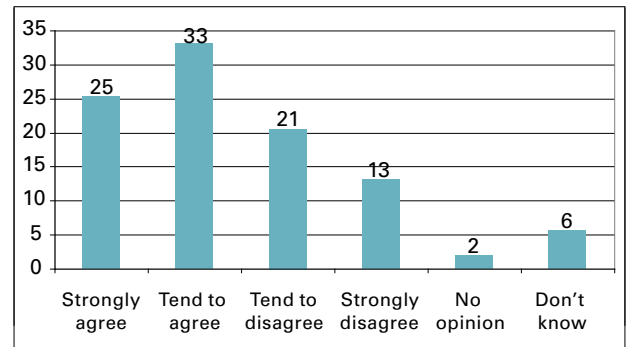


Figure 35: “Israel holds less responsibility for the recent failure of the peace process than its neighbours in the Middle East” % (N=3,987)



### 8.3. Peace process

#### Responsibility for the failure of the peace process

We asked whether “Israel holds less responsibility for the recent failure of the peace process than its neighbours in the Middle East.” Overall, a majority (59%) of respondents agree or strongly agree that Israel holds less responsibility. However, a third (34%) disagrees (Figure 35).

Nevertheless, when responses are examined in terms of secular/religious outlook, a clear pattern emerges. “Religious” respondents are far more

Figure 36: "Israel holds less responsibility for the recent failure of the peace process than its neighbours in the Middle East" by secular/religious outlook

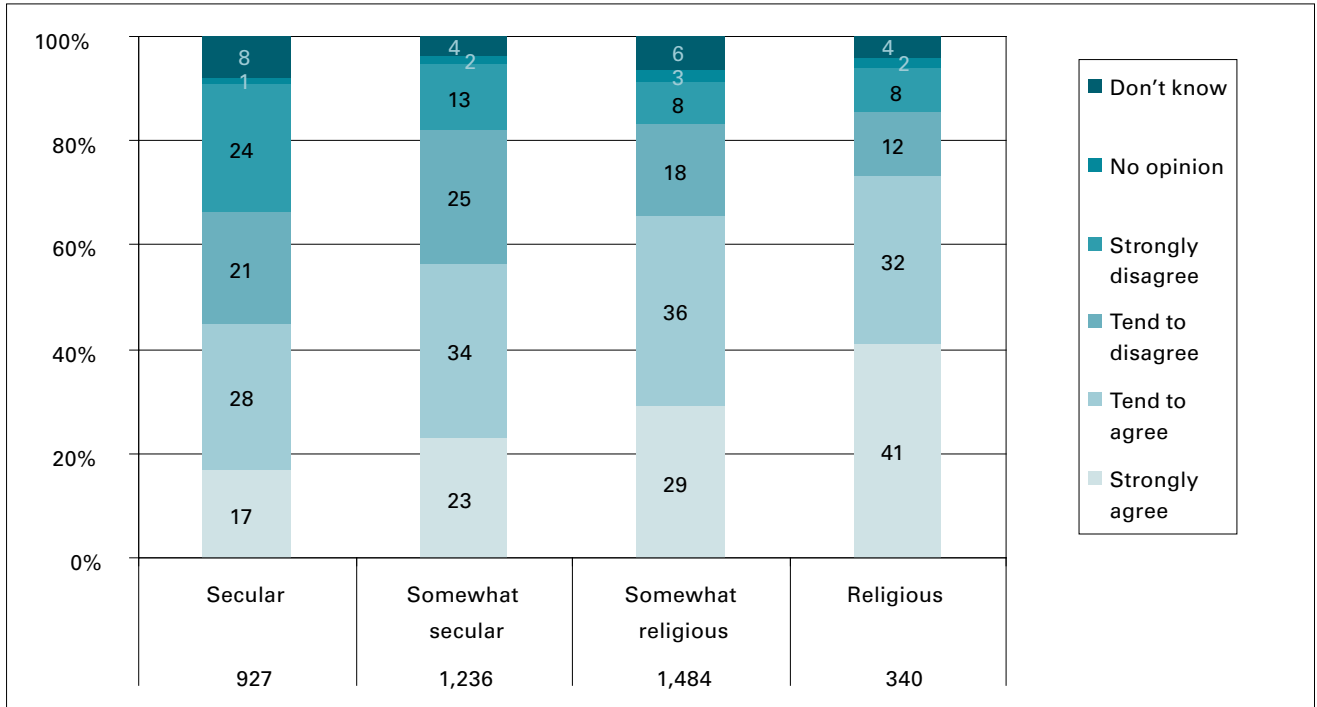
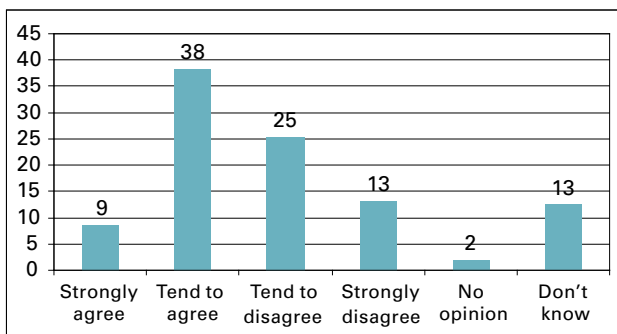


Figure 37: "Most Palestinians want peace with Israel" % (N=3,987)



likely than "Secular" respondents to agree or strongly agree that Israel holds less responsibility for the failure of the peace process (73% compared with 45% respectively) (Figure 36).

Further, Zionist respondents are more than twice as likely as non-Zionists to agree that Israel holds less responsibility for the failure of the peace process (69% compared with 31% respectively). It is also evident that respondents with higher levels of educational achievement are less likely to agree with this statement than those with

no formal qualifications (56% compared with 69% respectively).

**Do Palestinians want peace?**

Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree that "Most Palestinians want peace with Israel." Almost half the sample (47%) agrees or strongly agrees that Palestinians do desire peace with Israel, although a very small minority (9%) "Strongly agrees" (see Figure 37). Over a third of respondents (38%) disagree with the statement. However, a relatively large proportion (15%) has "No opinion" or does not know, suggesting that there is some uncertainty about this question.

Again, the data correlate closely with secular/religious outlook (see Figure 38): 55% of "Secular" respondents in contrast to 36% of "Religious" respondents agree or strongly agree that most Palestinians desire peace with Israel. And in terms of self-described "Zionists" and "non-Zionists", Figure 39 shows that Zionists are less likely than non-Zionists to agree that Palestinians want peace (with 44% compared with 59% respectively).

Figure 38: "Most Palestinians want peace with Israel" by secular/religious outlook

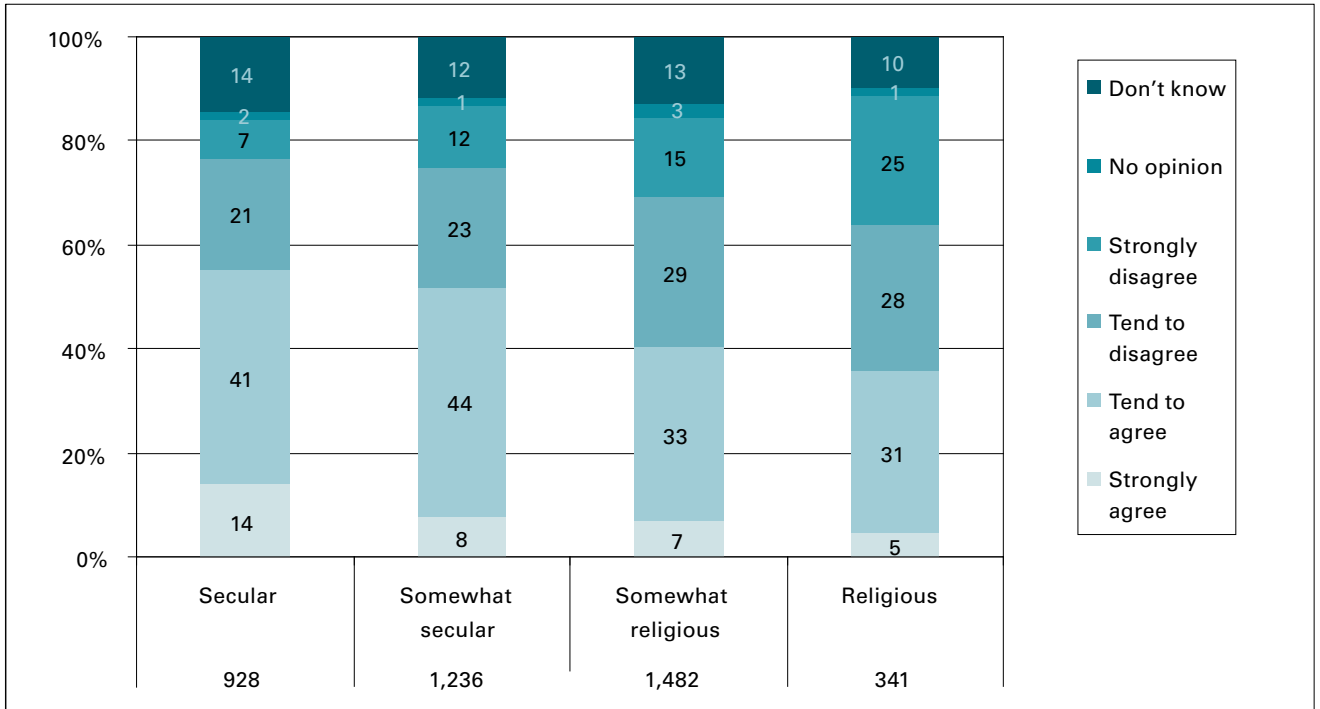
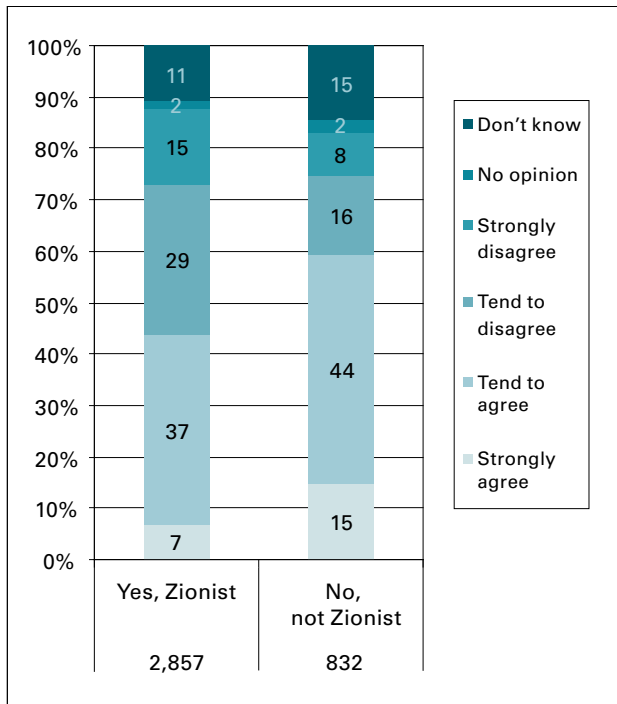


Figure 39: "Most Palestinians want peace with Israel" by whether or not Zionist (self-described)



## 9 The impact of Israel on Jewish life in Britain

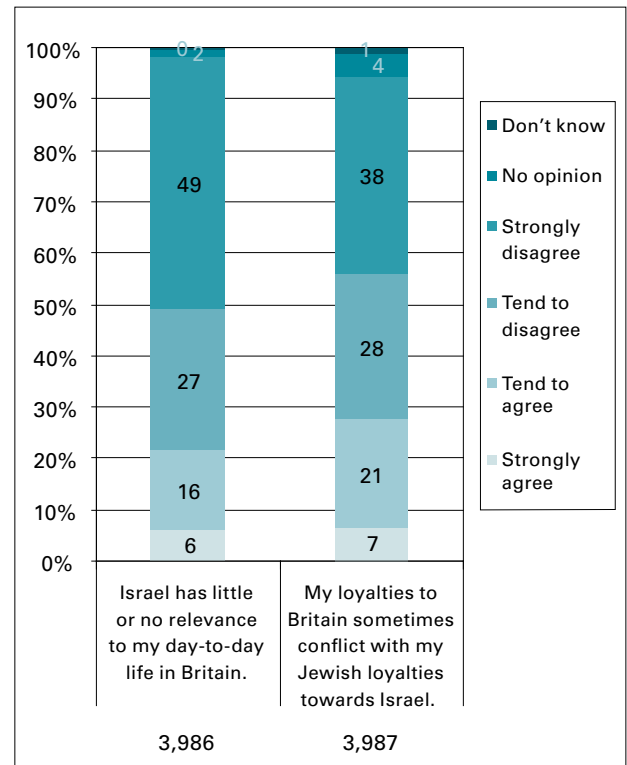
When first embarking on this project, we knew that Israel forms an important part of many Jewish people’s identity, and we were aware, of course, of the contentiousness of some of the issues discussed above. However, we did not know how these factors impact upon Jewish comfort levels in Britain. On the one hand, the British Jewish community is well established in this country—it recently celebrated the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its readmission. On the other, we wondered whether events in Israel have any effect on how Jews feel living in Britain. We began by asking respondents about Israel’s relevance to their day-to-day life in Britain and how comfortable they feel living here. We then went on to examine comfort levels through multiple lenses. In the first instance, we looked at the extent to which Jews feel comfortable discussing Israel with non-Jewish friends and colleagues, and whether they sense that non-Jews hold them responsible in some way for the actions of the Israeli government, simply because they are Jewish. Second, we explored the vexed question of whether Jews in Britain feel it is legitimate for them to speak critically about Israel in the British media, or indeed whether, as non-Israelis, it is right for them to judge Israel at all. Third, we investigated the extent to which the policies of British political parties on Israel inform the voting behaviour of British Jews. And finally, we entered the complex arena of antisemitism. We recorded how many of our respondents have been victims of, or witnesses to, antisemitic incidents, and then looked at their perceptions of the motivations of the abuser or assailant. Together, the data below provide information about how events in Israel impact upon the lives of Jewish people living in Britain.

### 9.1. Comfort and safety living in Britain

#### Relevance of Israel to life in Britain

Respondents were asked whether or not they agree or disagree that “Israel has little or no relevance to my day-to-day life in Britain.” The results were unambiguous: almost three-quarters (76%) agree or strongly agree that Israel is relevant to their lives in Britain (Figure 40). Respondents who describe themselves as “Religious” are more likely than those who describe themselves as “Secular” to see Israel as relevant.

Figure 40: Relevance of Israel in daily life and whether experience conflicts of loyalty



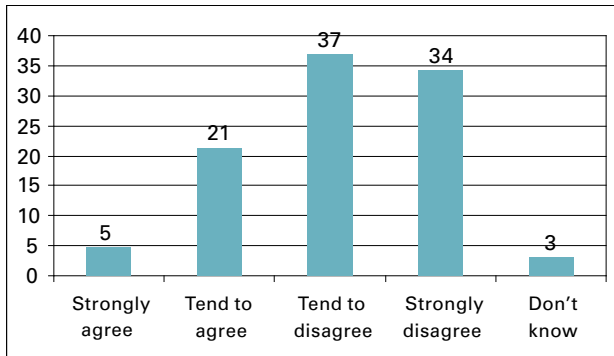
The survey found that 83% report having a “Very strong” or “Fairly strong” British identity, and we were interested to find out if this might lead to any conflicts of loyalty. We asked whether respondents’ “loyalties to Britain sometimes conflict with my Jewish loyalties towards Israel”? Two-thirds of respondents say they do not have any loyalty conflicts (Figure 40).

#### Feel comfortable in Britain?

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement “Because of events in Israel I feel uncomfortable as a Jewish person living in Britain.” A large majority (71%) disagrees with the statement, i.e. most do feel comfortable (see Figure 41).

The data also show that where respondents live affects how comfortable they feel in Britain. Respondents living in the most densely Jewish areas of the country (specifically, parts of London) are less likely to feel uncomfortable than those

Figure 41: “Because of events in Israel I feel uncomfortable as a Jewish person living in Britain” % (N=4,081)



living in more peripheral regions (i.e. Scotland, Wales, the South East and South West of England, and Northern England).

### 9.2. Discussing Israel with non-Jewish people

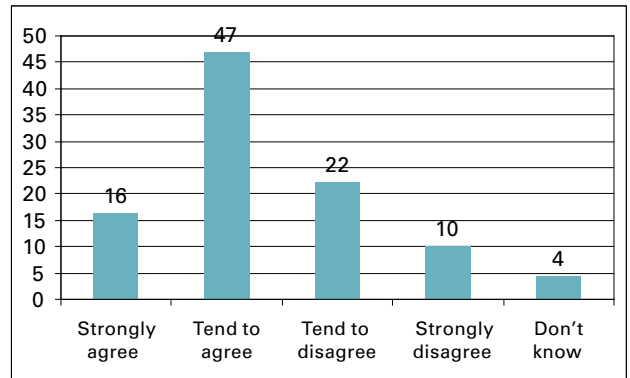
Almost all respondents (85%) had discussed Israel with non-Jewish friends or work colleagues in the course of the twelve months leading up to the survey. Respondents were asked how comfortable they felt in these conversations; just under a quarter (24%) had raised the topic, whereas 61% only discussed Israel when it was raised by others (see Table 2). The data also show that women are more likely than men to have tried to avoid such discussions, and men are more likely than women to have initiated them.

Respondents were also asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement, “Because I am Jewish, I feel that I am held responsible by

Table 2: “Sometimes the topic of Israel comes up in conversations with non-Jewish friends / work colleagues. Which of the following statements best reflects your experiences with them over the last 12 months?” (N=3,970)

Response	Percent
I have refused to discuss Israel	<1
I have avoided discussing Israel if possible	9
I have discussed Israel only if it came up	61
I have introduced Israel into my discussions	24
Not applicable	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 42: “Because I am Jewish, I feel that I am held responsible by non-Jews for actions that Israel’s government takes” % (N=3,987)



non-Jews for actions that Israel’s government takes.” As Figure 42 shows, a majority (63%) of the sample agrees or strongly agrees that they feel they are held responsible by non-Jewish people for Israel’s actions.

### 9.3. Speaking out

Respondents were asked to what extent they feel that Jewish people should be free to express criticism of Israel in the British media. As can be seen in Table 3, a quarter of the sample feels that there are no circumstances in which public criticism of Israel by Jews is justified. Over a third (35%) say that “if Jewish people consider criticism of Israel to be justified, they should always feel free to say so in the British media.” A

Table 3 “Thinking about the way Jewish people speak about Israel in the British media, which of the following statements would you say is closest to your opinion?” (N=3,986)

Response	Percent
Whatever the circumstances, there is <i>never</i> justification for Jewish people to criticize Israel in the British media.	25
There are <i>some</i> circumstances when it is justified for Jewish people to criticize Israel in the British media.	38
If Jewish people consider criticism of Israel to be justified, they should <i>always</i> feel free to say so in the British media.	35
Don't know	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

further 38% adopt a middle stance: criticism is justifiable in some circumstances.

Respondents were also asked whether they agree or disagree with the statement, “*Jews living in Britain do not have the right to judge Israel because they do not live there*” (see Figure 43). A little under half the sample (45%) agree that Jews living in Britain do not have the right to judge Israel, but the majority (53%) disagree (i.e. a slight majority thinks that Jews living in Britain do have the right to judge Israel).

Figure 43: “Jews living in Britain do not have the right to judge Israel because they do not live there” % (N=3,987)

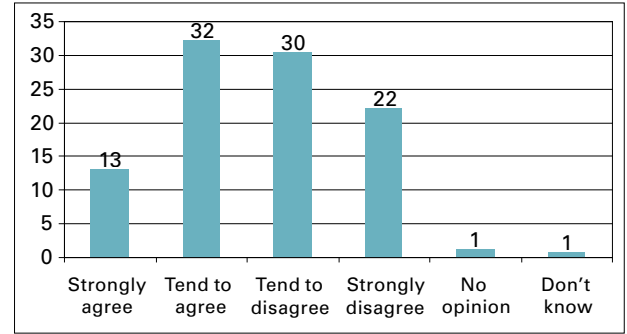


Figure 44: “... to what extent is Israel a consideration or not when you vote in British elections?” % N=3,987

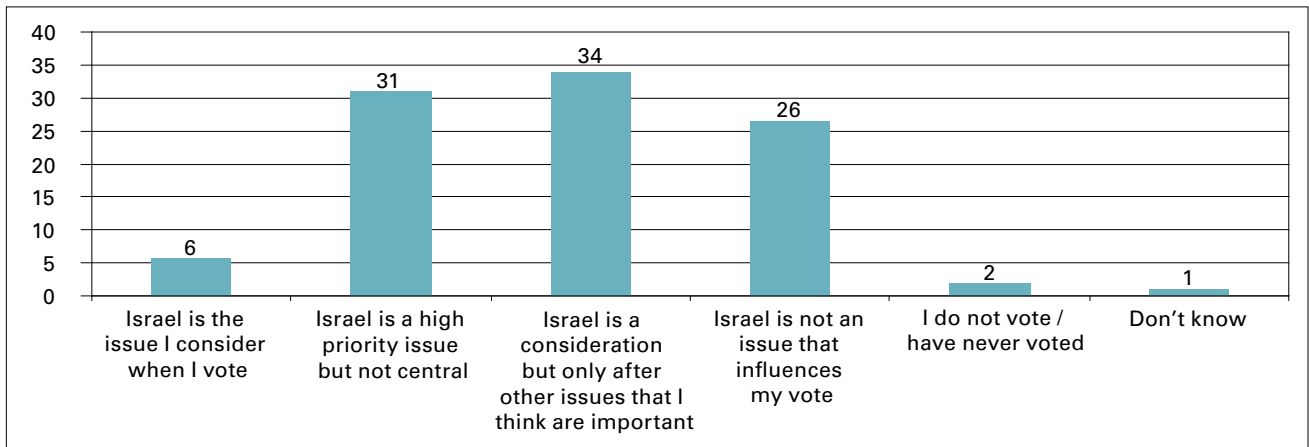
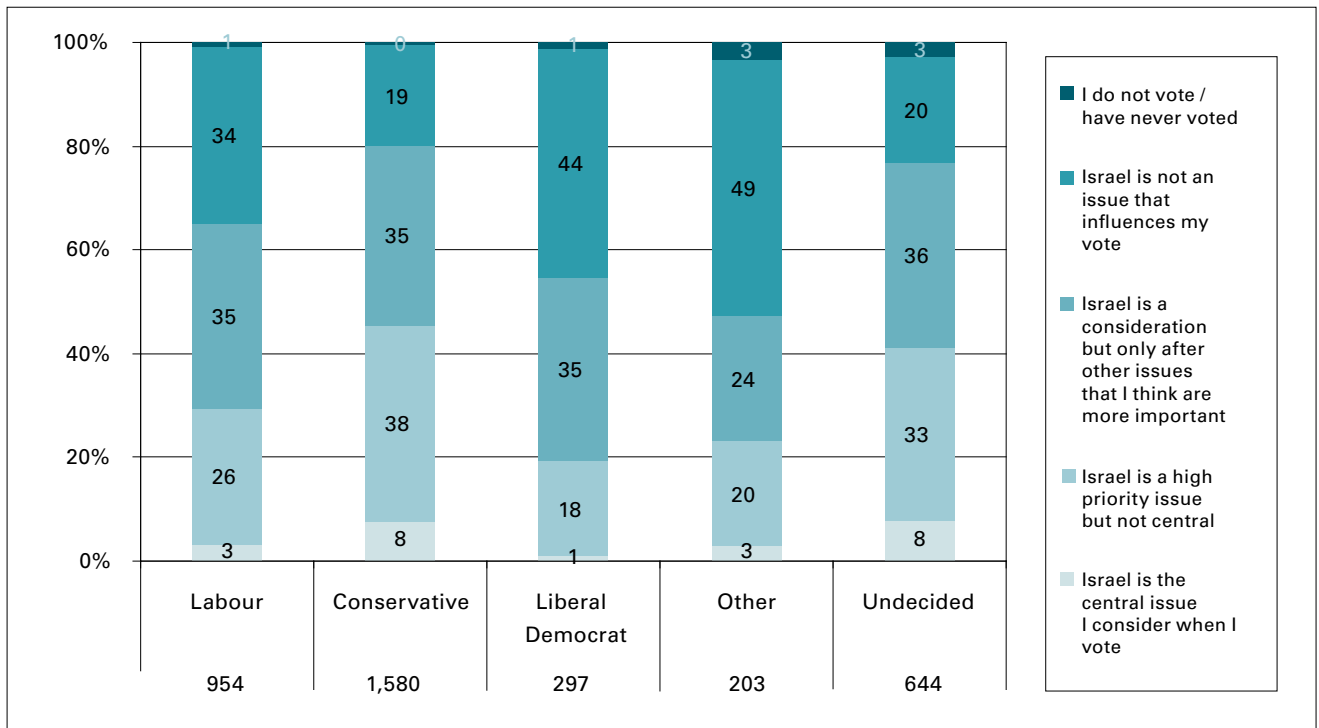


Figure 45: “To what extent is Israel a consideration or not when you vote in British elections?” by political leaning



### 9.4. Israel as an issue when voting

Respondents were asked, “...to what extent is Israel a consideration or not when you vote in British elections?” For 60%, Israel is either not an issue or only one of several issues that influences their voting behaviour (Figure 44). Only 6% say that Israel is “the central issue” they consider when voting in Britain.

In terms of political leaning, however, there are some important statistical differences. As can be seen in Figure 45, respondents who lean towards the Conservative Party are the most likely (45%) to consider Israel a high or central priority when they vote, in contrast to only 19% of those who lean towards the Liberal Democrats. Interestingly, two out of five “Undecideds” consider Israel a “high” or “central” priority issue when they vote.

### 9.5. Experiences of Israel-related antisemitism in Britain

Respondents were asked, “In the last 12 months, have you personally witnessed an antisemitic incident?” Almost a quarter (23%) said “Yes”.

Respondents who had witnessed such an incident were then asked about their view of the assailant or abuser; specifically, whether they thought that

the incident “...was related to that person’s [i.e. the assailant/abuser’s] views about Israel?” As is shown in Figure 46, over half (56%) of those who had witnessed an antisemitic incident said it was “probably” or “definitely” related to the assailant/abuser’s views on Israel.

This sub-sample of respondents who had witnessed an antisemitic incident was then asked whether they had been subjected personally to antisemitism, either “verbally” or “physically”. More than one in ten respondents (11%) said they had been subjected to verbal antisemitism, and 0.4% had been subjected to a physical antisemitic attack.

This group was then asked whether or not they thought that this verbal insult or physical attack was prompted by the abuser/assailant’s views on Israel. As is shown in Figure 47, over half (57%) said that it either “probably” or “definitely” was — a very similar proportion to the data on those who had witnessed an antisemitic incident. Similarly, half (52%, N=17) of those who had been physically attacked said that the attack was “definitely” related to the assailant’s views on Israel; none said it was “probably” related.

Figure 46: Was the antisemitic incident you witnessed “related to that person’s views about Israel?” % (N=905)

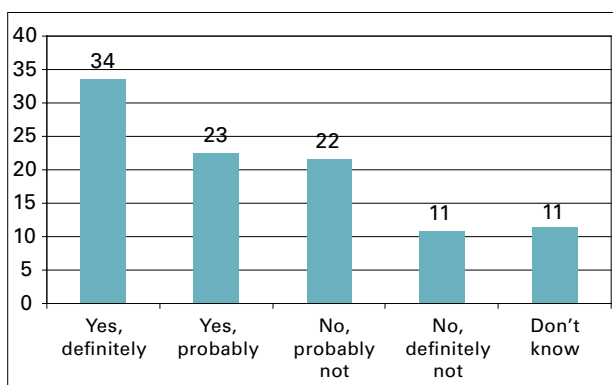
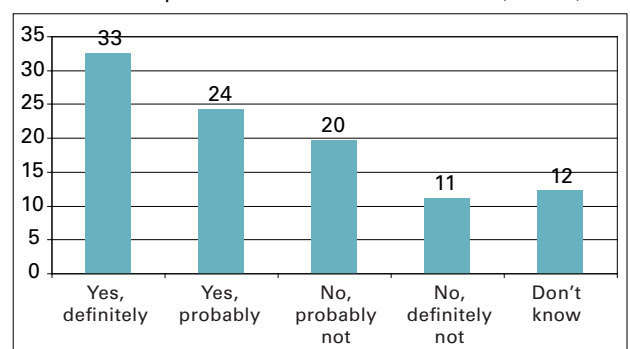


Figure 47: “Do you think this verbal insult/attack was related to that person’s views about Israel?” % (N=455)





## 10 Conclusion

Israel resonates in the thoughts, feelings and identities of a wide cross-section of the Jewish population in Britain. Jews in Britain are both worried about, and protective of Israel. Yet, notwithstanding these concerns and the significant mobilization of material and human resources on Israel's behalf, they hold a wide range of opinions about Israel's politics, civil society and conduct. As a consequence, the topic of Israel has the potential to both unite and divide Jews.

As monolithic as Jews in Britain are in their caring and concern for Israel and its long-term survival, respondents have highly divergent views on the controversial issues.

### **Strong support tinged with concern**

The vast majority of respondents exhibit strong personal support for, and affinity with Israel: 95% have visited the country; 90% consider it their "ancestral homeland"; 87% feel responsible for its survival; and 82% say it plays a "central" or "important" role in their Jewish identities.

On the other hand, this strong level of personal attachment to Israel does not prevent respondents from expressing criticism about Israeli society: 74% think that Orthodox Judaism has too much influence there; 67% consider there to be too much corruption in Israel's political system; and 56% feel that non-Jewish minority groups suffer from discrimination.

### **Desire for peace and security**

In terms of the peace process, it is clear that a majority of respondents both desires peace and is prepared to see Israel make concessions in order to achieve it. However, respondents are equally clear that Israel's security is of great importance, although they differ on which security measures are necessary, and the extent to which security considerations should influence government policy.

On a number of issues there is strong and clear agreement across the sample: 77% favour a two-state solution to the conflict with the Palestinians; 74% believe that it is wrong for existing settlements in the West Bank to be expanded; and 67% favour exchanging land for peace. However, on security, 72% believe that the security fence is

"vital" for Israel; and 72% feel that the Gaza War was justified in terms of self-defence.

On other key issues, a majority of the sample is also in agreement, but to a lesser extent: 55% see Israel as an occupying power in the West Bank; and 52% support the idea of Israel negotiating with Hamas.

### **Repositioning the meaning of 'Zionist'**

Respondents who label themselves "Zionist" (72% of the sample) are more likely than those who do not (21%) (note a further 7% were unsure) to exhibit greater support for Israel and the choices its government makes. They also tend to be more willing to give Israel the benefit of the doubt on contentious political and domestic issues. It seems that today the terms "Zionist" and "non-Zionist" are less directly associated with their classical meaning, and more closely related to the extent to which Jews in Britain are sympathetic to, or critical of, Israeli government policy.

For example, the data show that "Zionists" and "non-Zionists" do not always exhibit predictable patterns of opinion. On several points, *Zionist* respondents exhibited dovish stances on security issues and the policies of Israel's government, whereas *non-Zionist* respondents expressed opinions which are more readily associated with traditional Zionist positions, i.e. expressions of close attachment to Israel and concern about its security.

### **Religious position impacts political stance**

The secular/religious outlook of respondents strongly predicts political opinions on many axes.<sup>15</sup> Overall, 54% of the respondents described themselves as "Secular" or "Somewhat secular", whereas 46% said they were "Religious" or "Somewhat religious". Generally speaking, respondents tending towards the religious end of the continuum are likely to be more hawkish on security issues.

15 This was noted in JPR's previous report on attitudes towards Israel. See: B. Kosmin, A. Lerman, and J. Goldberg, *The attachment of British Jews to Israel* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 1997).

These trends are not surprising. However, it is worth noting that the gradient of opinion, as one moves across the religious-secular dimension, is far steeper in relation to political issues than to existential and ethnic ones. For example, on issues such as Israel being “the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people”, the differences between religious and secular Jews are not that marked; fully three-quarters of “Secular” respondents ascribe to the “Israel as Jewish ancestral homeland” concept. Yet raise the question of talking to Hamas or assigning responsibility for past failures in the peace process, and the secular-religious camps begin to diverge far more dramatically.

### ***Educational achievement impacts political stance***

A slightly surprising result was that political opinion is related to educational achievement. The more highly educated the respondents, the more likely they are to hold dovish views and to be critical of Israel’s domestic policies. For example, respondents with at least postgraduate qualifications are more likely to think that non-Jewish minority groups in Israel suffer from

discrimination. They are also more likely to think that Israel should give up land for peace and that Israel is an occupying power, but are *less* likely to agree that the security fence is vital for Israel, or that the Gaza War was a legitimate act of self-defence.

### ***Jews in Britain feel comfortable despite Israel-related antisemitism***

Over half of the respondents who had personally witnessed or experienced an antisemitic incident in Britain in the year prior to the survey said it was “probably” or “definitely” related to the abuser or assailant’s views on Israel. Despite this, respondents appear generally to feel comfortable living in Britain, although a significant proportion of particularly younger Jews is considering *aliyah* (emigration to Israel). Jews in Britain are also reasonably accepting of other Jewish people’s freedom to publicly criticize Israel, at least in principle. Finally, for most respondents, whilst Israel is an important consideration among many others when voting in British elections, very few consider it to be “*the* central issue”.

# 11 Methodological Summary

## 11.1. Sampling strategy

This survey marks only the second time a national study of the Jewish population has been carried out in Britain, and is the first such survey to have been conducted online. Ipsos MORI was chosen to administer the fieldwork on behalf of JPR as it has considerable experience in carrying out online surveys. Its staff advised on questionnaire development and managed the data collection process. However, Ipsos MORI was not involved in data analysis or report-writing, both of which were done exclusively by JPR. The sample was self-selecting, and respondents were required to self-identify as Jewish, living in Britain, and aged 18 or over. They were contacted primarily through five “seed” organizations, which represented a broad cross-section of the Jewish community and also held substantial email databases. The organizations were the *Jewish Chronicle*, the *Jewish News*, the Movement for Reform Judaism, Edgware K and JHub. We estimate that over 26,000 people were contacted directly through the mailing lists of these organizations. In addition, an advertising campaign was run in the Jewish press during the field-work stage, which ran for five weeks from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010 until 14<sup>th</sup> February 2010. In total, 4,081 unweighted responses were obtained. No other single sample survey of Jews in Britain has come close to gathering this many responses.

## 11.2. Sample control and testing the credibility of the data

It should be noted that the survey could only be completed once per valid email address. The majority (72.1%) of the sample said they had responded directly to emails sent out from JPR’s seed organizations, and 8.3% said they had responded to advertisements placed in the Jewish press. A further 18.7% of responses were obtained through electronic “word-of-mouth” contacts (also known as “snowballing”). The data show that a very broad spectrum of communal organizations (in terms of religious and political positioning) chose to publicize the survey independently. Further, a large proportion of the sample (74.9%) chose to provide personal contact details. Responses to the battery of political attitudinal statements found that, other than there being a slightly higher tendency (on average two to three percentage points) for the non-providers

to respond “No opinion” or “Don’t Know” compared with the providers, there is no evidence of a systematic difference in the way these two groups responded to these questions.

Similarly, the data were tested to see if there were any differences in responses over the duration of the fieldwork. This was to ensure that there were no suspicious trends occurring, for example due to some sort of sabotage. Thus, the data were divided into three time periods over the 39 days that the survey was online. Responses to the battery of political attitudinal statements *do* exhibit a systematic difference depending on the time period in which they were obtained. However, although the differences are significant, they are not substantial and, more importantly, can be benignly explained. The data show that those who responded later in the survey were more dovish than those who responded earlier. But the later respondents were also more likely to be *less* Jewishly involved and exhibit weaker Jewish identities than those who responded earlier. Given that this survey clearly shows that opinions about Israel correlate with strength of Jewish identity, and that less involved Jews are more likely to have found out about the survey later on, then these trends are consistent with what would be expected.

## 11.3. Data calibration

The data were calibrated using three sources of data: the 2001 Census, records from the Board of Deputies of British Jews and survey datasets held by JPR. In particular, two JPR surveys were combined into a single dataset: JPR’s London (2002) survey and its Leeds (2001) survey.<sup>16</sup> Together these datasets provide a solid baseline with which to assess the representativeness of the I.S.

16 H. Becher, S. Waterman, B. Kosmin and K. Thomson, *A portrait of Jews in London and the South-east: a community study* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research/National Centre for Social Research, 2002); S. Waterman, *The Jews of Leeds in 2001: portrait of a community* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2003).

The survey was open to anyone who self-identified as a Jew, and was living in the UK in January/February 2010 regardless of country of birth.

In general, the **geographical distribution** of the I.S. sample closely matches the 2001 Census data in eleven out of the thirteen UK regions examined. Some deviation was noted in North London (over-representation) and North-west England (under-representation). The **age profile** of the I.S. was also representative, and indeed, the I.S. was particularly successful at picking up responses from people in their 20s. Deviation was noted with respect to respondents in their 50s and 60s (over-representation) and those aged 80 and above (under-representation). In terms of **gender**, the I.S. over-represented men.

The **partnership status** of the I.S. respondents was broadly representative with some over-representation of married couples and under-representation of the widowed. In terms of **employment status** the I.S. sample was broadly representative across nine categories with the exception of the retired (over-representation) and those “Looking after the home” (under-representation). It was broadly representative with respect to country of birth.

In terms of **Jewish practice**, responses were representative compared with similar data from JPR’s London (2002) and Leeds (2001) surveys. The items tested were: Attend Passover Seder most or all years; Do not switch on lights on the Sabbath; Attend synagogue weekly or more often; Eat only kosher meat at home; Light candles most Friday nights; Fast on Yom Kippur most or all years; None of these.

On three measures however, deviations from the baselines were observed to impact on responses to the attitudinal questions in the survey, and we judged it to be necessary to weight the data accordingly. These deviations occurred in terms of **educational achievement**: the I.S. over-represented the highly educated, (over 80% of respondents aged under 60 were educated to degree level or above, compared with just under 41% of Jews in the same age group recorded in

the 2001 Census). There were also deviations in terms of **synagogue membership**. Compared with the most recently available Board of Deputies/JPR data,<sup>17</sup> “Mainstream Orthodox” members (a category which includes the United Synagogue, the Federation of Synagogues and Independent Orthodox synagogues) were under-represented (45.0% I.S. v 54.7% BoD/JPR) as were those aligned with the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations (UOHC) (3.4% I.S. v 10.9% BoD/JPR), whilst Reform synagogue members were over-represented (25.0% I.S. v 19.4% BoD/JPR), as were Masorti synagogue members (9.8% I.S. v 2.7% BoD/JPR). In terms of **secular/religious outlook**, although the I.S. data and JPR’s combined London/Leeds data are very similar (the secular/religious ratio in the I.S. is 52.4%:47.6% and in the London/Leeds data it is 54%:46%) the I.S. is more polarized. i.e. the I.S. recorded relatively fewer respondents in the middle “Somewhat” categories in the I.S. and relatively more respondents in the “Secular” and “Religious” categories.

#### 11.4. Weighting implications of the results of the over/under-representation analysis

The analysis showed that individually and combined, these three factors (synagogue membership, outlook and education) tended to shift opinions towards a more dovish (as opposed to hawkish) stance on the peace process and policy issues, and a more critical (as opposed to sympathetic) stance on the questions concerning the probity and conduct of the Israeli government. Other departures from the baseline population characteristics (such as for gender and age) were not associated with correlations with the attitudinal data. However, weighting the data for religious outlook showed an average variation of  $\pm 0.53\%$  per Likert item response compared with the unweighted data. For synagogue membership this was  $\pm 0.97$  percentage points and for educational attainment it was  $\pm 2.8$  percentage points.

17 D. Graham and D. Vulkan, *Synagogue Membership in the United Kingdom in 2010* (London: The Board of Deputies of British Jews/Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2010).

In light of these findings, and in order to ensure that the sample profile matched the population as closely as possible, the dataset was weighted to correct statistically for these departures from the baseline characteristics.

As in all similar studies, this is not perfect science. In deriving the sample weightings from our proxy population, it was necessary to assume that the national Jewish population has not changed in 8-9 years since the London/Leeds surveys were carried out, that the wording of the questions match each other and the I.S. wordings, that the questions appeared in the same order for each survey and, of course, that the London and Leeds samples are a fair and reliable representation of the population characteristics of Jews in Britain. Objections can be reasonably raised with respect to any of these assumptions. However, we judged that, on balance, the weighted data, albeit with some potential weaknesses, would provide a better approximation to the population profile than the unweighted data with its known sampling biases. In accordance with standard survey methodology, *all* the findings contained in this report have been weighted to take account of the three data biases: synagogue membership, secular/religious outlook and educational achievement.

### **Statistical reliability of the findings**

It should be noted that, with 4,081 (unweighted) individual responses, this is a very large sample. Indeed, it is the largest single sample ever achieved among the Jewish population in Britain. It is certainly sufficiently large for readers to be confident that the percentages quoted here are

likely to be close to the true percentages in the Jewish population as a whole. The percentages we report, when based on the full sample, are accurate to within a margin of error of about 1.5% in either direction.<sup>18</sup>

The large sample size also means that we can compare the views of different sub-groups within the sample (such as Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews) and be confident that even relatively small differences are statistically significant. We have not shown the results of the statistical analysis conducted on each comparison, but all the comparisons highlighted in this report are statistically significant – i.e. the differences in the percentages across the sub-groups being compared are too large to be attributed to chance variation.

### **11.5. Methodological conclusion**

All surveys have their shortcomings and surveys of small populations such as Jews in Britain are particularly challenging. We are, however, confident that the I.S. sample accurately reflects the diverse character of the Jewish population in Britain on key social, religious and demographic variables. Furthermore, where the sample does depart from baseline indicators, especially on items that were likely to affect responses to the political questions contained in the survey, we have been able to satisfactorily weight for these deviations. In sum, we are confident that the picture presented here is unlikely to differ markedly from the general pattern of opinion held by Britain's Jewish population as a whole regarding Israel.

18 In some instances, columns and bars of the figures presented in this report do not total exactly 100%. This is entirely due to rounding up or down of decimal points. For the same reason they may not exactly match the percentages quoted in the text.

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