



סיקוי סיקוי Sikkuy

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העמותה לקידום שוויון אזרחי الجمعية لدعم المساواة المدنية
The Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality in Israel

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Who's in Favor of Equality?

SIKKUY'S PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY OF JEWS AND ARABS FINDS
SOME SURPRISING, AND EVEN POSITIVE RESULTS

Dear Sikkuy Friends,

Indeed, who supports equality between the Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel?

Given that Sikkuy has been working for more than two decades to advance equality between the Jewish and Arab citizens (particularly at the government level), it made sense for us to ask this question of both Jews and Arabs. We thought this would help us better understand the challenges facing us as we work to have a positive impact on public opinion and government policy in Israel.

The results give us cause for optimism.

Some of the key findings:

- A clear majority of the Jews (74 percent) acknowledge the fact that Arab citizens suffer some degree of discrimination, and many of them expressed empathy for their situation.
- 60 percent of the Jews believe that promoting the equality of Arab citizens is in the interest of the country.
- The inequality of Arab citizens disturbs over half of the Jewish population in Israel (53 percent).
- Almost 40 percent of the Jews are ready for a program to reduce gaps, even if they will suffer from it

personally, in other words, they declare a willingness to pay a personal price in order to reduce the gaps.

- Among Arab citizens there is sweeping support for economic, political and social integration (88 percent, 81 percent and 78 percent, respectively). Among Jews the numbers are lower, mainly in the political sphere, and still, the majority supports economic, political and social integration (70 percent, 52 percent and 65 percent, respectively).

The survey found that the most profound points of disagreement between Arabs and Jews relate to sharing symbols and to equality when it comes to the definition of the state. Among the Arab participants in the study, 90 percent said that they see their future in the State of Israel, but believed that its character as a Jewish state perpetuates their status and reinforces their inferior status as a marginalized minority in the country.

While the survey was conducted in Hebrew, we provide you here a link to the [detailed abstract](#) in English.

For those of you who read Hebrew, here is a link to the [Hebrew publication](#).

The research was presented by **Ron Gerlitz** at Sikkuy's annual conference in Haifa in September 2011. The respondents included Arab and Jewish activists and journalists and leading Israeli author, **A.B. Yehoshua**.

So why our optimism? The findings indicate that even in today's challenging situation there is no basis for the belief that the majority supports the negative elements, and therefore, **there is also no indication that relations between Jews and Arabs are about to deteriorate. On the contrary, all the positive factors and forces** - in the government ministries, in civic society, and even in a small business in Tel Aviv that insists on employing Arab workers - **rely on a broad base of public support that was found in the study.**

Sikkuy will be motivated by the results of this survey to ramp up our work for equality knowing that there is broad public support among Arabs and Jews for this goal as both a vital Jewish and Arab interest.

We are also pleased that the research has been featured in many articles and commentaries in the print and electronic media and will be presented at the 28th annual meeting of the Association for Israel Studies to be held in Haifa in June 2012.

We hope you will have a chance to review the abstract and of course, we look forward to your comments and questions.

Sincerely,

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