
Konrad Adenauer Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation

October 25, 2022

A comprehensive survey of Arab voters ahead of the Knesset elections:

Expected Arab voter turnout – 49% • Hadash-Ta'al is expected to receive 4.1 seats based on Arab votes, Ra'am – 3.7, Balad – 3.2, Likud – 1.3 • 34.2% of the Arab public believe that there is no qualified candidate for prime minister, while Benjamin Netanyahu receives the highest rating (18.6%) • Half of Arab voters (46.8%) support the participation of an Arab party in any government that forms after the elections, while 53.4% believe that Ra'am's experience in the coalition was not successful • Few feel that the Bennett-Lapid government benefited the Arab population.

Dr. Arik Rudnitzky

Highlights

- The expected voter turnout in the Arab community in the approaching 25th Knesset elections is 49%, slightly higher than that in the previous elections (44.6%). The expected turnout according to the current survey is significantly higher than that found in a similar survey conducted prior to the election campaign.
- Of the three Arab lists, only Hadash-Ta'al is expected to exceed the electoral threshold with 4.1 seats (based on Arab voters); Ra'am is expected to receive 3.7 seats which is somewhat under the threshold; and Balad is expected to receive only 3.2 seats and thus will likely not exceed the electoral threshold. With respect to Arab votes going to the Jewish parties, Likud is expected to receive 1.3 seats, Meretz is expected to receive half a seat, and Yesh Atid is expected to receive one-third of a seat.
- About one-third of the Arab community (34.2%) believes that there is currently no qualified candidate for prime minister. Among the rest of the respondents, Benjamin Netanyahu is the leading candidate (18.6%), followed by Sami Abu Shehadeh (6.6%), Ahmad Tibi (6.3%), Mansour Abbas (4.8%), Yair Lapid (4.7%), Benny Gantz (3.2%), and Ayman Odeh (3.0%).
- The performance of the Bennett-Lapid government on issues of importance to the Arab community received very low marks, particularly on economic wellbeing, personal security, and residential planning and construction. About 40.9% of the participants believe that the situation of the Arab population has worsened during the term of the Bennett-Lapid government, while 44% believe that it remained unchanged. Only 13% believe that it improved.
- About one-half (46.8%) of the respondents feel that an Arab party should join any coalition that forms after the elections in order to improve the situation of the Arab community while 15.6% condition that on the coalition being from the Center-Left. Meanwhile, 22.3% feel that there are no conditions under which an Arab party should join the government or support it from outside the coalition. On the other hand, about half of the Arab public (53.4%) believe that Ra'am's experience as part of the government coalition was not successful, while 37.7% believe it was.

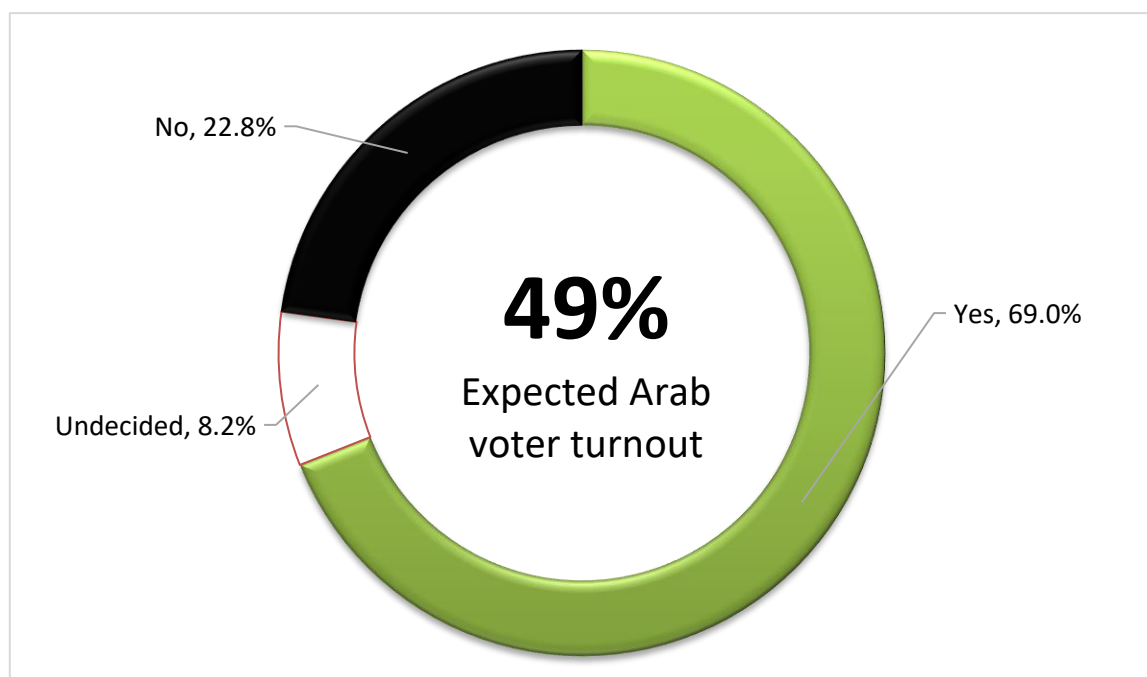
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Voter turnout and voter considerations in the Arab community

According to the survey, 69% of the respondents have decided to vote in the elections, as opposed to 22.8% who do not intend to vote and 8.2% who have not yet decided.

By weighting the survey findings based on past experience, including among other things the voting patterns of respondents in previous Knesset elections, the rate of voter turnout among Arab voters in the 25th Knesset elections is expected to be 49%.

Do you intend to vote in the upcoming Knesset elections?



The expected rate of voter turnout is significantly higher than that predicted prior to the election campaign (42% according to a survey carried out in August using an identical methodology). This increase apparently indicates that as election day approaches there is a greater tendency on the Arab street to participate in the elections.

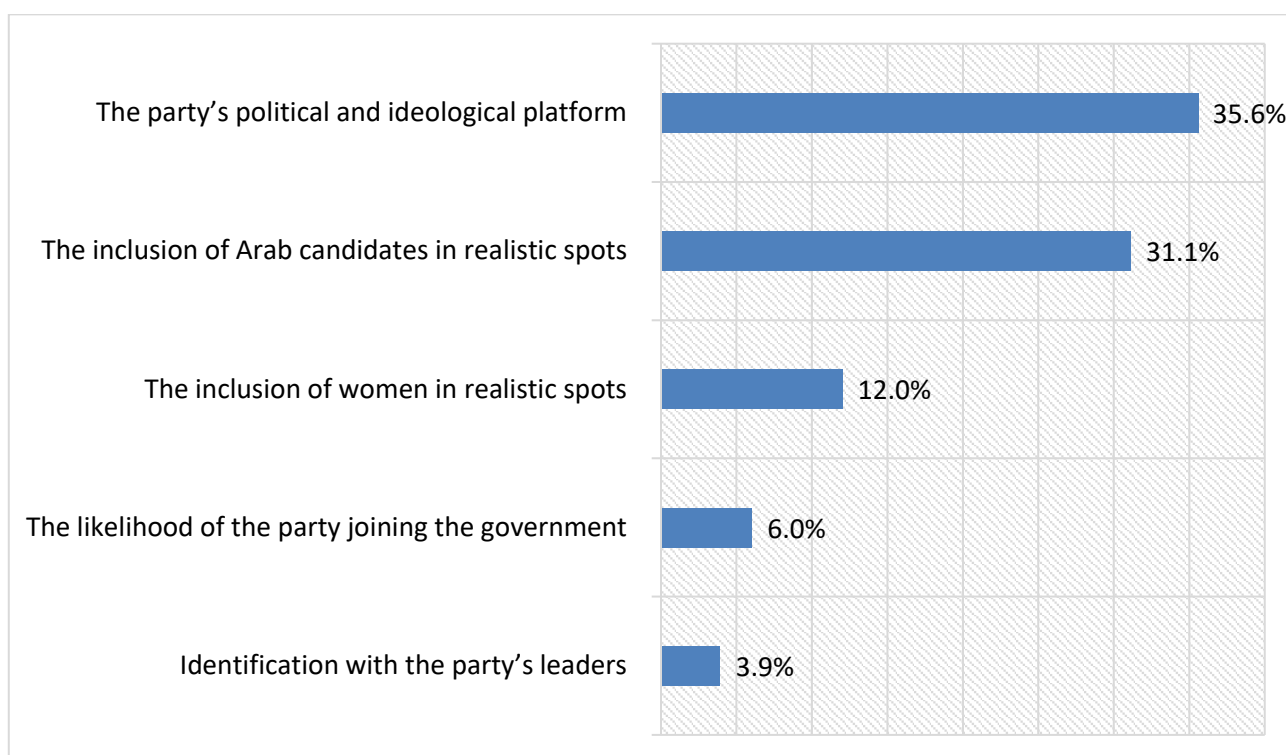
The expected voter turnout according to the current survey is somewhat higher than in the 24th Knesset elections held in March 2021 (44.6%). It is similar to that in the 21st Knesset elections held in April 2019 (49.2%), but significantly lower than the average (54.4%) of the last four elections (2019-2021).

What are the considerations of the Arab voter? There is a mix of ideological and pragmatic considerations at play in the approaching elections. About 35.6% of the respondents stated that their

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main consideration in choosing a party is its political and ideological platform. In contrast, a significant percentage stated that they are motivated by pragmatic considerations: 31.1% said that the most important consideration is the inclusion of Arab candidates in realistic spots on the party list and 12% stated that it is the inclusion of women—not necessarily Arab women—in realistic spots on a party's list. Considerations of secondary importance are the party's likelihood of joining the coalition (6%), and the degree of identification with the party's leaders (3.9%).

What is the most important consideration in your choice of which party to vote for?



The survey also examined voting considerations according to whether the respondent intends to vote. The two main considerations among respondents who intend to vote is that the fundamental right to vote should be exercised (28%) and the belief that voting has an influence on the political situation (27.9%).

Other considerations that motivate Arab voter turnout include the fear that the Arab parties will not exceed the electoral threshold (16.3%), the feeling that voting provides hope for a better future (15.6%), and an expression of confidence in the voter's representatives (12.2%).

In contrast, the respondents who stated that they do not intend to vote or have not yet decided whether to vote attributed their decision primarily to the feeling that the Arab MKs in any case will not be able to further the interests of the Arab community (30.5%). Respondents in this group reported three other major considerations: the feeling that there is no party or candidate that

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represents the Arab voter (19.2%), anger over the split among the Arab parties (16.7%), and a general lack of interest in the elections (14.6%).

Other reasons that were mentioned in this context are the feeling that in any case Arab citizens will continue to be marginalized and excluded (6.6%) and a fundamental opposition to participating in Knesset elections (5.4%).

Voter considerations according to whether the respondent intends to vote

What is the main reason that you intend to vote in the elections? (N = 349)		What is the main reason that you do not intend to vote in the elections or have not yet decided? (N = 147)	
Voting is a basic right and I want to take advantage of it.	28.0%	In any case, the Arab MKs are not able to further the interests of the Arab community.	30.5%
Voting allows me to influence what is going on in the State.	27.9%	There is no party or candidate that represents me.	19.2%
If fewer Arab citizens vote, the Arab parties will not reach the electoral threshold.	16.3%	The division and fragmentation among the Arab parties.	16.7%
Voting gives me hope for a better future.	15.6%	The elections do not interest me.	14.6%
Voting is a way to express confidence in those that represent me in the Knesset.	12.2%	In any case, Arab citizens will continue to be marginalized.	6.6%
		I fundamentally oppose Arab participation in the Knesset elections.	5.4%

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Who will Arab voters vote for?

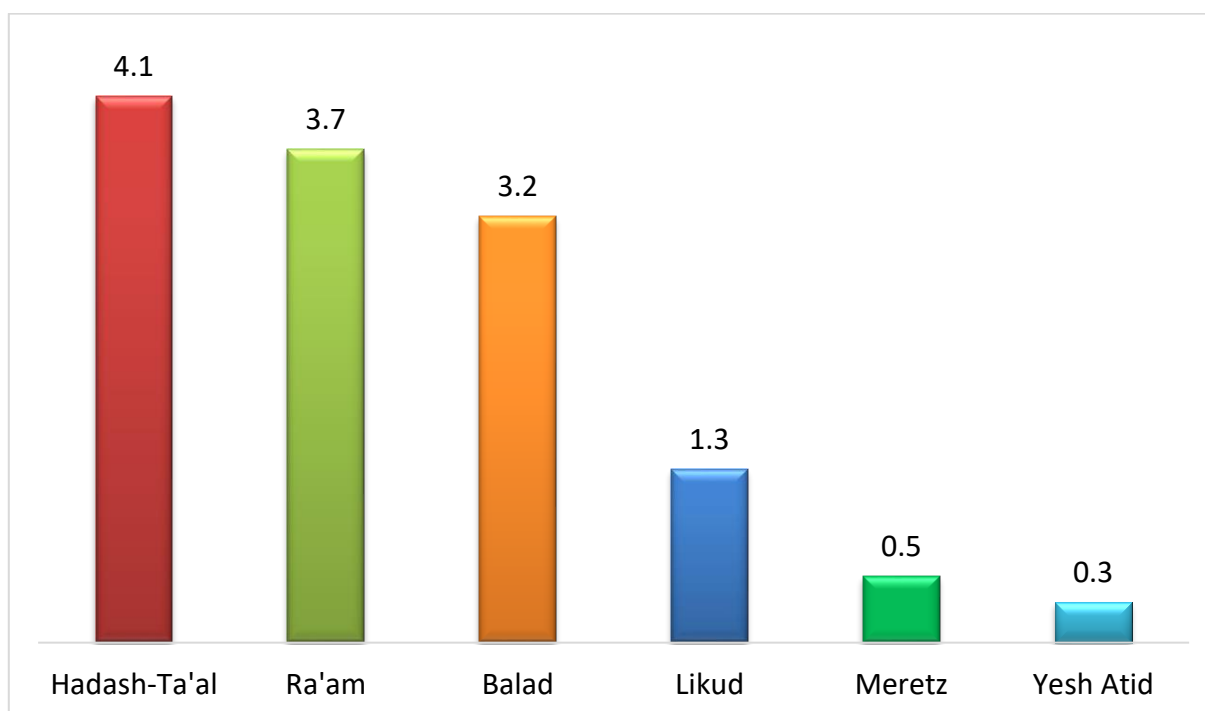
The following open-ended question was presented to the respondents: Which party do you intend to vote for in the coming Knesset elections? About 27.9% of the respondents stated that they will vote for Hadash-Ta'al, 25.0% for Ra'am, and 21.8% for Balad.

Other parties that receive low, though not negligible, Arab support include the Likud (9.1%), Meretz (3.2%), and Yesh Atid (1.9%). The support for other Jewish parties, such as Yisrael Beiteinu, Labor, the National Unity Party (State Camp), and Shas is negligible (less than 0.5% each). In addition, 9.8% of the respondents have not yet decided who to vote for or they refuse to specify who they will vote for.

By weighting the survey results and the expected rate of voter turnout in the Arab community and based on an analysis of voting patterns in the last four elections (2019-2021), it is estimated that Hadash-Ta'al will exceed the electoral threshold (4.1 seats, according to this survey); Ra'am is somewhat under the threshold (3.7 seats); and Balad is even farther from the threshold (3.2 seats). These calculations are based on the data as of the time the survey was conducted.

With respect to Arab support for the Jewish parties, the Likud is expected to win 1.3 seats based on Arab votes, Meretz is expected to win about one-half of a seat, and Yesh Atid is expected to win about one-third of a seat. The support for other Jewish parties is negligible.

Forecasted support for the parties from Arab voters (number of seats)



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Who is the most qualified candidate for prime minister?

The respondents, whether or not they intend to vote, were presented with the following open-ended question: Which politician—Arab or Jewish, whether or not currently in the Knesset and whether or not you support him—is the most qualified to be prime minister?

According to the survey results, about one-third of the respondents (34.2%) feel that there is currently no politician who is qualified for the position of prime minister. In addition, 14.7% stated that they don't have an opinion on this issue or they refuse to reveal their opinion. It appears that almost one-half of the Arab public (48.9%) feel that none of the current politicians is qualified to be prime minister.

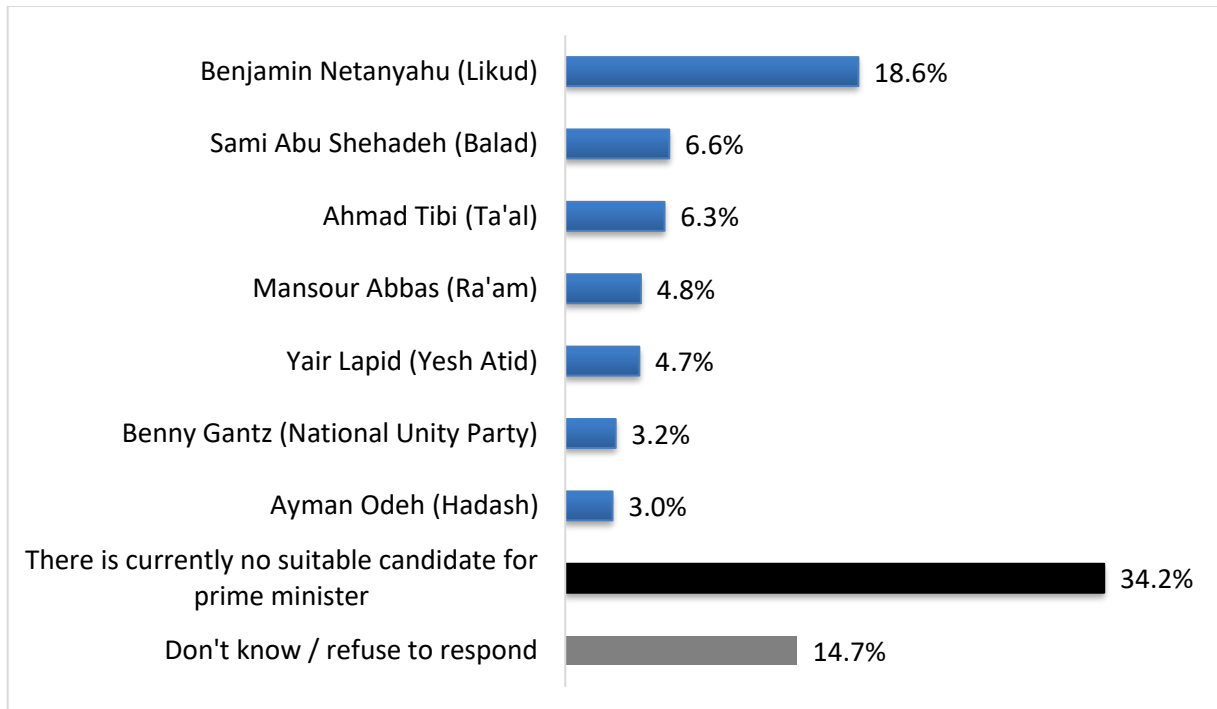
Nonetheless, the leader of the opposition Benjamin Netanyahu (Likud) receives significant support (18.6%), with Sami Abu Shehadeh (Balad) and Ahmad Tibi (Ta'al) well behind him, with 6.6% and 6.3% respectively. Mansour Abbas (Ra'am) receives 4.8%; Prime Minister Yair Lapid (Yesh Atid) receives 4.7%; Benny Gantz (National Unity Party) receives 3.2%; and Ayman Odeh (Hadash) receives 3.0%.

The participants were then asked to indicate who of the following three candidates for prime minister is likely to adopt a better policy vis-à-vis the Arab population if he is elected prime minister: Benjamin Netanyahu, Yair Lapid, or Benny Gantz.

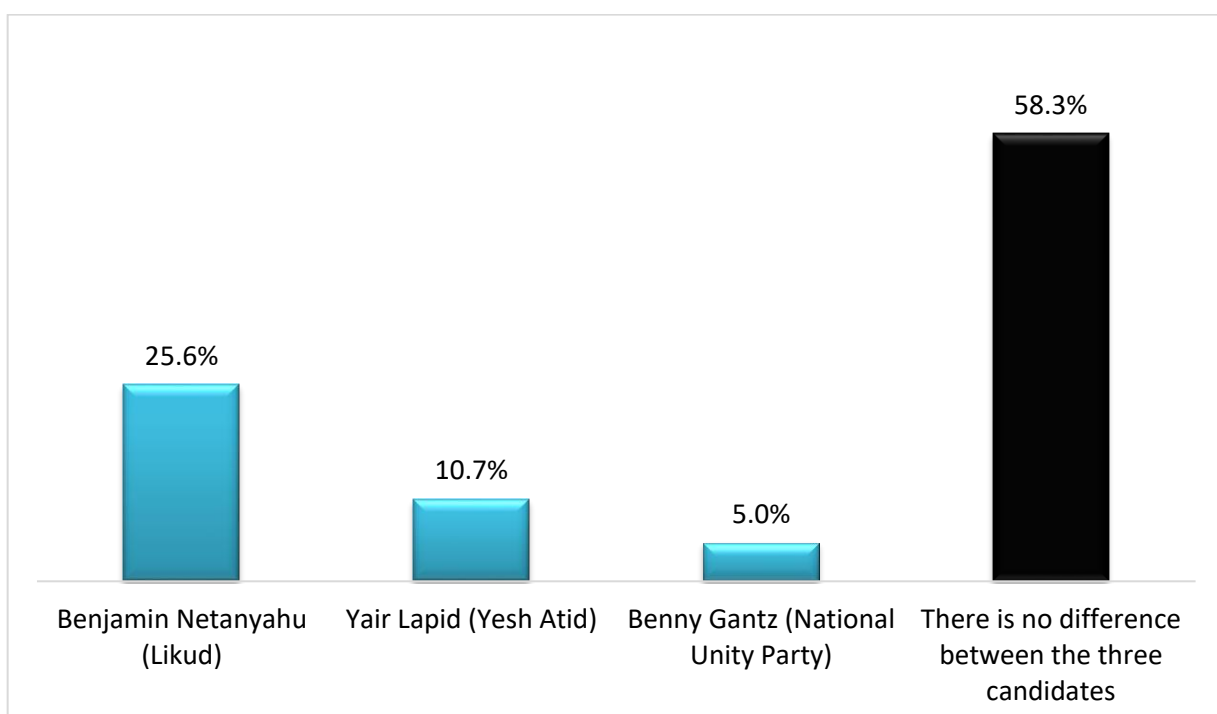
Most of the respondents (58.3%) believe that there is no difference between them in that respect. Nonetheless, Netanyahu (25.6%) receives significantly higher support than Lapid (10.7%) and Gantz (5%).

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Who is the most qualified candidate to be prime minister?



Which candidate for prime minister is most likely to adopt a better policy towards the Arab population?



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Rating the performance of the Bennett-Lapid government

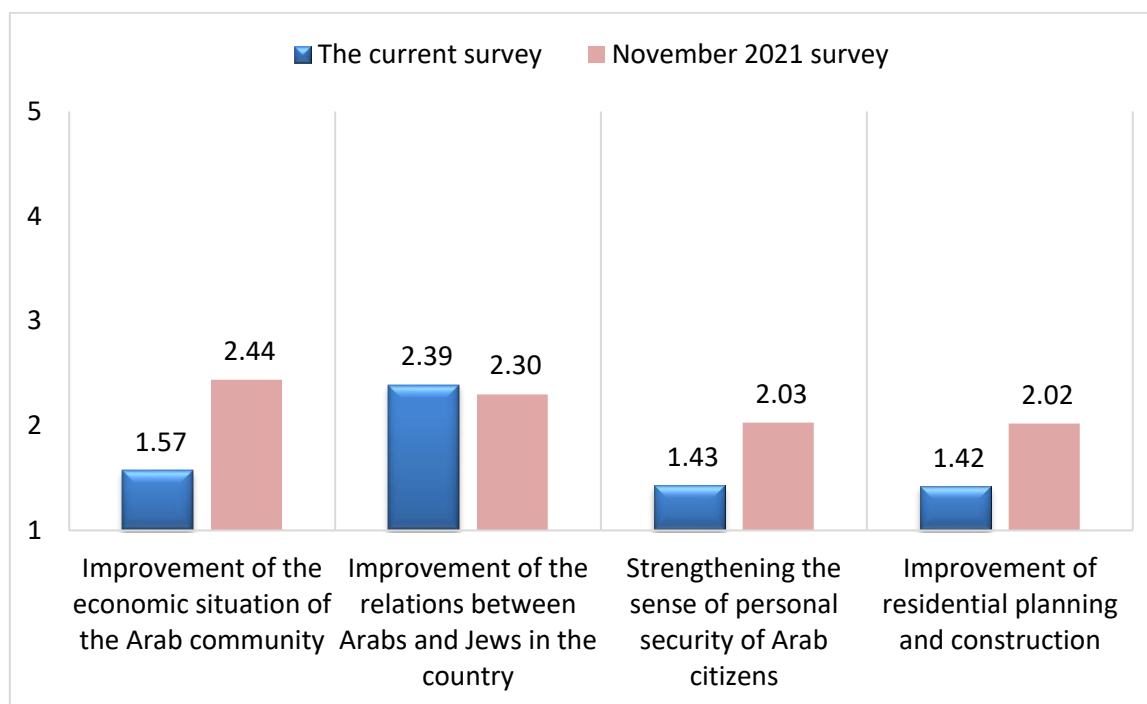
The government led by Naftali Bennett and Yair Lapid survived for less than a year and a half. The participants in the survey were asked to evaluate the government's performance on a number of issues that are relevant to Arab citizens using a scale from 1 (the lowest) to 5 (the highest).

According to the results, the Arab public gives low scores to the government's performance in improving the economic situation of the Arab community (1.57 on average); strengthening the sense of personal security among Arab citizens (1.43); and improving residential planning and construction in the Arab sector (1.42). The Arab public gives a slightly higher score (2.39) to the government's performance in improving relations between Arabs and Jews in the country, though it is still relatively low.

According to a survey conducted last year (in November 2021 and six months into the term of the Bennett-Lapid government) using an identical methodology, the Arab public did not have high expectations that the inclusion of an Arab party and Jewish parties with Arab members in the coalition would produce any benefit to the Arab community. The findings of the current survey show that they were nonetheless disappointed – with respect to the economic situation of the Arab community, the sense of personal security, and the situation of residential planning and construction. Only on the issue of relations between Jews and Arabs was sentiment unchanged. Thus, the Arab community feels that the government did not meet expectations and performed poorly overall.

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Rating of the Bennett-Lapid government's performance on issues important to the Arab community

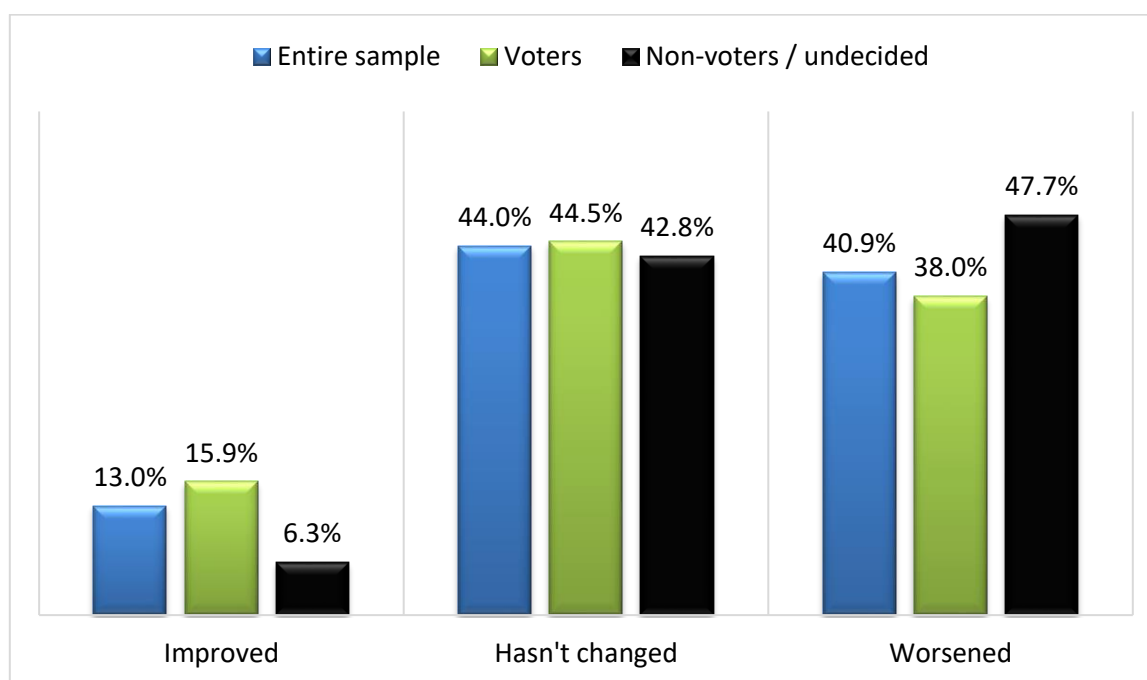


The disappointment of the Arab public with the performance of the Bennett-Lapid government is clearly evident from the survey. About 40.9% feel that the situation of the Arab population was not improved by the government, which for the first time included an Arab party and Jewish parties with Arab members; indeed, 24.7% think that the situation worsened. On the other hand, 44% believe that the situation of the Arab community remained unchanged. Only 13% of the respondents believe that the situation of the Arab community improved and most of them (10.8%) believe that there was only somewhat of an improvement.

On this question, there are significant differences according to whether the respondent intends to vote. The percentage of respondents who believe that the situation of the Arab population was improved by the Bennett-Lapid government is significantly higher among those who intend to vote relative to those who do not intend to vote or have not yet decided (15.9% vs. 6.3%). In any case, these rates are low. About one-half (47.7%) of the respondents who do not intend to vote believe that the situation of the Arab population worsened during the Bennett-Lapid government. This rate was also high among those who intend to vote (38%).

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Has the situation of the Arab population improved or worsened during the Bennett-Lapid government?



The question of whether to join the government

Surveys carried out among the Arab community during the last two years indicate growing support for Arab parties to join the government coalition. The current survey also presented this question, (without differentiating between respondents who intend to vote and those who do not): Is it desirable for an Arab party to be part of the government coalition in order to achieve benefit for the Arab community ?

About one-half of the respondents (46.8%) expressed support for an Arab party joining any government to be formed after the elections, while 15.6% stated that they would only support joining a Center-Left coalition. Overall, most of the respondents (62.4%) are interested in seeing an Arab party join the government coalition.

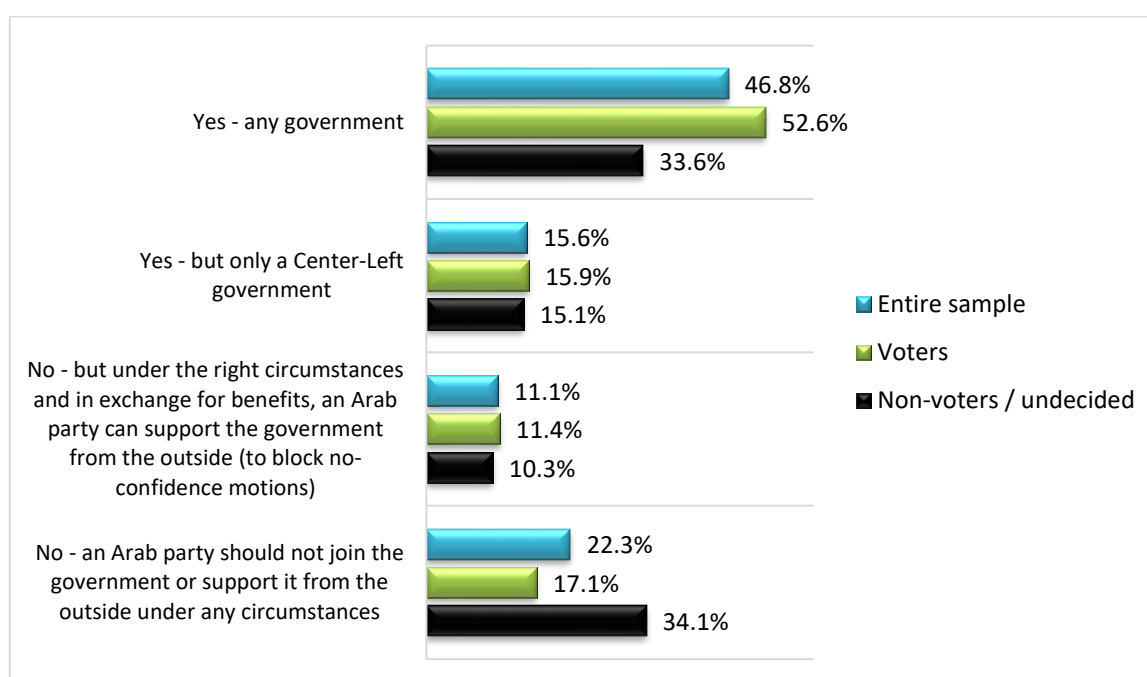
In contrast, 22.3% answered that they would not support an Arab party joining the government or voting with it from outside the coalition, while 11.1% did not support having an Arab party in the coalition, though they were in favor of an Arab party supporting the government from outside the coalition (to block no-confidence motions) in exchange for benefits granted to the Arab community.

In this regard, the survey found significant differences according to whether the respondent intends to vote. While one-half of those who intend to vote (52.6%) support an Arab party joining any government (not just a Center-Left government), only one-third (33.9%) of those who do not intend

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to vote or are undecided whether to vote expressed their support. In contrast, only 17.1% of those who intend to vote believe that an Arab party should not join the coalition or support it from outside the coalition, while that rate was twice as high among those who do not intend to vote or are undecided whether to vote (34.1%).

Is it desirable for an Arab party to be part of the coalition in order to achieve benefit for the Arab community? (according to whether the respondent intends to vote)



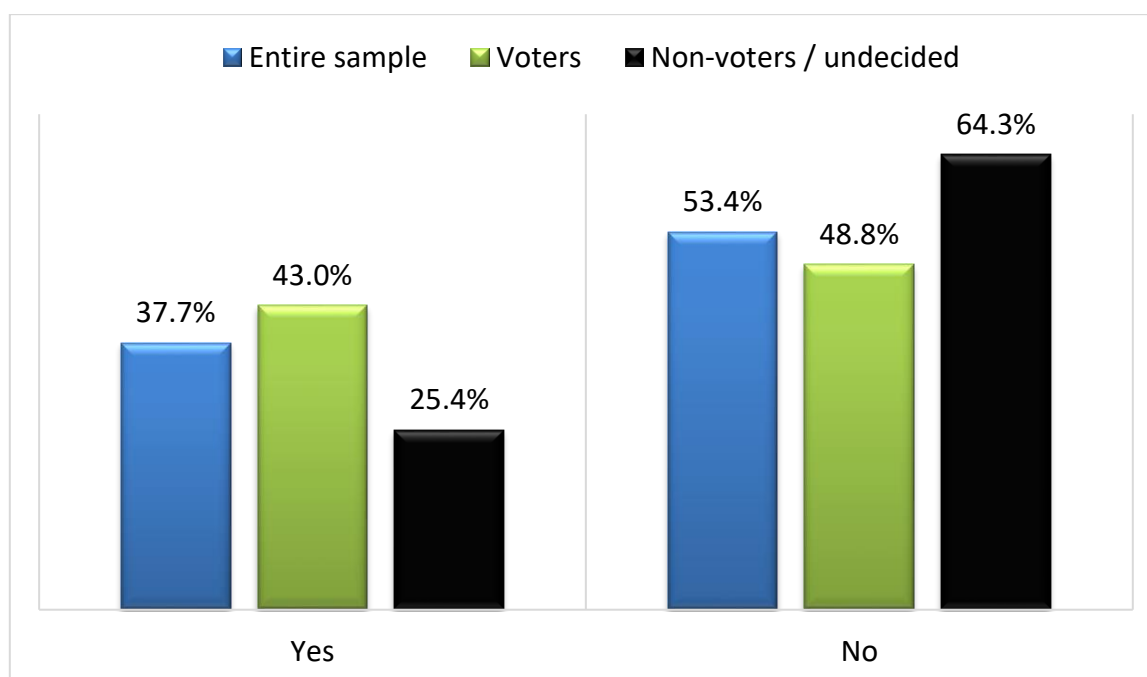
Following the previous Knesset elections (March 2021), the Ra'am party joined the government coalition headed by Naftali Bennett and Yair Lapid. Unlike in past surveys in which joining the government was a hypothetical issue, the respondents in the current survey were asked to assess the results of an Arab party having joined the coalition and to indicate whether in their opinion it had been a success.

The results indicate a division of opinion. A significant proportion of the respondents (37.7%) believe that this was a successful experience overall. On the other hand, one-half of the respondents (53.4%) believe that it was unsuccessful and 31.3% believe that it was very unsuccessful.

There were significant differences according to whether the respondent intends to vote. Among those who intend to vote, a relatively high percentage (43%) believe that Ra'am's joining the coalition was a successful experience, while one-half (48.8%) believe that it was not. On the other hand, among those who do not intend to vote or were undecided whether to vote, only 25.4% believe that Ra'am's joining the coalition was a successful experience, while the vast majority (64.3%) believe that it was an unsuccessful experience.

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Was Ra'am's joining the coalition a successful experience?
(according to whether the respondent intends to vote)



The question of unity among the Arab parties

The respondents were presented with a hypothetical question: In the case that one or more Arab parties do not exceed the electoral threshold in the elections, do you support the unification of all the Arab parties after the elections and the re-establishment of the Joint List?

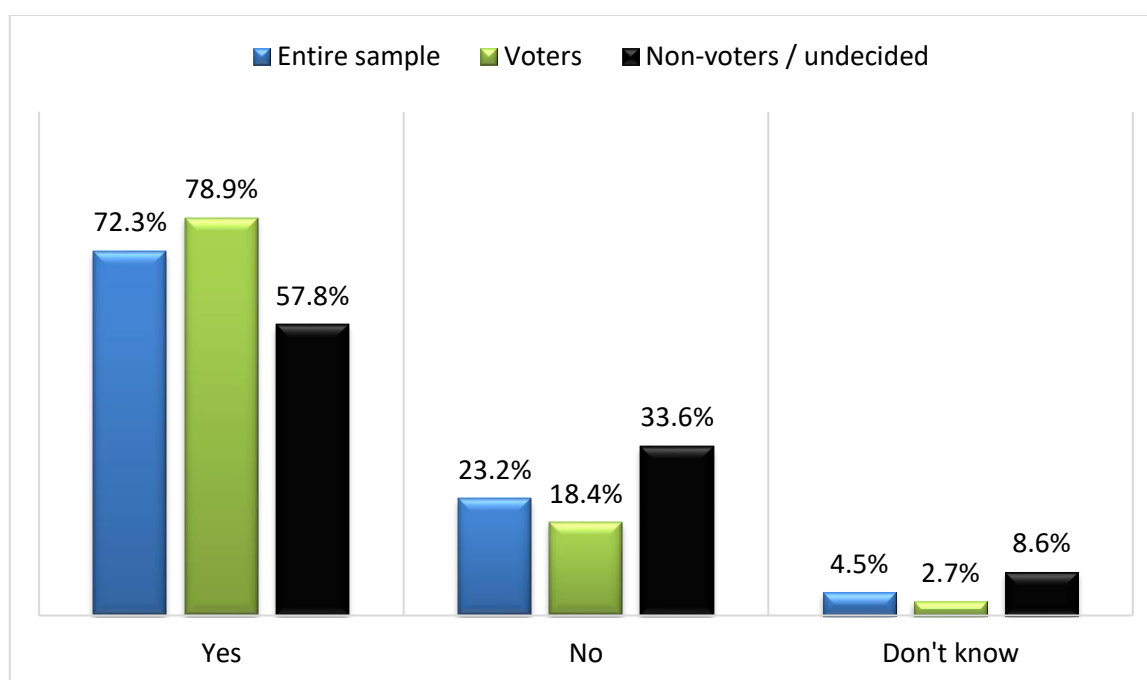
Over the past two years, internal disputes have led to the gradual breakup of the Joint List. This began with Ra'am's secession on the eve of the previous election (March 2021), and more recently continued with the split of the Joint List into two separate parties, Hadash-Ta'al and Balad, prior to the current elections. Nevertheless, the idea of political unity continues to resonate among the Arab public. Even if the Joint List was not particularly successful in practice, among large parts of the Arab public the idea of unity and cooperation between the Arab parties continues to be a desired political goal.

An overwhelming majority of the Arab public (72.3%) supports the re-establishment of the Joint List after the elections if one or more Arab parties do not exceed the electoral threshold. Only 23.2% did not.

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Significant differences were found according to whether the respondent intends to vote. Thus, the rate of support for re-establishment of the Joint List (78.9%) is significantly higher among those intending to vote than among those not intending to vote or who are undecided (78.9% vs 57.8%). It should be noted that among those who intend to vote, 65% support the idea to a large extent. Even among those who do not intend to vote, a fairly high percentage (38.2%) support the idea to a large extent.

If one or more Arab parties do not exceed the electoral threshold, would you support the unification of the Arab parties after the elections and the re-establishment of the Joint List? (according to whether the respondent intends to vote)



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The political agenda after the elections and furthering the interests of the Arab community

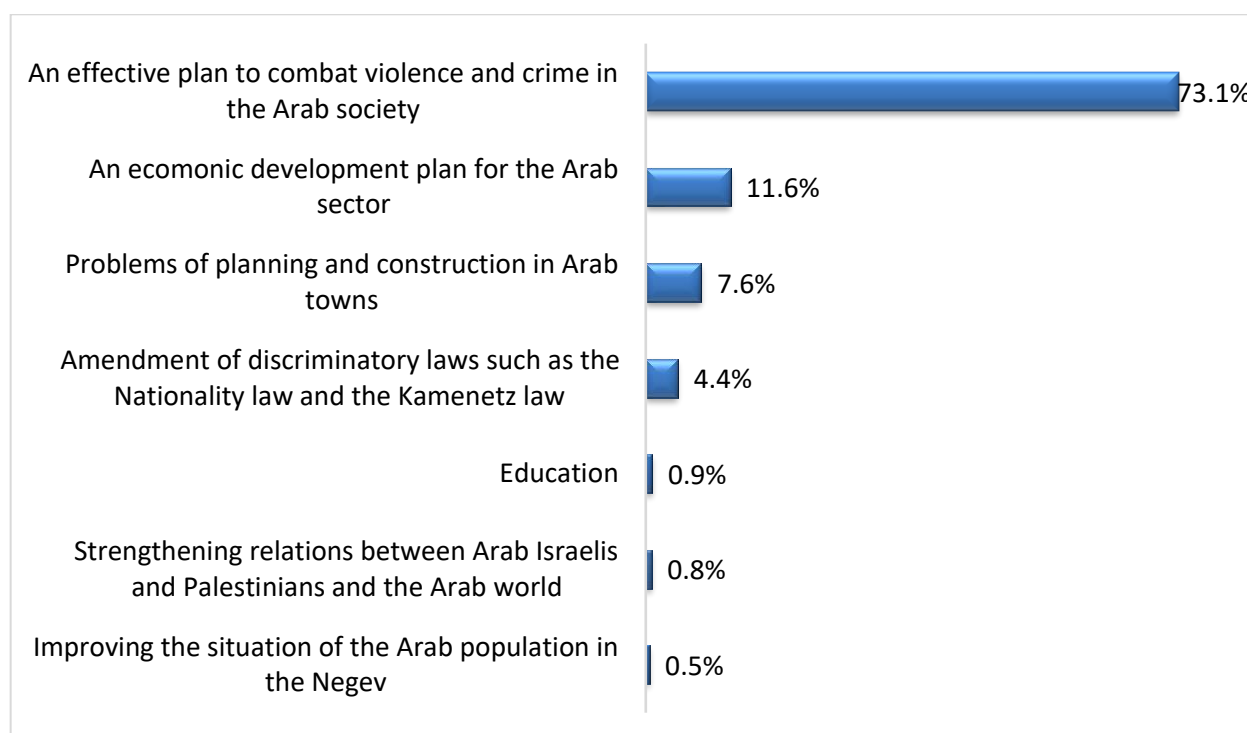
The respondents were asked which issue Arab MKs should focus on after the elections. For the vast majority (73.1%), it was combating violence in Arab society. This issue dominates other issues on the Arab public's agenda, which is unsurprising given that there have been over 90 people murdered in the Arab community since the beginning of the year.

Issues of secondary importance are an economic development plan for the Arab population (11.6%), improving the situation of residential planning and construction in Arab towns (7.6%) and amending discriminatory laws such as the Nationality Law and the Kamenetz Law (4.4%).

With respect to who is currently furthering the interests of the Arab public to the greatest extent, a large proportion of the respondents (36.6%) felt that there is no one looking after their interests. Nonetheless, 22.9% of the respondents believe that the Arab Knesset members are furthering the interests of the Arab public to the greatest extent, while 13.2% believe it is the civil society organizations.

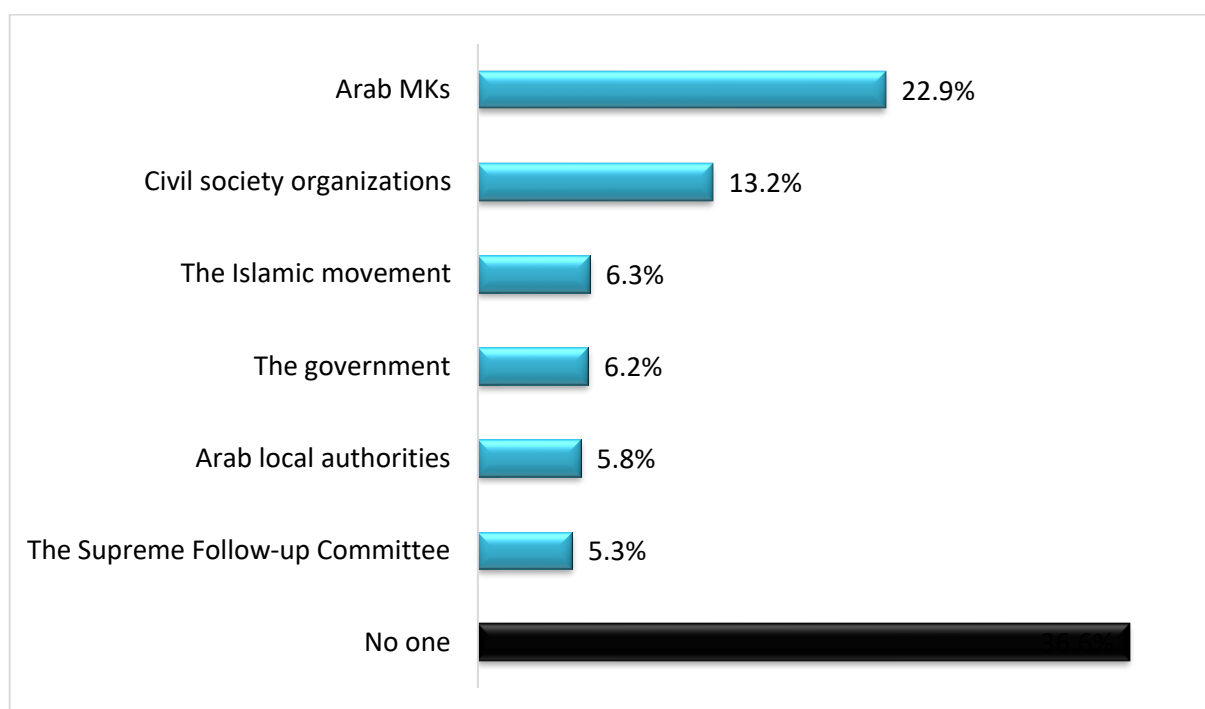
Other responses include the Islamic movement (6.3%), the government (6.2%), the Arab local authorities (5.8%), and the Supreme Follow-up Committee (5.3%).

Which issue should the Arab MKs focus on after the elections?



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Who is currently furthering the interests of the Arab community to the greatest extent?



The survey was initiated by the Konrad Adenauer Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation at the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, in cooperation with the Israel Office of the German Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

The survey was carried out by the Yafa Institute – Market Research, Surveys and Consulting, under the direction of Dr. Aas Atrash.

The data were collected during the period October 16 – 21, 2022 in a telephone survey carried out in Arabic among a representative sample of the adult Arab population (aged 18+).

Size of the sample: 510. Sample error: ± 4.4 percent.

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