

Survey: Majority of Haredim approve of Netanyahu, want Gazans expelled

New survey finds a majority of Haredim approve of Israel's handling of the Israel-Hamas war and want to see Israel take over Gaza after the war



Attendees at the pro-Israel rally in DC last November. Photo: Eli Feldblum

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Feb 21, 2024 5:20 PM

A survey published earlier this month found that two thirds of Haredim approve of Bibi Netanyahu's handling of the Israel-Hamas war. In addition, a strong majority of Haredim want Gaza's residents permanently expelled.

The study, which was conducted in January by Nishma Research, a research organization that

focuses on the Orthodox Jewish community, along with historian David Myers, [surveyed](#) 590 Haredim, most of whom were Americans, about their opinions on the Israel-Hamas war. The results found that, even though Haredi communities have historically identified as non-Zionist, Haredim still hold overwhelmingly hawkish views on the war: 68% believe that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and his government are handling the war well, and 57% want to see Gaza residents permanently expelled, with the same number believing Israel should take over Gaza after the war.

In fact, Haredim may hold more right wing views on these issues than most Israelis. A poll published in January found that [only 15% of Israelis](#) want Netanyahu to stay in office after the war ends.

Responding to a short-answer question, one Haredi participant in the anonymous survey tried to capture the complexity of views held in at least one Hasidic sect. “It's important to understand that Lubabvitch is 100% non-Zionist, but in a sense we are to the right of even the most extreme Zionist politicians,” the participant said.

Haredi communities have historically identified as non-Zionist, usually because they disagree with the Israeli state's secular orientation, or because they believe Jews should not have a sovereign state before the arrival of the Messiah. Still, many feel strong affection toward Israel because of its historical significance in Jewish religious life. Many Haredim also have family members in Israel and may have spent some of their school years there. In recent years, Haredim have also been leaning increasingly toward right-wing political views.

Twenty-four percent of Haredi survey respondents to the survey said that they have

become more Zionist in their views since the war began on Oct. 7. But the trend did not hold among all Haredi groups: nearly a third of the 35 Satmar Hasidim who responded said they've become more anti-Zionist since the war began.

One Haredi respondent said that far-right Israeli politicians provoked and inflamed tensions with Muslims, Referring to Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's Minister of National Security, he wrote, "Ben Gvir's provocations were not done in order to protect Jews." The respondent added, "Although I recognize that Ben Gvir isn't really at fault for the Oct. 7 attacks, and that the fault lies entirely with Hamas, I don't think his provocations helped matters."

Indeed, the survey's results may be skewed in a way that over-represents Haredi communities more likely to support the Israeli military. More Litvish than Hasidic Jews participated in the survey, and far more Chabad Hasidim than Satmar. Additionally, the survey was conducted online, and many Haredim, especially in the more insular Hasidic communities, do not use the internet.

Nishma, which also surveyed Modern Orthodox Jews, found respondents by sending email blasts through the news sites Vos Iz Neias, Matzav, Queens Jewish Link, and the organization Jewish Charedi Network, which sells ads on Orthodox news sites. It also surveyed people who participated in previous Nishma surveys.

In recent months, controversy has flared up repeatedly within Haredi communities over whether and how to support Israel's war. Most notably, Jews from the Haredi enclaves of Crown Heights, Lakewood, and Borough Park [attended](#) a pro-Israel rally in Washington, D.C. in November — even as Haredi leaders expressed mixed views over the event. At Agudath Israel of America, an

organization that lobbies for Haredi interests, some members of the Council of Torah Sages, the organization's rabbinic advisory board, voiced [dissent](#) over other Agudah leaders' support for the rally.

Elsewhere in the Haredi world, popular Hasidic singers, such as Motty Illowitz and Lipa Schmeltzer, came under [heavy scrutiny](#) within the anti-Zionist Satmar world for expressing support for the State of Israel and its military.