COEXISTENCE IN ISRAEL

تعايش في إسرائيل: بحث قطري

A NATIONAL STUDY

דו-קיום בישראל: מחקר ארצי

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CENTER FOR PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

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INTRODUCTION

The goals of the study

This national study was conducted in an effort to directly examine the relations between Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens. According to Israel's 2007 census, the country has a Jewish majority of almost 80 percent and an Arab minority of approximately 20 percent (including Arabs in East Jerusalem). As in any pluralistic society, the quality of the relations between these ethnic and religious groups directly influences the well-being and vibrancy of the country and its global reputation as a democracy.

We aimed to understand the feelings and attitudes of Jewish and Arab citizens in Israel toward key aspects of coexistence, such as support, opportunity, language policy, integration, responsibility, and urgency. We hope that these study findings will provide insight and guidance not only for policymakers, but also for the Israeli public.

How the study was created and conducted

Survey data were obtained through telephone interviews with 1,000 adult Jewish citizens and face-to-face interviews with 721 adult Arab citizens. Each survey included approximately 150 items. For each of the two populations, six versions of the survey were created to counterbalance the items and control for any ordering effects. Because of our use of multiple versions, different questions have different sample sizes. Due to rounding and/or non-responses, percentages reported in bar graphs may not sum to 100.0%.

The survey of Jews was conducted by phone from mid November to the end of December 2007. The survey of Arabs was conducted face-to-face from mid October to the end of December 2007.

The surveys were created in English at the Center for Public Leadership and then translated into Hebrew, Arabic, and Russian. Professor Sammy Smooha of the University of Haifa aided us in the refinement of the survey and coordinated the translations and data collection.

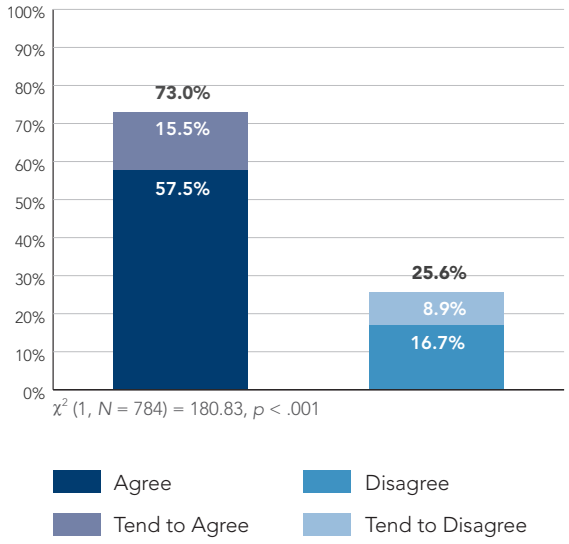
HOW COMMON IS SUPPORT FOR COEXISTENCE?

A statistically significant majority of both Jewish and Arab citizens supports coexistence.

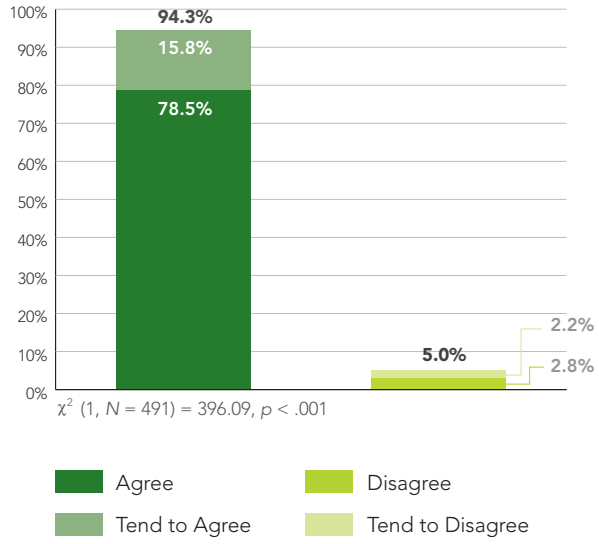
Survey Item

Israel should be a society in which Arab and Jewish citizens have mutual respect and equal opportunities.

Jewish Citizens



Arab Citizens



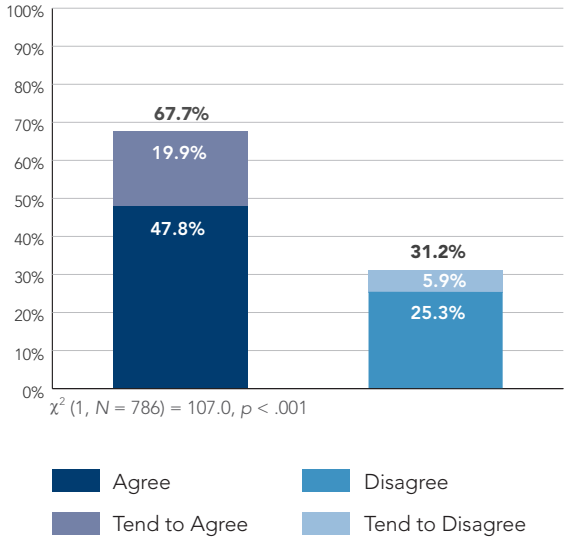
Support remains robust when attitudes toward specific aspects of coexistence are measured.

A statistically significant majority of Jewish citizens supports the teaching of conversational Arabic in schools.

Survey Item

Teaching conversational Arabic in Jewish schools is important to bring Arab and Jewish citizens together.

Jewish Citizens



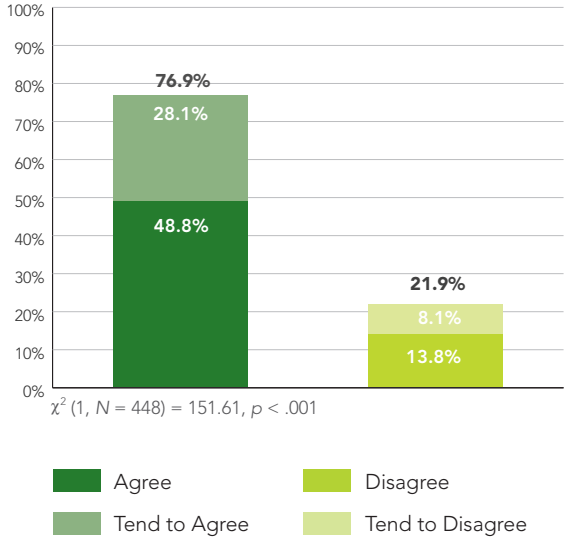
χ^2 (1, N = 786) = 107.0, p < .001

A statistically significant majority of Arab citizens would prefer to live in Israel.

Survey Item

I would prefer to live in the State of Israel than in any other country in the world.

Arab Citizens



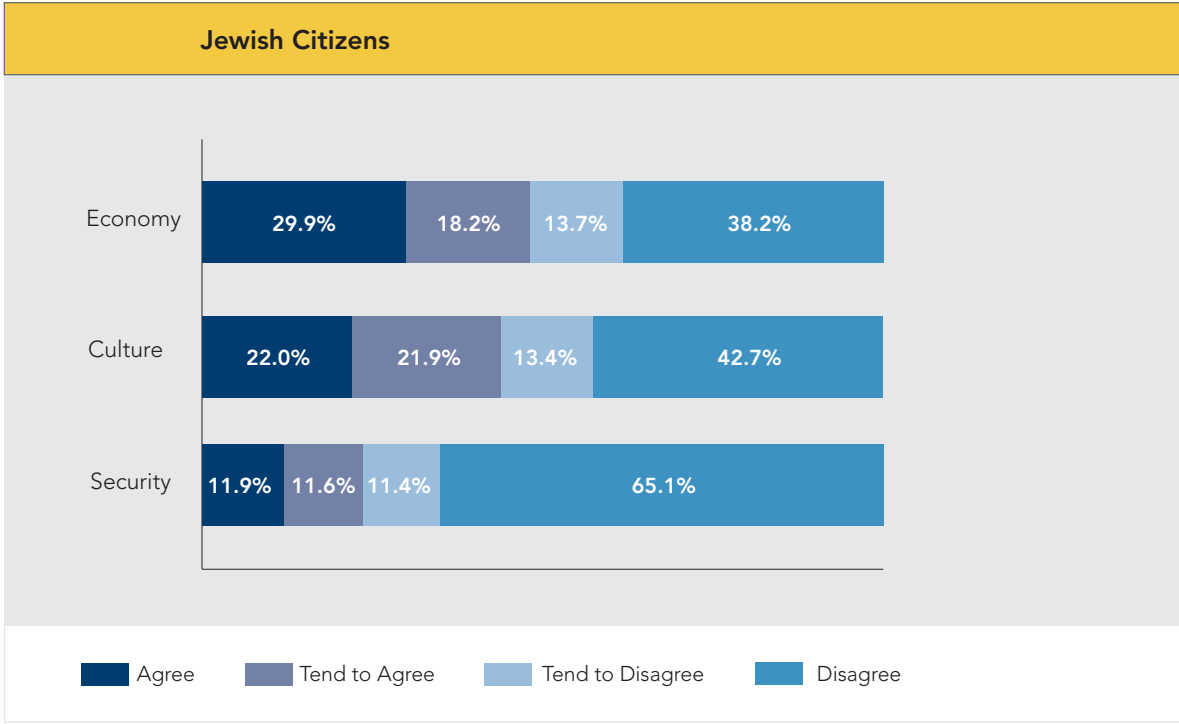
χ^2 (1, N = 448) = 151.61, p < .001

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COEXISTENCE?

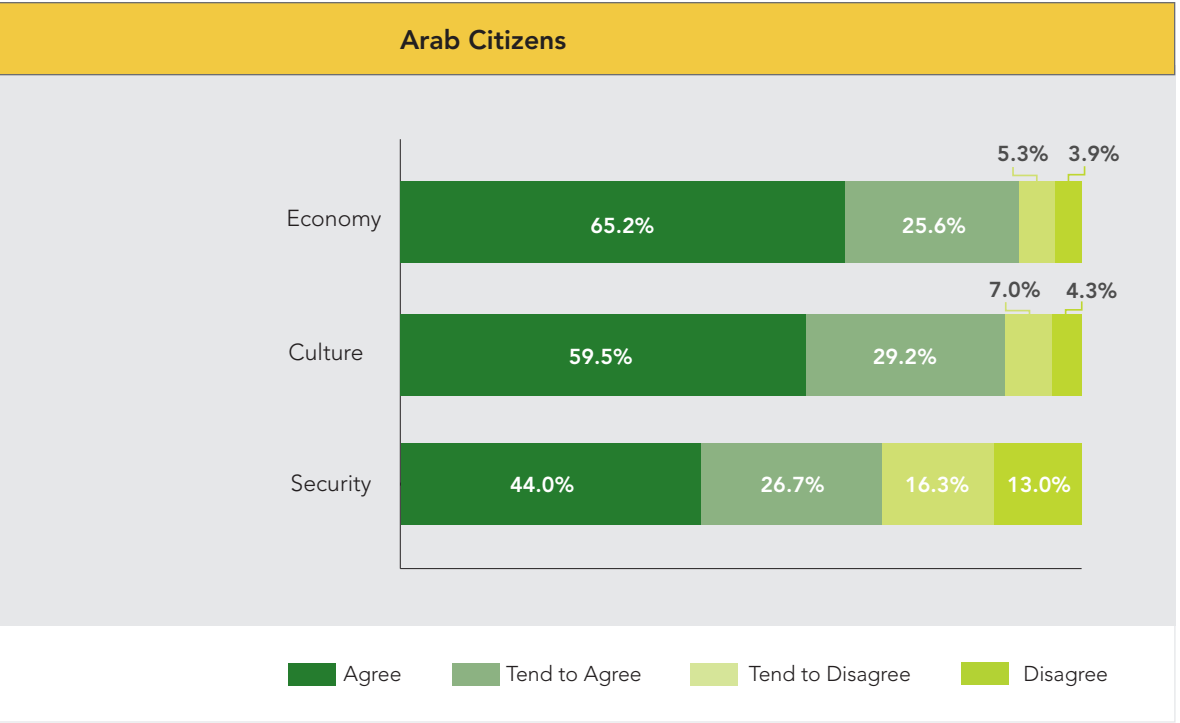
We asked Jewish and Arab citizens to report on the extent to which they believed coexistence would benefit Israel's economy, culture, and security.

Survey Items

1. *Greater integration of Arab citizens will contribute to the economy of Israel.*
2. *Greater integration of Arab citizens will contribute to the culture of Israel.*
3. *Greater integration of Arab citizens will contribute to the security of Israel.*



Jewish and Arab citizens both perceive the economy benefiting most, followed by culture, and then security. The linear trend tests were significant for Jewish and Arab citizens alike (all *ps* < .01).



WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS COEXISTENCE?

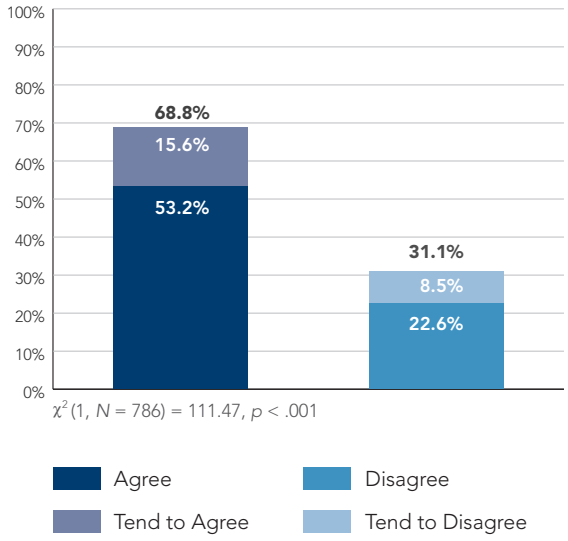
Personal Responsibility

A statistically significant majority of both Jewish and Arab citizens feels that all citizens have a responsibility to contribute to coexistence.

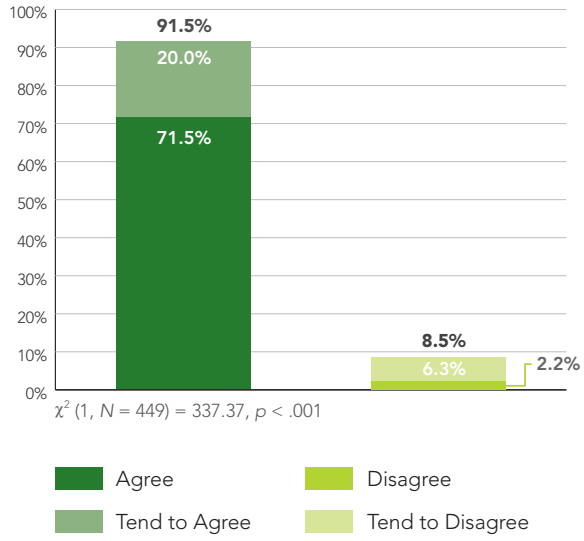
Survey Item

All citizens should act to build a shared society between Arab and Jewish citizens.

Jewish Citizens



Arab Citizens



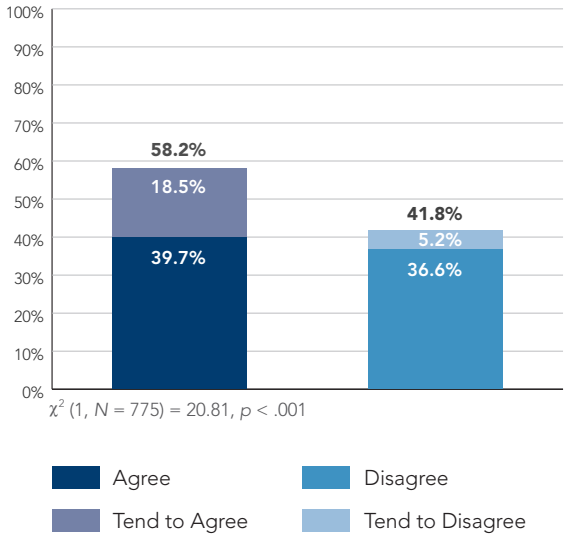
Government Responsibility

A statistically significant majority of both Jewish and Arab citizens wants the government to advance coexistence through cabinet-level action.

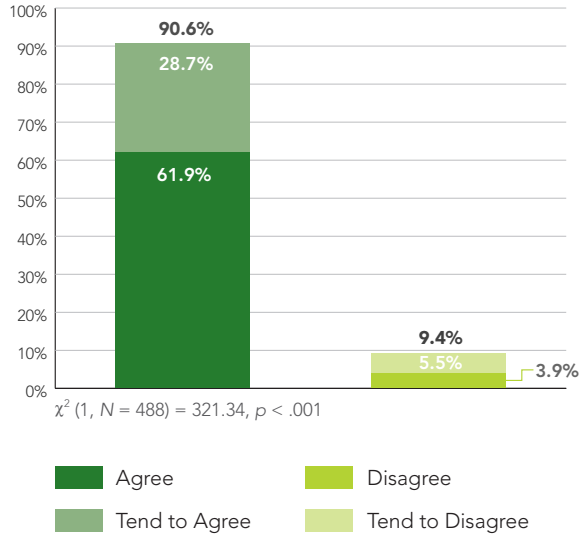
Survey Item

Israel should appoint a cabinet minister responsible for advancing Arab-Jewish relations in Israel.

Jewish Citizens



Arab Citizens



WHAT CONSTRAINS ADVANCES IN COEXISTENCE?

Efforts to promote coexistence often seek to reduce prejudice. However, the presence of liking is significantly more important to predicting support for coexistence than is the absence of prejudice (see Table, Step 2). This finding holds for Jewish and Arab citizens alike.

Survey Items

Prejudice index (α = .73):

1. *I have negative attitudes about Arab (Jewish) citizens.*
2. *I like Arab (Jewish) citizens less than I do some other groups of people.*
3. *I keep Arab (Jewish) citizens out of my everyday life as much as possible.*
4. *I do not like Arab (Jewish) citizens.*

Liking index[1] (α = .87):

1. *I have positive attitudes about Arab (Jewish) citizens.*
2. *I respect Arab (Jewish) citizens.*
3. *I like Arab (Jewish) citizens.*
4. *I feel positively toward Arab (Jewish) citizens.*

Support for coexistence:

1. *Israel should be a society in which Arab and Jewish citizens have mutual respect and equal opportunities.*

[1] Allophilia Scale; Pittinsky, Rosenthal, & Montoya (2008).

Table. Prejudice and liking as predictors of support for coexistence

VARIABLE	STEP 1	STEP 2
Jewish Citizens		
Prejudice	-.616*	-.317*↓
Liking	.678*	.421*
Arab Citizens		
Prejudice	-.094*	-.019
Liking	.109*	.095*

*$p < .01$; ↓ = a significant drop in magnitude

Note. Step 1 reports the Beta coefficients between the independent variables (prejudice or liking) and support for coexistence separately. Step 2 reports standardized weights when both prejudice and liking are included in the regression analysis.

WHAT CONSTRAINS ADVANCES IN COEXISTENCE?

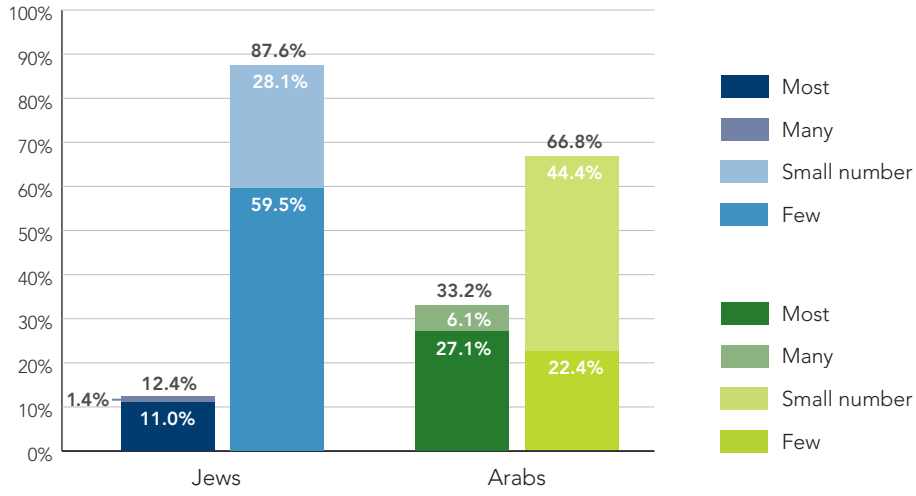
A second constraint is that people significantly underestimate the degree of liking their group has for the other group. Specifically, most Jewish and Arab citizens believe that most members of their group do not like the other group (see Figure 1). However, a significant majority of both Jewish and Arab citizens reports liking the "other" (see Figure 2).

Figure 1. Perceived Attitudes

Survey Items

Jewish citizens: *How many Jewish citizens do you think have positive attitudes about Arab citizens?*

Arab citizens: *How many Arab citizens do you think have positive attitudes about Jewish citizens?*



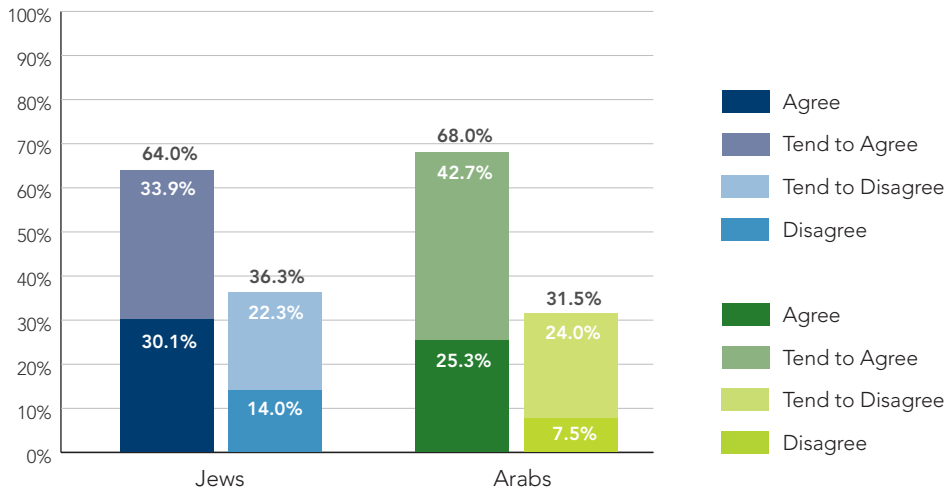
The difference in *perceived* attitudes and *own* attitudes was significant for both Jewish citizens, t (564) = 9.19, $p < .001$, and for Arab citizens, t (463) = 5.61, $p < .001$.[2]

Figure 2. Own Attitudes

Survey Items

Jewish citizens: *I have positive attitudes about Arab citizens.*

Arab citizens: *I have positive attitudes about Jewish citizens.*



[2] This finding—that, on average, both Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel like the "other" group more than they believe their peers do—invites more than one interpretation. It strongly suggests that both Jews and Arabs share the tendency to underestimate how much their peers like the "other" group. But could it also suggest that people tend to overstate their own degree of liking in order to present themselves in a positive light? This interpretation is, in fact, unlikely, for the following reasons: 1) the survey was strictly anonymous, and individuals reported a wide range of negative attitudes—which suggests that presenting themselves favorably did not significantly concern respondents; 2) previous research on intergroup liking has shown that it operates independently from self-presentation (Pittinsky, Rosenthal, & Montoya, 2007); and 3) research has shown that when individuals perceive that their peers hold negative attitudes toward marginalized groups, they are much more likely to express prejudice themselves (e.g., Monteith, Deneen, & Tooman, 1996; Ratcliff, Lassiter, & Markman, 2006). For these reasons it seems likely that in fact people do like the other more than they believe others in their group do—a problematic misunderstanding that can constrain coexistence progress.

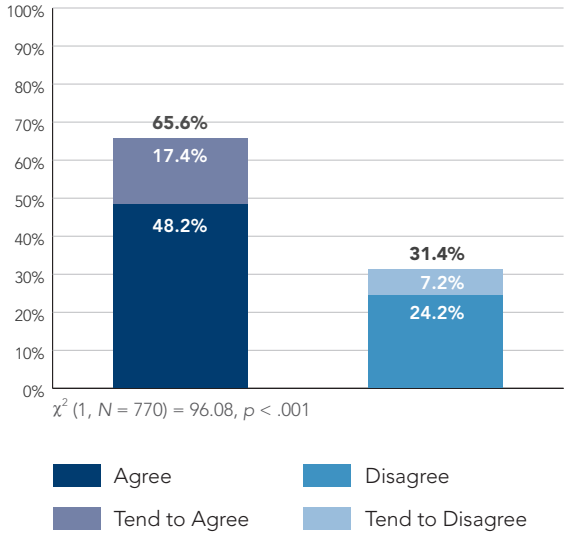
HOW URGENT IS COEXISTENCE?

A statistically significant majority of both Jewish and Arab citizens believes that the need for improved coexistence is urgent.

Survey Item

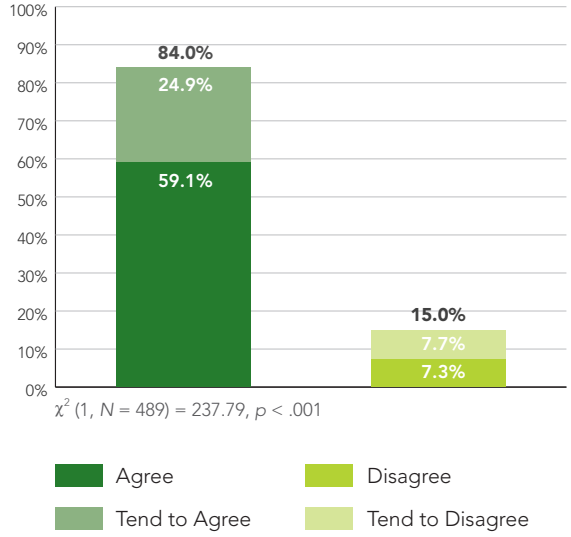
Improvement in the relations of Arab and Jewish citizens cannot wait until the end of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.

Jewish Citizens



χ^2 (1, N = 770) = 96.08, p < .001

Arab Citizens



χ^2 (1, N = 489) = 237.79, p < .001

NOTES

APPENDIX

Table 1. Personal Characteristics of Jewish and Arab Citizens

	Frequency		Percent	
GENDER	Jewish	Arab	Jewish	Arab
Male	364	260	45.8	54.1
Female	430	221	54.2	45.9
Total	**794**	**481**	**100.0**	**100.0**
AGE				
18-24	98	143	12.5	29.9
25-34	130	135	16.6	28.1
35-49	194	132	24.6	27.6
50-64	226	51	28.6	10.4
65 & over	136	20	17.3	4.0
Total	**784**	**481**	**100.0**	**100.0**
MARITAL STATUS				
Single	147	180	18.7	36.8
Married	517	300	65.9	61.3
Divorced	66	3	8.4	0.6
Widowed	55	6	7.0	1.2
Total	**785**	**489**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Table 2. Socioeconomic Position of Jewish and Arab Citizens

	Frequency		Percent	
EDUCATION	Jewish	Arab	Jewish	Arab
No schooling	1	22	0.1	4.7
Incomplete primary	4	11	0.5	2.3
Complete primary	20	34	2.5	7.2
Incomplete secondary	45	54	5.7	11.5
Complete secondary	254	193	32.3	41.2
Post-secondary, incomplete	119	56	15.1	11.9
Bachelor's degree	184	93	23.4	19.8
Master's degree	137	6	17.4	1.3
Doctoral degree	22	0	2.8	0.0
Total	**786**	**469**	**100.0**	**100.0**
EMPLOYMENT				
Employed for a wage or salary	409	198	51.8	41.0
Self-employed	86	76	10.9	15.7
A soldier in compulsory service	18	0	2.3	0.0
Not working; seeking work	26	43	3.3	8.9
Not working; not seeking work	33	28	4.2	5.8
Retired	149	22	18.9	4.6
University student	40	37	5.1	7.5
Housewife	29	79	3.7	16.4
Total	**790**	**483**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Table 3. Civic/Communal Values of Jewish Citizens

POLITICAL PARTY/MOVEMENT	Frequency	Percent
Labor	96	12.1
Meretz	43	5.4
Kadima	67	8.5
Likud	128	16.2
Halhud Haleumi	28	3.5
Mafdal	33	4.2
Shas	26	3.3
Yahadut Hatora	34	4.3
Gil (Pensioners Party)	4	0.5
Yisrael Beitenu	54	6.8
Yisrael Ba'aliya	1	0.1
Shinui (Secular Party)	2	0.3
Tafnit	2	0.3
Moledet	4	0.5
Kach	2	0.3
Green Party	4	0.5
Aale Yarok	6	0.8
Justice Party of Gaydamak	1	0.1
Other Jewish party	1	0.1
Hadash	1	0.1
Balad	1	0.1
All others [3]	0	0.0
None	210	26.5
Refused to answer	43	5.4
Total	**791**	**100.0**
RELIGION		
Haredi (ultra-orthodox)	70	8.9
Dati (religious)	89	11.3
Masorti (traditional)	186	23.6
Hilouni (secular)	443	56.2
Total	**788**	**100.0**

Table 4. Civic/Communal Values of Arab Citizens

POLITICAL PARTY/MOVEMENT	Frequency	Percent
Hadash (headed by Barake)	104	24.6
Balad (headed by Bshara)	74	17.5
Ta'al (headed by Tibi)	29	6.9
Democratic Arab Party (headed by Darawshe)	40	9.5
The National Arab Party (headed by Kin'an)	5	1.2
The Arab Unity Front (headed by Mahamid)	6	1.4
The Southern Islamic Movement (headed by Tzartzur)	18	4.3
The Northern Islamic Movement (headed by Sala'h)	56	13.2
Sons of the Village Movement	4	.9
Labor	49	11.6
Meretz-Yahad	19	4.5
Kadima	12	2.8
Likud	6	1.4
Shas	1	.2
All others [4]	0	0.0
Total	**423**	**100.0**
RELIGION		
Moslem	407	83.2
Christian	39	8.0
Druze	43	8.8
Total	**489**	**100.0**

[3] This includes the following survey options for Jewish citizens: Memad, Havhira Hademocratit, Hetz (Secular Party), A'am Ehad, Tekuma, Herut, Ra'am-Ta'al, and Other Arab Party. None of the participants in this sample selected any of these options.

[4] This includes the following survey options for Arab citizens: Other Arab party, Mafdal, Yahadut Hatora, Yisrael Betenu (headed by Lieberman), Halhud Haleumi, Gil (Pensioners Party), and Other Jewish Party. None of the participants in this sample selected any of these options.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABOUT THE ALLOPHILIA PROJECT

What lies beyond tolerance? Academic researchers as well as public and private sector leaders tend to assume that the best we can do with prejudice is to shrink it down to a neutral state of tolerance. But the Allophilia Project, launched in 2004 by professor Todd Pittinsky, says we can do much better by studying and promoting the seldom-acknowledged opposite of prejudice—people's feelings of interest, kinship, comfort, admiration, engagement, and affection for those who are different. These are collectively known as allophilia. We have already learned important things about allophilia and how it can best be created and nurtured, but we are eager to understand much more and to promote allophilia wherever there is diversity: jobs, schools, neighborhoods, nations, and the world.

We seek research partners with whom to advance our understanding, practitioner partners with whom to develop our practical tools, and friends motivated to support us in pursuing the full potential of our inescapably pluralistic world.

For more information about the Allophilia Project, go to **www.allophilia.com**.

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The Center for Public Leadership (CPL) opened its doors at Harvard Kennedy School in 2000 with the generous support of the Wexner Foundation. Our mission is twofold: to expand the pool of leaders for the common good and to advance the frontiers of knowledge about leadership. Leadership development initiatives include major conferences on the practice of leadership; study groups, workshops, and presentations for Kennedy School students; collaborations with programs such as the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders and Harvard School of Public Health's National Preparedness Leadership Initiative; and four master's-level fellowship programs focused on public service. One of these, the Wexner Israel Fellowship, annually supports ten outstanding Israeli government and public service professionals as they pursue mid-career master's degrees in public administration from the Kennedy School. Research initiatives include supporting faculty and graduate student research, holding leadership research conferences, building a community of leadership scholars at Harvard and beyond, and collaborating on a leadership book imprint with Harvard Business Press.

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