

FOR RELEASE APRIL 24, 2019

# U.S. Public Has Favorable View of Israel's People, but Is Less Positive Toward Its Government

*Wide partisan gaps in opinions of Israelis, Palestinians*

**FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:**

Carroll Doherty, Director of Political Research

Jocelyn Kiley, Associate Director, Research

Bridget Johnson, Communications Manager

202.419.4372

[www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org)

**RECOMMENDED CITATION**

Pew Research Center, April, 2019, "Public Has Favorable View of Israel's People, But Is Less Positive toward Its Government"

## About Pew Research Center

Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world. It does not take policy positions. It conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, content analysis and other data-driven social science research. The Center studies U.S. politics and policy; journalism and media; internet, science and technology; religion and public life; Hispanic trends; global attitudes and trends; and U.S. social and demographic trends. All of the Center's reports are available at [www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org). Pew Research Center is a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts, its primary funder.

© Pew Research Center 2019

# U.S. Public Has Favorable View of Israel's People, but Is Less Positive Toward Its Government

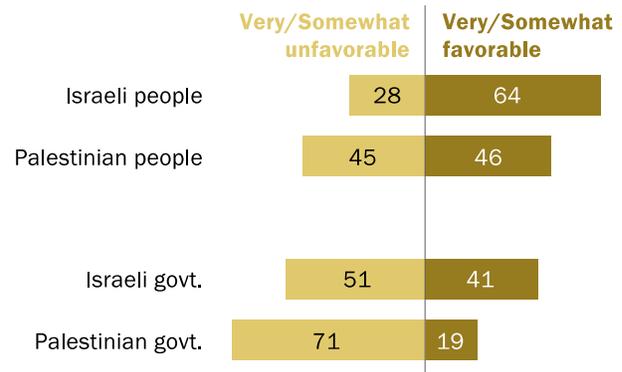
*Wide partisan gaps in opinions of Israelis, Palestinians*

A substantial majority of Americans – 64% – say they have a favorable opinion of the Israeli people. However, fewer than half (41%) have a favorable view of the Israeli government; a larger share (51%) views the government unfavorably.

The public also expresses more positive views of the Palestinian people than the government. While nearly half (46%) view the Palestinian people favorably, just 19% have a favorable opinion of the Palestinian government.<sup>1</sup>

## Israeli and Palestinian peoples are both viewed more favorably than their govts.

% who say they have a \_\_\_ opinion of the ...



Note: No answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 1-15, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

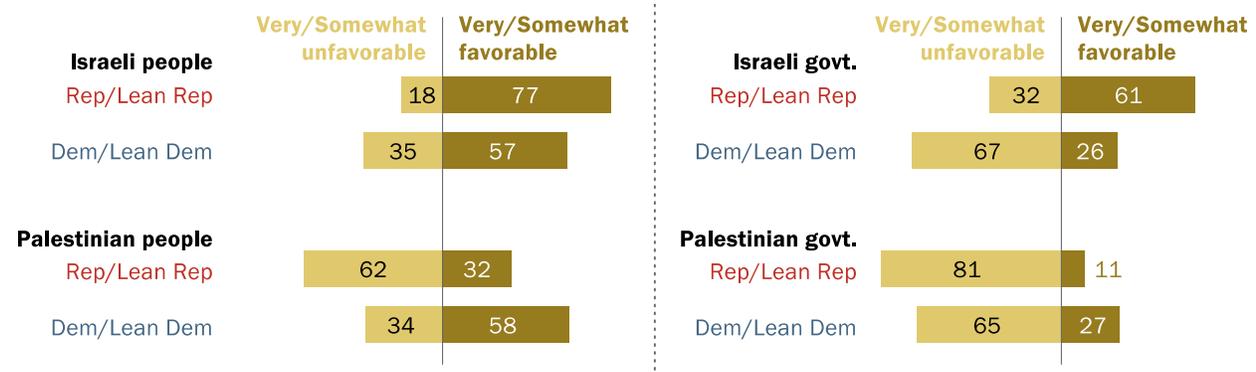
<sup>1</sup> There is not a unified Palestinian government; since 2007, there have been two Palestinian governments, one on the West Bank and the other in the Gaza Strip. To make this question accessible for respondents, and to provide a comparison with views of the Israeli government, the question asks about the "Palestinian government."

The new Pew Research Center survey, conducted April 1-15 among 10,523 U.S. adults, finds large partisan differences in opinions about both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples and their governments.

While majorities in both parties have favorable views of the Israeli people, Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are more likely than Democrats and Democratic leaners to say this (77% vs. 57%).

### Wide partisan divide in views of Israel's government; smaller differences in views of the Israeli people

% who say they have a \_\_\_ opinion of the ...



Note: No answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 1-15, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The partisan gap in opinions of the Israeli government is even wider. By nearly two-to-one (61% to 32%), Republicans have a favorable view of Israel's government. By contrast, two-thirds of Democrats view Israel's government unfavorably, while just 26% have a favorable opinion.

Among Republicans, there are religious differences in these views. Evangelical Protestants are more likely than non-evangelicals to express a favorable opinion of Israel's government (73% of evangelical Republicans vs. 55% of non-evangelicals)<sup>2</sup>.

Democrats have much more positive views of the Palestinian people than do Republicans. A 58% majority of Democrats express a favorable opinion of the Palestinian people, compared with only about a third (32%) of Republicans. Majorities in both parties feel negatively toward the

<sup>2</sup> In this report, respondents are categorized as evangelical Protestants based as much as possible on the specific denomination with which they identify. Evangelical Protestants include respondents of all races and ethnicities.

Palestinian government, but a greater share of Republicans (81%) than Democrats (65%) view it unfavorably.

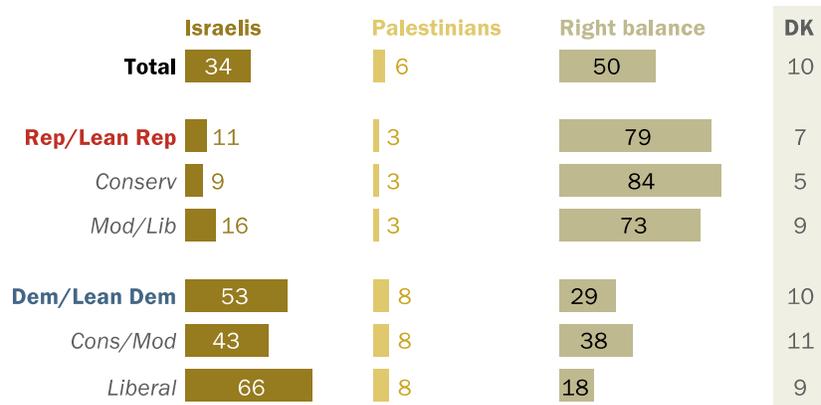
This survey also finds that half of Americans say President Donald Trump is “striking about the right balance” in dealing with the two sides. Roughly a third (34%) say Trump is favoring the Israelis too much, while 6% say he is favoring the Palestinians too much.

A wide majority of Republicans and Republican leaners (79%) say Trump is striking the right balance. Few Republicans say he is favoring either the Israelis (11%) or the Palestinians too much (3%). Conservative Republicans (84%) and moderate and liberal Republicans (73%) largely agree that Trump is taking the right approach to the Middle East.

About half of Democrats and Democratic leaners (53%), on the other hand, say Trump is favoring the Israelis too much; 29% say he is striking about the right balance, and 8% say he favors the Palestinians too much. By a wide margin, most liberal Democrats (66%) say Trump is favoring the Israelis too much. Moderate and conservative Democrats are more divided: 43% say he is favoring the Israelis too much, while nearly as many say he is striking the right balance (38%).

### Half say Trump is ‘striking about the right balance’ in dealing with Israelis and Palestinians

% who say Donald Trump is favoring the \_\_\_ too much



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 1-15, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Nearly half of Republicans feel favorably toward Israelis, unfavorably toward the Palestinians

When Americans' attitudes toward Israelis and Palestinians are considered together, a plurality (39%) has a favorable opinion of *both* Israelis and Palestinians, while smaller shares have mixed views or unfavorable opinions of both peoples.

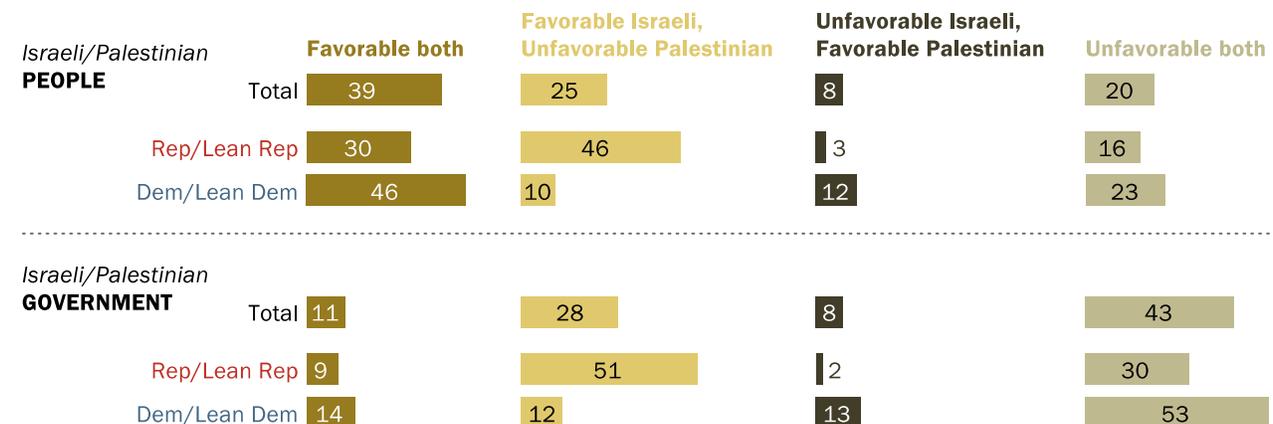
In views of the two governments, 43% have an unfavorable opinion of both, which is greater than the shares who hold mixed opinions or feel favorably about both governments.

Among Republicans, nearly half (46%) view Israelis favorably *and* Palestinians unfavorably. Yet almost as many Republicans hold some other combination of opinions, including 30% who feel favorably toward both peoples.

Democrats, by contrast, are more likely to view both Israelis and Palestinians positively (46% are favorable to both peoples).

### Democrats more likely than Republicans to view Israelis *and* Palestinians favorably

% who are ...



Note: No answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 1-15, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The pattern of opinion is different in views of the two governments. About half of Democrats (53%) have unfavorable views of both governments; that is larger than the shares with mixed views or favorable views of both governments. Among Republicans, 51% view the Israeli government favorably and the Palestinian government unfavorably, which is larger than the shares giving other sets of opinions.

## Age differences in views of Israelis and Palestinians

Majorities across age groups have favorable views of the Israeli people, although those ages 65 and older are most likely to express a favorable opinion.

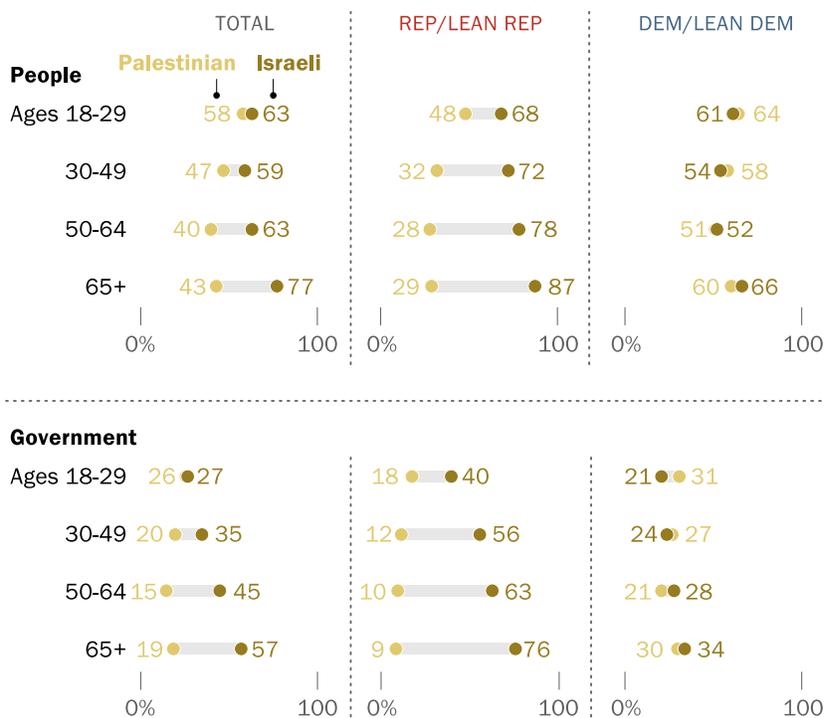
Yet there are much wider differences in opinions of the Israeli government; those 65 and older are the only age group in which a majority (57%) have a favorable view of the government. Among the youngest adults (those younger than 30), just 27% view Israel's government favorably.

Favorable views of the Israeli government among older adults are driven by older Republicans and Republican leaners, whose views are significantly more favorable than those of younger Republicans. There are more modest age differences among Democrats.

Younger Republicans also have less favorable views of the Israeli people – and more favorable views of the Palestinian people – than do older Republicans. Nearly half of Republicans and Republican leaners under 30 (48%) have a favorable opinion of the Palestinian people, compared with 30% of those 30 and older. Democrats in every age group are more favorable toward the Palestinian people than are their Republican peers.

### Young adults less likely than older people to have a favorable view of the Israeli government

% who say they have a very/somewhat favorable opinion of the ...



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 1-15, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Acknowledgements

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

### Research team

Carroll Doherty, *Director, Political Research*

Jocelyn Kiley, *Associate Director, Political Research*

Alec Tyson, *Senior Researcher*

Bradley Jones, *Research Associate*

Baxter Oliphant, *Research Associate*

Hannah Hartig, *Research Analyst*

Amina Dunn, *Research Assistant*

John LaLoggia, *Research Assistant*

Haley Davie, *Intern*

### Communications and editorial

Bridget Johnson, *Communications Manager*

### Graphic design and web publishing

Alissa Scheller, *Information Graphics Designer*

Sara Atske, *Assistant Digital Producer*

## Methodology

### The American Trends Panel survey methodology

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report are drawn from the panel wave conducted April 1-15, 2019. A total of 10,523 panelists responded out of 13,482 who were sampled, for a response rate of 78%. This does not include three panelists who were removed from the data due to extremely high rates of refusal or straightlining. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 3.7%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged onto the survey and completed at least one item is 1.0%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 10,523 respondents is plus or minus 1.5 percentage points.

---

#### American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment Dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	2,507
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	1,467
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	802
Aug. 8–Oct. 31, 2018	ABS/web	9,396	8,778	8,706
	<b>Total</b>	<b>29,114</b>	<b>18,720</b>	<b>13,482</b>

Note: Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

---

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of which 9,942 agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a random, address-based sample (ABS) of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. In each household, the adult with the next birthday was asked to go online to complete a survey, at the end of which they were invited to join the panel. For a random half-sample of invitations, households without internet access were instructed to return a

postcard. These households were contacted by telephone and sent a tablet if they agreed to participate. A total of 9,396 were invited to join the panel, and 8,778 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey.

Of the 18,720 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 13,482 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The U.S. Postal Service’s Delivery Sequence File has been estimated to cover somewhere between the low 90% to 98% of the population.<sup>3</sup>

### Weighting

The ATP data were weighted in a multistep process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents’ original survey selection probability and the fact that in 2014 and 2017 some respondents were subsampled for invitation to the panel. The next step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that aligns the sample to population benchmarks on the dimensions listed in the accompanying table.

Sampling errors and statistical-significance tests take into account the effect of weighting. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish, but the American Trends Panel’s Hispanic sample is predominantly U.S. born and English speaking.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

---

### Weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Gender	2017 American Community Survey
Age	
Education	
Race/Hispanic origin	2018 CPS March Metropolitan status Supplement
Hispanic nativity	
Home internet access	2015 CPS Volunteer Supplement
Voter registration	2016 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation	Average of the three most recent Pew Research Center telephone surveys.

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total US adult population.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

---

<sup>3</sup> “AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling” (2016). AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling.

---

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	10,523	1.5 percentage points
Half sample	At least 5,239	2.1 percentage points
Republican/Lean Republican	4,300	2.2 percentage points
Half sample Rep/Lean Rep	At least 2,141	3.1 percentage points
Democrat/Lean Democrat	5,937	2.0 percentage points
Half sample Dem/Lean Dem	At least 2,958	2.9 percentage points

---

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

© Pew Research Center, 2019

**2019 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL  
WAVE 47 APRIL  
FINAL TOPLINE  
APRIL 1-15, 2019  
TOTAL N=10,523**

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

ME\_SPPRT Thinking about the situation with Israelis and Palestinians these days... Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each of the following? **[RANDOMIZE]**

		-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			No
		<b>NET</b>	<i>Very</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<b>NET</b>	<i>Very</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<u>answer</u>
<b>ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=5,284]:</b>								
a.F1	The Israeli government Apr 1-15, 2019	<b>41</b>	14	27	<b>51</b>	17	33	9
b.F1	The Palestinian government Apr 1-15, 2019	<b>19</b>	1	18	<b>71</b>	27	44	9
<b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=5,239]:</b>								
c.F2	The Israeli people Apr 1-15, 2019	<b>64</b>	20	44	<b>28</b>	6	22	8
d.F2	The Palestinian people Apr 1-15, 2019	<b>46</b>	7	39	<b>45</b>	12	34	8

**ASK ALL:**

ME\_DT Do you think Donald Trump is... **[RANDOMIZE PUNCHES 1 & 2; ALWAYS ASK PUNCH 3 LAST]**

Apr 1-15,  
2019  
34  
6  
50  
10

Favoring the Israelis too much  
Favoring the Palestinians too much  
Striking about the right balance  
No answer

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**