



What's the story with the youth?

Personal, National and Social Attitudes
of Israeli Youth –

actualized after October 7th

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung's
fifth Youth Study Survey
May 2024

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THE CENTER FOR POLITICAL ECONOMICS

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Additional sources: Prof. Tamar Hermann from the INSS and data from a joint survey by Givat Haviva and Midgam.

for more
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www.macro.org.il
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Introduction to the English Edition of the 5th Youth Study

In a world that is perpetually in flux, the voices of the youth provide not only a reflection of the present but a prophecy of the future. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation, in collaboration with the Macro Center for Political Economics, has consistently sought to capture and understand these voices within the Israeli context through our series of Youth Studies. The 5th Youth Study, conducted in August 2022, aimed to explore the attitudes, aspirations, and perceptions of Israeli youth, marking a new step in our pursuit to chronicle the evolving narrative of Israel's future generations.

This English edition of the 5th Youth Study arrives at a critical juncture in Israel's history, framed by the tumultuous events following the horrific terror attack on October 7, 2023. These events have not only tested the resilience of Israeli society but have also underscored the imperative for integration, dialogue, and understanding among its diverse communities. The repercussions of these events have reverberated through every aspect of Israeli life, casting a long shadow over the collective psyche of the nation, and the youth in particular.

Our research, inherently designed to track long-term changes, is now imbued with the immediate task of contextualizing these seismic shifts within the fabric of Israeli youth's perceptions. This edition, therefore, not only serves as a testament to the prevailing attitudes and concerns among Jewish and Arab youth before the 7th of October but also as a basis from which to measure the change in Israeli society in general and Israeli youth, in particular, underwent as a result of October 7th.

We in the Macro Center for Political Economics and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung decided to amend the English publication of the 5th Youth Study by reflecting the paradigm shift.

The 2022 study's findings highlighted a range of issues from personal security, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, relations between Jews and Arabs, to broader societal concerns like democracy, governance, and the pursuit of personal and communal aspirations. Now, as we present this study to a global audience, we do so with the understanding that the events of October 7 have cast these issues into stark relief, offering both challenges and opportunities for growth, reconciliation, and unity.

In keeping with our commitment to fostering informed dialogue and policy-making, this edition not only seeks to provide stakeholders with valuable insights into the pre-October 7 mindset of Israel's youth but also to serve as a foundational stone for subsequent analyses and studies that will undoubtedly seek to measure the impact of recent events on this critical demographic.

As Israel navigates the aftermath of these events, the responses of its youth will significantly shape the nation's path forward. We hope that this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex tapestry of youth attitudes and perceptions in Israel, aiding in the crafting of policies and initiatives that are responsive to their needs, aspirations, and concerns in these unprecedented times.

In presenting this study, we are reminded of the enduring spirit of Israel's youth, their resilience in the face of adversity, and their undiminished hope for a peaceful, prosperous, and inclusive future. It is their voices that will ultimately guide Israel's journey in the years to come, and it is our privilege to amplify these voices through our work.

**Dr. Roby Nathanson
CEO
Macro Center**

&

**Ariel Indenbaum
Senior Researcher
Macro Center**

What are the aspirations of Israeli youth?

Israeli youth demonstrated that at the top of their priority list in life are personal and individual aspirations, while national goals and contributions to the community are placed at the lower end.

The three options related to social involvement beyond personal life were contributing to the country and society, contributing to the IDF, and volunteering for the community, and these were ranked in the lowest positions. **Jewish youth demonstrated their central aspiration in establishing a happy family (38%). Arab youth showed their central aspiration for economic success (51%).**

The general trend of prioritizing personal over national priorities corresponds with the findings of the 2016 study. Additionally, the focus on economic success aligns with Israelis' concerns about the cost of living and high rent prices.

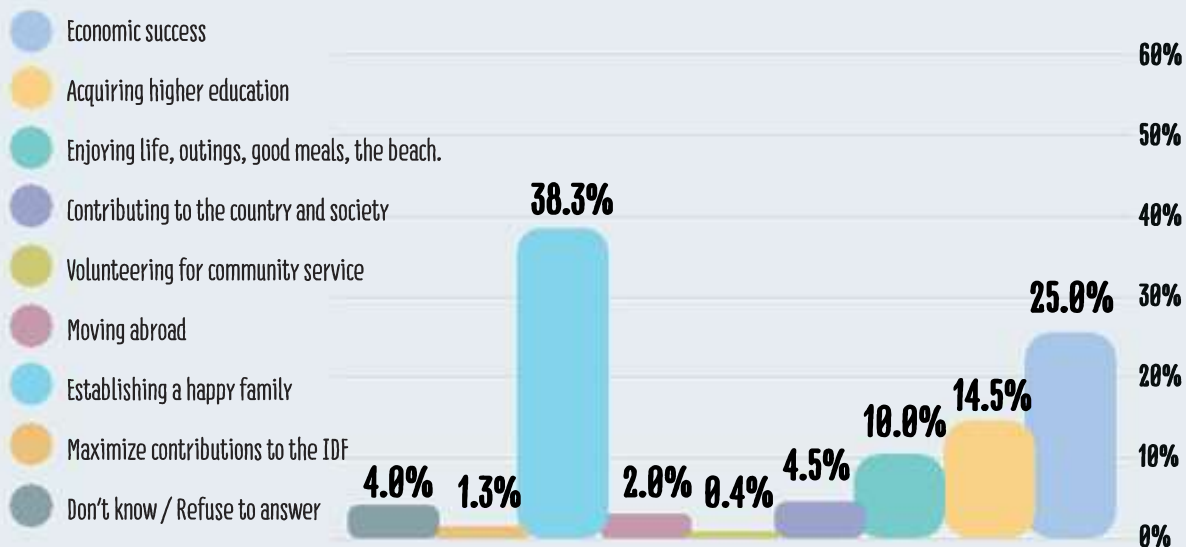


"Our unity, relatively, we are very much one with each other compared to other countries... When you're abroad and you see Israelis, you're over the moon."

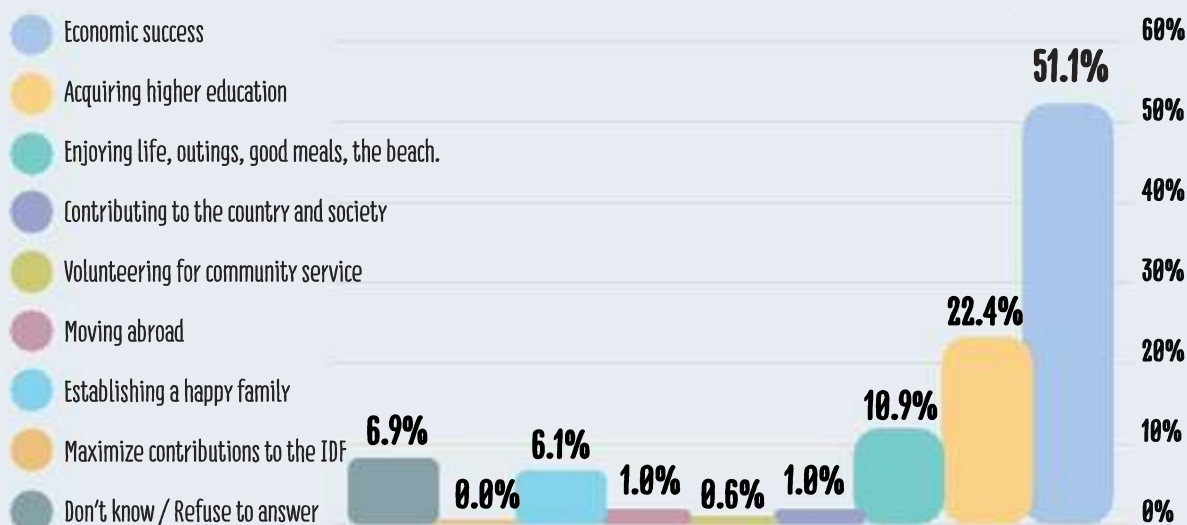




Personal Aspirations – Jews



Personal Aspirations – Arabs



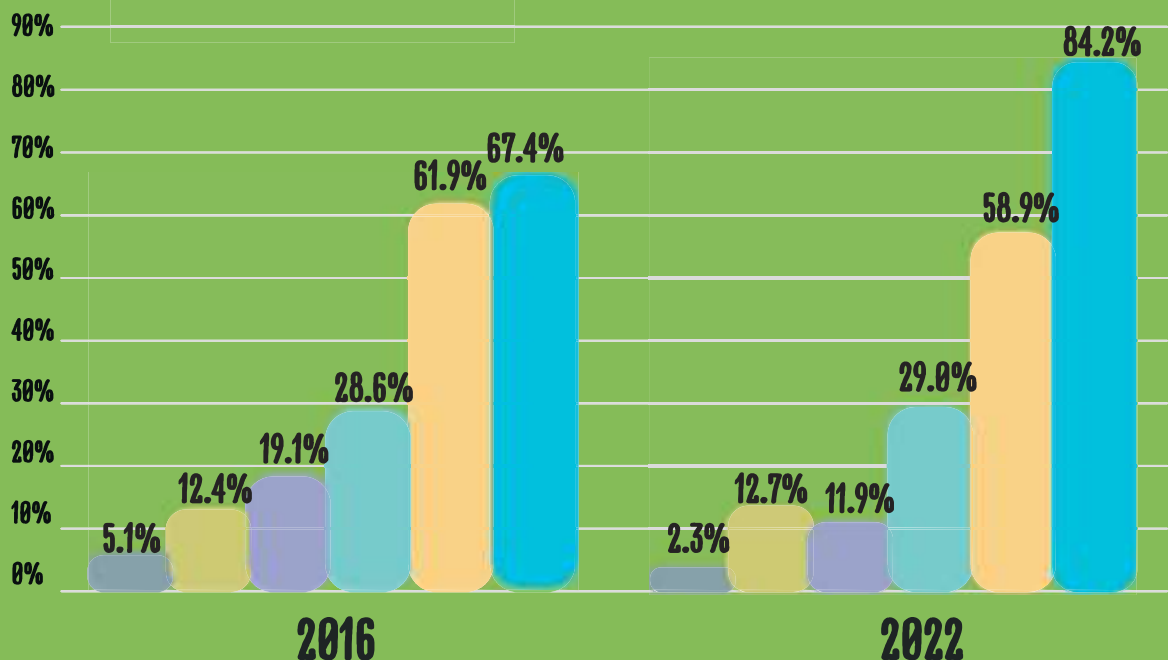
What's the biggest issue in Israel according to the youth?

While Jewish youth prioritize security-terror issues and the cost of living, Arab youth attribute importance to issues directly related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Jewish youth demonstrated a priority for addressing the cost of living issue and the danger of terrorism, followed in descending order by engagement with the education system, Jewish-Arab relations, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Addressing the cost of living issue and the fear of terrorism reflect the ongoing focus on these issues in Israel in recent years. For Arab youth, the cost of living issue was ranked sixth, while the top place was given to Jewish-Arab relations in Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



Biggest Issue in Israel - Jews



Don't know / Didn't answer

Israeli - Palestinian Conflict

Jewish-Arab Relations

The State of the Education System

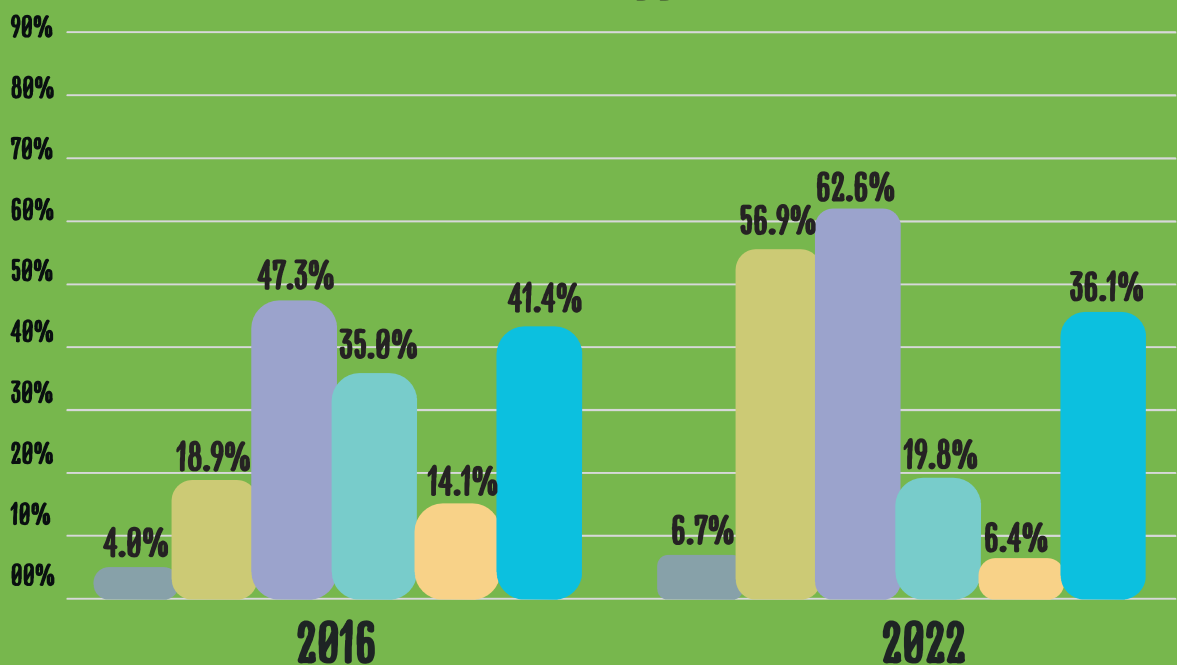
National Security / Terror

Cost of Living

**"Among the students I do not feel belonging.
I never encountered a racist incident, but in terms
of feeling, I do not feel that I belong."**



Biggest Issue in Israel - Arabs



Don't know / Didn't answer ● Israeli - Palestinian Conflict ● Jewish-Arab Relations ●

The State of the Education System ● National Security / Terror ● Cost of Living ●

What is the Israeli youths' optimism level regarding Israel?

Significant gaps exist between Jews and Arabs in the results of the current survey. The feelings of optimism among young Jews have risen since the last survey. In 2022, about 13% of Jews expressed pessimistic feelings about the future of the country, compared to about 40% in 2016. October 7th negatively impacted Jewish youths' optimism while Arab youths' remained stable, doubling down on the optimism flip from the last survey.

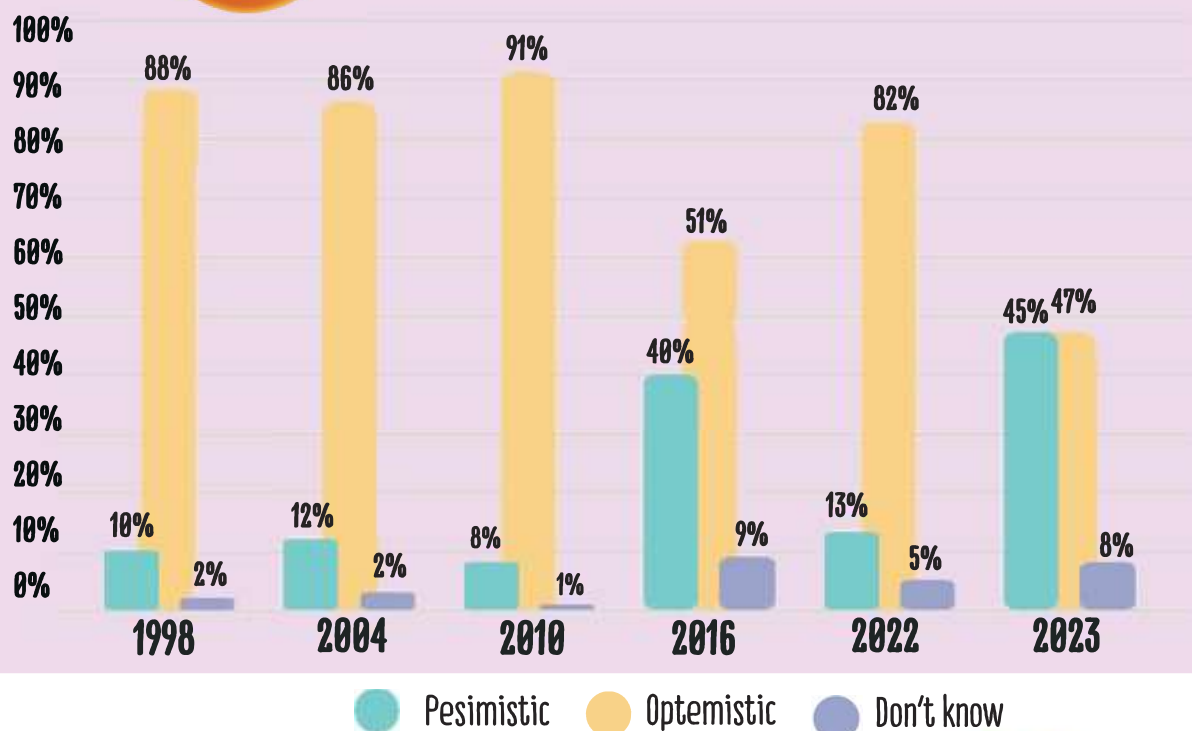
The level of optimism among the youth is greatly related to their satisfaction with their lives within the country and reflects their feeling of equality and capability to realize their future in Israel. **The security feelings of young Arabs, as demonstrated in the current survey, do not translate into optimistic feelings about their personal future, especially in relation to findings from previous years.** In 2010, a high percentage of about 88.5% expressed varying levels of optimism regarding life in the country, compared to 28% in 2022. It is interesting to examine whether this significant difference refers to a temporary trend change or whether it reflects a continuing trend of decline.

**"I feel that there is more hate
among Arabs, more than between
Jews and Arabs."**

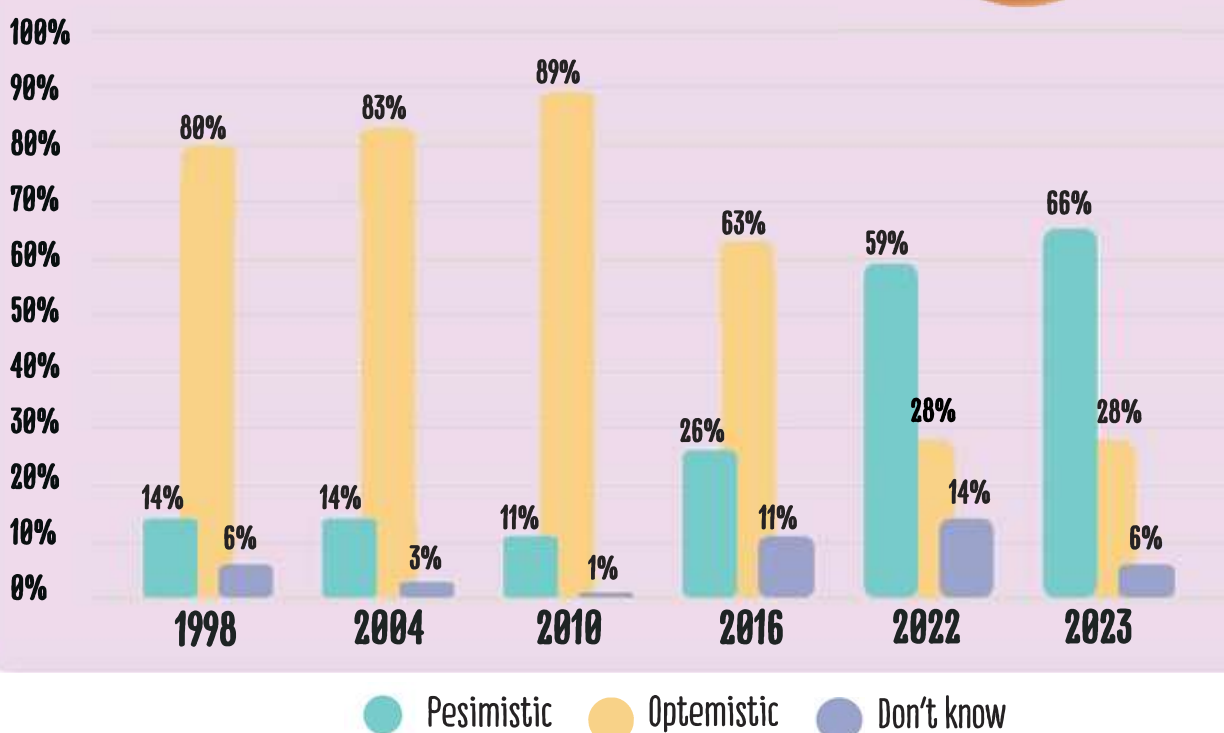




Jewish Youth Back to 2010's optimism



Arab youth Increasing Pessimism

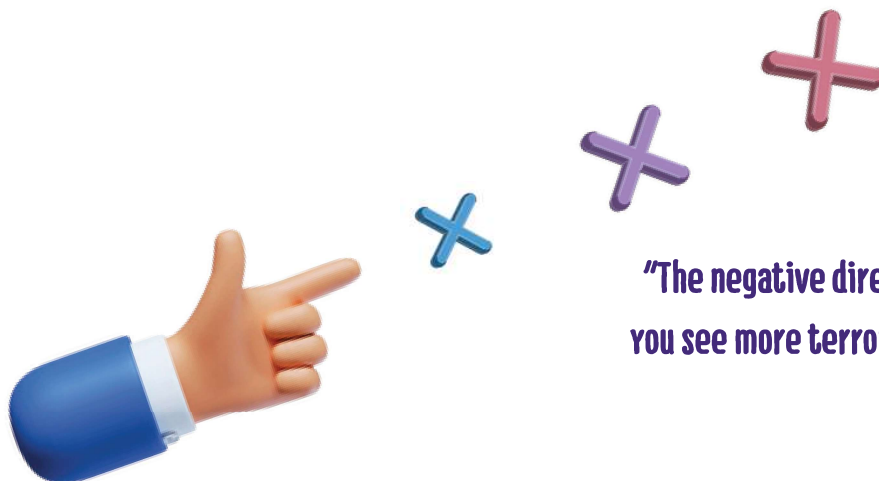


What is the Israeli youths' level of personal security?

The sense of economic security among Arab youth has reversed compared to the previous survey. In the previous survey, 82.7% of Arab youth expressed a high sense of economic security, which was higher than the economic security sense of Jewish youth by 20%. In contrast, in the current survey, 86.2% of Arab youth expressed a low sense of economic security.

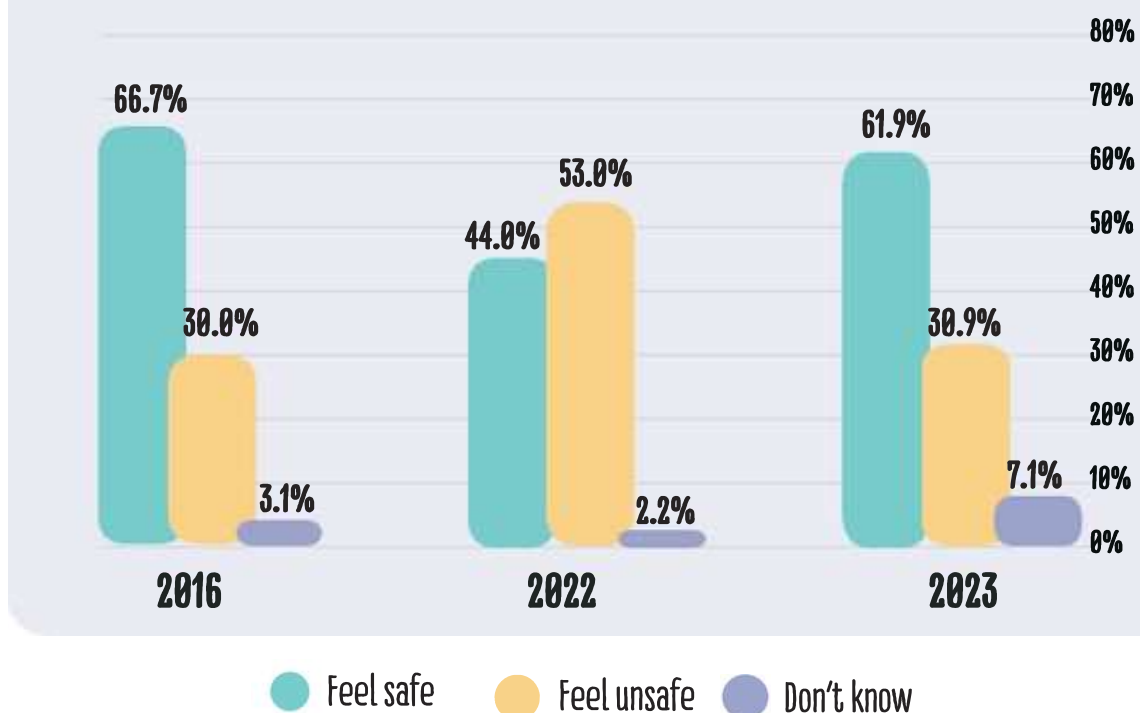
In 2022, 86.2% of Arab youth indicated a low level of economic security compared to 17.5% in 2016. A similar trend exists among Jewish youth, of whom 39% indicated a low level of security in 2022 compared to 29.2% in 2016. This represents an increase in economic insecurity among youth in Israel in general, and among Arab youth in particular. **The deterioration in the economic situation from 2019 to 2022 is likely due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the labor market and associated restrictions in Israel, particularly affecting the poorer segments, including mass layoffs.**

Using the INSS survey from 2023, **we observe that the war has had minimal impact on personal security.** Jewish youths' perceived personal security rose marginally from 54% to 57% and arab youths rose substantially from 44% to 62%.



"The negative direction also in security matters, you see more terror attacks and it's hard to thwart it all"

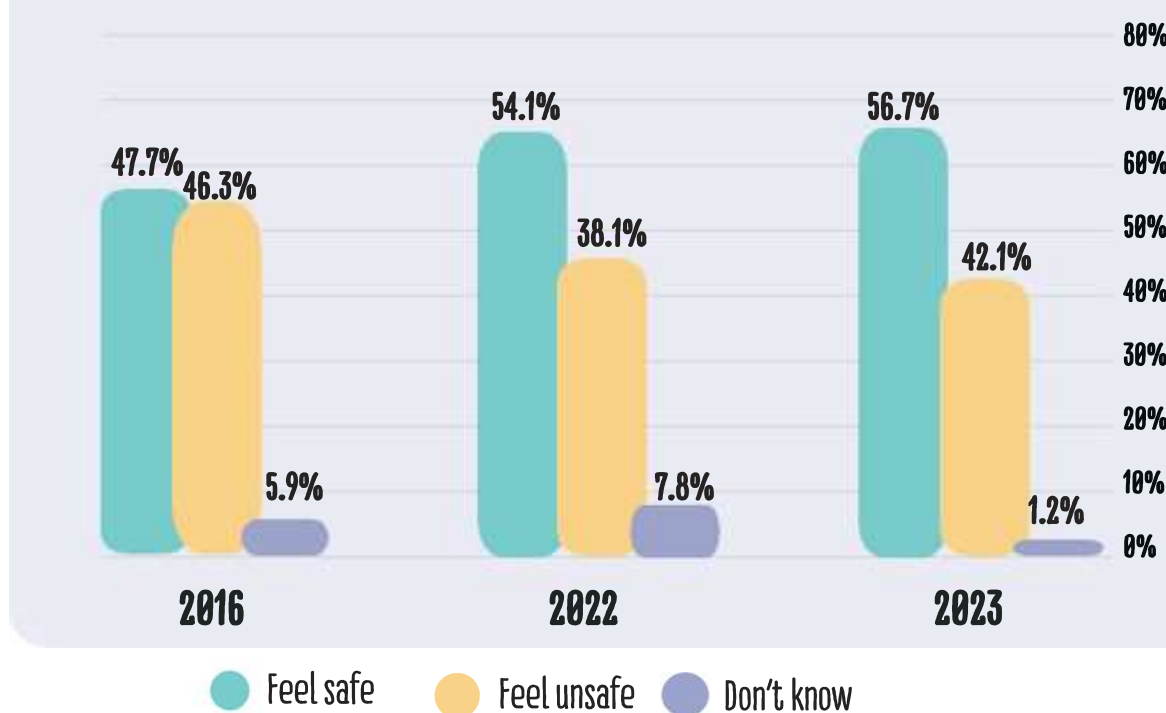
Level of personal security - Arabs



"There is racism between secular and religious,
between Muslims and Christians,
between men and women, between Muslims,
Christians and Druze"



Level of personal security - Jews



What is the Israeli youths' level of economic security?

The economic security sentiment among young Arabs has reversed since the previous survey. In the previous survey, 82.7% of young Arabs expressed a high level of economic security, which was higher than the economic security sentiment of young Jews by 20%. In contrast, in the current survey, 86.2% of young Arabs expressed a low level of economic security.

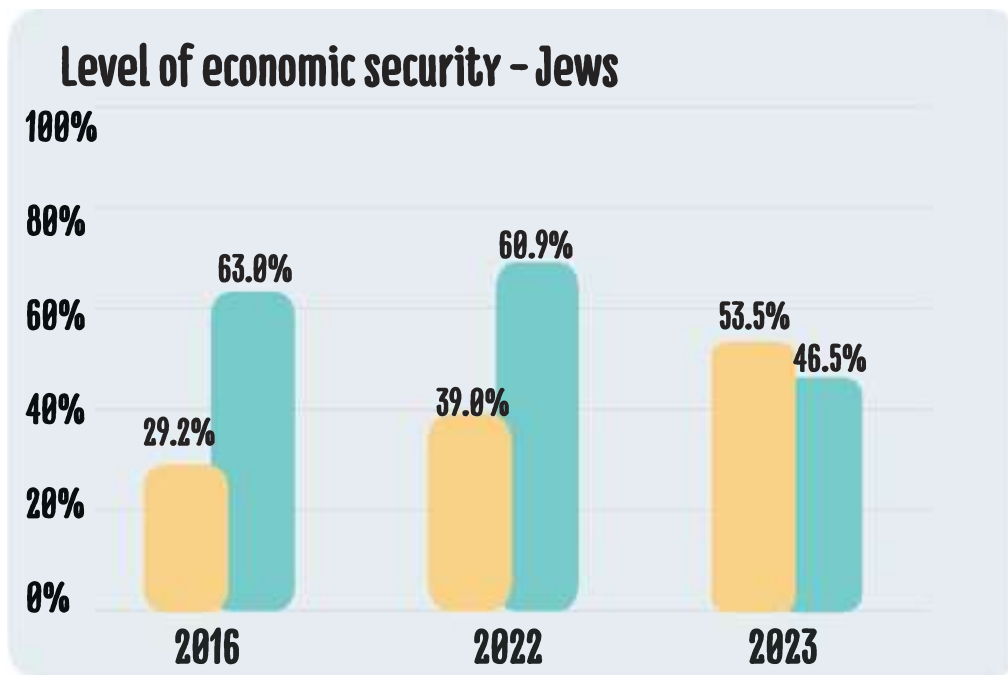
In 2022, 86.2% of young Arabs indicated a low level of economic security compared to 17.5% in 2016. A similar trend exists among young Jews, 39% of whom indicated a low level of security in 2022 compared to 29.2% in 2016. This represents an increase in economic insecurity among young people in Israel in general and among young Arabs in particular. **It can be assumed that this is related to the deterioration of the economic situation from 2019 to 2022, which has mainly affected the poor strata in Israel, due to the Corona crisis and the restrictions that accompanied the labor market, including layoffs.**

The INSS survey confirms the 2022 major increase in arab youths' feelings of economic insecurity with the majority of Arab youth feeling economically vulnerable, with slight gains since 2022. In 2023 perceived economic insecurity among arab youth fell from 86.2% to 81.1%, with the war having little effect.

The war has increased economic vulnerability among the Jewish youth, with the majority of Jewish youth feeling economically insecure. Economic security for Jews went down from 60.9% to 46.5%.



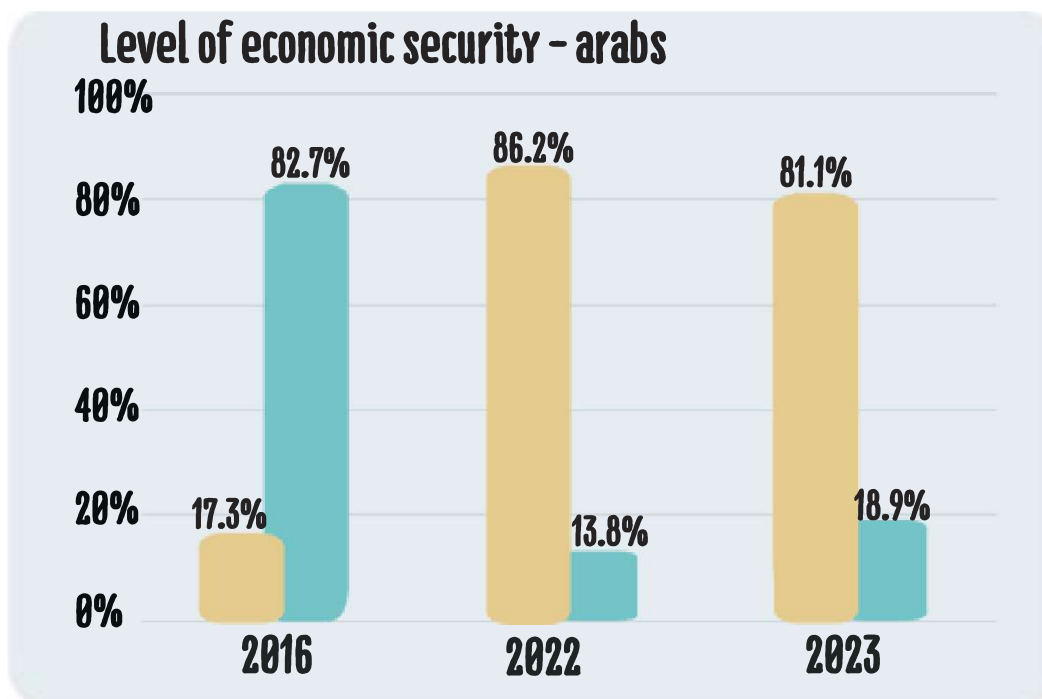
"I would also like to add, I feel there's some economic harassment towards the disadvantaged."



● Feel economically secure ● Feel economically insecure



"If something happens in Tel Aviv, The police catches the guy after maximum 2 hours. While here, in the south we have many who get ignored"



● Feel economically secure ● Feel economically insecure

Does the Arab community accept the existence of the state of Israel?

This matter was crucial in talks with Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim representatives, in both formal and informal sessions. **Whether during the conflict with Arab states or during Palestinian terrorism waves, the loyalty of the state's Arab citizens was always questioned whenever there was tension with the Palestinians.**

In the 2022 survey, Arab youth expressed acceptance of the existence of the State of Israel, but Jewish youth doubted their acceptance. 49.8% of Arab youth opposed the statement that Arab citizens of Israel have not accepted the existence of the State of Israel, 29.1% were unsure, 16.9% didn't know or refused to answer, and only 4.2% agreed with the statement. This is a significant change compared to previous years. For example, in 2016, the agreement rate for this statement was 36%.

Among Jewish youth, 62.3% agreed with the statement that Arabs have not accepted the existence of the State of Israel, 17.1% were unsure, 15.8% opposed the statement, and 4.8% refused to answer the question. This perception has implications for their relations with the Arabs of Israel, and at the same time, there are expectations from the Arab youth who have accepted the state's existence take a part of it.

**"I also think with the Corona virus, it was a hard process...
Now it's ok."**





"Most Arab citizens of Israel have not accepted the existence of the State of Israel and would destroy it if they could"?

	Arabs	Jews	total sample
1. Strongly agree	1.0%	40.7%	28.5%
2. agree	3.2%	21.6%	16.0%
3. Not sure	29.1%	17.1%	20.8%
4. Disagree	34.5%	10.0%	17.5%
5. Strongly disagree	15.3%	5.8%	8.7%
6. Don't know / won't answer	16.9%	4.8%	8.5%



"In my opinion, Jews, Arabs, Christians, anyone who lives here in the country, but I think that someone who shouldn't have Israeli citizenship is someone who harms or does not believe in the country itself, is against this thing called Israel, and yet he is a citizen."

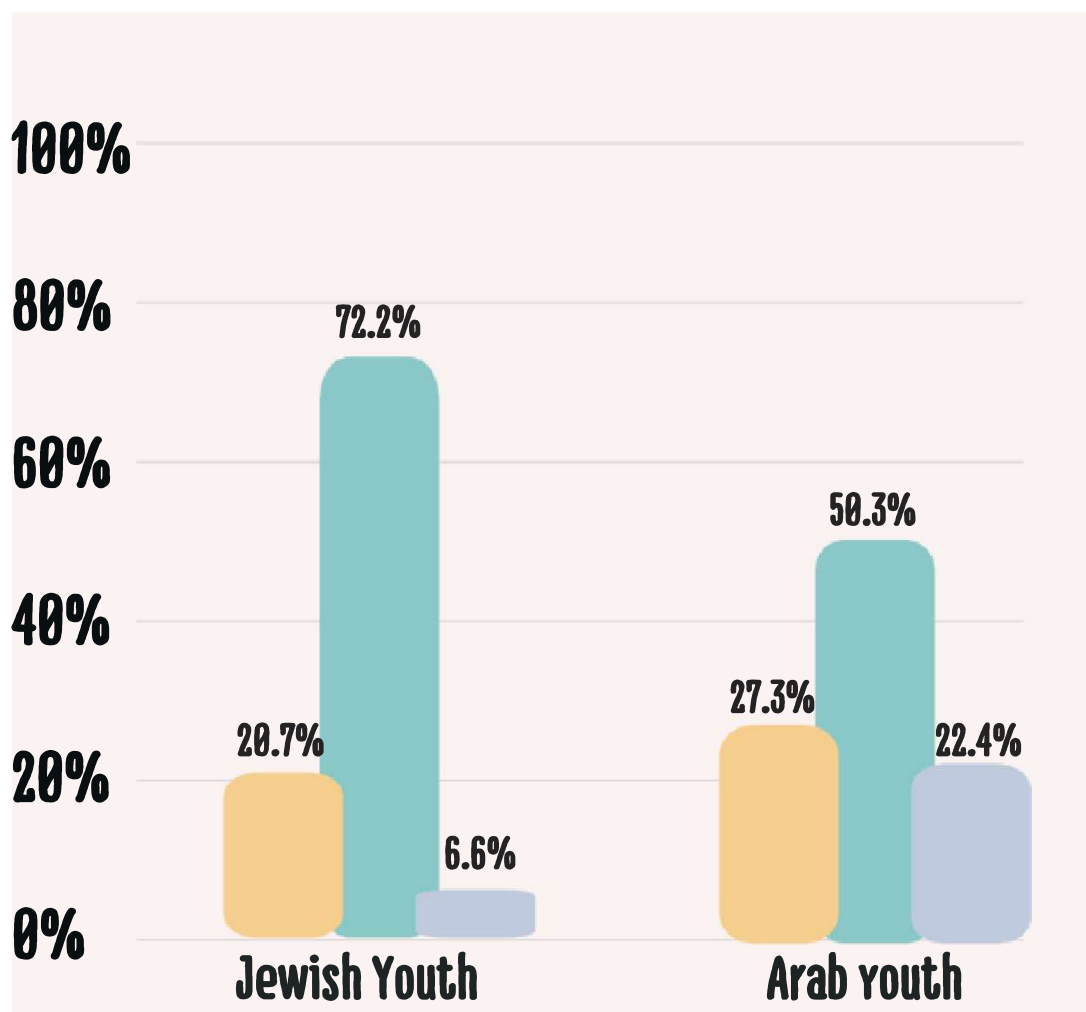
"Among the students I do not feel belonging. I never encountered a racist incident, but in terms of feeling, I do not feel that I belong."



Can Jews and Arabs co-exist in Israel?

The survey reveals that Jewish Youth are significantly more pessimistic about coexistence with Arabs compared to the more optimistic outlook of the Arab youth, following the events of October 7th. Overall, 20.7% of Jews and 27.3% of Arabs are optimistic about living together, with a slightly higher percentage of Arabs feeling hopeful. In contrast, a substantial majority of Jews (72.7%) express pessimism, compared to 50.3% of Arabs. Additionally, a higher proportion of Arabs (22.4%) than Jews (6.6%) are undecided on this matter. **This survey reflects a significant divergence in attitudes between the two groups, with Jews showing more skepticism towards coexistence than Arabs.**

can coexist can't coexist Don't know



List of sources

We would like to graciously thank Tamar Hermann from the INSS and Givat Haviva for letting them use their data in order to follow up on the Israeli Youth post October 7th. Allowing for new insight to be derived from old Data.



Data provided by INSS and gathered by the Viterbi Family Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research of the INSS.

- page 11, Optimism level
- page 13, Personal Security
- page 15, Economic security



Data was provided by Givat Haviva and gathered in cooperation with Midgam and presented in “Shared Society in Times of Emergency” conference.

- page 18, Coexistence